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The Postcommunist Procuracy

Legacies of Antimodernism

Kiriyenko and Matlock on the Russian Crisis

Slovakia after Meciar

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"unrealistic." Nevertheless, the cabinet gave in and further expanded revenues by \$789 million, while maintaining a 1 percent deficit. The president and government stressed that the deficit had to be kept low to meet the IMF's conditions for a \$2.2 billion stabilization loan. On December 31, the budget was finally approved by a slim 226 votes.

The budget dispute triggered a political war between parliament and the president over economic legislation. In its November session, the parliament attempted to increase the minimum wage nearly three-fold, from a monthly rate of \$16 to \$45. Kuchma vetoed the bill, declaring that the increase in government expenditures would cause a hemorrhage in state coffers, forcing the government to choose among three evils: increasing taxes, laying off workers, or printing money. On December 28, parliament again voted for a minimum-wage increase. This time, however, the new minimum wage was set at \$22 a month, with the official poverty line set at \$25. Meanwhile, the government announced that the only way to deal with growing wage arrears was to print money. The cabinet is currently planning to print \$290 million, which is expected to push up inflation, in 1999, to 19 percent.



Faced with growing dissatisfaction and protests from the Crimean Tatar population, Ukrainian authorities in Crimea simplified considerably the naturalization procedure for Tatars who are not Ukrainian citizens. The original, strict naturalization procedures had affected approximately 200,000 Crimean Tatars who have returned to Crimea from Uzbekistan but remained Uzbek citizens. The authorities believe the new procedures will help ease political tensions on the peninsula.

On October 21, the parliament of the Crimean Autonomous Republic adopted a new Constitution that declares Crimea to be an inseparable part of Ukraine. The new Constitution does not provide for separate citizenship or a separate legal system as did the previous four drafts, all of which were rejected by the Ukrainian parliament. Yet, on December 15, the Ukrainian parliament rejected this draft Crimean Constitution, by a vote of 210 to 89. Deputies of PDP criticized the provisions of the draft Constitution that would have given Crimea the authority to engage in foreign economic activities, sign international agreements and treaties, and keep the tax revenues it collects on the peninsula. PDP deputies also argued that the proposed Crimean Constitution failed to ensure the official status of the Ukrainian language and provided insufficient rights to Crimean Tatars. But after an amendment was added to the draft prohibiting Crimea from adopting legislation that contradicts Ukrainian law, the Ukrainian parliament voted on the Crimean Constitution again, on December 23, this time approving it, with 230 votes in favor and 67 against.

Yugoslavia

Unprepared to commit ground troops, NATO launched a massive air campaign against Serbia on March 24, in an apparent belief that cruise missiles and smart bombs can halt ethnic cleansing. Throughout the past months, federal president Slobodan Milosevic (Socialist Party of Serbia [SPS]) continues to play on Serbian fears of military attack while exploiting the international community's fear of radical Serbian nationalism to present himself as the best available spokesman of Serbia's interests. Crisis clearly suits Milosevic in his dealings at home and abroad. But never, during his tenure as president of Serbia and now as president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, has Milosevic faced so many crises. In a bid to carve out an independent state, separatist rebels in Kosovo pose an increasingly serious threat to Serbian security forces. NATO, while not supporting the outright secession of Kosovo (at least not for now), has tired of Milosevic and Serb forces' recurrent attacks on defenseless ethnic Albanian civilians. Because NATO is now willing to support the ethnic Albanian drive to police themselves, with the aid of international peacekeepers, Milosevic must choose between war with NATO or compromising the sovereignty of a region viewed by many Serbs as their ancestral homeland. (In Kosovo in 1389, Serbs lost the epic Battle of White Mountain to the Ottomans. Since then, it has loomed large in Serbian mytho-history.) At the same time, Milosevic must contend with his arch rival, Montenegrin president Milo Djukanovic (Democratic Party of Socialists [DPS]), who not only threatens Milosevic's ability to utilize effectively the federal government, but also has become a rallying point for political groups in Serbia who are tired of eking out their livelihoods in an impoverished economy and, as the former chief of the Yugoslav Army puts it, of being "at war with the world." Whether Milosevic continues to see crisis upon crisis as beneficial to his political health is hard to say. What is clear is that Milosevic's handling of the crises now confronting him will determine the fate of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which, at present, appears to be coming apart at the seams.

In October and November 1998, Milosevic purged the Yugoslav military and police leadership, which he had built up and relied on during the wars with Croatia and Bosnia. On October 27, Jovica Stansic, chief of the Yugoslav Security Forces (the secret police) was removed. In November, Ljubisa Velickanic, commander of the Yugoslav Air Force, was instructed to step down. On November 26, General Momcilo Perisic was removed as the chief of staff of the Yugoslav Army, a position he held since 1991. All of them resented the increasing political power of Milosevic's wife, Mirjana Markovic, who chairs the United

Yugoslav Left (UYL), one of SPS's partners in the government. They also questioned the reasonableness of risking war with NATO. Perisic is no stranger to cruelty. He is responsible for the shelling of Zadar, in 1991, and Mostar, in 1992. Perhaps Perisic finds it more amusing to shell civilian centers than to wage war against militarily superior opponents. Be that as it may, he was no doubt genuinely offended by the demand that the professional Yugoslav Army do the bidding of gangsters like Mirjana Markovic and Vojislav Seselj, deputy prime minister and chief of the far-right Serbian Radical Party (SRP). Not one to hold his tongue, Perisic made his views known and was therefore sacked.

Milosevic also purged his own SPS of various unbelievers. On November 13, SPS's executive board unanimously stripped Milorad Vucelic of his party functions and his seat in the Serbian parliament. (According to electoral law, parties may determine the distribution of mandates among their members.) Prior to his sacking, Vucelic was SPS vice chairman and leader of the SPS's faction in the Serbian parliament. Vucelic was also director of the powerful Serbian Radio and Television Corporation from 1991 to 1995. No official reason was given for his removal, but speculations are that he was becoming conciliatory toward Montenegrin president Djukanovic.



Armed confrontations in Kosovo also increased in the fall of 1998. Every few days, an ethnic Albanian was shot by Serbian security forces patrolling Kosovo. Likewise, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) killed Serbian police officers and attacked police convoys. On October 18, two Serbian journalists were kidnapped, and, on November 19, a Serbian police inspector was taken hostage. All were later released. From December 24 to 28, a sustained armed confrontation occurred near Podujevo, in northern Albania. Throughout this period, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) implored both sides—the Serbian forces and the KLA—to cease hostilities, holding both responsible for the bloodshed.

NATO was prompted to intervene on behalf of the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo because of the brutal and pointless massacre of 45 civilians in the southern village of Racak, which occurred sometime around January 15. On January 17, William Walker, the head of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission, reported that Serb forces had massacred at least 40 Albanian civilians in Racak. Serbian president Milan Milutinovic (SPS) accused Walker of overstepping his mandate, and, on January 17, the federal government ordered Walker to leave the country within 48 hours. At an urgently convened meeting in Brussels, the NATO Council

demanded that Milosevic identify those who gave the orders for the Racak operation and to bring them to justice. Milosevic was also asked to cooperate with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and allow tribunal officials to investigate the Racak massacre. The chief prosecutor of the tribunal, Louise Arbour, announced that she would travel to Kosovo to head the Racak investigation. But she and the investigation team were stopped at the Yugoslav-Macedonian border and denied entrance for not possessing the "proper" visas. NATO commanders Wesley Clark and Klaus Naumann issued a stern "final warning" to Milosevic, on January 19, that included the following four points: revoke the decision expelling Walker; allow a tribunal team to investigate the Racak massacre; take action in identifying and bringing to justice the perpetrators of the massacre; and restrain the security forces in Kosovo from violating the October peace agreement. After a visit to Belgrade by OSCE chairman Knut Volebek, on January 22, the Yugoslav federal government "froze" its decision to expel Walker.

Throughout mid-January, the Contact Group worked to develop a new plan, based on the Hill Plan, for immediate negotiations between Serbs and ethnic Albanians. The Contact Group was founded in 1994 to coordinate international responses to the war in Bosnia, and it includes representatives from England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the US. The Hill Plan, named after the US ambassador to Macedonia, Christopher Hill, who is also the American negotiator in the Kosovo crisis, proposed terms for Kosovar autonomy though not outright independence. (For an analysis of the Hill Plan, see *Yugoslavia Update*; *EECR*, Vol. 7, No. 4, Fall 1998.) The Contact Group renamed the plan the "Ten Principles" and added an annex that provided for stationing NATO peacekeeping troops on the ground in Kosovo. Soon thereafter, the NATO Council issued ultimatums to the Serbs and the Kosovo Albanians that negotiations based on the Ten Principles had to begin at once. An international peace conference on Kosovo was scheduled to begin, on February 6, outside Paris, at the Château Rambouillet. The parties were given three weeks to reach an agreement.

The Serbian parliament, acting on a motion by the Serbian government, decided to attend the peace talks. Out of the 250 delegates, 227 voted for attendance, three voted against, and three abstained. The decision came from the Serbian parliament, rather than the federal one, again emphasizing Milosevic's claim that Kosovo is an internal Serbian issue. The main opposition to attendance came from Vojislav Seselj. The Serbian delegation was headed by Ratko Markovic (SPS member and chief negotiator), who was joined by the deputy federal prime ministers and close aids of Milosevic—Nikola Sainovic

and Vladan Kutlesic. The delegation also included Vladimir Stambuk, deputy speaker of the Serbian parliament, and Vojislav Zivkovic, chairman of SPS's provincial board in Kosovo. The Kosovo Albanian delegation, not entirely united in their agenda, was headed by Ibrahim Rugova and included KLA representatives.

At Rambouillet, the delegations were separated from each other as the mediators presented first one side and then the other with the Ten Principles and a set of military annexes. After initial optimism, the talks ground to a halt. On February 13, Milutinovic traveled to Rambouillet to insist, ostensibly, that both sides sign the peace plan. He accused the Kosovo Albanian delegation and the mediators of obstructing the negotiations by not permitting direct talks between the two delegations. But mediators soon realized that Milutinovic had come to Rambouillet to block any plans that would allow NATO troops to serve as on-the-ground peace-implementation forces in Kosovo. After meeting with Milutinovic, on February 22, US secretary of state Madeleine Albright warned the Serbs that if they caused the breakdown of the negotiations, air strikes would follow. Milutinovic clung firmly to the position that NATO ground forces would not be acceptable in Kosovo, even if the Russians assented. Consequently, the Serbian delegation ceased to pretend that they were prepared to accept the terms of the Contact Group. For its part, the KLA maintained that only NATO troops could protect ethnic Albanians from Serb aggression. Also, the ethnic Albanian delegation wanted the agreement to include provisions for the secession of Kosovo from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

When the deadline expired, at noon on February 20, an extension was granted until February 23, in an effort to reach an agreement on the appendix regarding the status and military makeup of the Kosovo Peace Agreement Implementation Forces. Although the civilian aspects of the agreement had been accepted by both sides, two issues remained unsolved: the Kosovo Albanians insisted that a referendum on the independence of Kosovo be held after the expiration of a three-year transition period, while the Serb representatives rejected the designation of foreign troops, particularly those of NATO, as the peacekeeping force. The Serbs also claimed that the Albanian request for a referendum on independence corroborated their assertion that Serbia's military action was a legal effort to protect the territorial integrity of a recognized nation. This claim, unsurprisingly, was echoed in Belgrade. After continued failure to reach an agreement, the peace talks recessed, and the parties were given two weeks to consider the plan and/or to sell it to the principal players back in Belgrade and Pristina. Finally, on

March 15, Rugova announced that the ethnic Albanian delegation would sign the Contact Group's Ten Principles. But the Serbs have reached no decision, and, on March 20, Serbian forces were again heavily shelling Kosovo. NATO responded with the bombing campaign that began on March 24.



During the negotiations, Milosevic's allies in Belgrade were attempting to stoke the public's fear and sense of isolation. Belgraders knew they faced the prospect of attacks on the Yugoslav capital. At a press conference, on January 13, three deputy prime ministers—Ratko Markovic, Milovan Bojic (United Yugoslav Left [UYL]), and Seselj claimed to have discovered an allegedly top-secret CIA document outlining US support for Serbian organizations working for the overthrow of Milosevic. According to the three, the document revealed that the US government would increase the amount of aid to Serbian opposition groups from \$15 to \$35 million—the opposition media and political parties would each receive \$10 million; NGOs and alternative university groups, \$5 million; student organizations, \$2 million; and trade unions, \$1 million. By the next morning, the media had revealed that this CIA document was actually a set of recommendations issued by the Washington-based Institute for Peace, titled the "Promotion of Democracy in Yugoslavia." The document had been available on the Internet since December 10. Although the scandal was uncovered in less than eight hours, the Serbia *contra mundum* propaganda against "foreign agents" and "national traitors" went on for weeks and was intensely exploited, particularly by Seselj.

The government underwent further personnel changes, on January 19, when federal prime minister Momir Bulatovic (Socialist People's Party [SPP]) appointed Vuk Draskovic (Serbian Renewal Movement [SRM]) federal deputy prime minister, and three other SRM members were appointed to ministerial positions in the federal government—Milan Bozic was named minister without portfolio; Slobodan Nenadovic, minister of trade; and Milan Komnecic, public-information secretary. According to Art. 102 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the federal prime minister nominates the members of government with the approval of the federal parliament. Draskovic declared that his joining the federal government represented a "bridge between Yugoslavia and the world," and that he planned to reform the federal government. Since the large student marches in 1996, Draskovic has styled himself a reformer, though most credible opposition groups consider his rhetoric disingenuous. Draskovic's past also seems to lend credence to this skeptical perspective. In November 1997, he parted company with

the opposition groups that had led the student marches and formed a coalition government with SPS and SRP in the Belgrade City Council, ousting opposition leader Zoran Djindic from his position as mayor. By bringing SRM into the government, Milosevic greatly reduces the chances that any supposedly democratic opposition groups in Serbia will protest his campaigns in Kosovo.



Overshadowed by the Kosovo crisis, other political and legal events were largely pushed to the margins of the public consciousness. On December 24, the federal Constitutional Court annulled the Montenegrin Law on the Election of Deputies to the Chamber of the Republics of the Federal Parliament. At stake was Djukanovic's ability to check Milosevic's power over the federal government. According to Art. 80 of the federal Constitution, Montenegro elects half of the members of the Chamber of Republics (*Vece Republika*), which is the upper house of the Federal Assembly (*Savezna Skupstina*). Article 81 provides that "the election and termination of the mandate of federal deputies in the Chamber of Republics of the Federal Assembly is regulated by the law of the member republic." In June 1998, the Montenegrin parliament, which was dominated by deputies loyal to Djukanovic, elected 20 members to the federal upper house, all of them Djukanovic supporters. In addition, the

Montenegrin parliament amended the Montenegrin electoral law to require that its representatives to the Chamber of Republics vote according to the wishes of the Montenegrin parliament and not according to their own political views. Djukanovic attempted to use this law to ensure that his influence in the upper house would remain intact. With a bloc in the upper house, Djukanovic could have easily obstructed amendments to the federal Constitution, the ratification of certain laws, and the conferral of decree powers on federal president Milosevic. By striking down the law, the federal Constitutional Court does not exactly prevent Djukanovic from checking Milosevic's power in the federal government, but it denies Djukanovic a legal guarantee of the loyalty of Montenegrin deputies to the federal Chamber of Republics. If any of these deputies from Montenegro vote against the Montenegrin parliament's instructions, Djukanovic can do nothing about it. At present, however, all of the Montenegrin deputies in the federal upper house appear to be Djukanovic loyalists. At least for the time being, Djukanovic is very critical of Milosevic's policy in Kosovo, and he has exploited the latter's confrontation with NATO for his own political gain. In recent months, Djukanovic has warmly received representatives of the US and the UK. Foreign-policy communities in both countries are now speaking openly of Djukanovic as a politically palatable alternative to Milosevic.

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