

CRISIS IN CROATIA
Part I: Post-mortems after Karadjordjevo

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On the afternoon of December 2, 1971, Yugoslav radio stations interrupted their regular programs, an unusual and thus portentous occurrence, to broadcast a speech made by President Tito at a closed Party conclave the preceding day. The meeting, officially the XXI Session of the Party's most authoritative body, the Presidium of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia,¹ was still continuing at Karadjordjevo, a royal hunting lodge 70 miles north of Belgrade that is one of Tito's favorite retreats.

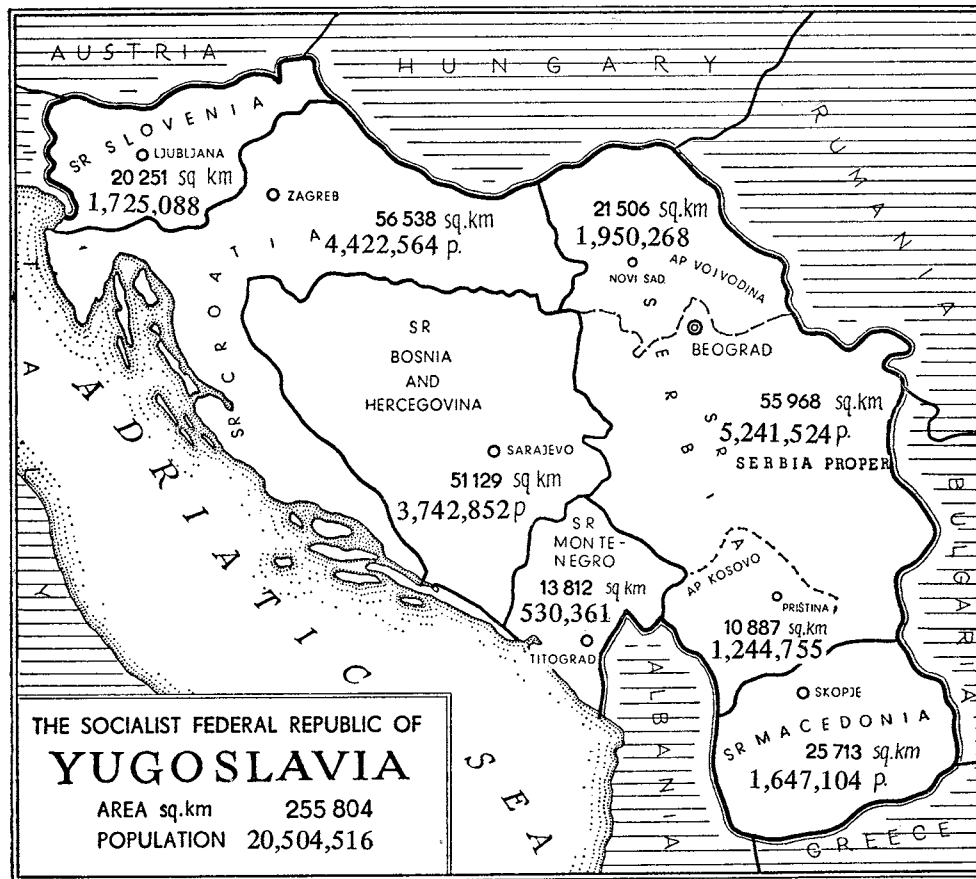
The unusualness of such a broadcast, which was repeated several times, signaled a dramatic event, comparable to the Brioni meetings of January 1954 and July 1966 which made public the downfall, respectively, of Milovan Djilas and of Aleksandar Ranković, erstwhile heirs-apparent of Yugoslavia. This time it was the Party leadership of the second most important of Yugoslavia's six federal units, the Socialist Republic of Croatia, who was under fire. This time the charge was pandering to nationalists and separatists and "rotten liberalism" in the face of a "counter-revolution"—the last a very serious term indeed for Tito to use. In the following weeks, moreover, the accusation was escalated to include encouraging or even leading separatist and antisocialist factions, bringing the country (Tito himself was to say) to within six months of civil war or foreign intervention.

Within ten days of the Karadjordjevo meeting the primary targets of Tito's wrath—Dr. Savka Dabčević-Kučar, President of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Croatia (LCC); Pero Pirker, Secretary of the Executive Committee of the LCC; Miko Tripalo, one of

Croatia's two representatives on the supreme Executive Bureau of the all-Yugoslav Party and one of the Republic's three members of Yugoslavia's new, 23-member collective state Presidency; and several of their closest collaborators—had all resigned. This was not, they all said, because they disagreed with President Tito but because they accepted the implications of his lack of confidence and agreed with his original criticism that they had been guilty of serious political misjudgments; additional charges that they had done more than this they indignantly rejected.

In Zagreb, the Croatian capital, the resignations provoked mass demonstrations, which lasted for several nights, by supporters of the deposed leaders. Some 550 of the demonstrators were arrested, most of them University students whose strike and attempt to call for a general strike at the end of November had been the immediate occasion for Tito's move. Public tension and intensive security precautions, at one stage including army helicopter patrols over the city, continued until Christmas and New Year had passed without further serious incidents. Except for a group of four student leaders seized by the police on the morning the resignations were to be announced, the rest of the arrested students either were released or were fined (276 of them) or given light sentences (155) for disturbing the peace. On the other hand, 11 prominent Croatian intellectuals, alleged to be the ringleaders of the aborted "counterrevolution," were arrested in early January and like the four student leaders are still awaiting a repeatedly postponed trial.

By mid-January at least 300 resignations or dismissals of Party or state officials at all levels had



Map courtesy of Yugoslav Survey

been reported in the press, and the total list was undoubtedly much larger. Spasmodic arrests on charges ranging from "hostile propaganda" to conspiring to overthrow the Constitution or the socialist system continued throughout the spring, with no regular pattern, and a total of 98 were officially admitted to be in preventive detention as of mid-March. A few minor figures, again often students, have been tried and sentenced. The leaders who were removed from office in December eventually lost their Party memberships, and despite apparently sincere opposition from their successors, demands for their arrest and trial by local Party organizations and organizations like veterans' associations were reported from time to time.

Five months after the process began the majority of the Croats, second most numerous and important of Yugoslavia's nationalities, were still in a state of shock, bitterly resentful, unwilling to believe the "truths" they were being told about the genuinely popular leaders they had lost, and sullenly refusing to grant legitimacy to new leaders whom they considered imposed from above and outside.

Their jokes reflected their attitudes. "Why did Tripalo and Savka read their resignations so slowly on television? Because they have difficulty reading Cyrillic." (The Cyrillic alphabet is the alphabet of the Serbs; the Croats write in the Latin alphabet.) "Why don't postage stamps stick on letters in Croatia any more? Because people are spitting on the wrong side." (The reference is to stamps with Tito's portrait on them.) "The dispute with the Serbs over the foreign currency system has been solved by mutual compromise. We send them our foreign currency; they send us their system."

Those in charge call it a "cleansing." Others including the Western press have called it a "purge." The bare facts are that the numbers involved have already been larger than in any other settling of accounts experienced by Yugoslav communism since it came to power during the Second World War, that there are strong pressures at all levels favoring a firmer hand and more use of the police than has thus far been permitted, and that the position of those who are resisting these pressures is being contested.

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Karadjordjevo and its aftermath provided a dramatic climax to 12 months of what Belgrade's leading daily newspaper was quick to label "Yugoslavia's most serious postwar political crisis."² They also clearly marked a major development in what this observer last summer hazardously called Titoism's historically decisive if agonizingly prolonged "moment of truth."³ But what kind of development do they mark?

Many Western journalists and editors found a simple analogy with Czechoslovakia in August 1968. Once again a "progressive" and "liberal" movement in a Communist Party, this time in Croatia, had been suffocated by the "fraternal" intervention of the "conservative" Communist forces of another, larger nation, this time Serbian.

A few of those who took this attitude were more than superficial observers of the Yugoslav scene. Like the present writer, they were correspondents who had watched and reported the political struggles of the past decade, which had pitted advocates of liberalizing economic reforms, economic and political decentralization, "de-étatization," and "democratization" of the Party against "conservative" advocates of the Yugoslav status quo, the quasi-market economy and quasi-de-Stalinized political system forged by compromise in the early 1950s. They had noted that the main push for reform had come from Croatia and the principal resistance from Serbia and the underdeveloped south, with the line-up a function of a mixture of different and conflicting political histories and economic and ethnic interests. They noted that the division had also reflected, in part, a generation gap between old Partisans who made the Yugoslav revolution and younger managers, professional cadres, and politicians imbued with more "modern" ideas, and that among the most outspoken of the new generation of reformers had been precisely the young Croatian leaders (all born post-1922) who were now being purged.

For many of these observers, especially those who had not lived in the country during the past two years and *felt* the changing atmosphere or whose homework had neglected the intellectual and political history of ethnic nationalism in the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires, the conclusion was obvious. Motivated both by Croatian patriotism and by a genuine devotion to a more "liberal" communism and a pluralistic conception of

socialist society, Croatia's leaders had almost succeeded in emancipating their people from "conservative" or still quasi-dogmatic Serbian communism and from Serbian hegemony and exploitation. Whether the coup which overthrew them and interrupted this development just short of consummation should be interpreted as primarily a restoration of Serbian domination or as primarily a restoration of Communist "conservatism" offered a point of marginal differentiation that was essentially unimportant, since the result in either case was both.

This interpretation is faulty or simplistic on several counts. It fails to consider the possibility that individual politicians and their positions can evolve with time, in response to changing demands or in the heat of political battle. It is simplistic about the generation gap, as are all those studies of Communist movements that assume that younger Communists are necessarily and permanently less dogmatic and more open and "modern" than their fathers, and in necessarily identifying decentralization with "democratization," failing to ask who it is who succeeds to decentralized power. The analogy with Czechoslovakia in 1968 suffers from a number of defects, beginning with the obvious point that Czechoslovakia is not legally part of the Soviet Union, while Croatia is constitutionally an inseparable part of Yugoslavia.⁴ (The Prague-Zagreb analogy is in fact valid in only one dimension: the popularity of the leaders and the effect this had on them, which was to provide a heady wine for their self-confidence and to make them, in the end, followers rather than leaders of their mass support.) The presumption that Croatia and Croatian Communists must always be on the "liberal" and "progressive" side of the political barricade because they have been there in the recent past and because Croatia, with Slovenia, is economically and socially the most developed part of Yugoslavia is also unwarranted as it stands, for it is based on unverified assumptions about political consistency and a deterministic relationship between levels of economic and social development and levels of actual or potential political modernization. The net result is a premature jump to a set of normative statements based not only on inadequate data but also on some ideological values or preconceptions that are usually unspecified but ought to be, if only for the sake of clarity.

With the politically violent resolution of the Croatian crisis still incomplete and subject to unforeseeable changes of course, it is too early to do more than speculate about its longer-term significance. It is time, however, to undertake the more modest task that authors of this kind of instant analysis could not complete, at least partly because adequate data were simply not available: a preliminary chronology of the events leading up to Karadjordjevo, including the roles and motives of the protagonists and the balance of forces that prevented an earlier solution and then determined the quality of the one initiated in December 1971, as a firmer basis for an interpretation of its immediate significance and value judgments about it.

This is the purpose of Parts II to IV of this series of Reports. Such an exercise is now possible because the large if still very incomplete volume of normally concealed information, which has emerged from the public airing of charges, counter-charges, "self-criticism," and efforts to analyze how it all happened, has glutted the Yugoslav mass media since December and has added much to what was known at the time. Although this material is still so incomplete that many chapters of the story will doubtless have to be revised as more is known, it also seemed useful to have on record a reasonably complete picture of the state of our knowledge shortly after the event, with one observer's initial interpretations. (This is the apologetic rationale for a tale in which the reader will sometimes be told more than he really wants to know.)

The rest of this introductory Report will summarize that story and a revealing range of Yugoslav interpretations and then will survey, disjointedly and inconclusively, some of the broader issues of ideology and insights into the nature and potential for development of the Yugoslav socialist system that they suggest.

The Developing Crisis: An Interpretative Summary

A series of developments in the middle 1960s, frequently described in earlier Fieldstaff Reports, initiated a new period of rapid change and associated disequilibria and instability in Yugoslavia's economic and political systems and "Titoist" political philosophy, the latter two virtually frozen

since the Djilas crisis of 1953-54. The primary results included a trend toward a laissez-faire socialist economy and an accelerating rate of change in the distribution of effective power shared by central Party and state apparatuses in Belgrade and those of the regions (the six republics and two autonomous provinces), favoring the latter, which are conceived as ethnic as well as territorial units. One of the leading protagonists of these changes was Vladimir Bakarić, boss of the Croatian Communist Party and the Socialist Republic of Croatia since the war.

In the later 1960s a group of younger, "progressive" Communist leaders came to power in Croatia, as Bakarić's protégés, on a platform of further decentralization, democratization, and economic liberalism. Such a platform was seen and welcomed as consistent with Croatia's long-term aspirations for a fairer deal in the Yugoslav federation, where Croats had felt exploited and oppressed by a centralized system in which their more numerous but poorer ethnic rivals, the Serbs, enjoyed preponderant influence.

In office and in alliance with like-minded comrades in other regions the new leadership, whose most prominent members were Miko Tripalo, Savka Dabčević-Kučar, and Pero Pirker, continued the battle against the remaining power of centralist and authoritarian bureaucracies and continuing concentration of finance capital and commercial oligopolies in Belgrade, which is not only the Federal capital but also the capital of Serbia.

In seeking wider support in this political struggle for decentralized power, the Croatian new guard began to play with Croatian national sentiment, historically the easiest and surest way of arousing mass enthusiasm while also frightening one's negotiating partners with the implicit threat that nationalist forces may get out of hand if one's demands are not met.

More extreme Croatian nationalists, in and outside the Party, appeared with escalating demands. Their activities centered around the Matica Hrvatska, a respected and ancient cultural organization that became again the aggressive defender of Croatian national sentiment and interests as it had been in the late years of the Hapsburg Monarchy and at some moments in the life of the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Kingdom. To many the

Matica began to look increasingly like the nucleus of a new, nationalist political party outside and challenging Communist control.

This development, combined with the Croatian leadership's increasingly rigid negotiating positions in disputes with the Federal center and their toleration of nationalist "excesses," which terrified the non-Croatian minorities with recent memories of Ustaše atrocities in multinational Croatia, frightened off Croatia's former allies in other regions. Their consequent isolation then forced the Croatian leadership into ever more exclusive dependence on mass popularity inside Croatia, based more on their appeal to national than on their appeal to socialist allegiance.

The process was further exaggerated by splits at the top of the Republican party hierarchy. Bakarić and some members of the "progressive" new leadership, including those on the Party's Executive Committee who have taken charge since Karadjordjevo, argued that the opening to the masses was proving an opening to chauvinism and separatism. For such views they were accused by the Matica and by their own colleagues of pro-Serbian "unitarism" and antidemocratic conservatism. These colleagues, who included the increasingly visible and popular Tripalo-Savka-Pirker triumvirate, insisted that what they now called "the mass national movement" was socialist and national rather than nationalist in orientation, that it was firmly under their leadership, and that they knew what limits to place on their useful alliance with the extra-Party forces gathered around the Matica. The disagreement escalated from one of tactics to one of principle, while clashes of personalities within each faction as well as between them also played a role.

In fighting this internal battle, it is now said, the leaders whose platform had been liberal national communism became more national and less liberal, gradually subordinating themselves ideologically to the Matica and using control of the Party apparatus and communications, their Matica and mass support, and the mass media controlled by their followers or the Matica to discredit and eliminate their "unitarist" opponents from political life. The atmosphere thus created is now retrospectively described by many in the Croatian Party as one of "intellectual and political terror."

It was this situation, in which it rightly or wrongly seemed to men in power everywhere except in Zagreb that the Croatian nationalist tail was wagging the Croatian Communist dog and moving in the direction of separatism or a kind of "chauvinistic dictatorship," that led to a "Yugoslavization" of the crisis and President Tito's forceful intervention. The denouement at Karadjordjevo was precipitated when students at Zagreb University, under partly non-Communist and pronationalist leadership, went on a well-organized strike at the end of November 1971 and resisted the pleas of a belatedly alarmed Party leadership that they go back to class. The student revolt against Party leaders who had claimed that nationalism was not dangerous and could be harnessed confirmed Tito in his conviction that the Party in Croatia had lost control of a dangerous situation, that those who were responsible must go, and that action must be forceful and immediate.

Interpretations and Misinterpretations

As the dismissal of officials accused of being soft on chauvinism and the arrest of people accused of separatism and counterrevolution continued throughout Croatia in the early months of 1972, Yugoslavs and foreign observers began asking themselves three basic questions:

- Was it true, as the official line now maintains, that the situation in Croatia had really become so threatening to the unity of the country, to peace among its nationalities, or to Titoist socialism that drastic action was unavoidable?

- Even if the answer is yes, are the actions taken since Karadjordjevo the most appropriate ones, or by including charges like "counterrevolution" do they contain what one observer called a dangerous dose of "ideological overkill" that will make an excessively widespread purge including criminal trials inevitable, thus generating even more genuine separatists and antisocialists—prepared, perhaps, to support terrorism—among a disbelieving and embittered Croatian populace?

- Will the widespread use of purge and police, backed by Tito's repeated demands

for a strengthened Communist Party, more central control, and an end to "democracy for the enemies of our socialist democracy," not carry Yugoslavia as a whole back toward the centralized Party dictatorship of a few years ago?

The second and third questions look to the future and the answers must therefore be speculative. They also depend in part on the answer to the first, which is now historical and the primary subject of these Reports. That answer derives in turn from one's choice of one or another or a combination of at least four views of the purge itself, which has been variously interpreted:

- as an action necessary to avoid the risk of secession, civil war, or an excuse for foreign intervention to restore order or someone else's definition of "socialism;"
- as a coup, perhaps under pressure from a predominantly Serbian army, to restore Serbian domination over an eternally hapless and exploited Croatian nation;
- as a move by "conservative" Belgrade and Zagreb Communists to stop a Prague-like "liberalization" in Croatia;
- or as one way, perhaps the only way, of stopping the development of a quasi-fascist Croatian dictatorship based, like the Italian original, on a marriage of extreme nationalism and corrupted socialism.

Although advanced by different parties and representing both pro- and anti-Establishment views of Karadjordjevo and its aftermath, these interpretations are not, it should be noted, mutually exclusive. In a complex political situation it is even possible that all are "true" in the sense that each is a valid reflection of the motivations or intentions of some of the individuals and groups who joined to initiate or to applaud the December action.

The official line is that the Croatian leadership that has now been purged had either deliberately or stupidly permitted Croatian nationalists inside

and outside the Communist Establishment to *organize* a dangerously powerful separatist and anti-socialist movement, and that their own political methods had become undemocratic and even Stalinist.

Desperate and even "undemocratic" measures were therefore required and nothing less than the present massive "cleansing" would have done. These, however, are temporary, emergency measures that will not affect achieved levels of polycentric decision-making, participation, civil liberties, and regional autonomy; in fact they are prerequisites of further progress in all of these sectors. "Our friends in the West," the strongest figure in the new Croatian leadership told me in January, "need not worry that we will go backward to a dogmatic Party. We are not social democrats but we are not an old type of Communist Party. Our immovable commitment to self-management is what distinguishes us from Eastern types, and we will continue on our own road."

Formally at the other extreme are those who are openly or secretly anti-Communist and/or anti-Yugoslav and who really wanted the "mass movement" in Croatia and its Party leaders to move in the direction of separatism and a basic change of system. Their position is in fact close to that of the official line, for it accepts or at least it desired what the official line claims was happening.

More interesting are the views of those who are not antisocialist or anti-Yugoslav, but who differ with the Establishment's answer to one, two, or all of the basic questions posed above.

Here the extreme is represented by those who feel that the purged but still popular Croatian leaders were merely trying to create the genuine, mass-supported socialist democracy that is Titoism's proclaimed goal. Their flirtation with nationalism, it is argued, was not only a harmless positive contribution to mass popularity for the Party and socialism but also the best way to cut the ground from under the real nationalists and separatists who would appear and compete for popularity in a genuinely democratized atmosphere.

For these people, who naturally include the ousted leaders themselves, their domestic admirers,

and those Western journalists and editors whose views were summarized in the introduction to this Report, the purge was in fact instigated by enemies of Croatia and of democracy: by Serbian "centralists" and their Croatian "unitarist" stooges, determined to reimpose a centralized dictatorship that would inevitably be Serb-dominated; by the Serb-dominated army; and/or by Serbian-dominated banks and commercial monopolies in Belgrade determined to consolidate an exploitative hold on the Croatian economy that the Croatian leadership was challenging.

Another view, more widespread in Zagreb than many Serbs are prepared to believe, holds that the answer to the first basic question (was the situation such that some kind of drastic action was unavoidable?) is regrettably yes, but the answer to the other two is no: the remedy now being applied is almost as deadly as the disease it is meant to cure. Many of the Zagreb Croats as well as Serbs with whom I have spoken now accept that the "mass national movement" sponsored by the disgraced Party leaders was indeed taking an alarming turn, with expressions of anti-Serb hatred grimly reminiscent of the heyday of the fascist Ustaše, who under Hitler's protection attempted during the Second World War to exterminate Croatia's Serb minority—15 per cent of the Republic's population and a third of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was included in the wartime Independent State of Croatia. They also accept that the movement was marked by escalating demands that pointed toward separatism and by political methods that were tending merely to substitute one form of arbitrary government for another, changing the locus and perhaps the social base of power but not the size of the base or the way power is used.

"With the fall of our former leaders," a Croatian student who used to be a fan of the deposed faction told me in January, "we narrowly escaped a chauvinistic Stalinism—or fascism, if you like—but only to find ourselves back with a Titoist dictatorship, vintage 1950s."

"I suppose," he added thoughtfully, "this is the lesser of the two evils, but was it the only alternative?"

A final and similar view agrees with the official line that the situation in Croatia and its backlash

elsewhere had indeed become a serious threat to the stability of the system, peace among the nationalities, and the unity of the country, but also agrees that the challenge had become so well-organized that only the present "overkill" would suffice. It adds, however, that the measures taken so far or contemplated, although unavoidable, could well mean a perhaps irreversible turning back from the "Yugoslav road to socialism" in the country as a whole and not only in Croatia. Achieved levels of pluralistic and participatory decision-making would be sacrificed and replaced by a return to the "firm hand" rule of a centralized, hierarchical, and authoritarian Party, with all of its historically known defects in terms of efficiency, honesty, responsiveness, and civil liberties.

This view, significantly, has been at least as widespread among Serbian Communists as among Croatian opponents of the deposed leadership in Zagreb. Except for Tito himself, most of the senior figures of the Party Establishment have shown themselves to be extraordinarily sensitive to such fears, issuing repeated warnings against the consequences of any return to "firm hand rule" or even temporary alliance with "the devested forces of centralism, neo-Stalinism, or neo-Cominformism" in the struggle against "nationalism and chauvinism." The terms used and the circumstances leave little doubt, in most cases, of the sincerity of the authors, but the dimensions of the purge in Croatia, the escalation of charges leveled against the purged, and the widening use (mostly at lower Party levels) of language and methods reminiscent of former times have left room for continuing nervousness.

Yugoslav Communists worried about such possibilities found particularly alarming President Tito's statement, in one of his two strongest postpurge speeches,⁵ that the rot had started with the Sixth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party in 1952, and that he personally had never liked that Congress.

It was the 1952 Congress (sometimes called the "Djilas Congress") that turned the Communist Party into the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, a change of name meant to symbolize a change in role from a Leninist Party ruling over the state and society to a Marxist association of "progressive" Communists exerting influence rather

than power in a "socialist democracy." If the Yugoslav Party has never become merely that in practice, the spirit and aspirations of the Sixth Congress have provided the ideological basis for the considerable degree of decentralization and pluralism achieved in recent years. For the "progressive" Communists who have dominated the Party Establishment since 1966, to call in question precisely that Congress is therefore to call in question most of the things that distinguish Yugoslav from Soviet communism.

So far there are at most only marginal signs, like the spasmodic flurries of arrests in Zagreb and elsewhere and pressures against "liberal" Communist leaders in the Serbian, Macedonian, and Slovene parties, that this kind of alarm is justified. It is discounted by those who are convinced—perhaps a little anxiously—that political and economic forces with a vested interest in the level of pluralism and decentralization already achieved are now too numerous and too powerful for the clock to be turned back more than an hour or two, even by Tito.

Values and Ideologies

Almost all these interpretations really agree on two points: that nationalism was an important element in the Croatian "mass movement" and that at least some of the actors who had appeared on the Croatian political scene represented non-Communist political forces. Where they differ is in their evaluation of these phenomena. These differences, when they are not purely tactical or personal, turn out on analysis to be value judgments on three subjects; one of which is partly empirical and entirely specific and two of which are ideological and at the heart of the fundamental contradictions and dilemmas that are Yugoslavia's larger crisis. The latter involve preconceptions about nationalism and the nation-state as principles and about the implications of political and ideological pluralism in a socialist society. The first concerns differing evaluations of the characteristics and strength of the "mass national movement."

There were, in other words, three kinds of value judgments that singly or in combination could lead to the conclusion that the whistle must be blown on developments in Croatia, whatever the cost: because nationalism is a *Bad Thing*; because political

or ideological pluralism are inadmissible under socialism; or because, independently of one's attitude to these principles as abstract categories, the "mass national movement" and the specific manifestation of nationalism and specific alternative political program that it symbolized were at this particular time and place and for a variety of empirically verifiable reasons judged to be undesirable, dangerous, and becoming too powerful a competitor for political power to be allowed to continue.

Those who considered the situation in Croatia before Karadjordjevo to be positive or at least harmless did so by contradicting, implicitly or consciously, one or more of these same judgments. For some a positive attitude was a logical consequence of a belief in the doctrine that mankind is naturally divided into nations, that the nation is the only legitimate basis for the political division of mankind into states, and that each nation consequently has a self-evident right to a state of its own. The Croats are undeniably a separate nation; *ergo* . . . (This logic is incidentally also inherent in the Czechoslovak-Croatian analogy, which dismisses as an irrelevant technicality the obvious objection that Czechoslovakia is not legally part of the Soviet Union, while Croatia is constitutionally an inseparable part of Yugoslavia.) A second set of values leading to the same positive evaluation assumes that any political pluralism is better than none and that the best is institutionalized in a multiparty system, open or disguised. What was happening in Croatia undeniably signified the end of a political monopoly by a centralized, one-party system and the legitimation in all but name of competition not only among individuals and groups within the same institutional and ideological establishment, which already existed in Yugoslavia, but between that establishment and a genuine opposition; *ergo* . . . Finally, the relevance of either or both these sets of ideological preconceptions to the specific situation could be denied or evaded if one simply denied either the characteristics or the strength attributed to the "mass national movement" by its opponents, arguing that it was not strong, that it was "national" but not "nationalist," that it was not autonomous of Party control, or at least that it was less dangerous than several other challengers of the existing system and therefore harmless or a useful ally at the present moment.

Each of these positions can be found, often only implicitly, in the words or the deeds of individual actors or groups who played important roles in the drama, as described in Parts II to IV of this series.

In the great debate within the Croatian Party in 1971, as will be seen, one basic disagreement was between those who thought that Croatian nationalism could by intelligent manipulation be incorporated into "progressive" Yugoslav socialism and those who were convinced that nationalism in general or at least in Yugoslavia is by its nature "reactionary" and that it was dangerous to act on any other assumption. Neither had a self-evident case, which is one reason why they were unable to agree; the lesson of history is that nationalism as pure ideology and mobilizer is not in itself "progressive" or "reactionary," but as applied politics in given circumstances can become either or both.

Paralleling this disagreement but chronologically later in origin was an apparently abstract but in fact highly suggestive dispute over the definition of the Croatian state to be written into a revised Republican constitution. For some, following the lead of the Matica Hrvatska, it must be "the national state of the Croatian nation." For Bakarić and others it must first be defined in class terms, as a state in which sovereignty rests with a nationally undifferentiated "working class and other working people." The Party leadership significantly sought a formulation that would include both aspects and insisted that the first be expanded to read "the national state of the Croatian nation and the state of the Serbs and other nationalities living in Croatia."

A second disagreement of principle, less clearly articulated, concerned the proper attitude of the Party to the appearance on the political stage of people who "are not ours," or as Bakarić was to put it, "people created not by the League of Communists but by someone else." The dispute here was between those whose understanding of Yugoslavia's "socialist democracy" includes the legitimacy of autonomous political actors and *organizations* and those for whom such political pluralism, especially if it involves ideological pluralism, is a "bourgeois-democratic" or "anarcho-liberal" concept unacceptable in a socialist society.

The lines of demarcation on both sets of principles were blurred and the debate was complicated by its third, specific dimension and the tendency of many of the participants to shift in the heat of battle from the partly empirical specific to the wholly ideological general, by its nature less subject to rational argument and compromise. Thus, as noted above and in more detail below, the Croatian Party leaders who were later purged frequently defended their attitude and policy toward the movement by arguing that nationalism was only a fringe and not a central aspect of it, that it was firmly led by the Party and not an autonomous, organized challenger, and that the true enemies of Yugoslav socialism were among the opponents of the movement, not in it. At other times, however, their position explicitly included positive appreciations of the nation-state principle and political pluralism. As an additional complication one of the charges against them, as noted, was that with lip service to liberalism their actions were actually tending to replace one form of political monopoly, which was Communist, with another, which was quasi-fascist.

On the other side it was similarly possible to examine the social and ideological content and goals of the "mass national movement" in Croatia and pass a negative value judgment on them (and to weigh the strength of the movement and its relations with leading Party functionaries and find them alarming in the light of this judgment) without necessarily being antinationalist or antipluralist in principle. This would in fact appear to be the position of those participants and observers, described above, who with only apparent inconsistency applauded Karadjordjevo while fearing its consequences. It is a position that honestly confronts, however uncomfortably and perhaps mistakenly, a problem overlooked by those Western observers whose approval of pre-Karadjordjevo developments in Croatia and condemnation of Karadjordjevo as a *coup d'état* by conservative Communists was in most cases ultimately based on a deep if unspecified faith in the virtue of pluralism. It would be sad for those with an ideological commitment to political pluralism if the Croatian story were to prove that non-Communist foreign apologists for the Yugoslav Communist dictatorship were right after all when they used to argue that a single-party system was justified because multiple parties in Yugoslavia would always

mean ethnic parties bent on mutual destruction, but the possibility cannot be rejected without re-examination in the light of that story.

The Croatian crisis is thus of vital and larger importance precisely because it involved the two great unsolved problems of contemporary Yugoslavia: the "national question" and "socialist democracy," the latter particularly including the role of the League of Communists and both including the fundamental nature and purpose of the Yugoslav state. Both were theoretically solved years ago, the first in the federal principle proclaimed in November 1943 as the basis of a new Yugoslavia, the second by the 1952 Party Congress. In 1971 the Croats proved that neither has really been solved, which is not news, and that there is still no effective consensus even among top leaderships about the way they should be solved, which in a way is news or at least evidence for what was heretofore only a reasonable working hypothesis.

"Ideological confusion and disorientation in the League of Communists" as a primary cause of the crisis has become such a cliché in establishment post-mortems that the real significance of the phrase has been overlooked by most foreign observers. It was Bakarić himself, however, who told a closed meeting in January 1972: "The basic problem is that we have no ideology." In a Zagreb conversation at about the same time a young, consistently antinationalist Croatian Communist and political victim of the "national euphoria," now out of active politics, put basically the same point to me this way: "The Yugoslav Communist Party had a clear three-point program in 1941. First, to drive out the German and Italian occupiers and their domestic quislings and take over the state; done by 1945. Second, to create a genuinely independent Yugoslavia; done in 1948. Third, to create a workers' democracy; done in principle by 1952. Mission fulfilled. For 20 years we have been without a program, without a mission. Tripalo, Savka, and company sought a new one for us. They found it in the slogan that if we were only free of Serb exploitation we would be as rich as America. This was believed at least in large part simply because no one else found or offered any credible alternative program, mission, or vision."

At first glance such statements are absurd. Theoretical elaborations of Yugoslavia's "self-management socialism" have been yearly more

numerous and the quality and originality of many of them have favorably impressed numerous critical foreign observers and scholars—more, perhaps, than they have impressed most Yugoslavs, but that is a separate if not unrelated question. Yugoslavs and these same foreign scholars chronicle unsteady progress along and deviations from the road to the "workers' democracy" declared in principle by 1952, which is therefore a "mission" at best only partly fulfilled. What is impressive in both theory and practice, however, has been confined almost entirely to the economic system and even that primarily at the microlevel. The political system and political philosophy have also been in flux and much discussed since 1962, but without similarly convincing signs of purposeful direction or ideological consistency. It was the strains resulting from this asymmetry that exploded into crisis in Croatia, dramatizing the lacunae and the reasons for them. They existed, to use the Marxists' own terminology, because internal contradictions in Yugoslavia's pragmatic synthesis of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism and "Western" liberalism, forged in practice and then uneasily reconciled with theory in the 1950s, were always potentially so explosive that almost no one wanted to face them. Those who did, like Djilas and Ranković, were invariably purged from political life by Tito and the Party apparatus, instinctively aware of the risks inherent in any effort to unravel the synthesis, however unstable it might be, and therefore preferring to carry on as long as possible without a coherence of ideology, "mission," or system.

Consequences of Inconsistency:

A Yugoslav View

In the chorus of accusations, "self-criticism," and instant micropolitical analyses of how it had happened which characterized the post-Karadjordjevo December 1971 session of the Croatian Central Committee that accepted the resignations of the purged leadership, one member turned aside from the agonizing subject of immediate political responsibility for the crisis to make a first serious attempt at a holistic explanation. He was Dušan Bilandžić, otherwise a competent social scientist in charge of the research department of the Yugoslav Party Presidium and author of an excellent analytical history of Yugoslavia since 1945.⁶ Despite all that has subsequently appeared on the subject, his contribution remains worthy of special attention.

Bilandžić began by noting a "puzzling anachronism." Yugoslav Communists are equipped with a theoretically and pragmatically unimpeachable "social concept" about democratic socialism and the national question and with the means and institutions appropriate to its realization, but the results are always inappropriate to the intentions; they are proud of having a methodology and a movement which understands the processes of social development better than any other, and which should therefore produce accurate forecasts, but they are always surprised by what actually happens.

He then turned (somewhat gingerly one suspects) to his own definition of a "counter-revolution," the strongest and most frightening term that Tito had used in characterizing the Croatian situation. In the Yugoslav context, Bilandžić said, "counterrevolutionary forces" are those who support or organize action against the program of the League of Communists, which is self-management, and who develop political concepts and practices that make realization of this program more difficult. They are forces that undermine the equality of the nationalities of Yugoslavia, inspiring ethnic hatred and a political behavior that in practice encourages the disintegration of the social community.

Sources of the present crisis and contemporary ethnic nationalism begin, he went on, with the economic difficulties that have now lasted nearly ten years and that have burdened the poor and enriched the middle sectors, and with the withdrawal of the Party at the local level from direct involvement, which in theory was to favor self-management but in reality has favored "techno-bureaucratic and other forces, especially of the middle class." This, in turn, reflects and is a function of a process which began in the middle 1950s and still continues: a progressive separation of the administrative social stratum from the working class, leading inevitably to changes in the ethics or dominant values of the former. "A techno-bureaucratic class cannot be self-management-minded in philosophy." Instead of reacting against this situation, the Party had adapted itself and become an institution "supporting this, as I would call it, spontaneous course."

Those of the constitutional amendments adopted in 1971 that were designed to strengthen

the organs of self-management and the mechanisms of "social contract" and to weaken the state should be seen, in this sense, as "an idea of the veterans of the revolution, who want to open a new dimension of the concept of proletarian dictatorship, to open the way to the hegemony of the working class. They were strong enough to force that concept into the Constitution, but power relations in society are making difficult, emasculating, and blocking realization of all they intended."

In this context, when society is faced with social problems that demand solutions, there is ever greater pressure to solve them not through the mechanism of self-management socialism but in some other way. These pressures lead back toward the concept of forming states, in which all problems will be resolved "through the spectacles of state functionaries," who by the nature of their social roles must decide and think in terms of the state, whether unitary or national.

To arrive at the present situation in Croatia, one must add to these tendencies a widespread acceptance of the proposition that nothing creative could be done because the Croatian nation was in an exploited position, especially in economic matters. The leadership, its energy concentrated on demonstrating the truth of this proposition, lost all creativity. A further contribution was made by the thesis—which Bilandžić admits that he, too, believed—that one could permit nationalists to pose as allies and to propagate their program, so that everyone could see for himself its two fatal weaknesses: that it was based on hatred of others and on the past, both inappropriate foundations on which to build the future. "But," he adds wryly, "it didn't work out quite that way."

One consequence of all this was the theory of the utility of a "homogenization of the Croatian nation" (see Part IV of this series), which in Bilandžić's opinion is acceptable if the nation is really classless but "otherwise is a bourgeois, indeed a petit bourgeois ideology." It was accompanied by a changed strategy for dealing with social problems. From the early 1950s until recently a two-pronged strategy had been pursued in Croatia: (1) to change the social system and the social locus of decision-making and (2) at the same time, step by step, to proceed as rapidly as possible

with economic and social modernization. The strategy had been successful, but little by little was watered down by the new course. Based on the argument that nothing could be done with the existing system (because "self-management" could not be realized as long as Croatia was economically "exploited") and that one could not wait for changes in the system, it was held to be necessary to change the strategy and to solve all problems on the basis of the state and the nation, not social classes and functions, as primary principles of aggregation. (Involved here, Bilandžić notes, is the theory-based ironically on the success achieved with the first strategy—that the historic moment had come when the national aspect could take precedence over class aspects because the whole nation could now be classified as "working people" without social differentiations; the struggle for the national interest was therefore identical with the struggle for class interest.)

The future, Bilandžić concluded, was dark. Economic problems would continue and in some sectors grow worse. Social structures were characterized by a strong middle class ("Unfortunately," he said, "I have no better expression."), the problem of the wrong machinery and the wrong mentality for successful self-management persisted, and so did an ideological confusion that would be particularly hard to overcome because class differences today are not susceptible to classical Marxist definitions and analysis but exist in a new, more subtle range.⁷

The Wrong Party for "Democratic Socialism"?

A useful addendum and one which bridges the gap between Bilandžić's middle-range social analysis and the details of political struggles and maneuvers had already been provided by Milka Planinc, a heretofore obscure and unimpressive member of the Executive Committee who succeeded Savka Dabčević-Kučar as President of the Croatian Party on December 14. A few days earlier, addressing a post-Karadjordjevo meeting of reserve officers in Zagreb on December 10, she turned to the question of how it could happen that "in some places entire Party structures, so to speak, stood up and cheered those who had usurped the Party" (i. e., the leaders who were about to be purged).

Their behavior was that of fortune-hunters and careerists, . . . careerists who I would say were not primarily nationalists, if you ask me, but who thought that this was the card on which they would build their careers.

Unfortunately, the majority of people [in the Party] is that way, because we have drawn into the Party the clerk mentality of obedient servants, not people who think and seek answers to the further continuation of the revolution, but obsequious clerks. We must find an answer for this. Without it, if we do not remove such people from the Party, we will not be equipped for the stage that will last even after Tito but on Tito's line. Because we have drawn into the Party pusillanimity, opportunism to the methods of Stalinism, because in some circles honest people simply have not been in a position to stand their ground. The method of applying labels, the method of defamation of individuals without argumentation has already penetrated so deeply in some circles that they simply cannot find the strength within those circles to defend themselves against such things. This has made of us a Party of such Stalinist methods as this Party never employed, even in that period that these democrats say was the Stalinist period in the Party.⁸

Although Milka Planinc was here attempting to suggest, for immediate tactical reasons, that the Party had only recently become characterized by a majority of "obsequious clerks," the same complaint has been heard before, frequently and in all parts of the country, and always with the same explanation. One of the finer ironies of the situation is that the methods used by the former Croatian leaders to control the Party, methods which are now one of the principal accusations against them, are in fact and always have been standard operating procedures, the glue of Party discipline. The personality of the organization she is describing is not the recent creation of the latest, now lost generation of Croatian party leaders. It is the creation of Lenin, Stalin, Tito, and the dynamics of the revolutions they made and is a major part of the ballast that could capsize Yugoslavia's

valiant and exciting experiment with an eventually party-less "socialist democracy" built on the keel of "self-management."

The immediate relevance of the subject to this Report of the Party profile described here is two-fold, a tool for both macro- and microanalysis. It is a major part of what Bilandžić has in mind when he speaks of "the wrong machinery and the wrong mentality" for self-management and of the consequences of that perception in Croatia, where the aspiration for an autonomous state, Party, and economy reflected comprehensible skepticism about "self-management," "direct democracy," and other unimplemented slogans of the official ideology. It also explains the behavior of the Party in Croatia during 1971, both in supporting the official leadership despite widespread doubts—even those who were convinced that these leaders were desperately wrong dared not openly oppose, as we shall see, until they thought that they were finished even if they did not—and in then abandoning them so quickly after Karadjordjevo.

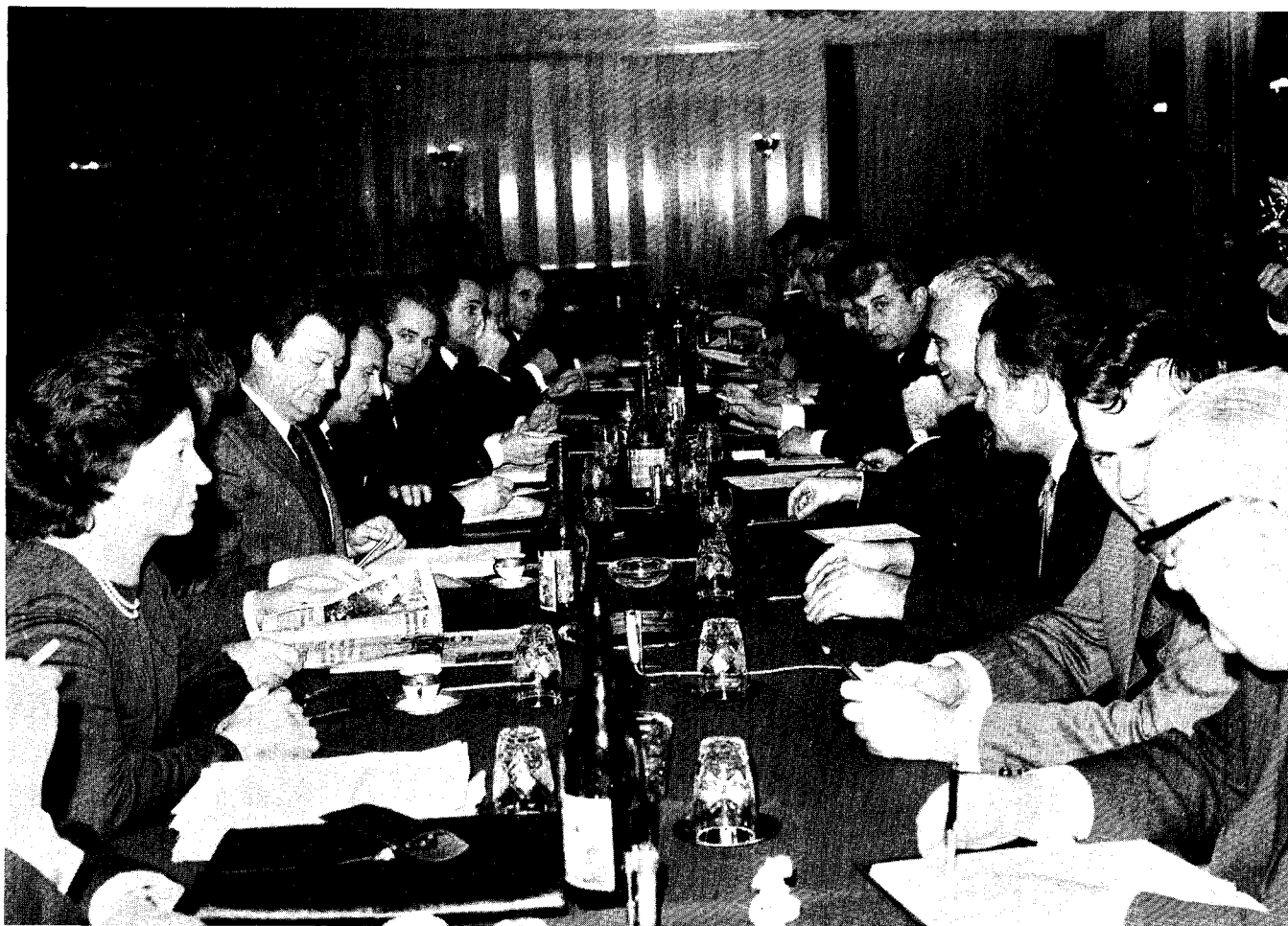
One of the more candid members of the Central Committee, Djuro Kladarin, captured the essence of this and other "microaspects" of the crisis in his speech at the same post-Karadjordjevo session at which Bilandžić attempted a macroanalysis. More frankly than anyone else at that stage he confronted the question: we knew, why did we not act?

He and most members, Kladarin said, knew of splits in the Executive Committee and the Party generally and what they were about. They sensed that the failure to find a key to resolve these differences was also a personal failure on the part of the Party President, Savka Dabčević-Kučar, the result of "her insufficient Party experience, patience, and sense of responsibility to the Executive and Central Committees." As a result, in Kladarin's interpretation, instead of forcing Miko Tripalo into "her column," she was forced into his and into joining in his political methods, ideology, and manipulation of Party personnel. (This, it should be noted, is only one of several interpretations of the role of personalities and personal relations between these two key figures, but on the evidence so far available it is one of the most plausible.) With an unresolved conflict there came a logical division into two or three "autonomous segments" struggling

for control of the Central Committee. A further "logical consequence" was that one group, in an effort to resolve the conflict, "departed from accepted norms of political conduct and by means of so-called democratic pressure of the masses and ever greater personal popularity sought to bring about a certain change in political relations inside the League of Communists of Croatia, inside the Executive Committee. In this course they also thought to strengthen their political position in the Yugoslav political constellation without noticing what was thought of them in other republics and how [this affected] behavior toward them."

An important role in these maneuvers was played by "cadre politics" (control of appointments), which were still conducted in accordance with the "old style"—the glue of party discipline referred to above. Thus there developed an "atmosphere" characterized by political pressures and threats of political destruction, by "a feeling of helplessness . . . of being lost, fearing to criticize," and by "labeling" (*etiketiranje*) that was "worse than ever before." This atmosphere constituted, in Kladarin's view, "elements of neo-Stalinism . . . the destruction of any constructive criticism." In addition, the political stance of those who controlled these levers and the alliances they had forged "opened the valve to the activity of bourgeois consciousness and political action." Theses originating in the Matica Hrvatska "penetrated every level, even to the Constitutional Commission. If we successfully fought such theses in one place they popped up in another. Most often it happened that even unconsciously we 'chewed the gum' that the Matica and *Hrvatski Tjednik* [the Matica's principal newspaper] threw to us, wondering at the level to which their political realism had brought us."

"How had we reached this point?" Kladarin asks, and he finds the answer, *inter alia*, in "the fact that a monopoly of power is always still very much there in the League of Communists, held by the Executive Committee or a group in the Executive Committee. The Central Committee usually serves only as a democratic façade . . . which is manipulated." The holders of this monopoly "even manipulated with Tito's name, as when we heard Pirker's exposé of the July 4 meeting [with Tito in Zagreb, see below and Part III], and a great number of the people here today knew he was not speaking the truth, and *we all remained silent*."



Karadjordjevo, December 1, 1971: The XXI Session of the LCY Presidium. Croatian leaders contemplating doom include, on the extreme left, Dr. Savka Dabčević-Kučar and to her left Miko Tripalo; the unidentifiable man sitting between them may be Pero Pirker. On the extreme right, in profile, is Vladimir Bakarić.

The same thing happened at the 22nd Session of the Central Committee in November 1971, when events were approaching a final crisis and where (as will be seen in Part IV) one dissident member of the Executive Committee, Dušan Dragosavac, broke ranks and attempted to provoke an open debate on the issues. Kladarin explains why this lead was not followed. First because Savka's long keynote speech at the beginning of the session "in her style covered the waterfront and polemicized with everything and was therefore hard to deal with." But in the atmosphere and in the corridors one felt dissension and crisis. "Therefore we all spoke as we did because *we were waiting to see*." Kladarin says that he himself did not dare to speak otherwise. Knowing that a battle was going on at

the Party summit, he felt that the "style and content of Dragosavac's intervention does not lead to results, and seeing that others did not move who had more weight than I, I stuck to generalities. I feared that in such circumstances I would not make my true contribution. I thought: 'If they put me on the Executive Committee or some similar body probably I'll say something different and more . . .'"

A final consequence of a Party composed in such large part of this kind of people concerns the genuine mass popularity of the leaders whose resignations Kladarin was contemplating. They were different, excitingly different. They were energetic, willing to take initiatives and risks, and spoke a

language people could understand and warm to, and all this in a Party and establishment usually characterized by cautious lethargy, sycophancy or at least the dull low profile of the careful clerk, and a rhetorical style that consists of approved labels and slogans or that cautiously says nothing in incomprehensible language that could mean everything or anything.

The Nationalist Strategy and Program

A regime, especially a Communist one, that is vulnerable to charges of ideological confusion, lack of a clear vision and program for the future, and dependence on the wrong machinery and people with the wrong mentality, and that in addition is reluctant to fall back on "old-fashioned" instruments of coercion to maintain its political monopoly, invited dissent that will seek to form an organized opposition. This is essentially what happened in Croatia. So far in this Report, however, we have considered only by inference and in terms of the contrasting perceptions of two factions in the established Party the composition, platform, and political style of that challenger, the movement that the guardians of the existing system condemned as nationalist, chauvinist, and neo-Stalinist or fa-langist, but which its defenders in the Party preferred to describe as mass democratic, national, and socialist.

My own perceptions of the character and goals of the movement will emerge, piece by piece, in Parts III-IV of this series. These perceptions are of a nineteenth-century National-Liberal party re-emerging in and influenced by a contemporary socialist context but with roots deep in the intellectual and political history of the Hapsburg Monarchy, like modern Yugoslavia a multinational anachronism in an age of nation-states. The description that will be found there also reflects the influence of my own political intuition, which has been argued at another place and time but should be confessed again here so that the reader may know the prejudices of the writer: that the result of a marriage of these particular traditional and modern currents, at least in Europe, is something that belongs in that part of a typology of political and ideological systems which is loosely and sometimes misleadingly called fascist.

When the later parts of this series were complete, including these perceptions, there came to

my attention an article by one of the post-Karadjordjevo leaders of the Croatian Party, analyzing "the characteristics and dimensions of ideological-political deviations in the League of Communists of Croatia." The author is Ema Derossi-Bjelajac, an Italian from Rijeka (Fiume), one of the members of the Croatian Executive Committee who opposed the views of the Tripalo-Savka-Pirker group from an early moment in the evolution of the crisis, and one of the strongest and most interesting personalities and minds in the new Croatian leadership. If allowance is made for some adjectives and phrases that reflect a different ideological point of departure and the exigencies of her political position, the section of this article that deals with the activities and platform of what she calls "nationalist forces" is a good summary of my own conclusions about this aspect of the story:

Without pretensions to a holistic analysis of the basic roots of the appearance and growth of nationalism, it must be said that in our circumstances it is a latent political current. However, its escalation and more forceful appearance on the political scene occurs when basic social contradictions become acute, when critical changes are taking place in society. So too Croatian nationalism became particularly real in the process of social-economic reform and especially with the initiation of a constitutional reform. Nationalist forces attempted to exploit these changes, which were in the first place stages in the development of self-management and in the struggle of the League of Communists, in order to impose their goals and interests, which quickly appeared as an effort to take power and turn social development as a whole in another direction. To this end these forces turned toward the organization of their own political movement, to infiltration into legal state and Party structures, to an open or disguised political action using the written and spoken word, and to the development of a coherent ideology directed against existing institutions of self-management and against the League of Communists as the leading sociopolitical force.

With the aim of developing their own political movement, nationalist forces took

over the Matica Hrvatska as their central institution and readjusted its cultural function to suit their political goals. They made use of the organizational framework of the Matica Hrvatska to develop within it activities which were in character the activities of a parallel political party, with all the attributes of a well-organized and centralized political organization, gathered on a platform of nationalist and also separatist conceptions of the further development of Croatia. In their proposals, speeches, and writings the most influential adherents of this current clearly demonstrated from day to day that cultural activities were least important to them and that their basic preoccupation was the assembling of those who shared their political views, the winning over of a certain number of people, among them intellectuals and students, and the creation of a tight, disciplined political organization. Their agility was particularly expressed in the founding of branches of the Matica Hrvatska in many parts of Croatia. At these, with great pomp, nationalist exaltation, and the pathos of the so-called renaissance, they served notice that the basic purpose was the constitution of a national movement which excluded the class basis of socialist development and therewith the avant-garde role of the League of Communists. Thus the Matica Hrvatska was gradually transformed from an organization for cultural action into a political organization with ambitions to counterpose its own platform to the platform of the League of Communists of Croatia.

In expanding their organization and movement the Matica particularly sought to win over public opinion, to which purpose an important role was played by their periodicals, and especially by *Hrvatski Tjednik*. That periodical's function was consistently to serve the political ambitions of the nationalist group in the Matica, as is particularly evident in the aggressiveness and the explicit political coloration of articles in it. *Hrvatski Tjednik* played a special role in the period when the amendments to the

Republican Constitution were under discussion, when it set forth an opposition platform on the subject of the statehood and the overall organization of the Socialist Republic of Croatia.

In expanding the network of key centers the nationalists worked in an organized way especially in conquering those centers which form the skeleton of national life, such as the University, the mass media, educational and cultural institutions, organizations that are of strategic importance like the railways, the postal service, and others. They similarly endeavored to establish influence in the offices of public prosecutors and in the courts, in which they succeeded in some places, with the purpose of paralyzing them in the execution of their basic function—the protection of the socialist democratic order. This orientation was in no way coincidental, but a very well thought out and politically calculated struggle for a gradual take-over of power. Also belonging to this kind of action was the strike at the University, which according to the intentions of the organizers was to have been turned into a general strike with quite different goals from those with which they attempted to motivate it.

At the same time, the nationalists did not disguise their efforts to assume control of Party organizations in some areas, to infiltrate individual leaderships of the League of Communists and other sociopolitical organizations; they spoke of how bureaucracy had betrayed the national interest, systematically attempting to discredit a broad range of leading figures in Croatia, emphasizing the inability and lack of qualification of the Sabor [the Croatian Parliament] to implement the constitutional reform, etc. Finally there came a proposal that the new Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia should establish a national congress of socialist forces in which the League of Communists, the Sabor, and other democratically elected, legal bodies would have lost their identity as the leading political forces of a self-managing socialist society.

Paralleling the development of an organized movement and through its political action nationalists evolved and built their own ideology with all the attributes of a consistent ideological program. This is seen in the development of theses about a so-called national economy, a national state, and a national culture.

The concept of a national economy was offered as salvation from the alleged economic exploitation of Croatia. It was demonstrated that this exploitation was more pronounced in new than in prewar, quasi-colonial Yugoslavia, that it has lasted continuously since Austro-Hungarian times. The characteristics of this concept of a national economy include among others megalomania and demagoguery, as is seen in the thesis that an unprecedented economic prosperity would be created with the realization of the political ambitions of nationalist forces. In harmony with these theses and partly as the answer of these forces to the monopolistic position of strong centers of alienated economic power, there was special emphasis on the usefulness of a homogenization of the national territory, actually meaning its closing in a rigid national framework, in the framework of a closed national market and national commerce in goods and capital.

Most systematically developed by the nationalists was the ideology of Croatian national statehood. They demonstrated that the statehood of the Croatian nation had always been threatened and brutally withheld and again, of course, most of all in socialist Yugoslavia because of the unitaristic orientation of the Croatian political leadership. Thus they developed their concept of pure and indivisible national sovereignty, from which by its very nature the Serb nation and members of other nations and nationalities in Croatia were excluded, thus displaying tendencies to national domination and assimilation. This concept of national statehood very quickly evolved in the direction of a separatist program, a tendency particularly expressed in the demand for a national army of one's own, a

currency of one's own, in demands for admission to the United Nations, in demands for international aid, and even in the publication of certain territorial demands.¹⁰

An important element in the ideology of the nationalists was also the sector of national culture. Their activity in this sector was basically of a traditionalist, bourgeois coloration. Their trespassing in the national cultural garden was not in search or affirmation of the true national cultural values which the spiritual creativity of the Croatian nation has affirmed on the Yugoslav or world scene. On the contrary, in the slogan about a "national cultural renaissance" were hidden intellectual terror and a political instrumentalization of science and art, and that at an extraordinarily primitive level. By spreading notions about the superiority of the Croatian nation to other nations and nationalities in Croatia, national intolerance and hatred were generated and the bridges of cultural cooperation with other nations and nationalities in Yugoslavia were destroyed. . .

Political and sociological analyses, although still inadequate, have shown that nationalism in our circumstances was the ideological trademark under which there appeared on the stage, in essence, the so-called middle strata, new economic and social groupings created as by-products of our development. Leaning on that petit-bourgeois social stratum and on other forces of the past, nationalists appeared on the stage with the slogans of the nineteenth century, but their goals were contemporary and directed toward the realization of their own interests under the guise of national interest . . .¹¹

One part of this description of the national movement that the diligent reader of this series will find mentioned again but never satisfactorily documented is the allegation, also implicit in Bilandžić's critique, that it rested on "the so-called middle strata" or on the new "middle classes," sometimes referred to as the "techno-managerial stratum." It is a thesis that will make sense both to historians

and to social scientists, and my own analysis tends at times to assume that it is true, but the data at our disposal in fact speak almost exclusively of intellectuals, frustrated politicians, and students as comprising identifiable adherents of the groups and organizations condemned at Karadjordjevo and tells us almost nothing about the social composition of their mass support.

There are, nevertheless, some indirect clues to be found in a closer look at the background of some individual leaders and some intuitions about the personal and social psychology of the movement and its Party supporters.

Of Mice and Men

Two towns perched on hilltops in the barren Dalmatian hinterland are appropriate symbols, for both made frequent appearances in the headlines in 1971 and a significant number of leaders on both sides of the political barricades in Zagreb were born or bred in them. Drniš and Knin are 15 miles apart, separated by parallel streams that are often dry in summer but whose winter waters join to reach the sea at Šibenik. Drniš is Croat and Knin is Serb, and when you gaze from one toward the other there is nothing to see but the sterile, grey-white limestone of the Karst, infrequently punctuated by a half-acre sinkhole, or *polje*, of fertile *terra rossa*. Life has always been difficult and there is no one to blame for hardship except God, or one's neighbors from a rival town who seem to have usurped too much of what little there is. This still means land, however poor, but it also means things like jobs on the railroad that passes both towns on its way from Zagreb to Split and Šibenik.

The railroad was built between the war, when Yugoslavia was ruled by a Serbian king, army, and bureaucracy. Whether or not this was the reason, many who got jobs building and later working on the railroad were Serbs from Knin. During the Second World War, under the Ustaše, Serbs faced genocide and Croats, including men of Drniš, could hope for jobs and the dignity of an income. In 1971 the question of ethnic proportions among railroad employees in Croatia was a major issue in the nationalist program, Drniš was a major citadel of the "mass movement," and the Serbs of Knin armed themselves and drew together in their own equivalent of the Matica Hrvatska, the Serb cultural association Prosvjeta, equally politicized.

Typical of those who left this environment to play major roles on the national scene, but who never really left it, is Dražen Budiša of Drniš, whom we shall meet as President of the Zagreb University Student Association after April 1971 and principal organizer of the December strike. (Milka Planinc is in fact also from Drniš, but less typical.) Budiša is handsome, articulate, highly intelligent and respected by his contemporaries, both political friends and enemies, who describe him as brilliant, a skillful politician but a man of integrity, and totally devoted to the Croatian national cause. "If only we had men like him on our side," one of his Party opponents said ruefully. Another, whose story I accept as true, tells me of a confrontation in September 1971 during which Budiša bluntly told him that he expected to be finished and out and probably in jail "within six months," but that this would not matter because he would have done his job: the Croatian nation would be awake.

To such people can be added two other classes. One comprises those who can prejudicially be called individual neurotics, people with special personal problems or chapters in their lives to live down. These include a leading nationalist intellectual in the Matica who in 1941, when the Italians annexed his native Dalmatia, wrote a pamphlet for the occupiers documenting Italy's historic right to his land, they include a former Partisan general who, as a young Zagreb friend says, "did God knows what during the war *and* had a father who was a leading Ustaša," and perhaps they even include Savka herself, whose political relationship with Ranković in the early 1960s is the subject of many unverified rumors and who suffers from hypoglycemia, a metabolic disorder whose victims vacillate between periods of intense activity and optimism and periods of immobilizing lethargy and pessimism. More orthodox Yugoslav Marxists also like to note that many leading Party figures in the movement, including Tripalo and Savka themselves, were scions of old and distinguished Dalmatian bourgeois families who became Communists in their teens, during the war.

The third category includes those with political ambitions who "never made it" for one of two reasons, either because they in good conscience could not become Party members or because they lacked the ability to succeed or had for some reason been thrown out of the Party. Both these kinds

of people found a new home and a new hope in the movement, which was, after all, the first time and place in postwar Yugoslavia that non-Communists could organize politically on a meaningful scale. The first group in this category also gave the movement an underlying ideological heterogeneity, which was more than simple nationalism, and ringed it with an exciting aura of "new politics" and new possibilities.

It is these last whose renewed exclusion from the political scene as a result of Karadjordjevo will be most regretted by those who consider pluralism in principle a progressive development.

* * * * *

The argument and conclusions that are supposed to emerge from this Report are really very simple, but I fear that they have been intolerably confused in the statement and that a brief recapitulation is therefore necessary.

If it is agreed that, as a matter of empirical fact, nationalist sentiments and a form of budding pluralism were aspects of the situation in Croatia in 1971, there are three reasons why a negative judgment could be passed on that situation. If we are non-Marxists (or perhaps non-Soviet Marxists) and not ready to condemn it because we consider that nationalism must be a priori reactionary in a socialist Yugoslavia and/or that political and especially ideological pluralism are bourgeois-democratic or anarcho-liberal concepts unacceptable under communism, there is only one reason. It is a specific judgment that the "mass national movement," initially sponsored and always praised by the Croatian Party's leading figures, represented destructive and dangerous forces.

This judgment could be made for several reasons, most of them inevitably subjective and partly intuitive evaluations of the known facts and all of them reflecting the individual judge's personal ideological preferences.

One would derive from an evaluation, based on impressive but inconclusive evidence, that the movement was evolving in the direction of separatism. If one believes that Yugoslavia as it is—a socialist federation—is a Good Thing, or at least better than no Yugoslavia, or if one makes the additional evaluation that an attempt at secession

would mean a civil war with unpredictable international repercussions, perhaps involving the Superpowers in an unwanted confrontation, this evaluation would be reason enough. Another would be a conviction, which could find supporting evidence in speeches, writings, and rallies connected with the movement and in the reactions of both Croatian and non-Croatian populations to them, that the smouldering fires of interethnic intolerance and hatred were being fanned into flames that could destroy the social fabric, with or without a civil war that could develop even without an attempt at secession. A third reason would derive from a judgment that the Croatian Party leaders, whatever their purposes and personal convictions when they came to power, had in their alliance with the moment and in response to the exigencies of a series of political battles been maneuvered into a position in which they were in fact creating a political system that had more in common with fascism than with either democracy or socialism. A final and more pragmatic reason, based on one credible reading of the political personality of President Tito and the balance of political forces in other parts of Yugoslavia, would argue that the Croatian leadership and what they were doing must sooner or later lead to a fateful confrontation with the ultimate guardians of the established system, that they must inevitably lose such a confrontation, but that the sooner it came the less would be the damage inflicted by fallout on achieved levels of ethnic coexistence and cooperation, decentralized and democratized decision-making, civil liberties, and international stability. If such values happen to be prized, this too could be reason enough.

It is this writer's opinion, for what it is worth, that each of these conclusions to the Croatian adventure was highly possible. No one of them was inevitable, but the odds I would have placed on each were such that the probability that at least one of them would come to pass amounted to mathematical near-certainty.

On this basis, and with full confession of the numerous value judgments involved in my conclusion, I would join those of the observers, participant or formally detached, who are reluctantly glad that the whistle was blown, sorry that it had to be blown that way, and concerned about the implications for the future of both the nature of

the crisis and the style of its resolution since Karadjordjevo.

Observers should not pretend that they can or do avoid making judgments.

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NOTES

1. The Presidium, with 52 members, replaced the traditional Central Committee after the Ninth Party Congress in March 1969. It is elected by and responsible to the quinquennial Congress, but is also responsible to and can be partly reconstituted by a new institution created in 1969, the Conference, a kind of minicongress which meets annually and consists of 280 delegates—70 standing members, elected by the Congress for five years, and 210 delegates elected each year by local organizations. Because the Presidium meets infrequently (23 times in its first two years) and is of unwieldy size, the 1969 Congress on Tito's initiative also created another, potentially powerful new body: the Executive Bureau of the Presidium, then comprising 15 members—two from each republic and one from each of Serbia's two autonomous provinces, plus Tito. The Croatian crisis and Karadjordjevo focused attention on the shortcomings of this body which had proved to be a council of republican barons unable to act decisively instead of the dictatorial Politburo some had feared it would be. It was consequently cut to eight members by the Second Conference (January 1972)—one from each republic and province, without Tito—and transformed into a purely executive body—almost exactly what the old Executive Committee of the Central Committee had been from 1966 to 1969!

2. *Politika* (Belgrade), December 5, 1971.

3. Dennison Rusinow, *The Price of Pluralism* (DIR-1-'71), Fieldstaff Reports, Southeast Europe Series, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, 1971.

4. This, incidentally, is why the Croatian program in 1971 included changes in Federal and Republican constitutional definitions of the Yugoslav union and of the Croatian state. The formal right of the republics to secede, which was in the first postwar Yugoslav Constitution (copied from Stalin's 1936 Soviet one), was dropped when a new Constitution, the one now being substantively amended, was adopted in 1963. For the ideological reason why this *legal* difference can be regarded as irrelevant, see below, p. 8.

5. To a meeting of trade union leaders on December 18, 1971. The other strong speech, in which he spoke of civil war and of his readiness to use the army if necessary, was delivered at Rudo, in Bosnia, on December 22.

6. *Borba za samoupravni socijalizam u Jugoslaviji 1945-1969* (Zagreb: Institut za historiju radničkog pokreta hrvatske, 1969), a brief and tantalizing apéritif for a larger study now reportedly nearing completion.

7. This summary and paraphrase is from the version of Bilandžić's speech printed in *Vjesnik* (Zagreb), December 14, 1971.

8. Speech published in *Vjesnik*, December 12, 1971.

9. *Ibid.*, December 14, 1971 (italics added).

10. Reference to territorial demands happens to have been omitted from descriptions of the nationalist platform scattered through Parts II to IV of this series of Reports, so it should be noted here that they are not figments of Mme. Derossi's imagination or establishment exaggeration of the nationalist platform. They were in fact one of several curious and unimportant but highly indicative marginal items for discussion that appeared in the *Matica* and even in the "Party" press in Croatia in 1971. They involved places like Neum, an odd little projection of otherwise landlocked Bosnia-Herzegovina to the sea that separates Dalmatia proper from the historic territory of the Republic of Dubrovnik, both parts of Croatia. It was left to Bosnia in the Communists' drawing of republican boundaries, a five-mile long break in the territorial continuity of Croatia, for purely historic reasons and because these boundaries did not matter much anyway in 1945, but in 1971 the Zagreb press noted ominously that a Bosnian Neum made Croatia into a "little Pakistan!"

11. Ema Derossi-Bjelajac, "Karakteristika i dimenzije idejno-političkih devijacija u Savezu komunista Hrvatske," in *Naše Teme* (Zagreb), January 1972, pp. 9-14.

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