

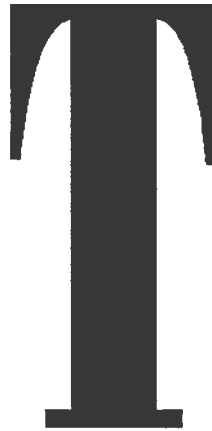
FACT SHEET ON YUGOSLAVIA

September 25, 1992

By

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he current tragic situation in Yugoslavia cannot be described in simple black and white terms. The multitude of factors involved are complex and have developed from long standing conflicts between the ethnic groups that inhabit the region. The historical geopolitical boundary of East and West that snakes through the Balkans led to the divisive

religious development of Orthodox Christianity and Catholicism. In addition, the military invasion of the Turks into the area beginning in the Fourteenth Century, accounts for the conversion of some inhabitants to the Muslim faith. This added a third antagonistic force to the region. The strategic importance of the Balkan states has often made it the focal point of military conflict, and therefore, frequently placed the three groups of this region on opposing sides.

The complexity of this issue, however, should not be used as an excuse to allow the spread of fallacies. For the most part, the current situation in former Yugoslavia has not been presented in a truthful manner. Many biases are accepted as truth, and many extenuating factors are ignored. This fact sheet will address some of these issues.

THE RIGHT TO STAY

Secessionists are not entitled to greater political rights than those who do not want to secede. Bosnian Serbs make up thirty-two percent of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is a 'minority' of almost one-third of the entire republic. In addition, this 'minority' owned sixty percent of the land in Bosnia-Herzegovina prior to the start of this civil war. The suppression of the rights and desires of that large a percentage is unconscionable. The idea of forcing the Bosnian Serbs to blindly show allegiance to the new Muslim controlled government, is tantamount to saying the citizens of West Virginia had no right to choose to stay within the Union - that they should have been forced to secede with the rest of Virginia.



Serbs living in the former republic of Croatia made up twelve percent of the total population. This number is certainly a minority that has no more political right than the seventy-five percent Croat population. However, the Serb population is concentrated in a few key areas. Since these areas are to a high degree homogenous, these people have the right to choose whether to stay within Yugoslavia or become a part of Croatia.

THE FOLLY OF PREMATURE RECOGNITION

Since the unilateral declaration of secession of Slovenia and Croatia from Yugoslavia in 1991, two more republics - Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia - have declared their independence. In the case of Macedonia the representatives of that republic and those of the national Yugoslav government worked out a settlement that was agreeable to all involved. Tragically, when it came to Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the international community intervened prior to the successful completion of negotiations between the republics and the national government. The international community was then surprised and shocked when fighting broke out, especially in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. They could not, and apparently still do not, comprehend why the Serbs were upset at being forced into a state and situation they did not desire, and were not given a hand in creating.

Scores of historians and diplomats have written numerous volumes on the dangers of premature recognition of a new country by the international community. Unfortunately, none of these warnings were heeded in the present situation.

Furthermore, The Digest of International Law, vol. 2, pp. 72-73, states that under the Traditional Approach a state considering recognition will first seek to determine the following three criteria:

1. Whether the government is in de facto control of the territory and in possession of the machinery of the state;
2. Whether the government has the consent of the people, without substantial resistance to its administration, that is, whether there is public acquiescence in the authority of the government; and
3. Whether the new government has indicated its willingness to comply with its obligations under treaties and international law.

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For Slovenia, while it was unfortunate for the Serbs living there (3% of the population) and certainly not diplomatically correct, the premature recognition succeeded without much ethnic infighting.

For Croatia, events began to heat up. There occurred some resistance to the administration, and repression on the part of the Croatian republic towards Serbs living there. Ultimately, the UN was forced to send in Peace Keeping forces to protect Serb property and lives. This area is currently under a shaky cease-fire.

Concerning Bosnia-Herzegovina, if one considers the three points of the Traditional Approach, the following becomes apparent:

1. The Muslim controlled government of the republic clearly did not have de facto control over areas populated by Bosnian Serbs or Bosnian Croats, who combined make up 56 percent of the population.
2. The Muslim controlled government of the republic did not have the consent of the substantially rural Bosnian Serb population (33%). The Bosnian Serbs are willing (obviously) to present substantial resistance to the Muslim administration.
3. The willingness of the Muslim controlled government to comply with international obligations has not yet been proven. Evidence shows the Muslims have broken cease-fire agreements and planned deliberate provocations, such as the Bread Line Massacre, and the attack on UNPROFOR troops in Sarajevo, which resulted in the death of two French soldiers.

Under these circumstances, the premature recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the international community has resulted in tens of thousands dead or missing, and a situation no closer to a peaceful solution than at any point in the negotiations. The international community will not accept blame for their role in creating the crisis due to premature recognition. Rather, blame and punishment, in the form of UN Sanctions and expulsion, are all placed at the feet of the Serbs in the New Yugoslav state.

Moreover, isn't it ironic that Macedonia, a country that was peacefully established through normal and recommended diplomatic means, is the only former Yugoslav republic that is refused recognition by the international community?

THE DETERMINATION OF BORDERS

The external borders of a country are recognized and agreed upon by the international community. Internal units of demarcation fall under the domain of the sovereign nation and, therefore, are not subject to international consideration or recognition.

Within 'Tito's Yugoslavia', administrative units were set up, and altered several times, in order to consolidate Tito's power and achieve his goals. The units do not define areas of ethnic concentration or historic homelands. Large areas of Serb population were transferred to the jurisdiction of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in a deliberate effort by Tito (a Croat) to weaken the Serbs and thereby better ensure his rule over Yugoslavia. It is not just, nor is it within the power of the international community, to accept the internal administrative units that designated the six Yugoslav republics as the proper delineation for international borders.

THE IMPACT OF GENOCIDE

The impact of genocide upon an ethnic group cannot be ignored. Its effects will influence the actions and attitudes of those who have experienced the attack.

The last time an independent State of Croatia existed, during World War II, the Croatian Ustaša and their allies the Muslims targeted the Serbs for genocide. To quote Dr. Lazo M. Kostich, noted historian of this event:

The Slaughter, mainly of the Serbian people but also of other nationalities and religions, which took place in the satellite "independent State of Croatia" from its establishment in April of 1941 to its collapse in May of 1945, was the bloodiest and most tragic episode of its kind during World War II, fully ranking in horror with Hitler's extermination of the Jews. Throughout the existence of the wartime Croatian "state", the Serbian, Jewish and Gypsy minorities were outlawed as "inferior races" and were murdered by the hundreds of thousands in one of the most bestial death orgies that modern history has recorded. (The Holocaust in the Independent State of Croatia, Chicago, 1981, p. ix.)

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The impact of this genocide shapes the intellectual outlook of the Serbs. It also fuels their apprehensions concerning the activities and motives of the Croats and their ally the Bosnian Muslims. Understandably the Serbs are determined to prevent a catastrophe of this magnitude from occurring in the future. Therefore, the Serbs are exceedingly reluctant to live under Croat or Muslim administration.

THE PREVALENCE OF ANTI-SERB BIAS

The existence of overwhelming anti-Serb bias cannot be denied. The facts listed below reveal the extent to which the Serbs are unfairly held solely responsible for the current situation.

1. The citizens of Yugoslavia are punished with economic sanctions for the actions of Bosnian Serbs (who are fighting a civil war to protect their rights and property), yet Bosnian Muslims are assisted by Croatia and a variety of Muslim countries without being penalized or verbally assaulted.
2. The Army of Croatia is operating within Bosnia-Hercegovina, and Croatia has annexed a portion of that republic without repercussion.
3. There is an open military alliance between Croatia and the Muslim government of Bosnia-Hercegovina which is accepted. Yet Yugoslav's are condemned because their sympathies lie with the Bosnian Serbs, and are blamed for instigating all military action within that territory.
4. The slanderous term "ethnic cleansing" is slapped onto the activities of the Serbs by former U.S. State Department Acting Chief of Yugoslav Affairs, George Kenney, while Croat/Muslim atrocities and cleansing operations, which began in 1991 in Croatia, are virtually ignored or down played.
5. The United Nations has revealed evidence demonstrating the complicity of the Muslim and Croatian Governments in framing the Serbs for certain events. Yet, these groups are given the equivalent of a slap on the wrist as punishment. Atrocities committed by Croats and Muslims are rarely given the news coverage that is garnered by supposed Serb offenses.

F**THE MOTIVATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

A final, as well as key, factor that must be examined is the motivation or private agenda that is certainly a prime consideration of some foreign power's involvement in this crisis. It is not the purpose of this paper to speculate on the ideas that are directing the actions of various countries in this situation. It is, however, very important to point out that the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims have encountered many difficulties in attempting to create a peaceful solution on their own. The intervention of foreign powers, in order to manipulate the outcome and achieve their own goals, makes the task impossible. When peace ultimately arrives in the Balkans, it must not be dictated for the gain of foreign nations.



Obviously the facts presented in this paper have out of necessity been greatly simplified. Nevertheless, an understanding of the basic true and unbiased facts is necessary before all the complexities of the current situation are allowed to cloud the situation, and before blame is assigned in error.

I - BASIC FACTS

It is a fact that the formation of Yugoslavia in 1918 was the result of the struggle and sacrifice of Serbia during World War I. The Serbian army and government fought for the unification of the Yugoslavs. It was the Serbian army which determined the frontiers of the future Yugoslavia and prevented de facto the application of the 1915 London Pact. Serbian victories in WW I enabled Yugoslavs from the defeated Austria-Hungary to switch to the camp of the victors. It was because of the Croats and Slovenes that Serbia broke with her pre-war ally Italy.

It is a fact that Serbia missed the historical opportunity in 1918 to establish her national territory and integrity, which was made for the sake of Yugoslavism. The alleged "Serbian hegemony" in Yugoslavia basically expressed the sacrifice of her individuality, her historical tradition of independent statehood, and her national individuality. Instead of a dictate to the defeated, Serbia resorted to a compromise for the sake of unity.

It is a fact that Yugoslavia in 1918 was organized by the center (the Serbs making over 40% of its population) while Yugoslavia in 1945 was dictated by the anti-Serbian periphery, which resulted in a balkanized version of the defunct Habsburg Monarchy.

It is a fact that the subjugation of the Serbian people and the splitting of the Serbian nation in contemporary Yugoslavia is the result of a Serbophobia which originated, was developed and applied during the inter-war period, during World War II and the post-war period. Both the extreme right and the extreme left turned against the Serbs (the Nazis as well as the Comintern). The result

was an unprecedented genocide against the Serbs during the war and the division imposed to the Serbs in the post-war communist Yugoslavia.

It is a fact that the Serbs fought in two world wars on the side of the Western Allies. The putsch on March 27, 1941 in which according to Winston Churchill "Yugoslavia found her soul," was the Serbian resistance to Nazi Germany, which originated in Belgrade and was supported by the Serbs. (Hitler's orders to invade Yugoslavia refer only to Serbia, his main target.)

It is a fact that Serbian vitality and dynamism had to be broken either by the "Independent State of Croatia," a Hitlerian puppet state, or by the application of the policy of the Comintern.

It is a fact that the "second Yugoslavia" which emerged from the communist directed resistance during World War II expressed an anti-Serbian posture. It was caused by two-fold reasons. Until the end of the war Serbia resisted, under general Michailovich, both the Nazi and communist totalitarianism. The anti-Serbian coalition prevailed in the communist movement, inspired by the pre-war policy of the Comintern. The 1943 AVNOJ decisions to create new nations by parcelling the Serbian body were brought by an appointed revolutionary body, without democratic procedures, plebiscite or referendum, in absence of Serbian representatives. The Serbian Communist Party was formed only in 1945, after the war ended.

It is a fact that the post-war Yugoslav federation expressed the dismemberment of the Serbian nation, the subdivision of the Serbian Republic with two autonomous provinces and the separation

from the Serbs in Montenegro (which in history played the role of Serbian "Sparta"). The slogan of the new Yugoslav establishment was "Weak Serbia--Strong Yugoslavia" with all the tragic consequences for the Serbs and for Yugoslavia, in which the periphery destroyed the center.

The fact is that the Serbs, in spite of humiliation, genocide and parcelling are still the main supporters of Yugoslavism and Yugoslavia.

II. Proposed arguments in support of the Serbian case.

After carefully examining sources and historiography concerning the post World War I European settlements it is not possible to find any legal obligation of the United States, United Nations or the Court in Hague to endorse the rejection of the contemporary situation in Yugoslavia (obligation based on the approval of one state versus mini-states).

1. Wilson's 14 points. Wilson's policy toward the formation of the new Yugoslav State in 1918 underwent substantial changes during the last years of WW I.

When defining the war aims of the allies on January 5, 1918 Lloyd George denied that the break-up of the Habsburg empire was the goal of the Allies. Instead he proposed the application of "genuine self-government on true democratic principles" to be granted to nationalities in Austria-Hungary. In other words he had in mind the federalization and survival of the Habsburg empire, motivated by the fear from a vacuum created in Central Europe, exposed to the influence of the bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917.

President Wilson espoused the idea in his 14 points. The Article 10 reads: "The freest opportunity of autonomous development to the peoples of Austria-Hungary, which is not intended to destroy."

From the very beginning of the war all allied powers (including Lloyd George and Wilson) pledged restoration of Serbia (and Montenegro). President Wilson added "the access to the sea to be given to Serbia." In 1915 the Allies offered to Serbia Bosnia and Hercegovina for her concessions to Bulgaria in Macedonia.

In the speech delivered 11 February 1918 President Wilson stressed Four Principles guiding the Allies in the war: 1. Essential justice; 2. National self-determination; 3. Territorial settlements for the benefit of the population concerned; and 4. "Well defined national elements to be accorded the utmost satisfaction."

Wilson revised his attitude toward the Habsburg Monarchy after the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Rome in April 1918. Along with the general sympathy for Serbia and her suffering, which dominated in the Western World, Wilson declared at the beginning of June that the "national aspirations of Czecho-Slovaks and Yugoslavs for liberty have the lively sympathy of the US government."

On June 28, 1918 Wilson clarified the position of the United States: "All branches of the Slav race should be completely freed from German and Austrian rule." It meant the approval of the break-up of the Habsburg empire. This policy guided the US during the armistice negotiations in October, during the Versailles peace treaty negotiations and in the Italo-Yugoslav conflict over the application of the London Pact.

2. Versailles and the St. German Peace Treaty.

a. Paris Peace Conference. During the first phase of peace negotiations in Paris a legally awkward situation appeared. The de facto participation of the new Yugoslav State at the conference was based on Serbia's war allegiance with the powers of the Entente. The official protocols listed the "Delegation of Serbia" while the delegation itself labeled itself the "Delegation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes." While the Conference addressed itself to the Delegation of Serbia, it received answers from the "Delegation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" (At one occasion Clemanceau said to a Croatian representative: "Who are you--You were on the other side of the baricade.") The memorandum presented to the conference by the SHS Delegation stated that "Serbs, Croats and Slovenes constitute one nation, with their own civilization and spiritual unity" and called upon the "principle of nationality and the right of people for self-determination."

On January 18, 1919 the Great Powers refused to admit the Serb-Croat-Slovene plenipotentiaries to the Paris Conference recognizing only the representatives of Serbia. The United States was the first ready to recognize the new State at the beginning of February 1919. It was on May 1, 1919 that the Conference recognized the Delegation of SHS. On June 2 and 6, England and France respectively recognized the new State which signed the Peace Treaty with Germany on June 28, 1919. Italy still refused to recognize it.

In Paris the Yugoslavs had pending disputes with six neighboring states (Greece was the only exception). The territorial requests were based on nationality (Serbs, Croats and Slovenes--

conscious of their nationality), ethnicity (Ruthenians and Slovaks), as well as strategic, historical and economic factors. All demands were based on "justice and morale" resulting from Serbia's sacrifice and contribution to the victory in the war. The main conflict emerged from the Italian territorial requests based on the London Pact (1915). President Wilson strongly supported the Yugoslav cause in the conflict.

b. Peace Treaties. The Balkan settlement resulted from the Peace Treaties concluded during 1919-1920 between the Principal Powers (United States, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan), the Allied and Associated Powers (Belgium, China, Cuba, Greece, Nicaragua, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, The Serbo-Croat-Slovene State, Siam and Czechoslovakia) on one side, and Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey on the other side. Treaties were signed in Saint Germain-en-Laye with Austria, Trianon with Hungary, Neuilly-sur-Seine with Bulgaria, Sevres with Turkey--the latter was changed in Lausanne in 1923). Peace treaties were accompanied with provisions for the protection of minorities. These provisions were regarded by the Yugoslav government as a limitation of State sovereignty which deferred for four months the Yugoslav signature of the St. Germain Treaty with Austria.

The Preamble of the St. Germain Treaty (concluded with Austria on September 10, 1919 and with some modifications at Trianon with Hungary on June 4, 1920) recognized the partition of Austria-Hungary. Besides Czechoslovakia, "the union of certain portions of the said Monarchy with the territory of the Kingdom of Serbia as a free, independent and allied State under the name of the

Serb-Croat-Slovene State" was recognized. Austria and Hungary respectively recognized the "complete independence of the Serb-Croat-Slovene State" (Article 46 in St. Germain, Article 41 in Trianon).

c. Conclusion. Treaties made in 1919-1920 resulted from a specific situation created at the end of WW I and legalized the formation of the successor states in Eastern Europe, among them Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the enlarged Romania and the reduced parts of the Habsburg Monarchy Austria and Hungary. During the following seventy years the post WW I European establishment went through dramatic and fundamental changes. The issues involved in World War II and the results of the war reshuffled the previous political and social order in Eastern Europe and willy-nilly were recognized in the contemporary world. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed in 1929 Yugoslavia, and after WW II changed three times its name (DFJ, FNRJ, SFRJ).

I do not see any legal ground or obligation of the United States to reopen the question of one-state versus mini-states through the United Nations or the International Court in Hague, which are based on the 1919 Peace Treaties. They belong to history and to the epoch in which they were made. The old Latin principle in law says: Lex posterior derogat priori: international treaties concluded later annulled the previous ones. Among the signatories of the St. Germain treaty are the representatives of the former British empire: of the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Union of South Africa, the Dominion of New Zealand and of India. Not to mention Cuba, Nicaragua, Siam etc. To call

upon the St. Germain Treaty would equal the request to restore the British empire, recognized in 1919 as a whole. The tragic consequences for the Serbian people in transforming Yugoslavia into mini-states are not relevant for the international law. Formally, Yugoslavia, recognized as an independent state, and appearing as an independent subject in international relations is beyond foreign intervention in domestic affairs. The struggle for Serbian human, political and national rights has to be based on another ground.

The eventually valid argument in questioning the post WW II splitting of the Serbs could be the conditional approval of the United States of the general settlement in Eastern Europe, reached at the Yalta Conference in February 1945. On that occasion the United States approved the Tito-Šubašić agreement (concerning domestic Yugoslav affairs). However, the approval was made under the condition, valid for the entire Eastern Europe, that "broadly representative governments of all democratic elements of the population" based on "free elections of governments responsible to the will of the people" be established. The Yugoslav elections in 1945 were carried out by a Stalinist regime and the Constitution was modeled after the 1936 Stalin Constitution. This did not comply with the Declaration of Liberated Europe which proclaimed the "sovereign right of self-determination."

3. The Comintern. The orchestration of anti-Serbian politics was initiated and carried out by the Comintern. It directed the national policy of the CPY before and during World War II and was projected in the post-war organization of the Yugoslav federation.

a. The anti-Slav and anti-Serbian attitude was already present in Karl Marx' writing. He called the South Slavs "petty bull-headed nations" and labeled Serbs as "a set of robbers."

b. Inaugurated in March 1919 the Third International (Comintern) expressed three goals: I--To organize and direct the world communist movement; II--To subordinate it to the USSR as a branch of the Soviet State; III--To destroy and revise the European settlement resulting from Versailles.

c. After the formative period (the 21 Conditions approved in 1920), at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in Moscow in 1924 foreign communist parties came under unconditional subordination to Moscow and Stalin's rising star. In 1924 the Executive Committee of the Comintern was empowered to annul all decisions taken by Central Committees of the subordinated parties, to expel their members and to appoint their leadership. The "bolshevization" of Communist parties produced an obedient "centralized, quasi-religious, quasi-military movement devoted to the revolution and service to the Soviet State" (Adam Ulam).

d. The Yugoslav State, recognized at Versailles, was a part of the post-war European settlement. It followed the traditional Serbian policy oriented towards France and England (the Little Entente and later the Balkan Pact). As such it became the target of the Comintern and had to be destroyed. The Serbs who were the backbone of the country had to share its destiny.

A Special Resolution on Yugoslavia, brought at the 5th Congress of the Comintern in 1924 accused the "Serbian bourgeoisie" for hegemonism and instructed the CPY to fight for the establishment

of separate independent republics in Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia. Soon after an independent Montenegro was added as a republic.

The Resolution coincided with the sojourn in Moscow of the Croatian leader Stjepan Radić who at the time flirted with the Comintern. The Comintern instructed the CPY to find allies among all anti-Yugoslav elements, right or left: the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), the Croatian fascists USTAŠA and the Montenegrin separatists. The Comintern constantly supervised the activity of the CPY, intervened in its internal fractions and directed its policy until WW II and 1943 when it was dissolved. During Stalin's purges in the late 1930s some 800 Yugoslav communists were executed.

e. The Socialist Worker's Party of Yugoslavia (Communist) split in 1919 with the Social Democratic Party of Yugoslavia and joined the Comintern. The CPY was organized at the Constituent Assembly in Vukovar in June 1920, and denounced parliamentarism, espoused the revolution and the terrorist activity (the "Red Justice"). This activity caused the suppression of the CPY by Yugoslav authorities in 1921.

f. As a disciplinary section of the Comintern, the CPY declared "Yugoslavia to be the product of the imperialistic world war in which the Serbs are the ruling nation." The solution of the national question was to break Yugoslavia into separate national states (CPY resolutions 1924-1928) and to join them in a Communist Balkan Federation. The policy against "Serbian hegemonism" resulted in a search for allies among the fascist Ustaša, IMRO and Montenegrin separatists. The CPY journal "Proleter" (n^o 28,

Dec. 1932) stated: "The Communist Party greets the Ustaša movement . . . and is taking completely its side."

g. When Hitler came to power in Germany the Comintern changed its tactic and supported Popular Fronts opposed to fascism. The CPY obediently followed the switch and was entangled in the zig-zagging policy of the USSR on the eve of World War II. During the 1938 Munich crisis and the 1939 invasion of Czechoslovakia the CPY preached the "defence of the country." When Stalin reached in 1939 the agreement with Hitler the slogan was reversed: "We oppose the imperialistic war which is fought for the benefit of western capitalists." A similar attitude prevailed during the invasion of Yugoslavia until Hitler attacked Soviet Russia on June 22, 1941. The communist resistance in Yugoslavia started in July of the same year, with the main slogan "to support the heroic struggle of the USSR."

1. It was during World War II that the first misunderstanding between Stalin and the Yugoslav communist leadership appeared. It was due to the cautious Soviet policy towards the Western Allies and the radical communist resistance in Yugoslavia which openly aimed at a communist revolution in the country. The pre-war policy of the CPY was modified during the resistance in WW II, by joining together the national to the social revolution. The geographical distance and the incapacity of Soviet Russia to offer a more substantial support to the partisans, as well as the support obtained from England loosened the ties between CPY and Moscow. Instead of breaking Yugoslavia a red colored Yugoslavia was promoted and a federation of Yugoslav nationalities was accepted.

However, the slogan of "unity and fraternity of Yugoslav peoples" was applied along the ideas inherited from the past. It manifested the principle of "weak Serbia--strong Yugoslavia" and resulted in the formation of new nations: the Montenegrin, the Macedonian and (in 1970) the Muslim. The Serbian Republic was divided into three parts, including two autonomous Provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina) which obtained sovereign rights to veto the legislation of their Republic (Constitution in 1974). Serbs in Croatia (15% of the population) were refused the autonomy accorded to Albanians in Serbia. The result is the tragic exodus of Serbs from Kosovo and the limitations imposed to their national rights in other Yugoslav republics.

CONCLUSION

1. The structure of the post-war Yugoslav federation is detrimental to the Serbs. The 1974 Constitution which deprived the Serbian Republic from the jurisdiction over its territory has to be revised in order to place Serbia on equal footing with other Yugoslav republics.

2. The recent national uproar in Serbia and Montenegro is the reaction to national injustices inflicted on the Serbs. It expresses the popular movement for national survival according to democratic traditions. It opposes a petrified, obsolete and oppressive regime. As such it is not directed against Yugoslavia but, to the contrary, wants a strong Serbia for the sake of a strong Yugoslavia.

3. The Serbs belong to the Western World to which their culture, tradition and history are closely connected. The myth of Serbian

neo-Stalinism are part of the anti-Serbian campaign instigated in Yugoslavia and the Western World by former Nazi Ustaša, Albanian irredentists, Slovenian and Croatian separatists and extremists as well as other centrifugal Yugoslav elements. Anti-Serbianism is rooted in the heritage from the defunct Habsburg Monarchy, the inter-war policy of the Comintern, including defeated Germany.

4. The Serbian movement conforms to the traditional US policy of integrity and independence of Yugoslavia as well as to the balance of powers in South-Eastern Europe. A hostile or indifferent policy toward the tragic Serbian exodus from Kosovo as well as from other parts of Yugoslavia is detrimental to the interests of the United States. The historic dynamism of the Serbian nation is crucial for the existence of Yugoslavia. To alienate Serbs means to jeopardize Yugoslavia and to push them, in desperation, toward the other side of the divided world. A strong Serbia means the victory of democracy and human rights.

Dear Mr Bentley

Enclosed are two writings published in
Chronicles. I believe "Letter from Serbia" is
one of the best writings on the present crisis
in Yugoslavia.

All my best wishes,

Dimitri Cyril Ramesses

July 12/93

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Letter From Serbia

by Momcilo Selic

Notes From the Front, Part I



In the twilight, the machine gunner holds aloft the dissembled barrel of his weapon, his hands oily and stained, and grins at me. White-toothed, red-haired, he wears his beret like a bonnet. Cocky, not too large, he laughs, then swears a heavy, loaded Serbian curse, unsparing of the Croats.

The machine gunner is a Kraina Serb: he and I are both part of a military company whose task is to defend the Serbs, and, if need be, to hurt the Croats. Both of us are preparing for a night assault on a Croat-occupied Serb village, cleaning our weapons and listening to the sergeant. The sergeant is a six-footer, dark and lanky, with the high cheekbones of an ancient Avar. He also is a Kraina native, a volunteer who has come from Serbia to defend his father's hamlet.

In a raspy voice, the sergeant tells us of the Croat deserters he has seen sunk in concrete up to their thighs, during the 1991 war, above Dubrovnik. "They left the poor bastards," the sergeant says, "so they could perform their bodily functions, and they fed them, until we started shelling their positions. The first to die were the built-in men, screaming for the rest of them to think about God." "The hill," says the sergeant, "is mined, by them as well as us. Remember: short bursts, grenades, watch out for the trip-wires!"

The machine gunner—a living, breathing Rob Roy, of these mellower Highlands—does not hate the Croats. His family has not been touched by the two-year-old Serbo-Croat war, and all his relatives are present and accounted for. But he has lost friends to the Croats: some to bullets, and some to the knife, fire, and the club. The 20-odd Serb victims of the Mali Alan ambush of January this year, for instance, were all dismembered by the Croat soldiers, some

while they were still alive.

The cockade the machine gunner wears on his camouflage beret is the silver, double-headed Serbian eagle, a legacy of Byzantine times. The Croats' memories are as long as the Serbs'—to them, the Latin pillage of Constantinople was not so great an evil as the persistence of Byzantines and Serbs who remained orthodox. Though originally welcomed to Jesus by Greek emissaries, Croats have become Roman Catholics, while the machine gunner, the sergeant, and I still cling to the religion of our ancestors.

In Kraina, the conflict between the two Slavic peoples has entered a new stage: in Serbian, "Kraina" means "frontier," much like the American frontier of the West, or the "Ukraine" of the Rus—a region of border wars, skirmishes, over-the-line feuds and grudges, bloody all. The Croats, despite a United Nations ban on the importation of arms, have acquired German Leopard tanks and some former East German heavy weaponry; they wear American, NATO, or German uniforms and equipment, eat NATO rations, and use Western standard military small arms. Gone are the days of the Croat armed rebellion against the respected Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: today, it is Croatia that is a recognized state, a member of the U.N., while what is left of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Serb Kraina, and the Serb Republic of Bosnia are international pariahs, shunned by the "international community." How has all this come about?

To my red-haired, red-bearded, blue-eyed companion with his brand new Yugoslav Army PKT machine gun, it makes no difference whether foreigners recognize Serbia, the Kraina, or Serb Bosnia. He is a simple peasant soldier, like his forefathers. Holding his weapon, in the dusk before a battle, he feels himself fulfilled. Once the military frontier of Venice against the Ottoman Turks, Kraina has for centuries been the home of a Serb yeomanry whose status is not unlike that of the Russian Cossacks. Farmer-soldiers, the machine gunner's ancestors defended the West, Christendom, and the Serbs—in their mind, always inseparable—from the East, Islam, Asia, and the myriad of evils and ills as

old as the first wars between the Europeans and the Turkic steppe-raiders or the desert marauders of the Near and Middle East. Kraina Serbs—a mixture of Slavs and the native Balkan Celts and Illyrians—lived in a changeless and satisfying land, tending to tasks as immutable as their vine-covered landscape. Along crystal-clear but turbulent rivers, all emptying into the Adriatic Sea, they—Serbian Orthodox in religion—rejoiced in being what God created them: a free people on free territory, recognized as such first by Venice, then by the Kingdom of Hungary and the Empire of Austria.

That night, we did not attack our objective. Someone—a politician, or a military bigshot thinking like a politician—had decided that it was prudent not to provoke an additional outcry against Serb "aggression." The Croats, in our village, could spend that night in peace—thanks to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and the Communist Republic of Yugoslavia.

In 1918, the victorious Serbian Army, on the winning side of World War I, entered the Austro-Hungarian province of Croatia to preserve civil peace. Western allies and the spearhead that had broken through the Salonika front defeated the Bulgarians, bringing about the capitulation of Austria-Hungary and ultimately the fall of Germany. The Serbs of Serbia were called in by the desperate Croatian Parliament to prevent a communist revolution-in-progress. The Croatian invitation was somewhat reluctant: last among all the Austrian Slavic subjects to declare independence (following the Austrian military debacle), the Croats were faced by an angry Entente, determined to treat them as a defeated nation.

Formed ad hoc on October 29, 1918, the Kingdom of Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes had to ward off Italian claims to the whole of the Dalmatian coast, as agreed on in the Treaty of London of 1915, by which Italy had been brought into the fighting on the Entente side. Furthermore, Croatia, like all the defeated Central Powers, had dissolved into a chaos of rioting deserters, warring nationalities, and mutinous regiments returning from Serbia and the Italian Front. The new "state" tried frantically

to drum up international support for its vision of a South Slav, rump Austria-Hungary, but Western victors would not hear of it—until two years ago, when Germany set out, once again, on the road to a world war.

In 1918, however, Croatia was ordered by the “international community” of the day to join up with Serbia as well as with Slovenia (another former Austro-Hungarian province) to form a “Yugoslavia.” What the machine gunner’s, or the sergeant’s, great-grandfather thought of this, I do not know. My own grandfather voted for a union of the Kingdom of Montenegro and the Kingdom of Serbia into a single Serb state. As a deputy to the Great Montenegrin National Assembly of November 1918, my grandfather, Blagota Selic, had little use for a “Yugoslavia.” Instead, he worked toward a more viable and historic “Greater” Serbia, made up of all the disparate Serb lands in the Balkans, liberated—after hundreds of years of bitter fighting—by the Serbian Army. Moreover, the 1915 Treaty of London had promised the Serbs as much as it had promised the Italians: a line was drawn from the Hungarian border downward to the Adriatic Sea and all the lands south of it given to the Serbs as their ethnic heritage. This projected “Greater” Serbia included the whole of Bosnia, which according to the official Austro-Hungarian statistics had a 44 percent Serb majority, as opposed to some 32 percent Moslems and about 24 percent Bosnian Roman Catholics (called “Croats” by the nationalists in Zagreb). For the medieval Kingdom of Bosnia had been a Serb kingdom, and most of its Muslims’ ancestors had been Orthodox Serbs before being—often forcibly—converted to Islam by the conquering Ottomans.

As my Montenegrin Serb grandfather saw it (in agreement with my Serbian maternal grandfather, who had fought as a guerrilla against both the Bulgarians and the Austro-Hungarians) Serbs had been, by international trickery—through the wiles of diplomacy, finance, and unholy influence-peddling—deprived of their hard-won patrimony. Every second Serbian adult male had died in the Great War for the Serbs to end up as parts of a state that, among its first measures, reinstated former Austro-Hungarian officers into the Yugoslav Army, with an automatic advancement in rank!

That night, of our aborted assault upon the village of Dragisic (the village was later taken by another Serb attack), we thought different things, but I’ve yet to find a Kraina Serb, or a Bosnian Serb, or a Herzegovinian Serb, willing to repeat this experience with the “German” or “Turkish” Slavs. The sergeant himself had barely survived the 1991 war, when his unit was deserted by its commanding officer, a “Yugoslav” who turned out to be wholly Croat, whereas my own father had seen *his* army units, in 1941, turned over to the Nazis by the Croat and Muslim officers of his day.

Through the creation of Yugoslavia, Kraina—ethnically Croatian from the 7th to the 16th century, but entirely Serb after the 16th-century Croat exodus under the Turkish onslaught—was given to Croatia, despite the record of the past four centuries and the fact that it was the *invited* Serbs who had defended it. In 1939, under Croat pressure, the government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia incorporated Kraina into the Province of Croatia, which was given the borders of an imaginary Croatia that had never existed, in an effort to thwart exactly what came about two years later, in World War II. (It must be remembered that Croatia lost its independence in the 12th century, to the Hungarians, and never regained it, until today.) In 1941 the whole Croat nation, led by all its political factions except the communists, lined itself solidly with the Axis and fought, with commendable tenacity, together with Mussolini and Hitler against the Free World.

This may help to explain the present German, Austrian, and Italian support for Croatia, so mistakenly glorified by the Western media as a bastion of democracy and liberty in the Balkans. As in 1941-1945, today over 300,000 Croatian Serbs are refugees in Serbia, after being declared a non-nation by the 1991 Croatian constitution and after seeing hundreds of their fellow Serbs slaughtered by the sons and the grandsons of the fascist Croatian Ustashi in the first ethnic cleansing of the last 50 years, a fact rarely noticed by the Western press.

It was the Croat police’s military attack upon the Serb village of Borovo Selo, near Vukovar, that in May 1991 started the Serbo-Croatian War. What the Serbs had declined to do, in the case of the 1991 Slovene armed uprising against the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Croats did without com-

punction, shooting at their former friends and neighbors.

In 1941, Croats and Bosnian Muslims, together with Kosovo Albanians, gave the Nazis more volunteer troops than the whole of the Soviet Union, and more than any other region on earth. The Croat Army Legion (*Verstaerken Kroatische Infanterie Regiment 369*), the Croat Air Force Legion, the Croat Naval Legion, the 13th *Maffen-Gabirgs-Division der SS Handschar* (*kroatische Nr. 1*), the 33rd *Maffen-Gabirgs-Division der SS Kama* (*kroatische Nr. 2*), the 368th German-Croatian Volunteer Division, the 373rd German-Croatian Volunteer Division, the 392nd German-Croatian Volunteer Division, the German-Croatian Gendarmerie (SS), the Italian-Croat Legion, the Italian-Croat Voluntary Anti-Communist Militia, the 21st *Maffen-Gabirgs-Division der SS Skanderbeg* (*albanische Nr. 1*), the 1st and 3rd Italian-Albanian Rifle Regiments (*Cacciatori di Albania*), and many other, lesser units, all fought against the Allies, in the Soviet Union, France, and Yugoslavia. All of these troops also fought against the Serbs—Royalist Chetniks, Tito’s Partisans, and, especially, the civilian population—as their primary target.

During the 1941-1945 war in Yugoslavia, the Serbs lost a million people—mostly noncombatants—to the combined actions of their enemies, who are today recognized as democratic, pro-Western states by the “international community.” The ethnic cleansing of Serbs in World War II *has never been recognized* by the U.N., whose files are clear of the Jasenovac death camp, near Zagreb, where some 30,000 Jews, 50,000 Gypsies, and over 600,000 Serbs were murdered. For this, we can thank the former Yugoslav communist government and its wish to promote “Brotherhood and Unity” within Yugoslavia, as well as the stalwart efforts of those same forces within the U.N. organization that elected the former Nazi Kurt Waldheim as secretary-general. Nor should one discount the effects of decades of Croat émigré propaganda. Even a cursory glance at any Croat émigré newspaper of, say, 20 years ago will show a collective Serb portrait that coincides with what passes for truth today, *after* all the alleged Serb misdeeds in the current war. What is strangely puzzling is that *all* the imputed Serb atrocities of the present—and much

more—were committed by the Croats, the Muslims, and the Albanians 50 and 80 years ago, in World Wars I and II. The 1914 mass hangings of Serb women in Austro-Hungarian-occupied Serb Macva can hardly be explained away as a Serb invention, since photographs, taken by the Croat, German, and Magyar executioners themselves, still exist, and a War Crimes tribunal that wants to set the record straight can examine this evidence before proceeding to the next set of anti-Serb massacres, those occurring in World War II.

"On the night of September 3/4, 1942, 700 arrested hostages were shot in Hrvatska Mitrovica. It was noted that, after exiting them from the jailhouse, the Serb hostages were made to pass through an Ustashi gauntlet in order to reach a waiting bus. As they were passing, the Ustashi administered blows to them with wooden clubs. At the site of the execution, besides shooting, there also occurred throat-slitting and other sadistic excesses. Among those was the cutting off of female breasts . . ." This is from the official report of the German Legation at Zagreb to the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Reich, on September 11, 1942.

"On the occasion of his promotion to the rank of an Ustasha captain," goes another such report of November 21, 1942, "the senior police commissioner, Tomic, arranged a dissolute party. After dinner, heavy drinking ensued. When all present were totally intoxicated, Tomic commenced to shoot with his pistol. The valuable oil paintings and crystal served him as targets. Around midnight, several Ustashe were ordered to bring in a few Serbs who had been kept in jail. These Serbs were knifed to death, and the Ustashe sucked blood from their wounds."

A memorandum by a German officer who was sent to prevent Croat massacres of the Serb population of Eastern Bosnia (the site of present day "humanitarian aid" to the Muslims) during August 1941 states: "While we were traveling in the direction of the Javer Mill, near Srebrenica and Ozren, we found all Serb villages along the way completely abandoned. However, in the houses we often discovered entire families butchered. We even found barrels full of blood. In villages between Vlasenica and Kladanj, we found impaled children, their tiny members contorted in pain, as if they were insects,

pinned down with needles." Perhaps such German reports of their Croat allies' behavior explain why today's Bosnia has an inverted proportion of Serbs to Muslims, when compared to Austro-Hungarian, and even Ottoman, times.

During my 1993 stay in Kraina—as a volunteer—and in 1992 in Bosnia, as a war reporter, I have heard of Serbs killing Moslems, but not Croats. It should be remembered, however, that even in this war, it was the Muslims who first shot at a Serb wedding party in Sarajevo, in the summer of 1992, murdering the father of the groom. This triggered the Bosnian carnage. It was Saban Muratovic, at Visegrad in Bosnia, who over the Yugoslav airwaves threatened to blow up the Visegrad dam and obliterate everything and everybody down the Drina and the Sava river valleys. It was Alija Izetbegovic, the Muslim President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who over those same airwaves publicly admonished the frantic Muratovic not to proceed with his plan. This was all before any Serb retaliatory actions, at the very outset of the 1992 Bosnian explosion. Personally, in Belgrade, I have talked to a father whose son—a Serb volunteer on the Croatian front—was butchered like a hog at the beginning of the Serbo-Croatian war, in 1991, and then portrayed first on Croatian TV and later on German TV as a *Croat* victim of the satanic Serbs!

It was Alija Izetbegovic who in the 1970's, in his *Islamic Declaration*, called on Muslims to take over power in Bosnia once their number surpassed 51 percent of the population. According to Izetbegovic's book, it is also the Bosnian Muslims' obligation to institute the rule of Shari'ah, or Islamic Law, in Bosnia and to turn it, perhaps, into something like the United Arab Emirates, where it is a capital crime to convert a Muslim. Nobody in the West paid any attention to Izetbegovic then, except for Amnesty International, which defended him as a prisoner of conscience.

Croatia, on the other hand, is governed by one of Tito's communist generals, Franjo Tudjman, who publicly said in 1991 that he was glad he was "neither Serb, nor Jewish." In his book *Historic Dead Ends*, published much after Izetbegovic's, Tudjman belittled the number of Serbs killed in World War II, claiming only 30,000 Serbs died in the Jasenovac camp, "mostly anti-fascist Croats" at that. To the chagrin of many

Jewish groups and lobbies, Tudjman also denies the existence of Nazi extermination camps and has allowed World War II war criminals to return to Croatia, where many of them have been publicly honored for their "contributions to the Motherland."

War in former Yugoslavia cannot be regarded piecemeal: what happens in Kraina is an outcome of what goes on in Bosnia, and both depend on what has happened, and is still happening, in Croatia. Nothing in former Yugoslavia can be understood without a knowledge of the past, which for most former Yugoslavs is still the living present.

Had there been no Ottoman invasion of the Balkans, in all probability Balkan history would have been as uneventful as Dutch or Danish history. But the 1389 Kosovo defeat pushed the Serbs northward into what was Hungary and Croatia, while the 1526 Hungarian defeat at Mohács emptied Croatia of most of its Croat population, which escaped (sometimes) as far north as Austria. In the 17th century, the Albanians came, as Turkish troops, into the Serbian heartland of Kosovo. A parallel is often drawn between the Kosovo and Kraina cases, but there is a crucial difference: Serbs came into a largely vacated Kraina, invited there by its Hungarian, then Venetian, masters, to defend the region from the conquering Ottomans, while the Albanians descended upon Kosovo as part of an Asiatic occupying force and displaced—often brutally—a numerous and established Serbian population.

But history happened, and Serbs, Croats, and Albanians became inextricably mixed. The best solution would have been a Yugoslavia, provided there was a consensus on its institution among the constituent nations. Unfortunately, there never was a consensus: Serbs wanted a Yugoslavia, as did the Slovenes and the Croats initially (so long as they could dominate it), whereas the Muslims and the Albanians had no use for a plan that abrogated their overlord status, derived from their privileged position as Muslims within the Turkish Empire.

During the course of a February 1993 night, as I stood watch over our position above the Croatian coastal town of Skradin (a town with many Serb monuments as well, including a 14th-century church) and wondered when the real shooting would start, history, ignored by the former meddlers in the Yugoslav

mess, marked the sky: red tracers from 20-m.m. guns streaked between our position and the Croats', sometimes criss-crossing each other like a giant game of tic-tac-toe.

In 1992, in Serb Cajnice, close to the besieged Muslim town of Gorazde, I lived on military Spam and rationed bread; that was the time when all the world was talking of Serb "concentration camps" where Muslims, as the claim went, were "intentionally starved." On the Bosnian-Serb-Romanian Mountain, that same summer, food was even scarcer than in Cajnice: homemade cheese and army bread were all we ate there (not bad fare, but monotonous); there was no U.N. "humanitarian aid" for the women and children of the high plateau above the Zepa region, where convoy after convoy of white U.N. trucks traveled. After the trucks, the Muslims of Zepa usually attacked our positions, sneaking by our patrols and guards at night and murdering the very same young and old Serbs, too weak for the rifle, who had smiled at us, confident that we would defend them.

Still, Muslim prisoners of war in the Serb camps were fed the same rations as our troops—Spam they often would not eat, nor anything derived of pork, but we had nothing else to offer them, or ourselves. Not far from us, in Sarajevo, in over a dozen unregistered camps, our imprisoned noncombatants went hungry, week after week, month after month; in the Muslim Croat Bradina camp, near Konjic in Herzegovina, Serb women and children were kept in a railway tunnel and, from time to time, either tortured, raped, or murdered, according to their captors' whim. Mostar, the capital of Herzegovina, which had a prewar population of over 30,000 Serbs, today has only 400 left: taken out night after night, one by one, they disappeared, into that same, Croat darkness.

At Elie Wiesel's insistence, the Serb camp at Manjaca was emptied at the end of 1992, but many of its Muslims came back to Bosnia several weeks later as armed soldiers of Islam, while the Croats and the Muslims still maintain their clandestine camps, where Elie Wiesel's envoy, journalist Daniel Schieffer, was never allowed to visit. A year before the hysteria about "raped Muslim women" hit the Western media, reports of hundreds of genuine, documented cases of punitive, cold-blooded

rapes of Serb women and girls in Croatia were presented to the Yugoslav public, but none of the Serbian-speaking foreign journalists in Belgrade considered them worthy of mention. As for the Serbs' own propaganda effort, their attitude may best be summed up by the recent reluctance of Herzegovinian Serb peasants to have the media present at the exhumation of the thousands of Serb noncombatants murdered by the Croat Ustashi in World War II. Asked what they had against the airing of these events (the communist government had previously filled in many of the execution pits with concrete, to cement its concept of "Brotherhood and Unity"), the peasants replied that "Serbs do not exploit their dead."

Momcilo Selic is a writer and journalist living in Belgrade. He was imprisoned by the communist government in Yugoslavia for satirizing the cult of the leader. He was managing editor of Chronicles from 1987 to 1989.

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Passing the Bottle



In the aftermath of a conference not long ago, a dozen of us spent a night in downtown Little Rock. (No, this wasn't the Economic Summit. It was a gathering of poets, novelists, and essayists to discuss Southern autobiography, and the talk was a *whole* lot better.) All in all, I'm a little more cheerful now about having an Arkansas politician running the Big Show. Despite some accretions of yuppiedom (too many brasseries and bistros to suit me) Little Rock is still a pleasantly funky Southern state capital.

We stayed at a hotel next door to the Old State House, familiar to television viewers as the scene of Clinton's victory celebration, and I dropped in to browse in the museum it now houses. In the museum's newsletter officials were busily pooh-poohing reports in the national press that the building is haunted by the ghost of a representative killed in an 1837 knife-fight. The knifing death is a

matter of record, but a spokesman protested that "there is no evidence that we are any more prone to soulless, lifeless zombies than any other state agency." The alleged sighting of the back of a man dressed in a frock coat, he said, was probably just "a very homely woman in a pantsuit."

That evening we went for supper to Bill Clinton's favorite restaurant, Doc's Eat Place, and pigged out on steak, tamales, and fried shrimp, served family-style at long tables. The beer and wine flowed freely (reminding me of the etymology of the word "symposium") and the conversation flowed freely, too. When it was my turn, I told one of my favorite stories, told to me by a Southern historian at a gathering very much like this one.

It seems there were these two Southern historians who had been to a convention, and after an evening of well-lubricated conversation they dropped into a truckstop for some coffee before retiring. One of them, a little guy who spoke with a lisp (that I undertook to imitate), was talking rather loudly, and after a while his friend noticed that the place had fallen silent. Several large, unkempt loungers were listening to him and snickering to each other. They started to make rude remarks, less and less *sotto voce*, which the speaker didn't seem to notice, but his friend certainly did. "Let's pay up and get out of here before there's trouble," he muttered.

The little guy finally seemed to notice what was going on. To his friend's dismay, he pushed back his chair, stood up, and glared at the locals. "I know what you're thinking," he told them. ("Oh, Lord," his friend thought. "Here we go.")

"You think we're pretty sissified," he lisped. "Well. If you're so smart: When did Hank Williams die?" The silence was intense. "January first, nineteen fifty-three. Now shut your go--amn mouths." They did.

That story always goes down well with an academic crowd—it shows what a knowledge of history can do for you—and the Little Rock group was no exception. As the laughter died down, however, Our Host—a historian lately diverted into administration—said quietly: "Cityfied."

Say what?

"Cityfied." He said, "You think we're pretty *cityfied*, not *sissyfied*. I was there. That was me—the friend. The other

Letter From Serbia

by Momcilo Selic

Notes From the Front, Part II



Basically, the Yugoslav problem is simple: it is a war of vanities, of various ethnic and religious groups vying for supremacy. If this sounds familiar to American and other Western readers, the parallel is intentional: after all, it was Tito, the archcommunist, who first implemented the New World Order of former President George Bush, of Henry Kissinger and the Trilateral Commission, and of the vintage Council on Foreign Relations. All the necessary components were there, in the Yugoslavia of 1945 to 1991: socialism (communism), obligatory internationalism (the "Salad Bowl" concept), a bureaucratic structure to keep the balance between the warring factions (a huge federal, state, and municipal administration), phony humanism and fake "democracy" (lip service to the various liberal holy causes, such as "sharing and caring," "compassion," "ecumenism," etc.), with—to top it all off—an actual if informal aristocracy to oversee the whole works.

Serbs are being crucified today because they will not submit themselves to the New World Order, which they barely survived the first time around. In 1914, there were over eight million Serbs in the Balkans—they were, by far, the largest and the most important nation in the region. Today, after two successful genocides—the Austro-Hungarian in World War I and the Croat and Muslim in World War II—the current one is proving too much for the remaining ten million Serbs: their archenemies, the Albanians, the Muslims, the Croats, the Bulgars, the Magyars, have, in some cases, doubled or tripled their populations and are being egged on by the several-times-defeated Germans, Austrians, and Turks.

On July 22, 1941, before a cheering Croat crowd, Mile Budak, a novelist and

the Croat Minister of Cults and Faiths, publicly said that the Independent State of Croatia was, as a matter of state policy, going to "kill one third of [its] Serbs, convert a third to Roman Catholicism, and expel the remaining third into Serbia." Dobroslav Paraga—once an Amnesty International prisoner of conscience, today the head of HOS, a militant Croat organization—is calling for a Croat invasion of Belgrade, of the kind that made some German cities in the Thirty Years War beg for deliverance from "the Croats, the fire, and the pest."

Apparently, the Croats, still only a third as numerous as the Serbs, are willing to ignite a world war in order to prove their eminence to themselves. For a nation that was, for almost a thousand years, the subject of Hungary, which in turn became the subject of Austria, the Croats' claims to fame are curious. According to their own centuries-old propaganda, they are one of the foremost nations of the world and have contributed mightily to the pool of the world's knowledge and artistic accomplishment. Instrumentalized by pan-German imperialism (during World War II, some Croat historians sought their national origins among the Goths), as well as by expansionist Roman Catholicism, the Croats have so far committed unpardonable crimes against their neighbors, the Serbs. During the last 150 years, under Austro-Hungarian aegis, they have converted over a million Serbs to Roman Catholicism, renaming them "Croats" in the process. (Croat national doctrine does not recognize the existence of Roman Catholic Serbs, as, for instance, the inhabitants of Dubrovnik and some other coastal cities, until quite recently, used to call themselves.)

To facilitate the transmutation of their Slavic neighbors into "Croats," they also took a Herzegovinian Serb dialect for their literary language, though very few Croats spoke it as their own. (Native Croat dialects are the Slovene-like *Kajkavski*, spoken around Zagreb, and *Ikavski* and *Cakavski*, spoken on the Adriatic Coast, while *Stekavski*—today's official Croatian—is an eminently Serb language, spoken by at least three-quarters of all Serbs.) Worst of all, from the Serb

point of view, the Croats have transferred *their* sins upon us, blaming us for what *they* did—and are still doing—to us, making use of an opportune crack in the fabric of this planet's sanity and misperceived self-interest.

The Serbs were the first—and the only—Balkan people to free themselves from the Ottomans through their own efforts (the Greeks and the Bulgarians achieved their liberation with British and Russian aid). In fact, the Serbs threw off the Turkish yoke despite long-standing British, French, and Austrian support of their Asiatic occupiers. Such historical tenacity should, in the case of normal reasoning, give pause to those who have written the Serbs off so easily because of their recent stumbling through the bog of communist insanity, foisted upon them—at Teheran and Yalta—by Joseph Stalin and a compliant West. There would have been no World War I had legitimate Serb claims to Serb Bosnia been taken into account. Gavrilo Princip, then, would not have felt forced to fire his bullet into Franz Ferdinand, and there would have been no Russian Revolution, no World War II, no Cold War, none of all this that's killing us today.

When in 1991, exactly 50 years after the first Jasenovac death camp, the Croats began brandishing their World War II checkerboard flags and singing songs like "Who needs the dark red wine / When Serb blood is just as fine!" the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia—a quarter of all the existing Serbs—had little choice but to prepare for the worst. The war itself, however, was started by Croat President Franjo Tudjman, who in a recent public speech stated that "Croatia could have accepted the reordering of the Yugoslav Federation, but, without war, we would not have got our independence."

As for the Jasenovac Memorial Museum itself, it has been sacked by the Croat Army, and all its exhibits of the Serb, the Jewish, and the Gypsy holocausts have been obliterated. Unfortunately for the Ustashi, a substantial Jasenovac archive still exists in Banja Luka, a Bosnian city under Serb control. Franjo Tudjman had plans to remake the museum into a "memorial for all the dead in World War

II" (for the Ustashi and their victims or more explicitly, for the Ustashi headman, Pero Brzica, and the 1,350 Serbs he had butchered in a single night, to set a record and win a wager he had made with his pals). It would be interesting to speculate how Jews would have reacted had someone suggested, say, that Auschwitz be refashioned into a monument to the murdered Jews and their SS executioners, but such an idea is still to be tested, as the whole episode with Jasenovac is yet to be reported by the Western media.

In their cover-up of their World War II *magnum crimen* against humanity (or, at least, its Serb component), the Croats have taken the tack chosen only by the Turks in their denial of the Armenian genocide. Three million Armenian men, women, and children were massacred by the Turkish Army, Turkish authorities, and Kurdish irregulars in 1915, while the West kept silent (except for a few isolated voices, such as Theodore Roosevelt's). Eighty years after this extensively—and intensively—documented event, the Turkish government, as well as Turkish public figures, men of learning, historians, and poets, all deny that it took place at all. This denial has caused an endemic Armenian terrorism whose sole aim is to force the Turks—a nation whose historic record in the countries it has occupied is notorious—to admit their deed. For those in the West who lecture the Armenians, and the Serbs, on the pastness of history while at the same time airing daily newscasts reminiscing about the Battle of Britain, or the victory at el-Alamein, or, still more indicatively, carefully refraining from even suggesting to Jews that *their* past has no bearing on the present, the Serb and Armenian plight should give some food for thought.

Would I—a 47-year-old with back trouble and a record of pulmonary TB—have taken a rifle and gone, bundled up in a Yugoslav Army standard-issue field jacket, to defend Serb Kraina had no history taken place? Would I, instead of completing my short stories and novels, piled up two feet thick on my desk after a 20-year communist ban on my writing, have taken the pen to write *this* account, about something almost banal to my people but (intentionally, it seems) unknown to the "Free World," had no "history" occurred?

In Kraina, and in Bosnia, I have seen the best of my nation live—and die—to

keep vigorous the spirit of what has made Europe, and the West in general, great. Gentle of bearing but ferocious in battle, the Kraina soldiers who helped me clean and assemble my automatic rifle on a position overlooking the blue Adriatic Sea are an assurance—to me and to the West—that in the next war between us and them who would disinherit us—all those racially, socially, religiously, ethnically, and economically overconscious masses of what is euphemistically called the Third and Fourth World—there will stand a dam, a pale, a manned bastion whose guard never sleeps nor sinks into frivolous complacency.

So far, Serbs have held back from becoming an imperial people. Like the Armenians, their greatest shortcoming seems to be the misfortune to live athwart important strategic communications, an involuntary obstacle to the imperial expansion of others: Germans, in the case of the Serbs, and Turks, in the case of the Armenians. But all this may change: those like the Croats and the Albanians who have let the genie out of the bottle may yet prod the Serbs—a nation that, in the time of the Black Prince of England, numbered, like the English, 4 million souls—to turn protectively imperialist and to claim for themselves the whole territory of the former Yugoslavia, without ever again sharing it with anyone.

So far, Serbs have restrained themselves from assimilating, annihilating, or banishing others on their territory: Greeks, Bulgars, Magyars, Croats, Muslims, and Albanians have, until the time of this writing, lived side by side with Serbs, never having to suffer for it. So far, others have taken from the Serb national being to augment *their* numbers and importance (north Albanian genealogies, for example, invariably mention their Rascian, Serb origin; Croats have, with Austro-Hungarian help, Croatized large segments of Dalmatian and Herzegovinian Serbs; Magyars have Magyarized Voivodina Serbs; Muslims still bear their Serb ancestors' surnames; Macedonians have only decades ago, by Tito government edict, Bulgarized *their* Serb family names, etc.), but all this might change: never, since Ottoman times, have the Serbs been so backed up to a wall, and they don't like it one whit.

In 1922, Lloyd George suggested that Serbian troops take Constantinople, as a move against Mustafa Atatürk. Then,

Serbian Prime Minister Nikola Pasic declined, saying that the Serb's 1912 victory over the Turks at Kumanovo in Macedonia was ample revenge for the 1389 Kosovo defeat. Now, however, judging by the mood of the Serb fighters I have seen on the various battlegrounds of the latest pan-Serb War for Survival, our enemies—and their protectors and tutors—might come to rue the day when Serb contemplativeness and leisure of spirit were mistaken for weakness and servility.

Kraina Serbs—part of the great Dinaric Serb population—are, according to anthropological, ethnological, and historical evidence, as Welsh (Vlach) as the men of the hills around Cardiff. The Dinaric Alps population has not—physically, mentally, or otherwise—changed much from the time of the legend of the dragon-spawned warriors of Cadmus. Montenegrin and Herzegovinian Serbs are still the tallest and the toughest people of Europe, and among the foremost military nations of the world. Their Slavic (i.e., Serb) overcoat only complements their great Celtic Voloch core: the Highland Fling is a Montenegrin dance as well, the bagpipes a Dalmatian Serb instrument too, heroic folk poetry singing of border feuds and cattle raids their staff of life still, all in a region boasting such place names as Tara (a mountain and a river), Boan (a town named after BoAn, the Celtic goddess of waters), Bojana River (from the Boyne), Bribir, Skradin, Krk, Kupa, and others. Called the Mauro Vlachs by the Byzantines and the Venetians, or just (contemptuously) Vlachs by the Croats and the Muslims, the Morlochs of Kraina so mesmerized H.G. Wells that he named a future race of cannibalistic troglodytes after them. This reputation the Kraina Serbs certainly did not deserve: H.G. Wells's unwed wife Rebecca West correctly saw the historical, maligned Uskoks as victims of the Great Powers' machinations, much as today.

A measure of the Serb spirit may be gathered from the fact that the Balkan Volochs chose to become Serb, instead of Croat or Muslim. Among the Slavs—and their ancient Iranian aristocracy (the original Serbs of Pliny)—they saw a kindred, aristocratic people, interested in honor much more than profit. The free herders of the *carst* thus turned Serb, while the Romance population of the coastal towns became both Croat and Serb: Croat for those who found conso-

lation in belonging to the Universal Church and a Universal Empire and Serb for those who rejoiced in being just as God had created them.

The few Volochs—and many more Slavs—who accepted Islam sought, in all probability, merely a respite from the impalements, the beheadings, the house and village burnings, the eternal rapes and pillages that marked Ottoman rule. Turkic terror, refined over the millennia, has sometimes mistakenly impressed even American servicemen, who have interpreted it as a sign of military valor, not of what it really signified—an Oriental desperation, desponding of any sense to life, except for the mad, heedless dash toward might, glory, and power.

To search for a regional, even a European, solution to the Balkans' ethnic, religious, and other conflicts, without taking into account their genesis, and their historical justice, is insane. Only a Domsday "International Community," run by people unwilling to concede that "bygones" are an inescapable part of the "present" as well as of the "future," could have committed such an array of sins and crimes as inform the present Western policy toward Yugoslavia.

Moreover, to seek solutions that ride roughshod over Serb national interests—as the West does today—is to court at least failure, if not outright disaster. (The Austrians, among others, tried that twice—in World War I and II.) For any calculations about "containing" the Serbs by using their ancient enemies—the Austrian Germans, the Hungarians, the Croats, the renegade Muslims, the Bulgarians, the Turks, and the Albanians—are a tally without the final word of the innkeeper—in this case, the Serb nation.

What should the Serbs be "contained" from? Is it from reaching their just goal of living in a single state that ensures their biological survival, as the so readily destroyed Yugoslavia used to be? The "International Community" (a euphemism, mostly, for Germany) has given the Croats a state that includes a million Serbs—a quarter of Croatia's population—within borders arbitrarily drawn by Tito, while "Bosnians" (only the Roman Catholics and the Muslims) are awarded "sovereignty" over an additional million-and-a-half Serbs—close to 40 percent of that state's inhabitants. Yet Serbs are not allowed to have what they have already achieved, by their military valor and long-term sacrifice,

through two internationally recognized former Yugoslavias. If the hodgepodge of Bosnia can exist as a viable "state," then, compared to that, a Yugoslavia, any Yugoslavia, is a unified nation. Even the much-maligned "Greater" Serbia would be less multinational, less multi-confessional, less multicultural, than the chaotic Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Champion of Islam, Alija Izetbegovic.

In a sense, Serbs should be eternally grateful to the Croat autocrat, Franjo Tudjman, and to the Slovene demagogue, Milan Kucan—both former top Tito cadres and communist officials of the highest rank—for awakening the Serbs' nationalism and reinforcing their will to survive. Had not this madness come about, in all likelihood Serb liberal intellectuals and the Serb effete, communist-bred elite, would have emasculated the Serb national spirit, in keeping with the best intentions of the architects of the New World Order. The Serbs, then, would have become just a regional designation, much the same as the Scots, who have ended up a mere name for the inhabitants of a country once as Celtic as Serb Kraina.

The Germans, who call all the Romance peoples "Welsh," and the Russians, who so call the Poles, settlers of the original European Celtic homeland, certainly know who the Voloch (*Volcae*) were. As in the case of the Serbs—the hated Wends of their genocidal past—they would that there were no history, or, at least, that they could rewrite it, more to their present democratic, human-rights-concerned liking.

What the Americans could do is to start thinking at least a few years ahead, instead of jerking their knees according to the political dictates of the moment. Though the world is governed by interest, Americans should strive toward a perception of *enlightened self-interest*, usually called friendship, among the more traditional peoples and men. Perhaps the reasons that made, say, the French become historic friends of the Americans—as the Serbs and the Greeks are their friends in the Balkans—will again reassert themselves, for the cause of mutual survival. In the cacophony of liberal babble, of endless and proliferating "rights," false "issues," and interchangeable media crusades (as unjust as they are foolish, unworthy, and forgettable) friends in certain-to-come need might prove to be a scarce commodity. To search for such "friends" among his-

torically anti-American and anti-Western nations like the Bosnian Muslims, the Muslim Albanians, the Teuton-loving Croats, and the autistic Magyars, not to mention the Oriental Bulgars, is truly a puzzling decision. For war there shall be as long as there are men, and wise nations and people keep that in mind when laying the groundwork for their national well-being, not to say survival.

In Kraina, among the men who love to joke, gamble, sing, fight, or just gab a little, the knowledge of what is and what is not is precise, certain, and well-worn. The Kraina Serbs can hear American cargo planes flying over their stone hamlets, on their way to drop "humanitarian aid" to their ancient foes, the "Turks" of Bosnia. Ljubo Urukalo, a dark-eyed, white-toothed young soldier, whose uncle the present-day Croat Ustashi have cut up into six pieces (the dead man was buried where he was found, so his mother would never learn of how he died), has a one-year-old son. Urukalo's son is a tiny, dark-eyed baby, crawling over a tended green lawn, in a small village on the *carst*-plateau. Among them, I smile and feel like a human being: no one asks anything of me, except my presence and my good spirits.

That, it seems, I have given them as an armed volunteer from Serbia. I sit in the enclosed yard and drink brandy with the Frontiersmen, a potent, clear liquid, akin to the Italian *grappa*. We finger our rifles—everyone carries one, the young and the old, many women as well—and watch the western sky, where the Croat coastal batteries sound off, pounding our villages, our women, and our children.

It will be a long war, because someone in Belgrade has forgotten that Serbs are a warrior people, not a nation of merchants—or negotiators—like the compatriots of Vance and Owen. After all, what is there to negotiate if someone wants to do us in? Let him come and get us, we won't mind, providing he's willing to pay the price. So far, no one in this world has been rich enough—in men, money, and hate—to win out over us, no matter how fervent his desire.

Momcilo Selic is a writer and journalist living in Belgrade. He was imprisoned by the communist government in Yugoslavia for satirizing the cult of the leader. He was managing editor of Chronicles from 1987 to 1989.

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cost more than \$6,000,000, and designed to supply about one-third of Tonga's electricity needs. It was expected to be in operation by 1990.

■ REFERENCES. Last roundup article p. 36152.

► KIRIBATI

● BASIC DATA

Area: 861 sq km. **Population:** 68,828 (July 1989). **Capital:** Island of Bairiki (in Tarawa Atoll). **Languages:** I-Kiribati (Gilbertese) and English. **Religion:** Christianity. **Av. life expectancy:** 57 yrs (women), 53 yrs (men) (1989). **GNP per capita:** US\$480 (1987). **Currency:** Australian dollar (US\$1.00=A\$1.2746 as at Dec. 11, 1989).

The Republic of Kiribati, which is composed of 33 Pacific atolls within an area of 5,000,000 sq km, became an independent republic within the Commonwealth in July 1979. Legislative power is vested in a unicameral House of Assembly (*Maneaba*), comprising 39 members of which are

popularly elected for up to four years and one is an appointed representative of the Banaban community. The head of state is the President who is popularly elected from amongst members of the Assembly; he governs with the assistance of an appointed Cabinet and is empowered to dissolve the Assembly and to call general elections. Ieremia Tabai has been President since independence and was elected for a fourth term on May 12, 1987 [see p. 35205], despite a constitutional prohibition on any individual serving more than three terms in the post.

● POLITICS

Kiribati announced in August 1988 that it was resettling more than 4,700 people on outlying atolls, in an attempt to reduce overcrowding. They were to be removed from the

Tarawa atolls, and sent to the Washington and Fanning Islands in the north of the Line group. By September 1989 200 people had been resettled.

Kiribati's trade deficit for 1987, of US\$14,000,000, was its highest ever, and was due, according to the Finance Ministry, mainly to higher domestic consumption and to imports of capital items and building materials for aid projects.

In September 1988 Kiribati ratified the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Treaty, under which United States tuna ships were licensed to operate within the 200-mile exclusive zones of member countries of the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency [see p. 35123]. Parliament gave its approval despite opposition by some

Cabinet

Ieremia Tabai
Teatao Teannaki
Ieruru Karotu
Taomati Iuta
Babera Kirata
Uera Rabuau
Raion Bataroma
Ataraoti Bwebwenibure
Rotaria Ataia
Michael Takabwebwe
Tekinaiti Kaiteie

President; Foreign Affairs
Vice President; Finance
Works and Energy
Natural Resources and Development
Home Affairs and Decentralization
Transport and Communications
Trade, Industry and Labour
Education
Health and Family Planning
Attorney General
Line and Phoenix Group

● ECONOMY

Economic Indicators

GDP growth 0.5% (1987)
Trade balance -US\$14 m. (1987)
Total external public debt US\$2 m. (December 1987 est.)
Gross domestic product US\$24.7 m. (1987)
Gross national product US\$32 m. (1987)
Inflation rate 10% (1988)
Unemployment 2% (1985)

representatives to a clause stating that US nationals found breaking local fishing regulations could be fined, but not imprisoned, by local courts. The opposition claimed that such a clause was discriminatory, since other foreigners could be imprisoned.

In May 1987 Kiribati authorities had seized a US tuna ship and arrested its crew, accusing them of fishing illegally in the country's 200-mile economic exclusion zone.

In April 1989 the master and a crew member of a South Korean vessel were arrested, and accused of fishing inside Kiribati's territorial waters.

■ REFERENCES. Last roundup article pp. 35205-06.

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► YUGOSLAVIA

● BASIC DATA

Area: 255,804 sq km. **Population:** 23,724,919 (1989). **Capital:** Belgrade. **Languages:** Serbo-Croat (spoken by Croats, Montenegrins, Serbs and Bosnian Moslems); Macedonian and Slovenian. **Religion:** Christianity (Orthodox and Roman Catholic); Islam. **Av. life expectancy:** 75 yrs (women), 69 yrs (men) (1989). **Armed forces:** 180,000 (101,400 conscripts) (1989). **GNP per capita:** US\$6,540 (1988). **Currency:** Yugoslav dinar.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (comprising the republics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia and the autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina) was established in 1945, and adopted its present name in 1963. The office of President ceased to exist upon the death in 1980 of Marshal Josip Broz Tito [for which see pp. 30472-73], being replaced by a Collective State Presidency whose eight members

(one from each republic and province) are elected for five years (most recently in May 1989—see pp. 36662-63) by the bicameral Federal Assembly (Parliament). The offices of President and Vice-President of the Presidency rotate among the members annually in May. Deputies to the Federal Assembly, which is made up of the Federal Chamber (220 seats) and the Chamber of Republics and Provinces (88 seats) are elected by a multi-tiered system of communal assemblies, and serve for four years. Each new Federal Assembly elects the Federal Executive Council (Cabinet).

The only legal political party is the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY). The party's leading body is the presidium, made up of 14 elected representatives along with the party presidents from the republics and provinces and the president of the party committee in the People's Army. The office of president of the party presidium rotates annually in June.

● POLITICS/SECURITY

■ For January 1989 resignations in Montenegro, campaign against federal

party president, new federal Prime Minister, Slovene opposition party see pp. 36348-49; for February attempts to resolve conflicts in LCY, deteriorating situation in Kosovo see pp. 36469-70; For March Kosovo crisis, new federal Cabinet, Serbian and Montenegrin leadership changes see pp. 36514-15; 36533-34; for May new Collective State Presidency, other appointments, developments in "Slovene four" case see pp. 36662-63; for July appointments see p. 36831; for September Slovene sovereignty declaration see pp. 36899-900; for November mine disaster see p. 37047; for December tension between Serbia and Slovenia see p. 37131.

The Yugoslav authorities faced a major crisis of confidence in the summer and autumn of 1989, when the ethnic and regional tensions which had characterized relations between the various constituent republics of the Yugoslav federation since the mid-1980s continued to escalate. At the same time a severe deterioration in the economic situation led to a series of Cabinet-level crises, as inflation approached and then exceeded the 1,000 per cent level; by early December 1989 it was considered likely that a currency reform would be necessary in order

to take account of the plunging exchange rate.

There was particular concern about the impact of changes being implemented in the constitutions of several of Yugoslavia's constituent republics—most notably in Slovenia, where the new clauses appeared to establish a right of secession from the Yugoslav federation [see p. 36899-900]. The changes in various parts of the country reflected an increasing mistrust of Serbia, the largest and most influential of the Yugoslav states, which was widely accused of attempting to impose its own rule on other regions under the guise of concern for the cohesion of the federation; they also coincided with an increasing level of emphasis on regional history and culture, which frequently took on political, and generally anti-Serbian, forms.

Nevertheless, the government of Ante Markovic [for whose appointment in January 1989 see pp. 36399; 36533] responded to the growth of popular opposition to the centralizing tendencies of the state by allowing for discussions on the legalization of oppositional political parties as

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well as on the holding of multi-party elections, probably in 1990. It was also agreed to hold an extraordinary 14th congress of the LCY [see below] during January 1990, at which most of these proposals were expected to gain the party's approval.

Calling of extraordinary 14th LCY congress

Discussions on the convocation of the 14th LCY congress had started in the spring of 1989, when Serbia's then League of Communists (LC) leader, Slobodan Milosevic, had begun the debate. His Croatian and Slovenian counterparts, however, had immediately dismissed the move as an attempt to extend the influence of Serbia vis-à-vis the Croatian and Vojvodinan minorities, and the central committee of Slovenia's LC had voted unanimously on April 19 against the holding of the congress.

The political climate worsened in mid-April, when the Croatian parliament approved the appointment of Stipe Suvar, the former president of the LCY presidium [see p. 36662], to represent Croatia in the eight-member state Presidium. Suvar was a noted critic of Milosevic, whom he had accused of stirring up nationalist protests with his uncompromising attitude towards minorities. Milosevic had, for example, accused Slovenes of "fascist hatred" of Serbia, a charge which led Jozef Smole, the leader of the newly founded Slovenian Socialist Alliance, to allege that Serbia intended to mount a "crusade" against its north-western neighbours. Meanwhile, Serbian publications were alleging the start of an "anti-Serbian coalition" of Slovenes and Croatians.

Tensions between Serbia and Slovenia were heightened further by an incident on Aug. 17 when Serbian traffic police in Belgrade allegedly assaulted Boris Muzevic, a Slovene member of the LCY presidium, after he had been stopped for speeding in his car.

Despite the continuing opposition of Slovenia, meetings of the LCY central committee were held on July 11-13 and on Sept. 11-12 to discuss preliminary arrangements for the 14th congress. On the latter occasion the delegates discussed a proposal to abolish the existing 23-member presidium, with its annually rotating chairmanship, and to replace it with an executive body headed by a secretary serving longer terms, in an attempt to reduce the country's regionalism and to enhance the party's authority. It was agreed (as confirmed on Oct. 10) to postpone the conference, originally planned for December 1989, until Jan. 20-22, 1990, for procedural reasons.

A two-day preparatory session of the LCY central committee was held in Belgrade on Oct. 20-21, when the committee approved a policy paper confirming the call for free and democratic elections, the development of political pluralism and the protection of the rights and freedoms of the individual.

A draft law on the holding of multi-party parliamentary elections had already been presented to the Federal Assembly in June 1989, and it had been proposed to limit the term of office for senior officials to a maximum of two years. It was noted in this connection, however, that the Yugoslav Constitution would need to be amended before a multiparty system could be implemented, because it currently affirmed the leading role of the LCY, and of LCY-affiliated organizations such as trade unions, in national affairs.

The moves towards reform came largely as a result of pressure from the various "democratic movements" which were springing up in Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia; these demanded the right to a free vote in a secret ballot, to social security provisions and to complete freedom of association. While political parties other than the LCY were banned by the federal Constitution (oppositional groupings being allowed to register only as "associations"), they were legalized in Slovenia during October 1989 [see below], a step which exacerbated the already severe tensions between the federal authorities and the Slovenian leadership.

There was considerable opposition within the armed forces not only to the proposed changes to the political structure of the country but also to those relating to the structures of its constituent republics. Veljko Kadijevic, the federal Defence Secretary, had told the July meeting of the LCY that the danger existed of

a fatal split in the LCY, and that he supported the suppression of sharp public disagreements on policy matters. Nonetheless, he added, it was essential to implement political reforms and to unite Yugoslavia's economy within a single Yugoslav economic area. The Deputy Defence Secretary, Stane Brovet, added on Oct. 22 that a multiparty system would only add to the country's problems.

The armed forces also expressed the view that Slovenia's constitutional reforms, by placing its own republican constitution above that of the federation, impinged upon the federal government's right to move military resources in the defence of the country. The country's Constitutional Court was accordingly on Oct. 4 empowered by the Federal Assembly to launch an investigation into the changes in all republican constitutions, notably those of Slovenia, in order to establish how far these changes conflicted with the federal Constitution.

The Slovenia crisis

■ For September 1989 Slovene sovereignty declaration see pp. 36899-900.

The crisis surrounding Slovenia's constitutional changes, which culminated on Sept. 27, 1989, with the passage of an amendment enabling the republic, in principle, to place its own constitution above that of the Yugoslav federation, and hence to threaten a wholesale secession from the federation, was already causing considerable concern by mid-June 1989, the month in which the Slovene parliament had approved the first draft of the amendments.

The formation of oppositional political parties was a particular point of conflict. Whereas the federal Constitution allowed no such parties to be formed, Slovenia legalized the creation of a Citizens' Green Party of Slovenia on Oct. 4. The party, which had held its preparatory meeting on June 18, had in fact been active for some months, having declared in its first manifesto on Jan. 19 that it would support neither capitalism nor socialism, but that it sought multiparty democracy, and that it intended to seek election to the Slovenian assembly in 1990.

The momentum for the move had come from the Slovene Democratic Alliance [for whose inauguration on Jan. 11 see p. 36399], which held its first congress on June 24, when its chairman, Dimitrij Rupel, had also declared his intention to ensure a democratic opposition to the LC.

The founding meeting of the so-called "Yugoslav Alliance" was held in Ljubljana, the provincial capital,

on July 5, at which speakers demanded "a fundamental and organizational change of the Yugoslav state".

Macedonia

Racial tensions were also rising during this period in Macedonia, where the assembly (parliament) approved on May 3, 1989, a constitutional amendment defining the Macedonian republic as the "national state of the Macedonian nation"; the definition had hitherto encompassed Turkish and Albanian minorities.

Kosovo

■ For deteriorating situation in February 1989 and March crisis in Kosovo see pp. 36469-70; 36514-15.

Newspaper reports estimated in late March 1989 that some 400 people had been arrested during the February-March crisis; among those arrested were Ismet Jasanicka, the director of the students' centre at the University of Pristina, and Ljazer Krasnici, the director of the power company Elektrokosovo [see pp. 36514-15 for other arrests]. The authorities also took further action against some 850 private business owners who had stopped work during the strike, apparently in sympathy with it.

The "special measures" introduced by the Kosovo authorities, which had been declared in February and which were widely compared with a state of emergency, were partially lifted on May 21 and were completely removed on July 12 after the Kosovo Polje celebrations [for which see below]. The curfew had already been relaxed on April 9, when the hours had been shortened, and on May 11 the ban on gatherings of more than three people had been lifted.

The Kosovo provincial LC organization held an emergency meeting on April 1, at which three members of its presidium, Kacusa Jasari, Vojislav Zajic and Dzumret Selmani, resigned their positions, and at which Vlasi was expelled from the LC for supporting the November 1988 disruptions [see pp. 36374-75] and the February strikes, and for what the official news agency Tanjug called his "political obstruction, careerist conduct and [political] ambition". The session also ordered a purge of all party officials involved in the disturbances; by May 23 it was reported that more than 300 had either resigned or been dismissed, and on July 21 it was reported that 86 Albanian intellectuals and aca-

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demics had been excluded from the party.

It was reported on Sept. 7 that Bosko Kronic, a resident of Stari Trg and a former president of the LCY presidium, had been expelled from the party by a unanimous verdict, in connection with the disturbances. Meanwhile it was also reported that the Kosovo judiciary itself was being purged for what Tanjug described as "idleness, professional incompetence and moral-political unsuitability" in its treatment of the Albanian question.

In the weeks following the April 1 emergency meeting some 550 ethnic Albanians were imprisoned, mostly for relatively short periods, for participating in the February riots. Ten members of the alleged "Marxist Leninists of Kosovo" were, however, imprisoned on April 7 for up to five years for instigating ethnic unrest. Tanjug reported on May 23 that another 237 Albanians were still being held in isolation, without trial, for their part in the disturbances; around 50 were still in custody by mid-June.

It was also reported in April that the Yugoslav authorities were offering financial incentives to Serbs wanting to settle in Kosovo, thousands having left the province since the onset of violence in 1981.

Albanian nationalism resurfaced in late May and early June, when an ethnic Albanian was shot by police during a small demonstration at Podujevo, near Pristina, the provincial capital. Security was increased as street demonstrations resumed; the shooting incident was widely blamed for the unsuccessful outcome of a visit by members of the European Parliament (EP), who, having come to Kosovo to examine allegations of ill treatment, were prevented by the Serbian authorities from meeting with ethnic Albanian opposition groups.

Azem Vlasi, an Albanian and former Kosovo party leader who was arrested in March [see p. 36514], went on trial on Oct. 30, together with 14 other ethnic Albanians, charged with "counter-revolutionary actions endangering the social order". In particular, he was accused by the court in Titova Mitrovica of having encouraged the strikes and the anti-Serbian riots during February and March.

Vlasi claimed, in his defence before the court on Oct. 30, that he was being subjected to a show trial aimed

at ending his political career and at crushing the Albanian population of Kosovo; press sources noted that, if convicted of the charges, he would face a minimum 10-year prison sentence and a possible death sentence.

The trial prompted a brief resurgence of the ethnic unrest and armed police were brought in before the trial to end a sit-in protest strike at the Trepeca lead and zinc mine where the February stoppages had begun, and where most of his fellow accused were employed. Gangs of youths stoned police in Pristina on Oct. 30-31, and five people were shot dead in the city on Nov. 1-2, in two assaults by police on the demonstrators. More than 500 people were reported to have been injured, and 138 ethnic Albanians were imprisoned on Nov. 8 for their part in the disturbances.

The trial also heightened the tensions between Serbia and Slovenia. The Collective State Presidency rejected on Nov. 1 an official Slovene application to annul the charges against Vlasi.

It was also announced on Nov. 15 that Ekrem Arifi, another former presidium member of the Kosovo LC, had been charged with instigating national, racial and religious hatred in connection with the disturbances.

There were relatively few disturbances in Kosovo during the June 28 commemorations marking the 600th anniversary of the battle of Kosovo Polje—a conflict in which the invading Turkish armies had defeated a huge Serbian army, and which was regarded by historians as securing the sovereignty of the Turkish empire in the Balkans from 1389 until the second Balkan war of 1913. Up to 1,000,000 Serbs were reported to have arrived for the commemorations, which passed off with relatively few arrests. The Croatian LC, however, described the occasion, and especially the involvement of the Serbian LC, as a "shady" device to use the celebrations for the propagation of pan-Serbian ideas.

Croatia

Serious disturbances developed between Serbs and Croats on July 8-9, 1989, at Knin, in Croatia, where Serbs returning from the Kosovo Polje celebrations [see above] were involved in street battles with local residents.

A new Croatian opposition group called the Croatian Democratic Alliance was formed on April 1, following a preliminary meeting in Zagreb, the provincial capital, on Feb. 28; the Croatian Social Liberal Alliance was successfully launched

on May 20 as the first legal opposition party in the republic. However, the Croatian LC remained vocal in its opposition to the new groups—its president, Ivo Latin, having declared on March 3 that all such "nationalist" initiatives were illegal—and the Croatian Internal Affairs Secretariat refused on April 10 to register the Initiative for a Democratic Yugoslavia as a citizens' association, on the grounds that it had political and cultural objectives.

In what appeared to be an assertion of Croatian traditions vis-à-vis the Serbian mid-year celebrations, a (Roman Catholic) mass attended by some 7,000 people was held in Solin, Croatia, on Oct. 8, 1989, in honour of King Zvonimir, the king of Croatia and Dalmatia from 1075 to 1089. Archbishop Ante Juric, addressing the congregation on Oct. 8, said that all of Croatia's history, and the actions of all its kings, refuted the allegations of genocide during the Second World War on the part of the Croatian people and confirmed that it had acted only in self-defence against external attacks.

Vojvodina

Major changes were also taking place in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, a part of Serbia, where increasing tensions had created a widespread lack of confidence in the provincial LC. On Nov. 14, 1988, in a preliminary attempt to resolve the problem, Bosko Kovacevic had been appointed president of the presidium of the provincial LC; he was replaced, however, on Jan. 20, 1989, at an extraordinary conference, by Nadeljko Sipovac [see pp. 36398; 36662]. Earlier, 11 members of the local LC presidium had been replaced after the resignation or dismissal of 23 members of the provincial LC committee; it was alleged in mid-January, during a further round of expulsions, that an attempt had been made within the party to create a state within a state, and to intensify tensions with Serbia.

On Oct. 24, 1989, the Vojvodina provincial assembly relieved Jon Srbovan of the post of president of its executive council, and appointed Sredoje Erdeljan in his place. Srbovan's resignation followed his expulsion from the Serbian LC because of his alleged opposition to demonstrations in favour of greater Serbian authority held in Novi Sad during mid-1988 [see pp. 36374-75].

Montenegro

Following the disturbances in Titograd, the provincial capital, during January 1989, which had led to the resignation of large parts of the party leadership, the Monten-

egrin LC held a two-day congress on April 25-26 at which it promised to boost the regional economy and to combat poverty in the region. Milica Pejanovic-Djurisic was appointed chairman of the new LC presidium.

Branko Kostic took over as President of the Montenegrin Presidency on March 17, following the resignation of the republican state presidency after a wave of street demonstrations [see p. 36534].

The remains of Nikola Petrovic, the last King of Montenegro, were reburied with ceremonial honours in Cetinje [the former capital] on Oct. 1, 1989, together with the remains of his wife and daughters. The King's body had been kept since his death in 1921 in San Remo, Italy. Kostic said at the ceremony on Oct. 1 that the king's repatriation was a manifestation of increasing confidence in democracy in the republic, and hence of the feeling that the old monarchy was no longer a threat to the LCY.

Political appointments

■ For March 1989 new federal Cabinet list see p. 36533.

Darko Marin, the former news editor of the Ljubljana radio and television networks, was appointed on July 26, 1989, as Federal Secretary for Information—a post which had featured in previous Cabinets but not initially in the smaller Markovic Cabinet appointed on March 16 [see p. 36533].

It was reported on Sept. 21 that, in response to growing pressure on environmental issues, a special Department of the Environment was to be established within the existing Federal Secretariat for Development. There were no indications, however, as to who would head the new department.

Andjelko Vasic was appointed on May 30 to the annually revolving presidency of the Council of the Federation of Yugoslav Trade Unions.

A major reshuffle of top-level posts in the armed forces took place on Sept. 21, when the changes included the appointment of Lt.-Col.-Gen. Blagoye Adzic as Chief of General Staff in place of Col.-Gen. Stevan Mirkovic.

Meanwhile, large numbers of high-ranking state officials left their positions in the LCY leadership, in accordance with the growing trend towards the separation of state and party activities.

Lazar Mojsov (a member of the State Presidency for Kosovo and a former President) stepped down from the LCY Central Committee

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EUROPE

on Nov. 14, 1988. In Slovenia Stane Dolanc (a Vice-President of the State Presidency), Janez Zemljarič (a Deputy Premier) and Marjan Orožen (the then president of the trade union confederation) resigned from the LCY central committee on Nov. 25, 1988.

Ljubomir Varoslija was appointed on Oct. 20, 1989, as a member of the LCY Presidium for Macedonia, filling the vacancy created in July when Vasil Tupurkovski had been elected to the federal Collective State Presidency [see p. 36831].

Consecration of new cathedral in Belgrade

The newly built (Roman Catholic) cathedral of Saint-Sava in Belgrade, reported to be the largest place of worship in the Balkans, was consecrated on June 25, 1989, in a ceremony attended by over 150,000 people.

● **ECONOMY**

■ For March 1989 approval of 1989 federal budget see p. 36534.

Economic Indicators

- GDP growth** 1.5% (1980-87)
- Current-account balance** +US\$819 m. (1987)
- Trade balance** -US\$1,200 m. (1987)
- Total external public debt** US\$23,518 m. (1987)
- Debt service ratio (as % of export earnings)** 13.3% (1987)
- Gross domestic product** US\$59,960 m. (1987)
- Gross national product** US\$154,100 m. (1988)
- Inflation rate** 230% (1988 est.)
- Unemployment** 15% (1988)
- Principal trading partners** (1987) COMECON, EC

Inflation

The rising levels of inflation, and the ensuing falls in standards of living, led to repeated unrest throughout the country during this period. Some 10,000 people on Sept. 13, 1989, joined in a mass protest in Belgrade, threatening a general strike in support of wage claims and demanding government action to curb inflation. Official figures released on Nov. 1 showed that consumer prices were rising at an annualized rate of 1,470 per cent. A 2,000,000-dinar note was issued on Aug. 11, being worth about US\$90 at the end-July exchange rate of \$1.00=22,500 dinars—whereas the rate in August 1988 had been \$1.00=2,700 dinars (by end-1989 the exchange rate was \$1.00=170,000 dinars). Unemployment was estimated in August 1989 at 16 per cent, and the country's total

foreign debt was put at around \$18,000 million.

Addressing the Federal Assembly on Sept. 29, Markovic appealed to Yugoslavs to place national economic issues above those of their respective republics, and to accept the need to re-establish the linkage between wages and performance, rather than between wages and prices. It was noted in this connection that the federal government had relatively little control over the size of the money supply, because the central bank was responsible for only 30 per cent of all currency issues—the remainder being issued by the federal republics without reference to the federal authorities.

Revised federal budget

The Federal Assembly adopted on July 14, 1989, after some weeks of disagreement, a supplementary federal budget for 1989 which took the total state spending to 68,000,000 million dinars [see p. 36534 for original budget of 20,600,000 million dinars]. Of the revised total, the armed forces were to receive 35,000,000 million dinars (56.5 per cent), or the equivalent of 4.6 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Another 7,000,000 million dinars (11.3 per cent) was to go to invalids' and veterans' allowances, and 4,000,000 million dinars (6.5 per cent) to Kosovo and to other underdeveloped regions.

Meanwhile the government was also reported to be preparing new legislation to encourage private ownership in the farming and industrial sectors, in its efforts to decentralize the economy and to encourage private initiative.

■ **REFERENCES.** Last roundup article pp. 36372-76; developments in 1989 pp. 36348-49; 36469-70; 36514-15; 36533-34; 36662-63; 36831; 36899-900; 37047; 37131.

► **UNITED KINGDOM**

■ For basic data and map see p. 36500.

● **POLITICS/SECURITY**

■ For July 1989 Cabinet reshuffle see pp. 36819; for October resignation of Lawson as Chancellor of the Exchequer see pp. 36982-83; for December leadership challenge see p. 37134.

■ For February, June 1989 parliamentary by-elections see pp. 36501; 36740; for June elections to European Parliament see pp. 36738; 36877.

■ For April 1989 Hillsborough stadium disaster, Heysel stadium trial verdicts see p. 36597; for August Thames disaster see p. 36857-58.

Local elections

Elections were held on May 4, 1989, to renew all 39 county councils in England and all eight such councils in Wales, being those last contested in 1985 [see pp. 33801-02].

After polling the Conservatives held 19 councils (compared with 12 in 1985), Labour held 13 (nine in 1985), SLDP (Social and Liberal Democratic Party, now the Liberal Democrats—see below) held one (controlled by the Alliance parties in 1985), and independents held two as in 1985. In the remaining 12 councils no single party had overall control (as opposed to 23 before polling).

The 1989 poll showed a marked decrease in support for both centre parties, the SLDP and SDP (Social Democratic Party), in favour of both the Conservative and Labour parties. The disappointing performance of the SDP in particular reportedly contributed to its decision later in May 1989 to announce a formal retrenchment of its activities [see below].

Party conferences

At the **Conservative Party** annual conference in Blackpool on Oct. 10-13, 1989, Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader, said that the economy remained strong despite recent rises in interest and mortgage rates [see below], and claimed that her government had laid the foundations of a decent and prosperous future. During the conference the party announced the planned introduction, during the 1989-90 parliamentary session, of an environmental bill

and a new criminal justice bill (with the latter increasing the legal responsibility of parents for the crimes of their teenage children), and also announced that the government would spend £685,000,000 over the next three years to finance a safety net for the proposed community charge (or poll tax—see p. 36501).

The **Labour Party** conference held in Brighton on Oct. 2-6 unanimously approved the party's policy review documents published in May [see p. 36667], and effectively completed Labour's gradual abandonment of its policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament. Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley remained unchallenged as party leader and deputy leader respectively.

The **SLDP** held its conference in Brighton on Sept. 9-15. Paddy Ashdown, the party leader, criticised the Conservative government for its failure to join the EMS (European monetary system, for which see pp. 36494; 36741; 36982-83; 37132), and urged the Labour Party leadership to allow a full discussion of electoral reform within its ranks. As a result of a postal ballot of SLDP members announced on Oct. 16, the party approved a change in its short title from Democrats to Liberal Democrats.

The **SNP** (Scottish National Party) at its conference in Dunoon on Sept. 20-22 called for a Scottish parliament to restrict the majority shareholding

Cabinet

- Sir Geoffrey Howe** *Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons*
- Lord Mackay of Clashfern** *Lord Chancellor*
- Douglas Hurd** *Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs*
- John Major** *Chancellor of the Exchequer*
- David Waddington** *Home Secretary*
- Peter Walker** *Secretary of State for Wales*
- Michael Howard** *Secretary of State for Employment*
- Tom King** *Secretary of State for Defence*
- Nicholas Ridley** *Secretary of State for Trade and Industry*
- Kenneth Baker** *Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*
- Kenneth Clarke** *Secretary of State for Health*
- John MacGregor** *Secretary of State for Education and Science*
- Malcolm Rifkind** *Secretary of State for Scotland*
- Cecil Parkinson** *Secretary of State for Transport*
- John Wakeham** *Secretary of State for Energy*
- Lord Belstead** *Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords*
- Antony Newton** *Secretary of State for Social Security*
- Christopher Patten** *Secretary of State for the Environment*
- Peter Brooke** *Secretary of State for Northern Ireland*
- John Selwyn Gummer** *Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food*
- Norman Lamont** *Chief Secretary to the Treasury*

since Dec. 30, 1989, and that it currently had 100 members and adherents.

● **Prison camp revelations**

A special commission of the Bulgarian government uncovered the existence of concentration camps which had operated in the 1940s and 1960s in which some prisoners were tortured and killed.

Although more than 40 camps were revealed to have existed, the largest was at Lovech in northern Bulgaria. Lovech was open from 1959 until April 1972 and interned 12,035 people according to official estimates. Documentary proof of 147 deaths had been found so far.

Former officers at the camp were arrested after the revelations and the Deputy Minister of the Interior, Col.-Gen. Mircho Spasov, was expelled from the BCP on March 29 for his connection with the camps; he was arrested on April 16. Spasov denied any knowledge of mistreatment of the prisoners, but surviving camp inmates reported that he had visited the camp often and ordered guards there to "work them [the prisoners] to death".

On March 28 an Interior Ministry spokesperson said that it was possible that former Communist leader Todor Zhivkov himself might be implicated in the crimes committed in the camps.

■ **REFERENCES.** References article pp. 36770-71; January and February 1990 political developments pp. 37192-94; 37253-54.

YUGOSLAVIA

Multiparty elections in Slovenia and Croatia

Elections to the assemblies in the northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia in the course of April and early May were Yugoslavia's first contested multiparty elections for 51 years. The issue of the republics' future within the Yugoslav federation dominated the electoral campaigns. Opposition victories over the ruling communist parties in both republics threatened to deepen Yugoslavia's political and ethnic crises, the victors having put forward manifestos featuring demands for greatly increased autonomy for the republics, even to the point of secession from Yugoslavia.

● **Slovenia**

The six-party centre-right DEMOS opposition coalition won the direct elections on April 8 to the Slovene Assembly's main Socio-Political Chamber and on April 8 and 22 to the less powerful Chamber of Municipalities. (Elections to a third chamber also with lesser powers—the Chamber of Associated Labour—were also held on April 8 and 22, but on a non-party basis.) A separate direct election for the President of the Slovene presidency, held in two rounds on April 8 and 22, was won by Milan Kucan of the ruling LCS—Party of Democratic Renewal (the

former Slovene League of Communists—see p. 37255).

DEMOS (the Democratic Opposition of Slovenia) comprised the Christian Democratic Party, the Peasants' Union, the Democratic Alliance, the League of Social Democrats, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Green Party. Its election campaign, focusing not so much on criticism of communist rule as on demands for a redefinition of Slovenia's status within Yugoslavia, was attuned to the resentment felt by many Slovenes of the lack of political reform elsewhere in the country, of the hostility of the military leadership to Slovene reforms, and especially of Slovenia's subsidizing the economies of the "backward" southern republics: with only 8 per cent of Yugoslavia's population, Slovenia produced 20 per cent of its national product and 25 per cent of its exports, while paying nearly 4½ times more in federal taxes to subsidize other republics than it received in federal finance programmes. DEMOS advocated a new Yugoslav confederation in which Slovenia would enjoy virtually full sovereignty and economic independence, but did not rule out holding a referendum on secession if the Yugoslav federal authorities would not accept its plans for a new Slovene constitution, a separate currency, and withdrawal of all Slovene conscripts from the Yugoslav People's Army.

DEMOS took just under 55 per cent of the vote in the Socio-Political Chamber elections, which according to a proportional representation system gave it 47 of the 80 seats. (Of the six DEMOS parties, the Christian Democrats performed best with 12.98 per cent of the vote and 11 seats, followed by the Peasants' Union with 12.55 per cent and 11 seats.) The LCS—Party of Democratic Renewal emerged as the largest single party in the Chamber, taking 17 per cent and 14 seats, while the ZSMZ—Liberal Party (formerly the Slovene Socialist Youth Federation) took 14.49 per cent and 12 seats. A total of 17 parties competed. The turnout was over 80 per cent of the around 1,500,000 electorate.

Kucan's victory in the presidential election reflected the great personal popularity he had earned while serving as president of the Slovene League of Communists in 1986-89 for his defence of Slovenia's political reform process in the face of fierce opposition by the hardline leadership in Serbia. In the first round of voting on April 8 Kucan took 44.5 per cent of the vote, compared with 26.2 per cent for DEMOS leader Joze Pucnik (of the Democratic Alliance), 18.9 per cent for Ivan Kramberger (independent), and 10.5 per cent for Marko Demšar (ZSMZ—Liberal Party). In the second round run-off on April 22 Kucan defeated Pucnik by 58.4 per cent to 41.7 per cent. Immediately after his election Kucan announced that he would renounce his party membership for the duration of his four-year term.

● **Croatia**

The elections to the three chambers of the Croatian assembly, all conducted on a multiparty basis in two rounds on April 22 and May 6-7, were won overwhelmingly by the right-wing nationalist Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), led by Franjo Tudjman. The hitherto ruling Croatian League of Communists—Party of Democratic Change came

second in a field of more than 30 political parties [the full results will be published in the next News Digest].

The HDZ fought an extreme nationalist and frequently anti-Serbian campaign based on demands for greater Croatian autonomy and economic independence, but also featuring statements by Tudjman calling for Croatia's annexation of parts of neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina, for Serbs in Croatia to be removed from influential positions, and for Croatia's secession from Yugoslavia. Exploiting traditional Croat-Serb animosity, the HDZ staged provocative election rallies in localities inhabited by members of Croatia's Serb minority, prompting Serb nationalist protests and an attempt on Tudjman's life at one such rally in March. Opponents claimed that HDZ policies were reminiscent of the fascist *ustasha* government which had ruled Croatia during the Second World War, and that it was receiving funds from *ustasha* emigré organizations.

Nevertheless, in a conciliatory statement following the announcement of the first round results heralding the HDZ victory, Tudjman professed caution on the issue of Croatian separatism, suggesting that a HDZ government would be content with Croatian sovereignty and greater independence within a confederal Yugoslavia, and would respect Serb interests.

Unlike in Slovenia, there was no separate direct election for the Croatian President, who was instead to be elected by the Croatian Assembly.

● **New Macedonian President**

The State Presidency in Macedonia on April 28 elected Vladimir Mitkov as its President from among its members. His mandate was to last until Macedonia's first multiparty general election due no later than April 1991.

■ **REFERENCES.** January-March 1990 federal and Slovene League of Communist developments pp. 37172-73; 37255; 37324-25; March Slovene constitutional amendments p. 37325.

End of Kosovo "special measures" – Resignation of Kosovo politicians – Release of Vlasi

It was announced on April 18 that the Federal Collective Presidency had agreed to lift the "special measures" in the autonomous province of Kosovo, a part of the Serbian republic, where disturbances involving the ethnic Albanian majority had been continuing for more than a year.

During the period of special measures, which had first been imposed in February 1989 [see pp. 36470; 36514-15; for additional special measures imposed in January 1990 see p. 37173], Serbian police and Serbian troops (the latter first being put on active service on Feb. 20—see p. 37255) had faced widespread accusations of using excessive force to quell the strikes and demonstrations. The Albanian protesters were claiming that constitutional changes introduced by the Serbian authorities in 1988-89 would lead to a diminution of Albanian influence, and to a growth of aggressive

pro-Serbian policies. On the day before the April 18 announcement, the President of the Serbian state presidency, Slobodan Milosevic, had declared that Serbia's own internal affairs secretariat had now taken over from the federal authorities in administering public security in the province. (Serbia denied press reports that the move had entailed suspending the Kosovo police itself.)

It was also announced on April 18 that some 108 persons arrested or imprisoned for their part in the 1990 demonstrations would be released from custody.

The official news agency Tanjug had reported on April 3 that Yusuf Zehjnlahu, the Chairman of the Kosovo provincial assembly (i.e. the provincial Premier), had resigned his post in protest at what he described as the excessively brutal tactics employed by the Serbian authorities towards the ethnic Albanians in the province. The Deputy Premier and the provincial Ministers for Education, Health, Agriculture and Transport had also resigned. (For the resignation of the Interior Minister on March 26 see p. 37325.)

Azem Vlasi, the former leader of the League of Communists in Kosovo, was released from custody on April 24, together with 13 other persons, after being acquitted on charges of instigating counter-revolutionary demonstrations in the province.

Vlasi, whose trial had started in October 1989 [see p. 37156], had been arrested in March 1989 during the first round of riots. It was reported on April 13, however, that charges had been brought against Fadilj Hodza, a prominent former state and party official, for inciting racial intolerance and religious hatred in connection with the 1989 riots. Official statistics released on April 17 showed that 2,188 people, of whom the overwhelming majority were Serbs, had emigrated from Kosovo during 1989.

■ REFERENCES. Reference article pp. 37154-57; 1990 Kosovo developments pp. 37173; 37255; 37325.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Renaming of state – Cabinet changes

The Federal Assembly on April 20 voted by a large majority to accept a proposal to rename the state the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic (CSFR), thereby ending weeks of controversy over the issue.

The Federal Assembly had accepted a compromise only on March 29, whereby different versions of the same title were to be used in the Czech Lands and in Slovakia [see p. 37326]. However, the compromise had led to protests in Slovakia. The new title gave equal weight to both nationalities in the republic.

Cabinet changes – Controversy over Interior Minister

A series of changes in the federal government, involving demotions, dismissals and appointments, was announced on April 6.

Valtr Komarek and Jan Carnogursky were demoted from First Deputy Premier to Deputy Premier (because there was no point in differen-

tiating between the two levels of post, according to Marian Calfa, the Federal Premier). Frantisek Reichel was dismissed as Deputy Premier and Chairman of the State Commission for Scientific, Technical and Investment Development and replaced in both posts by Armin Delong. Oldrich Bursky was also relieved of his post as Deputy Premier, but remained Minister of Agriculture and Food. Jiri Dienstbier and Vaclav Vales were both appointed Deputy Premier (the former retaining his post of Foreign Minister).

Komarek said on April 9 that Reichel had been relieved of his posts because he wanted to concentrate on election work for the Czechoslovakian People's Party, of which he was a member. However, Reichel himself claimed that he did not know the true reason for his dismissal, saying that he thought it might be due to disagreements over scientific policy.

Viliam Ciklamini and Jaroslav Prochazka, Federal Deputy Interior Ministers, were dismissed on April 20 after being accused by Richard Sacher, the Federal Interior Minister, of acting without his knowledge to have parliamentary deputies screened for connections with the former *Statni Bezpecnost* (StB—State Security, or secret police). The two officials alleged that Sacher himself was engaged in vetting deputies and persons in state positions, and was employing former officers of the StB. The dismissals followed calls from many quarters for Sacher to resign on the grounds that he was not doing enough to dismantle the StB structure (although officially the organization had been abolished on Feb. 1—see p. 37255). It was also suggested that he was using Interior Ministry files to discredit political opponents, and thereby promote the Czechoslovakian People's Party to which he belonged, in the lead-up to the June elections.

■ REFERENCES. Reference article pp. 37092-94; events in January, February and March 1990 pp. 37192; 36255-56; 37326-27.

CENTRAL EUROPE

Bratislava summit of central European states

A summit meeting of Czechoslovak, Hungarian and Polish leaders, was held in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, on April 9 to discuss the "return to Europe" of the three Warsaw Pact countries—i.e. their integration into European structures such as the European Communities (EC). The Austrian, Italian and Yugoslav Foreign Ministers, Alois Mock, Gianni De Michelis and Budimir Loncar, also attended as observers.

Czechoslovakia was represented by President Vaclav Havel, Federal Premier Marian Calfa, Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier and the Czech and Slovak Premiers; Hungary by acting President Mátyás Szűrös, Prime Minister Miklós Németh and Foreign Minister Gyula Horn, and Poland by President Wojciech Jaruzelski, Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski.

The summit dealt with the Czechoslovak proposal for a European security commission made up of the 35 states participating in the Conference on Secur-

ity and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), as a first step towards a European confederation, as well as a similar Polish proposal. It was agreed that a joint group of experts or deputy foreign ministers from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland would prepare a joint stand at the next Helsinki conference in 1991, while another group would work out a plan of action for "entering Europe". De Michelis said that Italy (which was to assume the EC presidency for six months at the end of June 1990) would work to accelerate the process whereby the three countries drew closer to the EC. The summit also discussed regional economic and ecological problems and the establishment of a Central European university.

In a separate bilateral meeting held on the fringes of the summit, Havel and Szűrös discussed problems connected with the Hungarian minority in southern Slovakia and the Slovak minority in Hungary, which had been a source of tension between the two states. Agreement was reached on setting up a joint commission of experts to deal with minority questions and on working towards guaranteeing minority rights.

ROMANIA

Postponement of visit by former King

The ruling National Salvation Front (NSF) decided on April 11 to bar former King Michael, 68, who lived in exile, from entering the country. It revoked the decision taken two weeks earlier to grant him a visa, on the grounds that he had refused to postpone until after the May 20 elections his planned departure from Switzerland with his wife Queen Anne and eldest daughters Princess Margerita and Princess Anne. At a press conference held in the terminal of Zurich Airport on April 12 King Michael denied any political motive for the visit, claiming that it was based purely on "personal and spiritual reasons connected with my wish to spend Easter in my own country".

The NSF claimed that during his planned 10-day visit over the Easter period the former King could be the unintentional subject of "obscure manipulations" which might threaten his dignity and safety, and that the publicity surrounding his presence could be seen "as a political gesture of a nature to bring unwanted elements into the election campaign". As such, this could "fan new passions" and result in violence. The decision raised speculation that the NSF government believed the visit might benefit opposition parties.

On March 13 King Michael had written to interim President Ion Iliescu stating that he was prepared to lead the country to democracy through a constitutional monarchy. This ran counter to the electoral law adopted on March 17, which decided that a president would preside over the executive and legislature [see p. 37327-28].

Approximately 150 monarchists gathered in the centre of Bucharest and an estimated 300 more at the capital's Otopeni airport on April 12 shouting slogans denouncing the government and supporting the King, who had been forced to abdicate in

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MAY 26 1992

Honorable Helen Delich-Bentley
1610 Longworth Blvd
Washington, DC 20005

May 22, 1992

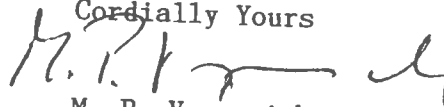
Dear Mrs. Delich-Bentley:

Enclosed, please, find "Genesis of the Serbo-Croatian War" and "Agony of the Serbs" which I wrote in an attempt to both understand and explain the tragedy of Yugoslavia.

If you think that it would be helpful to mail the above mentioned pieces to some people in the policy making circles, please, do let me know. I would need names and addresses.

My heartfelt compliments for your valiant fight in support of the Serbian cause.

Cordially Yours



M. P. Voynovich

AGONY OF THE SERBS

by M. P. Voynovich

May 1992

The principle of fairness in reporting about the tragedy of Yugoslavia is nonexistent in the American media and preconceived notions are given full display without much regard for truth or reality.

While the American media talks about the centuries old tensions between the Serbs and the Croats, genocide of the Serbs in the "Independent State of Croatia" during the World War II, **the root cause of the civil war**, is barely mentioned and only in passing.

The statement of the Croatian President Tudjman that "the Independent State of Croatia of the World War II was not just a pure creation of Hitler and Mussolini, but the realization of the age old Croatian aspirations" is not mentioned at all. This carries the same implications as if Chancellor Kohl had said at the time of the reunification of East and West Germany: "The Third Reich (with all that it implies: holocaust of the Jews, concentration camps etc.) was the age old aspiration of the German people."

Mr. Tudjman saying, during his election campaign: "Thank God my wife is neither a Serb nor a Jew" is considered in the press, if mentioned at all, as little more than an awkward faux pas. This at the time of rampant physical attacks on Serbs, on their clergymen, arson of their homes and businesses. No mention at all.

Mr. Tudjman's revival of the xenophobic political philosophy that resulted in the Ustashi genocide of the Serbs is too complicated for the newspaper columnists to consider.

Mile Budak, the Ustashi Minister, who formulated the Ustashi solution to the Serbian problem: one third to be converted to Catholicism, one third expelled and one third killed, is honored by the present Croatian regime by naming a school and a street in Zagreb after him. Is it surprising that the Serbs should feel the same way as the Jews would if there was suddenly a school and a street in Berlin named after Himmler? Not important enough to be mentioned in the American media.

Mr. Danijel Crljen, the chief of Ustashi propaganda during the World War II, was granted audience with the Croat President Tudjman and appeared as honored guest on the Croatian television on 26th of March, of this year. It is doubtful that the appearance of Mr. Goebbels would be met with equal silence in the western media or by western Governments.

The pictures in Chicago Tribune of Croatian and Moslem mothers grieving over their fallen sons are heartrending. Serbian mothers, on the other hand, either don't have dead sons, are not grieving over them, or are not worthy of readers' sympathy.

Mr. Milosevic is guilty of raising the specter of raw nationalism in Serbia and should be condemned for it. Mr. Kucan in Slovenia and Mr. Tudjman in Croatia (actually Mr. Tudjman revived the Ustashi specter, which is far, far worse) did the same thing but they escape criticism. Under their rule - let us not forget that they are ex-Communists (same as Mr. Milosevic) and new born democrats who had full control of the mass media with the power to influence the masses in their respective republics - Slovenia and Croatia opted for independence. It was a unilateral decision.

Lets us assume that Texas, New Mexico and California have majority Mexican population and they declare independence unilaterally. And our World War II enemies - Germany, Italy and Japan - and the European Community recognize the independence of those three states. Would we expect our Government to bow to the decisions of the above mentioned or would we want Washington to extend support to those Americans in the three states who, in order to avoid persecution, wish to remain citizens of the United States?

At the beginning, the United States Government and the European Community favored a united Yugoslavia. Later, under heavy pressure from Germany to recognize the two new countries, the E.C. proposed a formula as a condition for the recognition. Respect for human rights was an essential component of this formula. Then, again under very heavy pressure from Germany, E.C.

ignored its own commission's report against recognizing Croatia because of human rights violations. In direct contradiction of E.C. commission's report, German Foreign Minister Genscher stated that Croatia has exemplary human rights record. Chancellor Kohl, as an explanation of his country's position, said that Germany is only trying to help its ally, apparently honoring the alliance of Nazi Germany and Ustashi Croatia!

By now, it should be fairly obvious that Germany (and probably Austria) had supported the separatist movements in Slovenia and Croatia even before their declaration of independence. It is very doubtful that the unilateral declaration of independence would have taken place without assurances of strong support from abroad.

The right to self-determination in Yugoslavia is considered applicable to some ethnic groups, but not to the Serbs.

According to the census of 1981 Serbs represented 41% of the total population of Yugoslavia (this figure includes Montenegro since its people are Serbs), Croats 19%, Slovenes 8%, Bosnian Moslems 8% and Macedonians 8%. While those 8% of Slovenes, 19% of Croats and 8% of Moslems have a right to determine their own future and live in their newly independent states thereby breaking up the borders of Yugoslavia, the borders of these new states cannot be violated to accommodate the will of 24% of the all the Serbs of Yugoslavia who live in those new states. They are denied the right to self-determination, forced to live in the newly created countries where 50 years ago they were subjected to merciless genocide.

Looking at the ethnic distribution from another angle: there are 1.6% Croats and 2.3% Moslems in Serbia while there are 16% Serbs in Croatia and 36% in Bosnia-Herzegovina. (It is safe to assume that of the 379,000 people in Croatia and 326,000 in Bosnia who declared themselves as Yugoslavs in the 1981 census the majority are Serbs.)

A short time before the declaration of independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moslem, Serbian and Croatian leaders had agreed on ethnic autonomies along the lines of the Swiss cantons. Then, the Moslem leaders reneged on the agreement and Mr. Izetbegovic, a Moslem fundamentalist and the President of the Republic, announced independence for the Republic.

The utter failure to understand the problems of Yugoslavia by the media is just a reflection of the equally complete failure of the European Community's and the United States Government's solutions to a country's painful transition from Communism to democracy. The war in Croatia and the easily predictable spreading of the civil war to Bosnia-Herzegovina should be a sufficient proof of wrong solutions to the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Instead of revising a plan that is obviously not bringing the desired results, a scapegoat is found in the Serbian President Milosevic and Serbian nationalism.

The aim of E.C. and the United States involvement in Yugoslavia was to bring about a peaceful and just dissolution of the country. Instead it triggered a civil war without an end in sight.

Germany stands accused of supporting the separatists in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and pushing for quick recognition of their independence at the expense of the Serbs.

Hitler's rage against the Serbs in the World War II is well documented. He repeatedly threatened to destroy them. German Military Command, only in occupied Serbia, instituted a ratio of 100:1 of civilian hostages executed for one German killed, while the rest of Europe enjoyed a 10:1 ratio.

It is curious, to say the least, that today's democratic Germany pursues, with great determination, a division of Yugoslavia along the same frontiers that the Nazi Germany did.

2,250,000 Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina simply do not want to live in an independent Croatia or Bosnia-Herzegovina where they were subjected to genocide and where today there is a revival of neo-Ustasism. They have fought for centuries to achieve independence and freedom from oppression. They are being asked to bow to the German led E.C. and the United States and to live outside the borders of their own country.

Serbia has every right (as every nation has), indeed a duty, to protect the interests of - and to extend support to their nationals forced to live within borders that were not negotiated but imposed. Accusing Serbia of aggression is irrelevant. What has to be justly considered are the wishes and determination of the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Maybe, there is still time to avoid a Lebanon in the Balkans.

GENESIS OF THE SERBO-CROATIAN WAR

by M. P. Voynovich

The civil war in Yugoslavia started because, in simplest possible terms, Serbs in Croatia, with the horrors of genocide etched in their memory, do not want to live in a Croatia that is not part of Yugoslavia. Croat President Tudjman wants an independent Croatia with borders that include also the areas where Serbs constitute an absolute majority even after the genocide of 1941. From the Serbian point of view the war is about their right to self-determination in the areas where they constitute a majority. From the Croatian point of view the war is about the territory which they consider their own.

In 1941 Hitler granted independence to Croatia and installed an ex-terrorist and Croatian separatist, Ante Pavelic, the leader of a Croatian Nazi movement called the Ustashi, as head of the Government of the new State. The Croatian Government then announced publicly an official government policy, **unprecedented in the history of mankind, of extermination of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies from the territory of the "Independent State of Croatia"**. Hundreds of thousands of Serbs and tens of thousands of Jews and Gypsies were slain. Young and old, children and women were not spared.

At the end of World War II, Tito's Communists took control of Yugoslavia and, while there were some trials of the war criminals, **there was never a thorough process of de-nazification carried out in Croatia as there was in Germany, Austria and the rest of Nazi occupied Europe.** Under the Communist ideology and for the sake of brotherhood and unity in the country, any mention of the Croatian Ustashi horrors perpetrated on the Serbian population was discouraged and considered "nationalist deviationism".

In 1990, Mr. Tudjman, Tito's General and a high ranking Communist, in his political campaign for the presidency of Croatia, while proclaiming himself for democracy, ran on a platform that was racist and discriminatory against the Serbs. After the election, Mr. Tudjman and his Government instituted policies that were first formulated in mid 1800s by Ante Starcevic and his successor Josip Frank: it is only the Croats that can live as a political people on Croatian land. The ultimate implementation of

this political philosophy was Pavelic's policy of extermination of Serbs. Mr. Tudjman's new constitution relegated Serbs from the status of a separate constituent people (a status granted to the Slovenes, the Croats and the Serbs by both the Kingdom of Yugoslavia of 1918 and the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia of 1945) to the status of a minority: by a simple Government edict they became Croats of Orthodox faith.

When the Government of the Republic of Croatia (one of the Federal Republics of Yugoslavia), in June of 1991, proclaimed unilaterally independence for the state of Croatia, the Croatian Guard tried to disarm the Serbian population of Krajina. The Serbs rebelled first in Krajina and later in Slavonia, and rose up in arms against the creation of a state which they **justifiably perceived not only as a threat to their cultural, religious and political identity but to their very existence.** Local fighting escalated and the Yugoslav Army stepped in – initially to separate the warring parties.

At the beginning of the crisis in Yugoslavia, at the time of declaration for independence by both Slovenia and Croatia, the Yugoslav Army was the only functioning federal organization still committed to Yugoslavia as a single state. The Minister of Defense was a Croatian, General Veljko Kadijevic; his Deputy was a Slovenian, Admiral Stane Brovet, and the Chief of the Federal Air Force was a Croatian, General Zvonko Jurjevic.

Army's commitment to Yugoslavia was perceived as a threat to the Croatian drive for independence and, in order to internationalize the crisis, Croatian Government forces started blockading the Army barracks and facilities.

While it is true that a relatively high percentage of the officers' corps is composed of Serbs, it was the Army's commitment to the Yugoslav idea that made it eventually side with the Serbian insurgents. The Army's aim was to preserve Yugoslavia – Serbs do not want to live in independent Croatia – the two aims coincided. And the conflict escalated.

▪ **MISCONCEPTIONS AND LIES ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA**

We accept as a basic principle that in order to understand the actions of an individual today we must learn all about his past. The same principle applies to a nation or a people. Whether we like it or not, in order to understand the bloody tragedy being played out in Yugoslavia, we have to be willing to learn more about the actors in the Yugoslav drama.

The historical circumstances to which the two main players (the Serbs and the Croats) were subjected formed two totally different national characters. The Serbs had to learn to rely on their own resources in their long struggle for freedom and independence from foreign yoke; their leaders, spokesmen and their kings were selected from their own people. Even their religion, Serbian Orthodox, is their own and not subject to foreign influence. Early on, a clear ethnic and national identity was formed. By contrast, the Croats were dominated through centuries by their own corrupt aristocracy, and kept in virtual serfdom. They were and are Roman Catholic and their clergy was always very militant and proselytizing in character. Their national and ethnic identity developed later, never quite free of foreign influence.

In a single ferocious and bloody battle with the Turks at Kosovo in 1389 Serbs lost their freedom, their leadership, their aristocracy and their gentry. From then on for over 400 years the rebellion was waged against a merciless oppressor by the peasants on the level of small groups and villages. The thirst and fight for freedom never faltered till the early 1800s when, finally, after two bloody uprisings, the dream of freedom was realized and the Serbs created their own state. Incidentally, in the first uprising the people elected one of their own, a man called Karageorge, to lead them in battles against the Turks. His descendants became the kings of Serbia, the Karageorgevich dynasty.

During that same period, actually since the 1100s, the Croatian aristocracy, in order to survive, started first making deals with the Hungarian and then Austrian kings. The dealmaking progressed to outright request for the foreign kings to be their own kings. During that period in every popular rebellion and uprising of the Croatian people (e.g. in 1573 Matija Gubec) the Croatian gentry, in order to preserve their privileges, sided with the foreign rulers at the expense of the

peasantry. By the mid 1800s the awakening of Croatian consciousness started taking shape: on one hand there was a dream for a free and unified Land of Southern Slavs (this is the literal translation of Yugoslavia), whose most visible proponents were the Roman Catholic Bishop Josip Strossmayer and the Habsburg General and Austrian Governor of Croatia ban Josip Jelacic. On the other hand there was a proponent for Croatian independence – Ante Starcevic – whose aspirations were pan-Croatian in nature: he considered all Southern Slavs as Croats. His successor, Josip Frank, thought Croats should stay within Austrian domain and was virulently anti Serbian.

It is generally thought that Yugoslavia was an artificial state created by the Allies after the end of the First World War. Or that it was imposed on the Croats and Slovenes by the victorious Serbian Army. Nothing could be further from the truth.

During the First World War, Serbia fought valiantly on the side of the Allies and was offered a considerable enlargement of its territory which would encompass almost two thirds of present day Yugoslavia (Treaty of London of 1915 – the Treaty that also granted Italy most of Dalmatia). The Slovenes and Croats fought on the side of Austria as conscripts. As the Allied victory appeared more and more certain, afraid of being left on the losing side with the victorious and expansionist Italy as a neighbor, many exiled Slovene and Croat politicians approached the Serbian Government proposing a single Southern Slav State.

An agreement was reached on the Island of Corfu in 1917 between the Yugoslav Committee (composed of Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian representatives living on the territories under Austrian rule) and the Serbian Government for the creation of a unified state under the Serbian dynasty Karageorgevich. The leading Croatian politician, Dr. Ante Trumbic, at the time declared: "Serbia proved ready to sacrifice her state individuality in order that one common state of all Serbs, Croats and Slovenes might be created. She thus has the absolute right to be called the Yugoslav Piedmont".

So it was that, on December 1, 1918, a new nation was born: a constitutional monarchy called Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. To further unify and to minimize the importance of ethnicity the name was

changed in 1929 to Yugoslavia. The administrative borders of the provinces were drawn disregarding ethnicity, named after the main rivers running through the units and the main theme of Government policy was unity and brotherhood: we are Yugoslavs first and by choice – the rest is an accident of birth. The majority of people accepted this and, given time, the dream of a Yugoslav nation and Yugoslav people would have eventually become a reality. And considering the checkered demographic distribution (Slovenia being the only ethnically homogenous province) the wisest possible solution to the new state.

There were difficulties: Croatian politicians, once assured of the integrity of the Croatian land within the borders of Yugoslavia and having Yugoslavia as a guarantor against expansionist Fascist Italy, began a policy of obstructionism. In order to maintain the idea of Croatian identity and separateness alive they pushed for the creation of a province drawn along the Croatian ethnic lines. It was, perhaps, born of an 800 year old Croats' life without history, without their own flags, without their victories and their defeats. Of this historical frustration was born the idea of Croats as a political entity. The cornerstone of this idea is that only Croats can live on Croatian land. For the more moderate Croats the Serbs living on Croatian land owe political loyalty only to Croatia while for the more extreme (the Ustashi) Serbs had no right to exist at all on Croatian land.

The Serbian leadership and politicians, decimated and exhausted by the First World War (Serbian losses were 23% of its population), lacked both vision and sensitivity to assuage Croatian worries about their own identity. Overall, with all the political bickering and dissensions the future looked promising.

The Slovenes, on the other hand, gave wholehearted support to the Yugoslav idea: perhaps because sizeable numbers of their co-nationals were still living under the rule of Fascist Italy and Austria and their only hope for eventual liberation was a strong Yugoslavia.

In 1941, with Great Britain alone waging the war against the might of Hitler's Germany, which by that time with its allies was in control of almost all of Europe, there was a great deal of diplomatic activity in Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia: Hitler was pressuring the Yugoslav Government to sign a non-

aggression pact with Germany in order to further secure the southern flank of "Fortress Europe" since Italy was less than successful in their war with troublesome Greece and with British troops positioned on the Island of Crete ready to land on the mainland to assist the Greek forces. The British and the American Embassies (US Colonel Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services, the precursor of the CIA, was a very busy man those days in Belgrade) were trying equally hard to persuade the Yugoslav Government not to sign. The Yugoslav Government eventually felt forced to sign a non-aggression pact with Germany. Just as Hitler was preparing his attack on the Soviet Union, it was the Serbian patriots, fired by the ideals of democracy and liberty, that overthrew the Government.

On April 6, Germany launched heavy air raids on Belgrade and the might of its Army against Yugoslavia. Croatian regiments on the Hungarian border offered no resistance and Zagreb welcomed the Nazi Army. The Serbs fought briefly but were no match for the Blitzkrieg, and the war ended in short order.

And Germany proceeded to partition Yugoslavia among its Allies: an "Independent State of Croatia" was established comprising Croatia proper, Dalmatia, eastern Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Italy and Austria divided and annexed Slovenia, parts of Serbia were given to Hungary and Bulgaria. What was left of Serbia was under the direct military occupation of Germany while Montenegro and a part of Serbia to the northeast of Albania were occupied by Italy.

Hitler's rage against the Serbs, whose actions delayed the attack on the Soviet Union giving him less time before the onset of the Russian winter, prompted him to set a ratio of 100:1 – Serbian hostages to Germans killed. And the German Military Command for Serbia proceeded to both enforce and exceed it. In the town of Kragujevac, as a retribution for 10 German soldiers killed and 26 wounded, on the 21st of October 1941 the German military shot 2,300 Serbian hostages (including high school children); town of Kraljevo: 2,400; in the region of Macva a German punitive expedition massacred 10,000 people (women, children and men) razing to the ground a dozen villages, etc. etc... This type of German inhuman ruthlessness was played over and over again.

▪ **"INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA"
GENOCIDE OF SERBS**

Germany's rage may also have played a part in its decision to install on April 10, 1941, Mussolini's protege Ante Pavelic, a Croatian terrorist, responsible for the assassination of King Alexander, as the head of the newly created "Independent State of Croatia" (that was the official name of the new state). Ante Pavelic, a Croatian separatist, a follower of Ante Starcevic's idea of pan-Croatism and Josip Frank's ferocious hatred of Serbs and a believer in the purity of the Croatian race, has been living in Italy since the late 1920s under the protection of Mussolini. With the funds furnished by the Italian Government he established secret training camps in Italy attracting Croatian separatists. He named the members of his terrorist organization Ustashi. The aim of the Italian policy at the time was to destabilize Yugoslavia and realize the age old Italian aspirations of making Dalmatia part of Italy, and Mussolini's dream of reviving the glory of the old Roman Empire of controlling the Balkan peninsula and the Mediterranean basin. The Ustashis also enjoyed the support of the Hungarian Government and had a terrorist training camp at Janka Pusta in Hungary.

On December 14, 1941, Croatia declared war on Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. A peace treaty was never signed.

Pavelic, following the Croatian historical precedents, invited an Italian prince, Duke of Spoleto, to be the king of Croatia. In gratitude for Italian support he ceded to Italy a sizable part of Dalmatia which that country promptly annexed.

Within days, Mile Budak, Minister for Education and Religion (!) of the Independent State of Croatia, announced the official policy of the Government as to the solution of the "Serbian problem": "One third of the Serbian population shall be converted to Catholicism, one third expelled across the river Drina (which was the border with the German occupied Serbia) and one third shall be liquidated". This announcement was carried on the front pages of the Croatian newspapers and broadcast by the Government radio.

On April 28, 1941, only a couple of weeks after the announcement of this official Government policy the execution of 195 Serbian civilians took place in the

village of Gudovac, near Bjelovar, in the presence of Eugen "Dido" Kvaternik, Minister for State Security of the Independent State of Croatia. After that, the pace of the liquidation of Serbian civilian population on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia accelerated: in the concentration camps, in towns and villages, in the Serbian Orthodox churches (it is estimated that in the Orthodox Church in Glina over a thousand Serbs were slaughtered on August 2nd and 3rd, 1941). Women and children were not spared: in the region of Kozara thousands of children with the average age of 6.5 were slaughtered. The dead were not spared either: in Capljina the Orthodox cemetery was ploughed over and the city dump was established on its site. Hundreds of Serbian Orthodox churches were demolished.

The Ustashi genocide of the Serbs was characterized by a hatred beyond comprehension: the favored tools of mass executions were knives, axes, bats and torture. By contrast, German executions were positively surgical.

There is a wealth of historical documents indicating that both German and Italian occupation authorities (the Italians largely on humanitarian grounds) were opposed to the enormity and bestiality of Ustashi massacres of the Serbs on the grounds that the massacres were increasing the ranks of the guerrillas and thus making the position of the Axis military forces on the Balkans more difficult. (Faced with annihilation Serbs would flee to the mountains and organize defense and resistance groups in order to survive.)

Dr. Hermann Neubacher, Hitler's Minister Plenipotentiary for the Balkans writes in his book "Special Assignment In The Southeast, 1940-45" (pg 18) that "a Croatian crusade of destruction directed against the Orthodox Serbs erupted, a crusade that belongs among the most brutal mass murder undertakings in the entire history of the world". Further on in his book (pg 31) he writes: "The prescription for the Orthodox proclaimed by the leader and Fuhrer of Croatia, Ante Pavelic, was reminiscent of religious wars of the bloodiest memory: One third must be converted to Catholicism, another third must be expelled and the final third must die. The last part of the program has been carried out. When the leaders of the Ustashi movement claim that they have slit the throats of a million Serbs (including infants, children, women and

old people) that is, in my opinion, a boastful exaggeration. On the basis of the reports that were submitted to me, I estimate the number of the defenseless murder victims to be three quarter of a million."

The German intelligence chief for the Southeast Dr. Wilhelm Hoettl (alias Walter Hagen) writes in his book "The Secret Front" (pg 238): "A truly murderous hatred was aimed at the Serbs and the Jews who had just been officially proclaimed outlawed. Already in the Summer of 1941 the horrendous atrocities have assumed unheard of proportions... Since, following an old tradition, being Croatian was equivalent to confessing to the Catholic faith and being Serbian followed from the profession of Orthodoxy, they now began to convert the Orthodox to Roman Catholicism under duress. These forced conversions were actually a method of Croatization."

Curzio Malaparte, a respected Italian writer and journalist reports in his book "La Pelle" about an audience with Ante Pavelic. Malaparte, commenting on the contents of a wicker basket, asked: "Are they Dalmatian oysters?" Pavelic replied: "It is a gift from my loyal Ustashis. Forty pounds of human eyes."

In a book titled "Collaboration or Resistance" published in 1968 in Austria German author Werner Brockdorf writes: "The Ustashi formed the Jasenovac concentration camp in the summer of 1941. Deplorable living conditions resulted in an enormous mortality rate among the inmates. The camp was built mainly for the extermination of Jews and Serbs. Systematic executions, some in bestial fashion, were committed en masse."

The commandant of the Jasenovac camp was a Franciscan friar, Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic.... The Franciscan seminarian Brzica alone on the night of August 29, 1942, decapitated 1.360 persons, using a special knife.

Further in the book Brockdorf says: "On June 28, 1941, mass arrests of Serbs suddenly began. By the hundreds, they were led up to the banks of Neretva, tied together by wire, shot and then thrown into the river. In the vicinity of Mostar, where the river narrowed, the drifting corpses jammed the waterway. The Ustashi unclogged it by throwing hand grenades."

Again Brockdorf: Taking the lead in working hand in

glove with the Ustashi, and imposing upon the Serbian people a repression which was designed to lead to mass conversions, was the order of Franciscans. Already in 1941, thousands of Serbs became converted. The Ustashi and the Catholic clergy were of the mistaken opinion that compulsory Catholicization also resolved the issue of nationality, for Zagreb's first priority was to Croatize those areas which were thinly populated by Croats.

The Austrian publicist and writer, Friedrich Heer, writes in his book "The Faith of Adolph Hitler": As for the brutal murders of Serbs in Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian areas taken over by the Croatian Ustashi bands, 600.000 to 850.000 Orthodox Serbs, down to small children were butchered. Roman Catholic priests and Franciscan friars collaborated in these murders both as executioners and as commanders of concentration camps. Not infrequently, they initiated them. The mayhem was taking place before the eyes of Rome. The Croatian state of Ante Pavelic represented itself as strictly Catholic; it had its envoy in Rome. The Italian and German commanders averted their eyes with horror. Rome was keeping silent.

Still, Friedrich Heer: 299 Serbian churches were pillaged and razed and 600.000 to 800.000 Serbs were murdered. Churches were converted into slaughterhouses. Later, children were found on a spit, their members still contorted by pain.

The German writer, Karlheinz Deschner, in his book entitled "With God and the Fascists", says the following: Numerous Serbian priests were subjected to horrible tortures. In Zagreb, where Catholic Archbishop Stepinac resided with the Apostolic Nuncio Marcone, the Orthodox Metropolitan Dositej was tortured in such a bestial fashion that he lost his sanity. Orthodox hierarchs, Bishop Platon of Banja Luka, the Metropolitan of Sarajevo Petar Zimonic, and Bishop Sava, were brutally murdered, as were several hundred other Orthodox clergy. They gouged out the eyes of Bishop Platon and his aide, Msgr. Dusan Subotic, while a fire was lit on their chests; then they cut off their noses and ears before administering the mortal blow.

Other victims of Nazi terror, Jews and Gypsies, were not spared either: Pavelic boasted to Hitler that his Ustashis were more efficient and thorough than Hitler's SS troop in eliminating the Jews.

▪ MARSHAL TITO'S YUGOSLAVIA

After the war ended, Marshal Tito installed his personal brand of autocratic Communism in power. In order to solidify the rule of the Communist party over the country and also to insure his personal power, he divided the country arbitrarily into six Republics (vaguely along ethnic lines). To further weaken possible opposition from the Serbians (who were by far the most numerous group and also largely monarchist) he created on the traditionally Serbian territory two autonomous units. The administrative boundaries were never open to parliamentary discussion or popular plebiscite. The fairness of the boundaries is rather questionable; for instance: **according to the statistics of 1948 only 1% of Croats were living in the Republic of Serbia, while 17% of Serbians, even after the genocide of 1941, were left within Croatia's borders.**

The division of the country into six Republics and weakening of the Federal Government (Marshal Tito himself retained enormous personal power) resulted in the creation of cliques in each Republic fighting for power on both Republican and Federal level. It also degenerated over the years from a purely ideological level to a narrow national and a personal power struggle.

Incidentally, after the War's end, there was an adjustment of Yugoslav borders and the territories populated by the Slovenes in Italy and Austria were incorporated into the Yugoslav state.

▪ POST COMMUNIST YUGOSLAVIA

After the formal demise of Communism, "democratic" elections, more or less controlled and manipulated by the existing power cliques, were held: in Slovenia, Mr. Kucan, Secretary of the Communist Party of Slovenia was elected President of Slovenia; in Croatia, Mr. Tudjman, a Yugoslav Army General and a high ranking member of the Communist Party was elected President of Croatia and in Serbia it was Mr. Milosevic, the Secretary of the Serbian Communist Party (which became a Socialist Party) who was elected President of Serbia. Fiery rhetoric, based on intolerant chauvinism, was used in each electioneering campaign as a substitute for the bankrupt communist ideology.

Mr. Tudjman, heavily financed by Ustashi emigre circles, in his zeal to appeal to the most ethnocentric sentiments of his electorate and in order to score points against his local opponents, said: "Thank God, my wife is neither a Serb nor a Jew!"

Much more ominously, he made a clear statement: **"The Independent State of Croatia was not just a pure creation of Hitler and Mussolini but the realization of the age old Croatian aspirations"**. This is a direct and clear reference by Mr. Tudjman to the "Independent State of Croatia" headed by Ante Pavelic and his Ustashi butchers whose stated official policy was the elimination of the Serbian population from the "sacred soil of Croatia".

Mr. Tudjman and his party, the Croatian Democratic Union, adopted as their symbol a flag with a red and white chessboard, the flag created by the Fascist Ustashi. While it is true that the chessboard is a historical Croatian coat of arms it was never before used on the flag till the Ustashi created it as a symbol of their Fascist movement. It was the symbol under which the Ustashi carried out the horrendous genocide against the Serbian people. It carries the same emotional impact to the Serbs as the Nazi crooked cross elicits in the Jews.

As is typical of all apologists, Mr. Tudjman reduced the number of civilian victims of Ustashi genocide to 38,000. And the Croatian Catholic Church took an unconscionable stand: the victims of the World War II in Croatia were due to the civil war! In a letter published on May 22, 1991, in *Zajednicar* (a Croatian periodical) and signed by 15 Croatian Catholic Bishops they say: "The people were exposed to the civil war that was particularly harsh on the territory of Croatia. The Croatian population suffered from armed Serbian groups (Chetniks) and the Serbian population from the revenge of the Croatian regime (Ustashi)." **This is a horrifying and despicable attempt to accuse the victim of the crime committed by the victimizer – to confuse the issue of the victim of genocide and the perpetrator of genocide.**

Historically, Chetniks (literally members of cheta or squad – as in military squad) would appear during the wars as volunteers in defense of the Serbian people. In peacetime they would disband and exist only as old veterans that would meet occasionally and

informally to recount old glories. They were completely non political in their outlook. **By contrast the Ustashi were a terrorist organization which, once in power, became a clearly defined Nazi party dedicated to a racially pure Croatia, a party with a publicly stated policy of extermination of Serbs from their newly created state.**

In 1941, Col. Drazha Mihajlovic formed a core of resistance in Serbia against the Nazis under the name of Chetniks. He was named Yugoslav Minister of Defense by the Yugoslav Government in exile and was recognized as such by the Governments of USA and Great Britain. Both Allied Governments had military missions at his Headquarters in the mountains of Serbia. His Chetniks saved the lives of hundreds of American pilots downed over Yugoslavia. They had built, with very primitive means at their disposal, a landing strip at Pranjani in Serbia and kept it secure. It is from this strip that the American Air Force planes flew the pilots to safe haven in Italy.

The largest Chetnik group in Croatia, the Dinara Chetnik Division, operating roughly in the area of Krajina, was established on the 27th of July of 1941, fully 3 months after the genocide by the Ustashis had started. Hundreds of Croatian patriots also joined the Dinara Chetnik Division: quite a few in positions of command – Major Stude was the Chief of Staff, Ivan Jankov was a Brigade Commander, Captain Alfirovic was the Adjutant to the Commander of the Division, Roko Kaleb was Chief Information Officer etc.

There was a Slovenian Chetnik group operating in Slovenia. Chetniks of the Second World War rose up not only in defense of the Serbian people against the Ustashis, but, primarily, as a Yugoslav resistance movement against the Nazis.

After Mr. Tudjman's election, thousands of Serbs in Croatia were fired from Government jobs, special police units of "pure Croats" (as opposed to the new Croats of Orthodox faith) were formed, public display of Cyrillic alphabet was forbidden. While there were programs on the Croatian Television and Radio for the Italians, Slovenes and Hungarians, there was not a minute devoted to the Serbs, although they constitute by far the largest minority in the Republic of Croatia. The educational curricula were geared to the creation of an ethnically pure Croatian state. Serbian literature and history were all but eliminated from the text

books. Serbian Orthodox clergy has been continuously exposed to indignities, threats and physical abuse. As a result, 4 bishops and a great many priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church, fearing for their safety and mindful of the 1941 total extermination of their predecessors, fled from the Republic of Croatia.

Serbs have lived in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia–Herzegovina since the 13th century. They continued to migrate to these areas in order to escape the horrors of Ottoman Turkey. The Austro–Hungarian Empire was the lesser of two evils and they settled in the territories that were the border between Austria–Hungary and Turkey. While Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia were separate administrative provinces of the feudal system of the Austro–Hungarian Empire, the territory where the Serbs settled and lived as relatively free men, was called Vojna Krajina (literal translation: Military Zone) and was under the direct military control of the Austrian Crown. The Serbs became the soldiers of the first line of defense of the Austrian Empire and Vojna Krajina a buffer zone between the two warring Empires.

In the 1800s the Turkish Empire started crumbling and ceased to be a threat to Austria–Hungary. Consequently, the need for the Military Zone ceased to exist and, towards the end of the century, it was incorporated into Croatia proper, still under Austrian rule. **Since Krajina, the territory where the Serbs have lived and defended it with their lives for centuries, was part of Croatia but for a short period of time in history, it is not quite correct to talk about Serbians in Croatia. The Croatian claim to that territory rests on very questionable grounds.**

Except for brief periods of peaceful coexistence with the Croats, the Serbs were subjected to cultural and political oppression and forced into conversion to catholicism. The most "genuine" Croats, those in western Herzegovina, for instance, are really of Serbian descent. Their family names betray their Serbian origin.

CONCLUSIONS

It is all too easy for the democratic West to view the demise of Communism as a first step towards democracy in Eastern Europe. While this attractive point of view may be realized without too much turmoil in homogenous nations, it seems that

multinational countries such as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia may go through a period of nationalistic awakenings, ethnic tensions and tribal hostilities, all of it compounded by the difficulties and miseries of the transition to market economies. The Communist doctrine of forced and artificial internationalism ignored the ethnic, nationalistic and tribal passions, and they continued to fester underground instead of loosing their destructive power as they do in open societies. Newborn "democrats", steeped in Communist ideology of autocratic power politics, cannot easily abandon their lifetime training of rule by force. Skilful manipulation of ethnic and tribal passions gets them elected in seemingly democratic fashion and allows them to retain the power.

In Yugoslavia, Communism as ideology had died long before it did in the rest of Eastern Europe. Government apparatus and structure of the Communist parties survived. **In order to stay in control in each Republic and gain popular support, the cliques in power revived dormant tribal animosities and drifted towards extreme and narrow nationalism.**

The natural progression of events carried these power cliques in Slovenia and Croatia towards the declaration of independence for their own states, because otherwise they would have had to relinquish some of their power.

Considering the checkered demographic distribution, a just division of Yugoslavia into independent states would have been very difficult at best. A peaceful and equanimous solution became almost impossible in the atmosphere of heightened nationalistic tensions.

In Croatia, Mr. Tudjman and his party, the Croatian Democratic Union, went a step further in exacerbating an atmosphere of mistrust: they are responsible not only of reviving the tribal animosities **but also of resurrecting a racist and xenophobic policy of Messrs. Starcevic, Frank and Pavelic. A policy based on hatred of the Serbs, purity of Croatian political entity and the sanctity of the Croatian soil. THIS IS THE CAUSE OF THE SERBO-CROATIAN WAR.**

The Croatian (and Slovenian) claim that they are fighting for democracy and freedom from the Communist regime in Belgrade is totally without foundation. If we take freedom of expression, freedom to criticize the government and its policies

as a measure of democracy, then Serbia is more democratic than either Slovenia or Croatia: there is far more opposition to the Government policies allowed in Belgrade than in Zagreb or Ljubljana. Several periodicals, published in Belgrade, both in Cyrillic and Latin alphabets, are harshly critical of Government policies as are the numerous opposition parties in their public debates over the future of Yugoslavia and/or Serbia. By contrast, the only opposition to Mr. Tudjman's policies is allowed to come from even more extreme elements of the ethnocentric and racist persuasion. Tragically, Croatians born after 1940, have no idea of the crimes committed by their fathers. They are gambling their future on a history based on lies and on a political philosophy that cannot but continue to deepen the rift between the Serbs and the Croats.

In Croatia, a mantle of democracy must not be allowed to hide the underlying ethnocentric, racist and anti-Serbian political philosophy of the Croatian Government as represented by Mr. Tudjman and his Croatian Democratic Union.

Any support of Mr. Tudjman's regime, particularly from abroad, is a subversion and betrayal of basic democratic principles. It is alarming to read the statement of Chancellor Helmut Kohl (as reported in the Chicago Tribune of 12/22/91 by Storer Rowley) that Germany is merely trying to protect an ally (Croatia). Democratic Germany honoring the alliance of Nazi Germany and the Ustashi "Independent State of Croatia"!!

It is both alarming and ominous to see democratic governments of recent date in Germany, Italy, Austria (Waldheim's Austria !) and Hungary in a great rush to dismember Yugoslavia, the torn in their sides since its inception. Apparently, the new democratic governments in the aforementioned countries are pursuing the same geopolitical aims as their previous Nazi and Fascist regimes did. It is doubtful that without their support the separatist movements in Slovenia and Croatia would have rushed into unilateral declarations of independence without exploring all the possibilities of a peaceful and amicable settlement within the legal framework of the Yugoslav state.

In the exacerbated atmosphere of ethnic and nationalistic tensions in Yugoslavia a peaceful and truly democratic resolution seems tragically remote.