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The Yugoslav Communist Party: Decentralization and Reorganization

Barbara P. McCrea

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THE YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST PARTY:
DECENTRALIZATION AND REORGANIZATION

by

Barbara P. McCrea

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
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Barbara P. McCrea
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AND REORGANIZATION
THE YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST PARTY: DECENTRALIZATION

McCreary, Barbara P.
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INTRODUCTION

At the close of World War II Yugoslavia was constituted as a federation of six republics. These corresponded in main to the regions inhabited by the five major nationalities of Yugoslavia, the exception being Bosnia-Hercegovina where Serbs, Croats, and Slav Moslems are intricately mixed. This was a legalistic fiction; the reality was a centralist and authoritarian Communist government. As with its Soviet model, all power lay in the hands of the Communist Party.

However, a crucial event diverted Yugoslavia from Stalinism. In 1948, Stalin, suspicious of Tito's power and independence, expelled Yugoslavia from the Cominform. Contrary to all expectations East and West, Tito refused to cave in and was furthermore able to preserve Yugoslavia's position outside the Communist bloc. Tito's success was due in large part to the ability of the Yugoslav Communists to innovate and the internal strength of the party, which was unique in Eastern Europe in that it owed no debt to Soviet arms or largesse.

In order to justify themselves ideologically to their own Party and to differentiate their regime from the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav Party has effected a
series of innovations which have gradually led them away from an authoritarian, centralist government. The seminal innovation was the institution of Workers' Self-Management of 1950 whereby the management of the individual enterprises was turned over to workers' councils, the state proclaiming that the means of production were to be "socially owned." The Stalinist system of subordinating economic criteria to administrative criteria was whittled away. This inevitably included in decision-making non-Party technicians, whose main concerns were economic rather than political. As a concomitant of economic decentralization, the Party announced that the proper road to socialism lay in both the state and Party "withering away," which was to be effected through decentralization.

However, decentralization in the Party was lethargic, lagging behind that of the economic sphere. Intraparty resistance blocked many proposed reforms and, in general, conservatives retained a strong voice in Party affairs. By the early 1960's Yugoslavia had proven its ability to survive and trade with both blocs, but its political survival was far more debatable. The Party had become far out of step with the increased freedom in the economic sphere.

A worsening trade position forced far-reaching
economic reforms in 1965. Their effectiveness was blunted by Party conservatives, who resisted attempts to decentralize political power. In 1966 the divergence between liberals, led by those committed to the reforms, and the conservatives came to a crisis. Aleksander Rankovich, Tito's heir-apparent and the leading conservative, was purged. The concepts of self-management and decentralization have begun to acquire real meaning within the Party since his ouster, and the range of permissible criticism has appreciably broadened. Decentralization gave increased power to the parties of the republics. The problems posed by their growing independence appear to have been finally faced at the Ninth Congress of 1969. The Ninth Congress marks a major transformation of the Party, both in personnel and in structure. The new institutions set up by the Congress represent an attempt to accommodate the growing pluralism within the Party structure.

Decentralization has also served to revive the nationality problem, an ever-present facet of Yugoslav life. Essentially, any consensus politics in the country depends on the support of several nationalities, as not one holds a numerical majority. In essence, the government's function is to effect a balance among the nationalities which will not threaten the fragile unity of the country.
I intend to concentrate my examination of the changes within the League of Communists on the last crucial years, from the ouster of Rankovich to the Ninth Congress. No study of Yugoslavia can be properly made without considering the grave threat posed by national antagonisms, and the stresses these place on the Party. Therefore, national rivalries, and the economic decentralization which has served to reinforce nationalism, will also receive much attention.

Because of the problems involved in writing Serbo-Croatian on a standard typewriter, I have transliterated the most common names. Thus, the consonants marked with a hachek, Ć, Š, and Ž, are written as Ch, Sh, and Sh. The accented Ć is also reproduced as Ch, and Đ is written as Dj.
CHAPTER I

THE MATRIX

The Socio-Historical Complex

"Of all my travels I think the most enlightening were in the Balkans, whose combination of intellectual subtlety and crudity, of torture and intrigue and honest courage revealed more truths about the political animal man than are found in most textbooks of political science." ¹

Of all the East European nations Yugoslavia alone has both repudiated Soviet domination and managed to escape from it. Since the 1948 break with the Cominform, the road which the Yugoslav Communist Party has traveled is unique, dictated by Yugoslavia's divisive nationality problem, her complex history, her strategic geographical location, and, peculiarly enough, the very strength of the Party itself. The post-1948 reorganization of the Party is rooted in the complex of historical and social forces which act upon the country. No discussion of the changes in the structure of the Party can be complete without considering the internal pressures upon the Party.

Specifically, two factors weigh heaviest: the great internal stresses bred by the nationality problem and the ever-present fear of a return to Serbian hegemony. In a country where not one of the five major nationalities enjoys a numerical majority, the ruling group must cope with an extraordinarily intricate internal situation. The dynamics of governing a multinational state with great historic, economic, and social discontinuities has greatly influenced the decentralization and reorganization effected by the Yugoslav Communist Party.

The discontinuities spring from the complex history of the country. Yugoslavia's cultural and historical heritages are so diverse that in reality they represent different civilizations. It has been a halfway house between cultures, a border region where Roman and Byzantine, Christian and Moslem, Teuton and Slav met and clashed. Great disparities still exist between the former lands of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy and those of the Turkish Empire. The Roman Catholic Croats and Slovenes were subject to the westernized rule of the Hapsburgs and benefited from the industrialization which flowed from western Europe. The southern portion of Yugoslavia, dominated by the Turks for five hundred years or more, remained undeveloped and substantially illiterate. When the state of Yugoslavia was formed in 1919,
three-fourths of the 1,855 existing industrial plants were located in the former Hapsburg lands, although the bulk of the population and resources lay in the southern portion.\(^2\)

The Hapsburg-Ottoman political division was reinforced by the religious cleavage between the Roman Catholics of the north and the Orthodox Christians of the Turkish domains. The Croats and Slovenes drew upon western traditions, while the Orthodox peoples derived their culture from Byzantium. In addition, the long centuries of Turkish rule left behind a residue of Slav and Albanian Moslems estimated at 12 per cent, who preserved much of the Turkish culture.\(^3\)

The tremendous discontinuities among the South Slavs became evident only when these diverse peoples were united in the Yugoslav Kingdom in 1919 under the Serbian Monarchy. Postwar illiteracy rates reflect the discontinuities which continue to exist: in 1953, only 2.5


per cent of the Slovenes were illiterate, compared to 63.5 per cent for the Albanians, 48.6 per cent for the Bosnian Moslems, and 28.5 per cent for the Serbs. No reliable statistics exist for the national composition of prewar Yugoslavia. In 1953, the Serbs constituted 41.7 per cent; the Croats, 23.5 per cent; the Slovenes, 8.8 per cent; the Macedonians, 5.3 per cent; the Montenegrins, 2.8 per cent; the Moslem Slavs (mainly of Bosnia-Hercegovina), 5.9 per cent. National minorities comprised 12 per cent; the largest of these were the Albanians, 4.4 per cent, and the Magyars, 3 per cent.

The highly nationalistic Serbian state was poorly equipped for the task of governing a heterogeneous, greatly expanded state in which the Serbs constituted only the largest minority. The monarchy's answer was to impose Serbianization, which managed to satisfy almost no one outside the borders of the former Serbian state. While the various South Slav nationalities might have been amenable to an eventual amalgamation within a South Slav federation, the prospect of exchanging their

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5 Hoffman and Neal, Yugoslavia, p. 33.
traditions for those of the Serbs was highly unattractive to most non-Serbs.\textsuperscript{6}

Serb centralism alienated large portions of the country for both national and economic reasons. The Macedonians were denied separate national status and education in their own language, were garrisoned by Serbian Army units and officials, and, in general, misgoverned.\textsuperscript{7} The Croats and Slovenes felt exploited and humiliated by the Serbs, whom they viewed as inferior in culture and education. The Croats were especially unreconciled to Serbian hegemony, for they had enjoyed more autonomy under the Hapsburgs. In addition to the nationality conflict between the two, the Croatian and Serbian business classes were placed in direct competition in the new state. The Croatian bourgeoisie was compelled to give way to the central government, which was controlled by the Serb Radical Party and which ruled in the interests of the Serbian bourgeoisie against all other classes and nationalities.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{6}For a Croat view on the desire for federation, see P. D. Ostrovich, The Truth About Yugoslavia (New York: Roy Publishers, 1952).

\textsuperscript{7}Hugh Seton-Watson, Eastern Europe Between the Wars: 1918-1941 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), pp. 131 and 256-265.

Thus, the interwar Yugoslav government failed to satisfy a large percentage of its subjects, and a strong, if unfocused, revolutionary potential existed.

The conflict between the Serbs and Croats plagued interwar Yugoslavia from its inception. When the Croatian delegates refused to participate in the 1920 Constituent Assembly, on the grounds that they had been promised a confederation, the Serbs were able to ram through a highly centralized constitution and the new nation was delivered unto Serbian autocracy. In the end, the Serb-Croat conflict brought down the Kingdom.

Thus, although the Yugoslav Communists espoused federalism as a means for consolidating power after World War II, it is a natural political form for a country where hegemony by one nationality had failed to function

9 Although the Serbs and Croats derive from the same tribe of seventh century Slavic invaders and speak basically the same languages, history dictated that the Croats be westernized Roman Catholics, using the Latin alphabet, while the Orthodox Serbs are Byzantine in traditions and write their common language in Cyrillic.

10 The Constitution was passed by only twenty-seven votes, the majority of which were provided by such groups as the Serb Moslems who were easily influenced by promises of a special status within the new state. Thus, it was a compromised instrument from the beginning, opposed by the majority of the people it was intended to govern. It was christened the "Vidovdan Constitution" in honor of the Serbian national holiday, a clear insult to the non-Serb majority.
satisfactorily. The federalist structure of modern Yugoslovakia is a compromise between unity and diversity. In most federal systems, the balance of power does not necessarily remain static, the system usually being forced to accommodate to changes in society. In Yugoslavia, the pressures for change acting upon the system are most likely to evolve from the problem of national rivalries, which are exacerbated by economic decentralization. Decentralization, which was forced by both the nationality problem and the Soviet ouster, inevitably has had great effect upon the Party itself.

The impact of decentralization on the political structure poses two major questions for the regime: how to organize the economic-administrative system on the local level so it will perform in the desired manner, and how then to organize a system of national controls which will guide the local units without being dictatorial. In a country with the fragile unity of Yugoslavia, these considerations decreased the power of the Party to act arbitrarily after the support of the Soviet Union was withdrawn. While economic liberalization and political reform are related variables, they have not proceeded at the same pace. Since the ouster of Aleksander Rankovich in 1966, the momentum of political reform has increased, and with it the crucial question posed by decentralization:
can the monolith of Party power remain intact once liberalization is permitted in other spheres.

The Party: Genesis and Brief Period of Legality

The Communist Party which finds itself facing this question evolved from a merger between the left-wing Social Democrats and the Socialist Workers Party of Yugoslavia (Communist) in 1919. It became a member of the Third International (the Comintern) in 1920. From the beginning the Party enjoyed a crucial advantage: unlike the bulk of Yugoslav political parties, which were based on regional and nationalistic appeal, it attracted support from all regions of the new state. It obviously had far wider support than mere membership figures indicate, for in the 1920 municipal elections the Party won majorities in Belgrade, Zagreb, Skopje, Nish, and Uzhice. The Communists and the Democrats were the only parties who won representation in every region. In the


12 Ibid., pp. 42-43.

13 The Democrat Party was a bourgeois-based party more genuinely democratic than its parent, the Serb Radical Party.
first parliamentary elections the Communist Party (CPY) emerged as the third strongest party, winning 58 of the 419 Assembly seats. Significantly, the bulk of CPY votes lay in regions most vehemently opposed to Serbian hegemony, especially Croatia, Dalmatia, and Macedonia.  

Thus, although much of its support was lost during the ensuing years of illegality, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia did not appear overnight in 1941. Once King Alexander outlawed the Party in 1921, dissidents were forced to give their overt support to nationalistic parties of opposition. However, the Party remained a force among the intelligentsia, especially at the University of Belgrade.  

In 1929, Alexander suspended the Vidovdan Constitution and with it most civil and legal restraints upon the government. As Serbian autocracy increased throughout the interwar period, so did the potential for revolution.

The Party: 1921-1937, The Underground Years of Persecution and Dissent

The 1921 elections were the highwater mark for the CPY. The Serbian monarchy, which had had strong ties to


15 Seton-Watson, East European Revolution, p. 41.
the Romanov dynasty, greatly feared Marxism and seized upon the first opportunity to ban the CPY.\(^{16}\) This was handily found in the assassination of the Minister of the Interior, the culmination in a series of strikes and disorders. Many of these the Communists had indeed perpetuated. The Party was forced to go underground and it ceased to be an important political factor.

Equally destructive to the CPY were the shifts in Comintern policy on nationalism. Originally, the Comintern's rather vague stand on nationalism permitted the CPY to gain adherents by supporting federalism, but by May of 1922 the Comintern tightened its policy on nationalism and ordered its members to encourage national rivalries. For the CPY the policy shift was disastrous, because it was forced to seek support from a _melange_ of competing nationalities. In addition, the Comintern further hamstrung the Yugoslav Party by forbidding any cooperation with national-based parties, which were a main source of support for the CPY.\(^{17}\)

Therefore, after 1922 Comintern policy was fundamentally at odds with the political realities operant in

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\(^{17}\)Shoup, _The Yugoslav National Question_, pp. 21, 23.
a multinational state. The CPY was unable to come to any internal agreement. It split between the Comintern loyalists and those who held that it was unrealistic to expect that the solidarity of the miniscule Yugoslav working class would be furthered by encouraging national antagonisms.

Comintern policy became even more extreme in 1928. The recalcitrant Yugoslavs were ordered to call for the immediate secession of every nationality, including even the Albanians. Throughout the twenties the Comintern intervened several times to impose discipline on the CPY.

When the Constitution was suspended in 1929, the CPY became subject to increasing police repression. The Party collapsed, membership fell to only a few hundred, and most of its leadership fled abroad. It was during this period that the future leader, Joseph Broz-Tito, entered the ranks as a labor organizer. Perhaps fortunately for his survival vis-a-vis Stalin, he was imprisoned for five years in 1928 and so avoided any obloquy for that period in Party affairs. In 1932 the Comintern suspended the entire Central Committee of the faction-torn Party and named Milan Gorkich secretary-general. Tito was

\[18\] Ibid., p. 35.
named to the new Central Committee and ordered to Moscow. In 1935 an open split surfaced between the Yugoslav leaders in exile and the illegal Party based in Yugoslavia. Once again the CPY insisted on airing a quarrel publicly--and once again the Comintern intervened to settle the quarrel. It takes no imagination to conclude that Stalin must have come to consider the CPY an unreliable and ineffective instrument.

The Party United: Tito Takes Control

In 1937 Gorkich fell victim to the Stalinist purges and Tito was named head of the CPY. Although Tito succeeded in avoiding the abyss of the purges, they were especially devastating to the Yugoslav Party. A survivor has stated that "of all the emigrations ours suffered the most in the U.S.S.R. The overwhelming majority were arrested in 1937-1938 and nothing is known of their fate." During 1936-1937 Tito brought into the CPY a new group of young leaders and returned the leadership to

19 Those Yugoslavs who received training at Comintern institutions include Ivan Gosnjak, Miha Marinko, Velkjo Vlahovich, Edvard Kardelj, and Tito. Avakumovic, History, p. 127.

Yugoslav soil. It is probable that Tito first conceived a deep dislike of Stalinism during the purges which decimated his party and must have threatened his own life. Ironically, Stalin killed more members of the CPY Central Committee than did Alexander or the Germans.

Tito was also charged with recruiting volunteers for the International Brigades fighting in the Spanish Civil War. Among those who fought in Spain were Alesh Bebler, Boris Kidrich, Kocha Popovich, Veljko Valhovich, and Peko Dapchevich. Milovan Djilas served as a recruiter within Yugoslavia. By 1961, twenty-four Spanish war veterans were generals in the Yugoslav Army. One lesson they must have learned was to prove vital in their war against the Axis: the impotence of modern air power and a highly mechanized army against widely dispersed mobile guerilla force operating in mountainous terrain. That they learned the lesson well the Germans could testify.

The new leaders Tito recruited were "home" Communists,

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21 These included Djilas, Kidrich, Vladimir Bakarich, Vladimir Popvich, Kocha Popovich, Lola Ribar, Lazar Kolishevski, and Svetozar Vukmanovich.

22 Avakumovic, History, p. 129, citing Politika, Oct. 7, 1961. In 1959 Tito stated that his Moscow years were worse than the hardships of the Partisan War--"In war at least one knows where his enemy is." New York Times, May 3, 1959, p. 31.

many of them bound by loyalty developed in the Spanish Civil War. They had no ties with the factionalist party of the twenties, in general little actual contact with Moscow, and, most important, tendered their loyalty to one leader, Tito. Under Tito the Party lost its Serbian character and became a truly national, well-disciplined party.24

The Party at War: The Partisan Epic

By 1941 Yugoslavs ranging from industrialized Croats and Slovenes to barely literate Albanians were alienated from the Serbian monarchy. The government of Milan Stojadinovich, premier from 1935 to 1939, pursued a policy of increasing pro-German orientation. A dramatic repudiation of the government's pro-German policy occurred in March of 1941 when an army coup d'état overthrew the government and installed the underage heir as King. Hitler attacked on April 6, 1941, and within a few days the King had fled the country, the Army was shattered, and the state of Yugoslavia was no more. When World War II rolled over the country few Yugoslavs felt any allegiance to the monarchy. The dismembered state was divided

24 Until 1928 Party leadership was mainly drawn from the old Serbian Social Democratic Party. Shoup, The Yugoslav National Question, p. 37.
among Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Bulgaria. Croatia was constituted as an independent Quisling state under the Fascist Croat party, the Ustashe.

By the summer of 1941 two guerilla forces had grouped in the mountains of Serbia: the Chetniks, led by remnants of the Serbian army officer corps; and the Partisans, led by Tito. The circumstances of the Partisan entry into actual conflict with the Germans are clouded with ambiguity. While it is a reasonable assumption that the timing of the main partisan offensive was decided by the German invasion of the Soviet Union, it seems equally clear that Tito must have utilized the intervening two months between defeat and offensive to prepare his well-organized resistance movement.²⁵

Of interest to the examination of the postwar development of the Yugoslav Party is that for the first time evidence appeared of action taken independently from the Comintern. A May 1941 meeting of the CPY recorded its opposition to the dismemberment of the country and, furthermore, claimed portions of the Julian region which Italy had held since 1918.²⁶ It seems probable that at


²⁶Shoup, The Yugoslav National Question, p. 61, citing Jovan Marjanovich, Serbija u Narodnooslobodilačkoj borbi, p. 79.

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this time the CPY also broke relations with the Hungarian Party, to avoid discussing the Vojvodina which had been awarded to Hungary. Both these decisions were apparently unsanctioned by the Comintern. In addition, Tito's communique to the Comintern attributed the absence of a Macedonian delegate to "technical reasons," although the reasons were less technical than political—the Macedonian Communists having just bolted to the Bulgarian Party. Thus as early as 1941 the Yugoslav Communists were withholding information from, if not deliberately misleading, their Comintern superiors.

This is the first glimmer of the independent decision-making which Tito and his hierarchy were to exercise as the Partisan warfare broadened. Yugoslavia's fate during World War II was tragic, compounded by the national hatreds which racked the country. The Croat Ustashe, joined by many Bosnian Moslems, set out to slaughter all Serbs on their territory. The Serbs retaliated and a bloody imbroglio ensued. National minorities, such as

27. The absence of the Macedonians stems from the ever-present strife within any Macedonian political party over which way Macedonia should head—federalism, union with Bulgaria, union with Yugoslavia, or autonomy. In this case, the Macedonian Communists, under the tutelage of Tito's protegee, Metodija Shatorov-Sharlo, had just gone the way of Bulgaria. Shoup, p. 62.
the Albanians, rose up against their rivals. Throughout this holocaust, the Partisans managed to conduct an extremely effective guerilla war against the Axis. At the same time they battled the Chetniks, who had turned to civil warfare against the Partisans. 28

Ironically, the war forged the Partisan leadership, adherents of international Communism, into a truly national movement. When Belgrade was liberated in October of 1944, most of the country was already under Partisan control; there was no doubt as to who controlled Yugoslavia. Significantly, the Belgrade liberation was a joint Partisan-Soviet effort, Tito having refused to put his forces under Soviet command.

The Communist Party which emerged from the war victorious was unique in two respects which were to prove crucial: it was an indigenous movement and was supported by a mass of non-Party citizens, millions of whom admired Tito's fortitude during the war. Of all the East European Communist parties, only the Yugoslav leadership remained in the country throughout the war. 29

28 First-hand accounts of the Partisan War are contained in Fitzroy Maclean, Disputed Barricades (London: Jonathon Cape, 1957) and Dedijer, Tito.

29 The hierarchy of the other East European parties sheltered in Moscow, returning with the Soviet armies as their countries were liberated.
the Party owed no part of its triumph to Russian armed might. The isolation of the Partisan leaders from Moscow created habits of independent decision-making not present elsewhere in East Europe. Whatever dislike Tito had internalized for Stalinism during the thirties must have been reinforced by the Soviets' repeated refusal to aid the Partisans. The Soviets' continued contact with the Chetniks even after the British had transferred all their aid to the Partisans was obviously galling to the Partisan leadership.

There is yet another facet to the evolution of the wartime Party which was to become vital when the Party embarked on its separate course. Of the 12,000 members enrolled in 1941, only 3,000 survived the war. The ideological training of those thousands who joined after 1941 was by necessity brief and perfunctory. The overwhelming bulk of the membership enrolled during a guerilla war when national interests were paramount, and instructions from Moscow of little import to the rank and file. In addition, many were poorly-educated peasants and workers. This has been both a blessing and a curse: a blessing

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30 See Dedijer, Tito, for an account of Soviet duplicity during the war.

31 By 1945 membership had grown from 12,000 to 141,000. The Partisan units enrolled 800,000. Hoffman and Neal, Yugoslavia, p. 73.
because, when Stalin cast out the Yugoslavs, the Party was unshaken and remained loyal to Tito and their country; a curse because, when the Cominform ouster led to the economic decentralization which the Party deemed necessary for sheer survival, political reforms in turn became imperative, and these have been resisted by much of the older generation.

The Party Triumphant: The Stalinist Model

The structure of the Communist Party which came to power in 1945 was modeled after that of the Soviet Union. Although the government itself was federalist in form, all actual power lay in the central Party organs; specifically, with the top Party hierarchy led by Tito. The foundations for federalism were laid during the war, when Committees of National Liberation were organized in territories under Partisan control. (From the summer of 1941 on, there was no time when the Germans controlled all of Yugoslavia.) These local units took over administrative duties and supervised hospital care and provisions for the local Partisan units. The Party maintained close contact with these and similar committees operating sub rosa in the occupied territories. Since the committees operated over the whole of the country, and sought to enlist as much local participation as possible, all
nationalities were drawn into the struggle and were given equal recognition.

The predecessor of the postwar government was the Antifasisticko Vijece Narodnog Oslobodjenja (AVNOJ), constituted in November of 1942 by the Partisan leadership. A year later, AVNOJ convened at Jajce, Bosnia, and set up a provisional government, under the aegis of a popular front organization. Tito did so without permission from Moscow, and was reprimanded for this—only when the Western Allies accepted the AVNOJ decisions without comment did Moscow acknowledge the results of Jajce.

Thus by the end of the war, the Party possessed a nationwide apparatus of control, the Committees, which they directed through AVNOJ. The provisional government, constituted after Yalta with the approval of the Allies, was headed by Tito, with all but five of the twenty-eight ministers being Party members. AVNOJ, enlarged by a

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32 AVNOJ included many prominent non-Communists such as Dr. Ivan Ribar, speaker of the 1921 Assembly, who was named president of AVNOJ.

33 AVNOJ proclaimed itself the only legal government, despite the existence of the government-in-exile in London headed by the young King Peter. Moscow prohibited broadcasts of the AVNOJ decisions and severely criticized Veljko Valhovich, Yugoslavia's Comintern representative.
token representation from six prewar parties, was designated the provisional parliament. In the fall of 1945 elections for the Constituent Assembly were held, with separate and highly obvious ballot boxes provided for those few hardy enough to vote against the Communist-selected Popular Front Candidates. 34

The representatives of the government-in-exile were routed. Since the prewar parties had generally been discredited by internecine squabbling, the Party was the sole viable political force. On January 30, 1946, the Constituent Assembly promulgated a new constitution, clearly modeled after the 1936 Soviet Constitution. It was federative in form, as promised by the Jajce decisions, and gave to each major nationality equality within the federation.

Six republics with their own administrations were constituted: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and Montenegro. Two autonomous provinces were attached to Serbia: The Vojvodina, containing a mixed population of Serbs, Croats, and Hungarians; and Kosovo-Metohija (Kosmet), which is approximately 75 per cent Albanian. Although legally the highest authority was vested in the parliament (Skupshtina), like

34 Hoffman and Neal, Yugoslavia, p. 80.
its Soviet model it merely accepted without debate the legislation issued by the Presidium. The Presidium also exercised power of judicial review and selected the Council of Ministers, wherein lay the true administrative power. Thus, the actual operation of the federation was concentrated in the central Party organs.

The Party leadership designated the leadership of local governmental units, which inevitably were headed by the secretary of the local party unit. (Many of these local leaders were Partisan chiefs, selected for their wartime contributions rather than for any administrative skills.) Political control was buttressed by the state security forces, headed by Aleksander Rankovich. The extent to which Rankovich utilized Stalinist methods of police terror may be gauged by his admission in 1951 that, during the 1945-1948 period, 47 per cent of all arrests were "unjustifiable" and 23 per cent were for non-political crimes of "minor significance."

However, the federalist structure of the 1946 Constitution should not be dismissed as a mere legalistic device. It represented an honest effort by the Party to alleviate national antagonisms, and, as such,

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36 Ibid., p. 92.
satisfied an important psychological need of the Yugoslav peoples. The CPY's espousal of federalism derived not from Stalinist ideology but from their own attempt to create a viable country. 37

Federalism was also applied to the Party structure. Separate Slovenian and Croatian parties, with their own central committees, were organized by Tito in 1937. 38

The Macedonian Party was set up during the war; the Serb Party in 1945. Separate parties for Bosnia-Hercegovina and Montenegro did not exist until the Cominform break. During the war Tito utilized local cadres on their own territories to carry out the Partisan war and to coordinate the Partisan activity with the Party. Thus, the principle of staffing local Party and administrative posts with indigenous personnel developed. 39 However, in areas of mixed nationality the minorities were consistently under-represented. This was especially true of Bosnia-Hercegovina, where the Serbs held a

38 Ibid., pp. 43-45.
39 This was and is contrary to Soviet practice: party organizations exist in the Soviet republics, but the personnel is shifted from republic to republic at the will of the central Party organs.
disproportionate number of Party and government posts. 40

Once the Yugoslav Party began to decentralize, the existence of separate republic parties became an important factor. They have both encouraged and hindered unity; encouraged it by providing an outlet for national feelings which might otherwise fester beneath the surface, but hindered it because the republic parties have become increasingly able to act autonomously, especially in the area of economics. The fact that they have always been constituted as purely national groups, utilizing their own nationals, has given them cohesion.

There is evidence that even during the Stalinist years the republic parties occasionally differed with the CPY. Rankovich mentions two instances before 1948 when differences between federal and state interests were settled at joint sessions of the national Central Committee and the republic central committees. 41 In addition, the republic constitutions were promulgated in two separate groups, and contained slight differences in the

40 However, the minorities, especially the non-Slavs, did not seek Party membership. Shoup, p. 121, citing Vida Tomashich, "Lichnon Sastavu KJP," Partiska Izgradnja, No. 6 (June-July 1950), p. 8.

method of selection of ministers. The republic parties of today have traveled a long road from the comparatively impotent organizations of 1945, but the first signs of independence can be detected during the Stalinist period.

The federalist structure, the system of republic parties, and the utilization of local personnel are indicative of the CPY's prime achievement: the dampening of national rivalries. If the surface unity has cracked under decentralization, Yugoslavia is at least not torn by the bitter strife which previously divided the country. However, during the Stalinist period there was no distinction made between Party and government. The Party hierarchs occupied chief positions in both, and all lines of power ran to the center.

The Cominform Break

In 1948 the Cominform cast out Yugoslavia and the CPY was deflected from the Stalinist model. It is far beyond the intended scope of this paper to explore the

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42 Shoup, p. 114.

43 Serbian hegemony ceased, and with it an important source of strife disappeared. Republic boundaries were carefully delineated and have since endured with few minor changes. The granting of full national status to the Macedonians helped pacify that perennially troublesome region; for the first time the Macedonians were assured of equal status with all Yugoslavs.
Soviet-Yugoslav break. The formal ouster occurred on June 28, 1948. It is obvious that the Yugoslav hierarchy could not have acquiesced to the Soviet demands without losing their power, and most probably their lives. It is equally obvious that Stalin misjudged the Yugoslavs.

The Yugoslav Communist Party was analogous to no other in the Soviet bloc. The Partisan War forced the CPY to rely on its own leadership and developed habits of independent decision-making. The Party ranks and many top offices were filled by men who had enrolled during a period of tremendous upheaval when loyalty to Moscow was subordinated to the interests of their own country. In addition, the CPY had evidenced some opposition to Soviet hegemony throughout its history. Thus, the Soviets were dealing not with a weak lackey but a strong party fully capable of independent action.

Soviet charges were so contradictory that their rationale was evident: to destroy the Titoist regime.

44 Useful accounts of the break are contained in Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Tito and Goliath (New York: Macmillan, 1951); Adam B. Ulam, Titoism and the Cominform (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952); and Vladimir Dedijer, Tito.

45 There is some grounds for the suspicion that the timing of the break was dictated by the February 1948 Czech coup, which placed the last of the East European states firmly under Soviet control.
The break stemmed not from ideological differences—in 1948 Yugoslav Communism could best be described as domestic Stalinism—but from power considerations. Ideological conformity apparently blinded the Soviets to Tito's independent power.

Yugoslav disenchantment with Stalin had begun during the war when the Soviets refused to sever ties with the Chetniks long after the Allies had thrown their support to the Partisans. During the Stalinist period the Yugoslavs resented the obvious intent of the Soviets to keep Yugoslavia undeveloped. The CPY protested over the operation of Soviet spies within the country and insisted that the Soviet functionaries accept the same rules governing other foreign personnel. Despite Soviet reluctance the regime insisted in pursuing its own national aims: the ceding of Trieste and plans for a Balkan federation.

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46 The Yugoslav regime was accused of both too much and too little, of carrying Communism too far and collectivizing too fast, and of refusing to subordinate chauvinistic interests to the mother Socialist country.


48 "What do you need heavy industry for? In the Urals we have everything you need," the Soviets argued. Dedijer, Tito, p. 278.
Although a minority of Party members did defect to the Cominform, the Party in large remained loyal to Tito's decision to oppose Soviet hegemony.\textsuperscript{49} The CPY was placed in the peculiar position of opposing a system whose forms it closely imitated. Forced to seek a broader base of internal support, the hierarchy had to perform a precarious balancing act: to justify themselves to their own comrades while making the regime more acceptable to the populace.\textsuperscript{50}

The modus operandi they selected was to attack Stalinism itself: Stalin had deviated from true Marxist-Leninism by centralizing all power. Therefore, the Yugoslavs would retain the purity of their faith by decentralizing, a move which they could justify ideologically and utilize to secure support in a heterogeneous country where decentralization is especially suitable. As a later-day critic has written,

\begin{quote}
But while Marxists may still argue about the inadequate interpretation of Marx's conception of the state in socialism, statist communism . . . appears
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{49} The most notable defectors were Andrija Hebrang, head of the planning commission; Arso Jovanovich, Tito's former chief of staff; and Sretan Zhujovich, Minister of Finance who later recanted.

\textsuperscript{50} During the first year after the break, the Party more or less marked time, hoping to be returned to the fold.
to be a complete absurdity for anyone who possesses any knowledge of the authentic Marx.\textsuperscript{51}

Institutions in Flux: 1948-1958

The Yugoslavs mounted a four-pronged attack on Stalinist centralism: (1) decentralization of administrative duties by delegating many governmental functions to republic and local bodies; (2) dismantling of the central planning apparatus; (3) broader participation of the masses; (4) attainment of the latter two through the system of workers' self-management. Operation of each individual enterprise was turned over to the workers employed there, although the means of production were still to be "socially owned" (in contrast to the Stalinist "dictatorship over the proletariat").\textsuperscript{52} The Party was to seek democratization, permit the decentralized economic structures to function autonomously, and was no longer "to consider the determination of the political line ... as its monopoly alone."\textsuperscript{53}


\textsuperscript{52}See Chapter II for a fuller account of the concept of workers' self-management and the economic decentralization.

\textsuperscript{53}Edvard Kardelj, "Report on the IV\textsuperscript{th} Congress of the People's Front," Yugoslav Review, II (March 4, 1953), p. 17.
If the new economic institutions were to function properly, it was necessary for the Party to overhaul its own structure so as to be in step with the newly decentralized economy and administration. The basic ambiguity has been manifested here: the desire of the Party to retain monolithic power while permitting economics and administrative affairs to be decentralized. The result has been an oscillation in Party affairs as the CPY first relaxed discipline, then tightened it.

The CPY first tackled the question of the new role of the Party as workers' self-management swung into effect in the spring of 1952. The June directives of that year attempted to limit the Party's ability to interfere in local administrative and economic affairs. Secretaries of local Party organizations were forbidden to head local administrative bodies. Members were ordered to stop interfering with the newly-formed workers' councils and to confine themselves to educational activities. The Sixth Party Congress convened in November and attempted to chart the changed direction for the Party. Although the Party clearly meant to retain firm control, there was a change in method and emphasis. Party members were to refrain from "administrative measures" (i.e., police terror and compulsion). To dramatize the break with Stalinism, the name was changed to the League of
Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY).  

The Congress initiated extensive reforms in the Party. These included open Party meetings, encouraging non-Communists to attend, basing of Party units solely on production and territorial units (which meant dismantling the cell system in various quasi-governmental bodies such as the trade unions), and the delegating of responsibility for expulsions and admissions to local Party units. The reforms had far less effect on the top Party structures, being limited to renaming the Politburo and abolishing the Party apparatus attached to the Central Committee and the Secretariat. But on the local level, the power of local executive committees disappeared and the number of functionaries was drastically cut back.  

In January of 1953 the Fundamental Law was adopted, in essence abrogating the Stalinist Constitution of 1946.

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54 From here on the terms "League" and "Party" will be used interchangeably, as they are in Yugoslavia in all but official publications.


The powers of the local People's Committees—which had had their genesis in the wartime Committees—were considerably strengthened. They were empowered to set taxes, determine local investment, and regulate the local enterprises. Under the Fundamental Law all authority other than that specifically delegated to higher government organs rested with the local governments. In 1955 the concept of local government became fully articulated with the passage of the laws setting up the Opshtine (the basic administrative units, the Communes) as fully autonomous local institutions of administration. The development of an independent system of local government secured much support for the Titoist regime, for local and nationalistic pride is never far below the surface in Yugoslavia.

However, the reforms bore most heavily upon the segment of the Party least prepared to bear them: the local Party officials, often poorly-educated men who had been rewarded for Partisan service with a local office. There was little institutional impact on upper Party

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levels. The elements least adaptable to change were asked to accept the most drastic changes. In addition, the shifting ideological pronouncements accompanying were often so vague that considerable confusion resulted. Party membership had mushroomed by 70 per cent since 1948; from 448,175 to 779,382. Although indicative of the support the Party had been able to muster, this did not make for a cohesive or well indoctrinated body. Many members had no idea what their role should be in a decentralized administration. The low educational level of the Party (at this point it was still over 40 per cent peasant) precluded much ideological sophistication. As Blazo Jovanovich, Montenegrin Party Chief, succinctly stated,

In the countryside, there is a considerable number of Communists who are either semi-literate or illiterate, who can hardly read the newspaper, not to mention anything else. . . . As for those Communists, it is their prime task and obligation to learn how to read.

By the summer of 1953 the confusion was so evident that the League began to tighten discipline. A Party Plenum convened at Brioni firmly torpedoed the idea of

58 Hoffman and Neal, Yugoslavia, p. 174.

any immediate "withering away of the Party." Democratic centralism was reconfirmed; members were not to disagree with Party policies. Although the 1953 Brioni Plenum attempted to halt the disarray within the League, the results were less than successful (this was the period when the Djilas heresy was rocking the Party). Resignations and expulsions sharply increased; new membership fell off. From 1954 to 1956 expulsions numbered 273,464; by 1956 membership had decreased by over 20 percent and some Party units were reduced by almost half.

A March 1956 Plenum sought to halt the disarray. A system of Aktivs--small, tightly organized Party groups--were created to replace the cell system dismantled by the Sixth Congress. Party discipline was revived by the reactivation of the special Party schools, and Cadre commissions were set up in the Republic parties.

These measures came during the period when the

60 This concept had first been publicly articulated in Dedijer's biography of Tito, which quoted Tito as stating, "If the State does not wither away, then the Party . . . becomes an instrument of the State, a force outside society. If the State really withers away, the Party necessarily withers away with it." Dedijer, Tito, p. 428.

61 Djilas' heresy began with a series of articles in Borba which he wrote to oppose what he considered a mistaken return to bureaucratism as the result of the Brioni Plenum.

62 Hoffman and Neal, Yugoslavia, pp. 196-197.
attempted Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement was at its high point. The emphasis on discipline did serve to curb dissent and answered in part Soviet complaints about Titoism. But the price was popular support. Local Party chiefs felt free to interfere with the workers' councils and Opshtine assemblies. Abuses of Party position reappeared: comfortable apartments, special cars, luxurious vacations, all the appurtenances of Party power so evident in the Stalinist era. But it was not the Stalinist era, and public criticism was much less easily muted.

In February of 1958 the Party answered the growing criticism by sending a Circular Letter to all members, criticizing the use of dictatorial methods, favoritism, corruption, and local chauvinism. In particular, local officials were scored for "powerful particularistic tendencies... which frequently assume a nationalistic and even chauvinistic form." The Letter demonstrates how

63 Ibid., pp. 201-203.

64 Ibid.

65 Shoup, The Yugoslav National Question, p. 208; citing Komunist, February 28, 1959, pp. 1-2. The Circular Letter is also significant as one of the first instances the problem of economic chauvinism was publicly mentioned.
much the League has changed since 1948, when such Party privileges were prevalent. In addition to public opinion, a second pressure led the Party to curb abuses of power. The rapprochement with the Soviet Union first faltered during the Polish and Hungarian Octobers in 1956 and finally came to a standstill in 1957 when Yugoslavia refused to sign the strongly anti-revisionist Moscow Declaration. Although the break was not as drastic as that of 1948, it reaffirmed Yugoslavia's isolated position.

The Seventh Congress

After a decade of flux, the League finally articulated a cohesive ideology at the Seventh Congress of April 1958. The problems with the Soviet Union emphasized the differences between the two systems and impelled the LCY to sum up a coherent, alternative ideology. Once the Party had curbed excesses through the Circular Letter, it could proceed to clearly define its stands.

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67 Originally scheduled for 1956, the Congress had been repeatedly postponed. That this was done, contrary to Party statute, is indicative of the prevailing confusion in the Party over the fluctuating relations with the Soviets and the resulting switches in Party policy.
The Congress drew the immediate wrath of the Soviet bloc, whose envoys walked out en masse (with the exception of the Polish delegate who was reported to have been "asleep"). For the first time the various ideological and political innovations were drawn together in one document. The Program condemned the bloc concept, the primacy of the U.S.S.R. or of any one socialist state over its sister socialist states, the doctrine of continuous revolution, and state capitalism. It firmly stated Yugoslavia's right to an "independent path to socialism," citing Lenin's theory of the uneven development of capitalism, and, by extension, socialism.

Marxism is not a doctrine . . . or a system of dogmas. Marxism is a theory of the social process which develops throughout successive historic phases . . . We do not pretend . . . to know the road to socialism in all its concrete aspects. We know the direction of that road . . . but only experience will tell. 68

The Congress attempted to alleviate the confusion over the "withering away" of the Party. Soviet doctrine also touches on this concept, but reserves it only for some far-distant day when Communism is finally achieved. The Yugoslavs stated that the process must at least begin in true socialism.

The problem of the withering away of the state is not . . . to be considered an immediate aim or an

68 Yugoslavia's Way, p. 133.
aim which will only be realized in the more distant future. This process is considered as an indivisible part of socialist development.

Practice so far has shown that the function of the state begins to narrow first in the field of economics, education, culture, social services, etc. The state is increasingly replaced by various forms of self-government. 69

Although it emphasized that the Party will not disappear until socialism is absolutely assured, the program did foresee that the League

will gradually disappear. ... as the forces of direct socialist democracy become stronger and expand. This disappearance will proceed parallel to the objective process of the withering away of social antagonisms. ... 70

The Program also differs from the Soviets in the area of operational theory. Although the Yugoslavs, as do the Soviets, view ideology as the determinant of the uses of power, the context in which their ideology developed is important. Yugoslav ideology developed pragmatically, as a criticism of Soviet practices. They elaborated on those theories which were workable for the society and supportive of an independent party. Citizen


70 Yugoslavia's Way, p. 235. This countered Djilas' demand that the Party begin immediately to wither away.
participation through decentralization of the economy and administration fulfilled these needs and became the basis of their ideology.

Social self-management and self-government constitute the social-political basis of socialist democracy in Yugoslavia. . . . a multifarious mechanism of socialist democracy.71

Decentralization meant direct citizen participation and the opportunity for non-Party participation. State and Party functions were separated, and the Party operated as the educator. The conflict remained: how much decentralization and what sort of a "leading role" should the Party play? Kardelj firmly stated that the Party intended to retain ultimate power:

It would be true that we would be guilty of hypocrisy, if we did not admit at present the Communists . . . do exert, as they should, a direct influence on the key positions of power. . . .72

The Conflict Unresolved

Although the Seventh Congress laid a firm ideological base, it did not solve the operational problems of a single, centrally organized party trying to govern a state which permitted decentralization of economics and

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72Kardelj, On the Program, p. 22.
administration. Although the reforms altered the forms of political action, they did not alter the seat of power. The rift deepened between the centralists, who intended that no further power be decentralized, and the liberalizers, who looked to the reforms as tentative steps toward a more decentralized political structure. Thus, the oscillation continued between discipline and liberalization. Caught in the middle were the many Party members who viewed the Party as the unifying force so sorely needed by the country.

Additionally, in the period under study here, 1958-1964, the Yugoslav Party periodically attempted to renew ties with the Communist party states, without, however, jettisoning its favorable position with the West. The first Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement ended in 1957 when Yugoslavia refused to sign the anti-revisionist Moscow Declaration. However, in the years immediately following the Moscow Declaration, Yugoslavia's stance in several areas was more pro-Soviet than pro-West. In particular, the 1961 Belgrade Conference of Non-Aligned States endorsed such policies as recognition of East Germany, the seating of Communist China in the UN, and a refusal to criticize Soviet resumption of nuclear testing. The Cairo Conference of 1964 reaffirmed this stance. The Yugoslavs also "normalized" relations with individual
members of the Communist bloc. As a result of this bi-lateral approach, by 1963 the Yugoslavs enjoyed fairly cordial relations with their Communist neighbors, especially Hungary and Poland.73 Yugoslavia was granted observer status in COMECON, the East European trade community, and trade with the Communist bloc countries increased in the early sixties. The deepening Sino-Soviet rift also encouraged hope that relations between the Soviets and Yugoslavia would better.74

Initially, the Yugoslav Party remained quiescent after the Seventh Congress. It was not until November of 1959 that the Central Committee met. It was then made plain that the actions taken by the Seventh Congress was meant to reaffirm the Yugoslav ideological stance and not to loosen Party discipline. Tito stated that "democratization" did not apply to open discussion within the Party, let alone open debate of Party affairs throughout the country. He insisted that the Party had been far too

73 Veljko Vlahovich, "Conditions Have Been Established for Closer Cooperation Between the League of Communists and Communist and Workers' Parties in Other Countries," Socialist Thought and Practice, no. 12 (December 1963), pp. 59-68.

74 The Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU, at which Krushchev renewed the attack on Stalinism and the cult of personality, was taken by the Yugoslavs as a vindication of their policies.
tolerant of "loose talk and gossiping" and "would deal sharply" with those members so guilty. Tito also scored "localism," threatened recalcitrant members with expulsion, and stated that the Central Committee must be firmly united in order to weed out all such manifestations of chauvinism.

Throughout the early sixties the leadership lashed out against intellectuals and critics. In a speech at Pula in 1962 Tito castigated liberal intellectuals, making it plain that the Party would determine what was acceptable criticism. Djilas, who had been released on five-year probation in 1960, was reimprisoned when he published Conversations with Stalin abroad. His reimprisonment was widely interpreted as a concession to Krushchev. The tightening of discipline is indicated by the great increase in disciplinary measures taken against Party members. In 1962, the total number of Party members expelled or disciplined soared to 48,716, almost 20,000 more than in 1961. In 1963 the Yugoslavs enacted a new


77 Vjesnik u Srijedu, August 29, 1968, p. 3; Joint Translation Service, no. 5116, September 19, 1968. This was almost double the number disciplined during 1966, the year of the Rankovich ouster.
Constitution which restructured the government. As if to clear the decks and reiterate the Party's intent to retain ultimate control, in January of 1963 Tito once more denounced the "barren intellectuals" who continued to criticize Party policies.

The 1963 Constitution marks an important departure from standard Communist practice. Unlike the Stalinist constitutions of East Europe, which also enunciate an impressive list of human rights, the Yugoslav Constitution created an independent judiciary to safeguard them, and an executive apparatus to implement them. Power was not vested in the central Party organs, behind a facade of parliamentarianism and a subordinate judiciary. Constitutional guarantees were extended to the workers' self-management system and the communal governments. Unlike the Soviets, the Yugoslav government no longer determined all needs, but delegated this to the market mechanism. Unlike the Soviet Party, which determines all activity, the Yugoslavs retained the leadership in ideological matters but did not hamstring economic or administrative activity. The Opshtine system was institutionalized; the subordinate governmental units were granted substantial powers of action and given independent sources of income. Greater independence of action was granted to the Federal Assembly, which was changed
from a bi-cameral legislature to one of five chambers. Discrimination against the peasantry in representation was ended (formerly legislative representation had been based on contribution to the social product in a manner which consistently undervalued agricultural production). A Supreme Court was designated to determine the constitutionality of all legislation; the judiciary was granted substantial independence from both Party and government.

The standard Communist procedure whereby the Politburo issues administrative decrees was discarded. The Federal Assembly was given full rights to initiate legislation, debate was conducted in open rather than closed sessions, and both deputies and members of the Federal Executive Council were given the right to resign. The Assembly not only became the source of all legislation, it also adopted the federal budget, called referendums, ratified foreign treaties, and supervised the work of the administrative organs of the Federation. The tenure of every office holder, except Tito, was strictly limited to two consecutive terms.

The principle of rotation was applied to the Party at the Eighth Congress of 1964. For the first time, change in the leadership of a Communist Party was specified by the principle of regular rotation of offices. The statutes of the Eighth Congress specified that
membership in the League of Communists was not inconsis-
tent with religious affiliation, and that members would
be permitted to criticize Party administration. However, the Party Congress which endorsed these principles
remained committed to the idea of highly centralized
Party rule. The Executive Committee was raised to 19
members. The five-man Executive Secretariat was re-
placed by four secretaries, Tito, Kardelj, Rankovich,
and Vlahovich, who were responsible for the day-to-day
operation of the Party.

A latter-day critic of the Eighth Congress statute
revealed some of the ambiguities which remained:

... the Statute which has been in force so far is a
half-way measure, is insufficiently consistent, and
contains a fair amount of compromise solutions. ... It has retained the previous organizational structure
in which ... the cell was the foundation and the
only fully valid form of organizing Communists. ... did not essentially shake the otherwise deeply rooted hierarchial relations within the League. ... the
8th Congress furnished a narrow framework for a
deeper transformation ... in the League. ...
The main emphasis of the Eighth Congress was placed upon nationalism and the need for further economic reform. The Congress came at an awkward time, only two months after Krushchev had been deposed; after Tito had been striving since 1962 to better relations with the Soviets. Perhaps out of a desire not to aggravate the new Soviet leadership, ideology was scarcely discussed at the Congress.

The Congress dealt mainly with internal problems, especially the rise of nationalism. Tito called for implementation of self-management and charged that some Party members had chauvinistically opposed aid to the undeveloped regions and sought to aggrandize their own nationalities. He admitted that the problem of national rivalries had become more acute, "engendered by the still considerable differences in the degree of economic development." The main thrust of the Congress was to implement self-management through a cessation in "administrative" interferences and further reforms of the economy. In an effort to line up the membership behind the reforms, both outstanding liberals and hard-line doctrinaire members were dropped from the Central Committee.  

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insisted both that Party discipline would be maintained and that the workers' councils would be given more power. Thus the stage was set for the 1965 economic reforms, and the showdown with the Rankovich-led centralists in 1966. The halfway measures taken by the Eighth Congress permitted the passage of the 1965 economic reforms but did not sufficiently weaken the position of Rankovich and the centralists.

The Rankovich Ouster

A major upheaval shook the Party in July of 1966. Aleksander Rankovich, head of the secret police for twenty years and Tito's second-in-command, was purged from the Party in an open battle which clearly revealed the division between the conservatives and liberals. Rankovich focused those elements of the Party which were impeding the decentralization, which desired to retain central power, and which intended to ensure this by blocking the economic reforms.

From 1953 until the 1965 reforms, the Party retained ultimate control over the economy, but supposedly delegated the day-to-day operations to the individual

enterprises. However, the de facto power of the Party was still great, as may be deduced from Tito's frequent speeches calling for a halt in Party interference. On the local level, the majority of Opshtine Assembly seats and administrative posts were filled by Party members. Thus the Party retained much control despite decentralization. A division developed between the decision-makers--the Party--and those who had to bear the blame or credit for implementing their decisions--the organs of self-management.

The Party itself was in conflict, torn between those who wished to secure socialism through complete freeing of the economy, and those who saw this as a sell-out of socialism. The great economic disparities between the northern and southern republics caused the liberals and conservatives to coalesce along national lines. The Serbs, as the most numerous nationality and the most politically active, became the leaders of the conservatives. As the economic reforms gathered momentum, national rivalries, economic chauvinism, and ideological differences served to place the two groups in increasing opposition.\footnote{It is perhaps simplistic, albeit convenient, to refer to the "Rankovich faction." Although they derived their power from Rankovich's position, it was a broad} The 1965 reforms meant that
the undeveloped regions, including Serbia wherein Rankovich's power lay, were cut off from a sizable amount of federal funds.

It was later revealed that the split between Rankovich and the reformers became definite at the March 1962 Executive Committee meeting, where Rankovich argued heatedly for a turnback of the reforms. Rankovich taped the proceedings and then ordered that the records of the meeting be kept secret, contrary to Party Statute. That they were indicates both his power and the hierarchy's reluctance to admit to such a serious division. The split along national lines was especially serious. As a Serb in charge of the predominantly Serbian secret police apparatus, which he utilized as an independent power base, Rankovich represented the threat of a return to Serbian hegemony. On the other side of the fence, the opposition to Rankovich was construed by many in the south as emanating primarily from Slovenia and Croatia.

During the sixties, the power of the Central Committee diminished and most important policy decisions

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were made by the Executive Committee on which Rankovich sat. His success in stalling the economic reforms derives in part from the peculiar situation of Yugoslav politics; the most sophisticated and advanced regions are in the minority, while the undeveloped areas enjoy a numerical majority.

Although the Eighth Congress of December 1964 attempted to present a united front for self-management and economic liberalization, the unanimous resolution adopted was a mere papering-over of the split. The centralists, led by Rankovich, sought and found a community of interests with the parties of Bosnia-Hercegovina, Montenegro, and Macedonia—the areas which stood to lose the most from the reforms.

As a signal of the growing turbulence, during 1964-1966 the Yugoslav press for the first time attacked Serb nationalism and economic chauvinism. In 1964 Vladimir Bakarich, Croat Party leader, scored the increased tendency toward

\[\ldots\] unscrupulous nationally tinged struggles for investments; there exists the tendency to shut oneself up in narrow administrative territorial boundaries, which makes normal economic

\[\ldots\]
developments more difficult. . . . In the race for funds, which must be gotten from somebody. . . . arguments . . . quickly become nationalistic. . . . in some hands even a political platform of a certain circle of persons.88

When the 1965 economic reforms were finally enacted, opposition among the Rankovich faction hardened. Rankovich began to rely more and more upon the secret police, utilizing them to report on liberals. One of the charges against Rankovich in 1966 was that the secret police had deliberately falsified information about economic affairs.89 The far-reaching economic reforms were enacted in mid-1965; between the end of 1965 and 1966, the Executive Committee called a series of meetings designed to get the reforms moving and to discuss the problem of economic nationalism. In February of 1966, Komunist, the official Party organ, publicly admitted that the center of resistance to the reforms was centered in Serbia.90 The Executive Committee announced that an extraordinary commission, composed of the Executive Committee itself, the Central Committee, and "political activists" would undertake an investigation of

88 Ibid., p. 254; citing Komunist, November 5, 1964, p. 3.


the nationality problem. This was interpreted as an effort to discredit the centralists through their role in aggravating economic nationalism.

However, one last effort was made to bring Rankovich into line at the Third Plenum of March of 1966. Although the Plenum issued an unusually blunt directive, ordering Party members to carry out the reforms without delay, later events revealed that the Plenum had been severely divided. Immediately following the March Plenum, the Serbian and the Macedonian Party leaders met. Although the joint meeting was held ostensibly for the purpose of promoting intra-republic cooperation, no mention was made of the directive laid down by the Third Plenum. Similar reports of resistance came from Party meetings in Bosnia-Hercegovina and Montenegro. The open alliance between the Serbs and Macedonians, and by extension, the parties of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Montenegro, indicates that Rankovich apparently had managed to broaden his support, transforming the struggle into a question of the

91 Ibid.


94 Ibid., citing Komunist, March 22, 1966, p. 5.
developed north against the undeveloped south. His political power may be gauged by the fact that the Macedonians clearly sided with the Serbian Party in opposing the reforms, despite the fact that the liberal head of the Macedonian Party, Krste Crvenkovski, was in favor of the reform.

Thus by May of 1966 the Rankovich-led centralists were clearly aligned against the liberal elements of the Party. It was clear that either the reforms went or Rankovich went. The definitive break occurred July 1, 1966, at the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee. In the most momentous meeting since the Djilas ouster, the Plenum stripped Rankovich of all power, condemned his abuse of the secret police apparatus, and accused him of setting up a "factional group based on the state security system and opposed to the Party line."\(^{95}\) Rankovich was also charged with being too close to Moscow--indeed, it had generally been conceded that he was the Kremlin's choice to succeed Tito.\(^{96}\) The extent to which nationalism and the fear of Serbian hegemony were involved in


\(^{96}\) Specifically, it was reported that Randovich had cooperated with the Soviets in the Oleg Penkovsky spy case. New York Times, July 7, 1966, p. 4.
the contest with Rankovich is demonstrated by the Plenum's denouncement of Rankovich for "manipulating the Serbian Party organization for the benefit of the faction opposing the economic reforms."\(^{97}\)

The preparations taken by Tito prior to the Fourth Plenum indicate the severity of the threat posed by Rankovich. As a precaution against a Serb coup, Tito pressured the military to ensure that the commanding general of each republic be a native. National Committees for Defense for each state capital, established during the 1948-1950 Soviet threat, were reactivated.\(^{98}\) General Pucar, a Rankovich ally, was replaced as head of the army of Bosnia-Hercegovina.\(^{99}\) According to *East Europe*, ten days before the Plenum Slovenian army units were posted to Belgrade.\(^{100}\)

The catalyst for the Rankovich ouster was his abuse of police power--it was feared that he had built up a network of loyal subordinates who posed a definite threat

\(^{97}\) Ibid.


\(^{99}\) Ibid., p. 8.

\(^{100}\) Ibid.
to the Party leadership itself. However, in choosing to attack Rankovich through his abuse of the security apparatus, Tito merely utilized his weakest point. The true causes for the break were political, involving the twin issues of economic liberalization and national rivalries. By insisting on the ouster of a comrade who had been at his side since the Partisan War, Tito underlined his belief that Yugoslavia's future depends on the success of the economic reforms and the political decentralization which must of necessity accompany it.

The dynamics of the Rankovich ouster involves more than the economic battle which pitted liberals against conservatives, the richer republics against the have-not republics. Nationalism, most specifically the fear of a return to Serbian hegemony, is deeply involved. The Partisan resistance movement recruited members who were much more inspired by regional loyalties than by pro-Yugoslav passions. Despite the CPY's adherence to the Yugoslav ideal, the fact that the bulk of its membership

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101 This is substantiated by the disclosure that the Rankovich forces were able to bug the offices and homes of officials outside Serbia--one such being the private residence of Tito in Zagreb. Kocho Popovich, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, revealed that the foreign service was highly infiltrated by the secret police who used wiretapping information to discredit liberal appointees who were then replaced by Rankovich allies. Ibid.
was drawn from Partisan ranks was bound to modify later events, and did. Federation assuaged many of the pre-war animosities, but it also created an arena for the expression of nationalism. Coupled with this effect is the fear on the part of the non-Serb majority that the Serbs would someday use their predominant position to once more impose Serb hegemony. Added to this was the suspicion that the Serbs might prove willing to accept Soviet aid to impose a pan-Serbian takeover. When Djilas wrote as recently as March of 1969 that if the Soviets intervened and used the Serbs, "... they will deceive themselves ... as they always have ... whenever they have tried to turn the Serbs from friends into instruments and underlings," he voiced an ever-present fear. If no such fear existed, there would be no need to deny it.

Prior to 1949 the Serbs held a disproportionate number of posts in the Central Committee and Politburo. In 1953, when Serbs made up 48.5 per cent of the population of Serbia, Croatia, and Macedonia, 51.2 per cent of the Party members of these republics were Serbs. If the large number of Serbs in the Party of Bosnia-Hercegovina were added, the percentage of Serbian Party members would be even greater. Shoup, The Yugoslav National Question, p. 122. The same disproportion is observable in the top Party and government posts of Bosnia-Hercegovina where Serbs held well over a majority—even as late as 1963 the 92-man Central Committee included 52 Serbs. Ibid., pp. 211-218.

Once the country was released from unitary control in economic and administrative affairs, national passions were granted wide areas of expression. The problem surfaced in the Party because in general LCY had not come to grips with a crucial question: how to decentralize the economy and administration while ultimate control remained vested in the Party. As long as the Party retained power, it was as logical for the Rankovich faction to demand that ultimate control as it was for the liberals to deny it to them. Those Party leaders who resisted decentralization, from nationalistic motives, from a reluctance to relinquish power, or from an honest fear of revived national hatreds, became committed to resisting any further decentralization. On the lower Party levels, many local officials resisted any changes for fear that they would lose their favored positions. Rankovich coalesced these elements. On the other side, a new class had arisen in the Party. These were not apparatchiki but professional and managerial men, especially economists. They had come to maturity in the post-Partisan years and viewed centralism as a Stalinist aberration and an extremely inefficient modus operandi. The Fourth Plenum of 1966 was a denouement for two groups which had been on collision course since the fifties. The ebb and flow between liberalism and centralism
throughout the fifties and early sixties is indicative of the ambiguous position the Party struggled with. At the Fourth Plenum the League finally came to grips with a basic problem: the rigid Communist mentality of earlier times blocked the restructuring of the Party.

The Rankovich ouster indicated several conditions. First, Tito still retained ultimate control over Party affairs. Secondly, the Party was now firmly committed to decentralization. Thirdly, the Party was forced to admit publicly that it had failed to solve the nationality problem. Fourthly, one method of succession to Tito was discredited, but the question remained. (The 1963 Constitution provided for the Presidential succession, but the question of who is to succeed as head of the Party was not answered by any statute.)

In theory, the million-member Party is responsible to the nation. But as the Rankovich affair illustrated, it is in reality responsible only to itself and Tito. If a repeat of the Rankovich affair is to be avoided and the shoals of national anarchy bypassed, the Party must develop a broader responsibility. Thus the Rankovich affair was not a denoument but a prelude. As will be discussed in Chapter IV, the Party had been forced to consider and react to the multitudinous forces which pressure the political leaders of the country.
CHAPTER II

ECONOMIC DECENTRALIZATION AND THE GROWTH OF PLURALISM

The Early Reforms

"Can one even assume that it is possible to make so-called 'purely economic' reforms without making corrections in the social mechanism as well?"¹

"Today the nationality problem is at least question number two. With the battle for the reform we have to win the battle against nationalism as well. If we don't win this battle, then it might become question number one."²

The crucial determinant in Yugoslavia's post-Cominform political development has been the decentralization process through which the center of decision-making has shifted from the federal level to myriad local centers. As decision-making diffused downward, an ever-increasing proportion of the population became involved in the decision-making process. The decisive shift was first made in the economic sphere. In general, the economic sphere has been the chief innovating force and,

¹Bozidar Bogdanovich, Politika, October 16, 1967.

²Vladimir Bakarich, Borba, March 6, 1966.
in fact, has created the need for political and social reforms.

The seminal innovation in the long series of reforms which transformed Yugoslavia's political, economic, and social structure was the introduction of workers' management in July of 1950. By 1952 the central planning apparatus had been dismantled and the day-to-day operation of the individual enterprises turned over to the workers' councils and the management boards selected by the councils. The direct participation of the workers in the decision-making process, which resulted from the shift from centralized to decentralized decision-making, opened the political doors a crack to non-Party members.

Under decentralization the individual industries

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3 The principle of the councils was laid down as follows: "Manufacturing, mining, forestry, municipal and other public undertakings, shall, as the property of the whole nation, be administered in the name of the community by their work collectives as part of the said economic plan and on the basis of the rights and duties established by law. . . . The collectives shall carry out their administration through the workers' councils and boards of management. . . ." International Labour Office, Workers' Management in Yugoslavia (Geneva: La Tribune de Geneve, 1962), p. 1.

4 By 1962, 1,303,000 workers had served in the workers' self-management organizations; the bulk of these being non-Party members. Ibid., p. 42.
began to develop interests of their own that were neither dictated by the Party nor controlled by it. The lines of communication with Party officials ran from enterprise to commune, not from enterprise to the central government. Thus, the "leading role" which the Party members were to exert over enterprise organs was determined on the local level. Despite the firmness of Party discipline and the clarity with which Party doctrine was supposedly spelled out, the autonomy of the local units made differing interpretations possible. Since the workers' councils were naturally most concerned with maximizing profits, decisions came to be based on local considerations, with little regard for the all-over economic picture. Inevitably this led to economic competition between communes, regions, and republics, and, given the heterogeneous national composition of Yugoslavia, to the revival of national rivalries. Economic competition among the republics became a primary expression of nationalism. This was of particular significance to the Yugoslav Party because they had come to power enjoying the benefits of supposedly having found the answer to nationalism. Vladimir Bakarich's prognosis has proven to be only too accurate: if the Yugoslavs are to remain committed to a market-planned economy, they must somehow manage to solve the nationality problem without jeopardizing the fragile
unity of the country. The Rankovich ouster and the extensive changes in the structure of the LCY which followed demonstrated the extent to which the Party has been pressured by economic-national tensions. Nationalism and economic rivalry have become a centrifugal force which is not countered by Party ideology or the slow growth of a Yugoslav identity.  

The Rise of Nationalism

Economic rivalry has become a main arena of national tensions because many of the sources of interwar antagonisms have been muted. The Roman Catholic and Serbian Orthodox churches are no longer permitted to inflame national passions. Serbian hegemony over the rest of the country has disappeared, and only the fear of its return remains—as the Rankovich case demonstrated. Communication between formerly isolated peoples has been encouraged by the rapid urbanization which in three decades

A recent survey by the Belgrade Centre for Investigating Public Opinion illustrates the lack of appeal for the "Yugoslav" identity, despite the fact that of their interviewees, two-thirds had some LCY function. Questioned about the proper national designation for children born of mixed marriages, only 34 per cent opted for "Yugoslav" over a definite national designation. Obviously, the percentage would be far lower in the rural areas or among a working class sample. Politika, October 26, 1968, p. 7; Joint Translation Service, No. 5158, October 26, 1968.
has transformed Yugoslavia from a country 75 per cent rural to one only 45 per cent rural. Political discrimination based upon nationality is the exception rather than the rule. Thus economic decentralization channeled national consciousness into one main area of competition.

Great differences exist among the republics. These differences—education, degree of urbanization, natural resources, economic infrastructure (transport, electric power potential, etc.)—in general divide along the lines of the old north-south division and dictate that funds invested in Slovenia and Croatia earn a much higher rate of return. The low rate of productivity in the undeveloped regions (Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and the Kosmet) is reflected in the ever increasing gap in per capita incomes between the north and the south. In 1947 per capita income in Macedonia was 31 per cent below the national average; in 1963 it was 36 per cent below. During the same period per capita income in Slovenia rose from 62 per cent above the national average to 95 per cent above.

6 The revelations of the excesses of Serbian police forces in the Kosmet following Rankovich's ouster were all the more notable because of the comparative rarity of this type of behavior.

The poor quality of the potential work force in the undeveloped areas is responsible for a good part of the imbalance. In 1957, primary manufacturing and mining enterprises in these regions had less than 80 per cent of the moderately skilled workers and less than 50 per cent of the highly skilled workers that they needed. University graduates and technicians often refuse to migrate to the poorer areas, despite the fact that in many cases the pay is higher there. Therefore, no matter how high their capital investment, the undeveloped areas still lack the necessary personnel. The demands placed upon the skilled work force of the undeveloped areas are compounded by the fact that although this region includes only 33 per cent of the population, it holds the bulk of the raw materials. Thus, there are economic as well as


9 In 1957 the power of the Federal Executive Council to transfer personnel from republic to republic was abolished. One factor influencing this decision seems to have been the open resentment over "outsiders" staffing top positions. Shoup, The Yugoslav National Question, p. 238.

10 They have 60 per cent of the known coal reserves, 42 per cent of the hydroelectric potential, 80 per cent of lead and zinc reserves, 85 per cent of the bauxite deposits, and sizable amounts of copper and other mineral wealth. Vladimir Pejovski, Yugoslav Investment Policy (Beograd: Medjunarodna Politika, 1965), p. 31.
political reasons for aiding industrial development in these areas.

The government has been, and is, faced with a politically explosive problem: whether to use the earnings of the north to finance development of the less-efficient south, or whether to permit the north to retain the bulk of its earnings for reinvestment there. Either way a sizable block of the country will be antagonized. Until the economic reforms of 1965, when the enterprises were permitted to retain a much greater proportion of their earnings, the government opted for the first course. This was increasingly resented by the Slovenes and Croats, who felt that their profits were being taken away from them in order to finance inefficient industries in the south.\footnote{A recent cartoon in the Slovene paper Pavlika epitomizes the northerners' sense of exploitation: a cow labeled "Slovenia" is being milked by the other republics. As Borba cryptically commented, "There was no criticism in the chambers of the Slovene Assembly." Borba, December 8, 1969, p. 5; Joint Translation Service, no. 5194, December 8, 1968.}

The allocation of the federal grants-in-aid were a prime bone of contention. These were not subject to federal control until 1964, and no economic criteria were attached to the grants. In addition, the recipients did
not have to justify the projects for which they used the grants. The overall philosophy became "grab what you can and spend it immediately." This resulted in great duplication of industrial capacity and services, with each republic clamouring for funds to develop their own transport system, steel mill, port, etc. The complaint of the Slovenes and Croats that their money was being used for inefficient and often unnecessary projects is understandable.

The 1965 reforms created a special fund for the underdeveloped regions and instituted controls on federal investments, but the underlying problem remained. The north resented their profits being used to finance industry in the south where the rate of return is much less, and the south resented the increasing wealth of the north, which is based in part upon raw materials from their region. Although the government predicted that the growth rate for the undeveloped areas would be 2 per cent above the national average, they in fact failed to reach even the average rate. In 1966 the undeveloped areas lagged behind the national average by 1.5 per cent; in 1967 by 3.6 per cent. Bosnia-Hercegovina posted the worst record, falling 4.3 per cent below the average. Politika, July 28, 1968, p. 8; Joint Translation Service, no. 5087, August 5, 1968.
of development. Lagging far behind were Serbia, with a per capita income of $480, Bosnia-Hercegovina with $348 per capita, Macedonia with $339 per capita, and Montenegro with $330 per capita.\footnote{Rudolf Bichanich, "Economics of Socialism in a Developing Country," \textit{Foreign Affairs}, XLIV (July 1966), p. 645. In his analysis Bichanich uses $500 annual income per capita as the demarcation line between a developed and an undeveloped region.}

To recapitulate, the competition for federal funds and the nationality resentments bred by the great economic disparities were further aggravated by the federal structure of postwar Yugoslavia. Because all the republics but Bosnia-Hercegovina had been constituted as the "home" of a major nationality, ethnic rivalry was practically synonomous with the competition for federal money between the republics. In addition, the division between the developed north and the undeveloped south increased national tensions as the south fell further and further behind the north. These conditions gave rise to a split within the Party. Two opposing factions developed, with liberals and centralists divided in general along the north-south axis.
The First Decade of Decentralization

The conditions which led to this division developed during the fifties as economic decentralization, generally in tune with the fluctuating line of the LCY, oscillated between liberalization and retrenchment. The very early reforms, up to 1955, resulted in severe inflation when the newly-independent workers' councils immediately raised wages and prices. Fueled by uneconomic federal investments, the inflation caused Vukmanovich to state by 1954 that "the entire system has entered a blind alley."\(^{14}\) Initially, it appeared that the inflation would force the government to channel investments to the most profitable areas. Throughout 1954-1956 changes in the method of allocation of federal funds were repeatedly discussed. However, no changes were ever effectuated, most probably due to pressure from the undeveloped areas.\(^{15}\)

In 1956 the Party tightened discipline and announced that new economic controls would be instituted to combat the inflation. The following year the authority of the workers' councils to set wages was sharply curtailed. As


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has been discussed in Chapter I, the new emphasis on Party discipline and the reinstated economic controls encouraged many local Party functionaries to resume interfering with the enterprises. At the same time, competition for federal investment money continued unabated. By the time Tito issued the Circular Letter in 1958, he found it necessary to castigate Party members for

... powerful particularistic tendencies which are appearing ... frequently assuming a nationalist, even a chauvinistic, form.16

The impotence of the government in curbing national rivalries in the face of increasing competition for federal funds was admitted at the 1958 Party Congress by Boris Krajger, a leading Slovene economist, who implored the Party to find

... a solution which will not represent a compromise between the interests on one side or another, but the best path for satisfying the socialist interest ... such a path exists, must exist, and must be found.17

In the late fifties the coalition between Rankovich and representatives of the undeveloped republics began to assume definite shape. After rebuking Party members for interfering in the workers' councils in 1958, Tito

16 Ibid., p. 247.
17 Ibid., p. 235.
turned to the opposition within the hierarchy itself. At a special plenary meeting of the Central Committee in November of 1959, Tito more or less admitted that the dissent reached to the topmost levels. Central Committee members themselves were rebuked for "ethnic particularism" and for blocking the economic decentralization. 18

Initially it appeared that Tito's rebuke had stymied the opposition. Serious discussion on revamping federal investments was initiated, the drive to industrialize the undeveloped areas was slowed somewhat, and plans for the Belgrade-Bar railroad, so ardently pushed by Rankovich, were dropped. 19

By 1961 the Yugoslav economy had slowed down to the point where the liberalizers were able to push through a series of reforms designed to further free the economy from central planning and political interference. The authority of the workers' councils was increased, the dinar devalued, almost all products placed under free market pricing, a lower and uniform tax rate on profits

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19 When in December of 1963 the central committees of Serbia and Montenegro announced a joint decision to go ahead with the railroad, it was a sign that the rift between liberals and conservatives had deepened.
instituted, and restrictions on foreign trade relaxed. Self-management was extended to non-productive groups such as theatres, and most importantly, to the communal governments.  

A new credit and banking system, similar to the U. S. Federal Reserve system, was instituted in order to give the communes an independent financial base and to put the granting of loans on a more economic basis. The National Bank, heretofore a virtual bank monopoly, was now to be only a bank of issue.

The government stated that the reforms were undertaken because

Measures . . . adopted in the postwar period . . . have now become an impediment. . . . Decentralization in financing economic development through the financial autonomy of enterprises . . . were jeopardized by the prevailing instruments of foreign trade and . . . currency exchange, which had not developed in step with the general economic growth.

. . . the old relations, characterized by a complex and clumsy system of manifold foreign exchange rates, the lack of customs duties, and a poor rate of fiscal tax instruments and mechanisms, were more or less retained in the monetary field.  

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For a number of reasons the 1961 reforms were ineffective. The thorny issue of federal aid remained untouched, although Kardelj had proposed in the spring of 1961 that the General Investment Fund, source of the grants-in-aid, be revamped and integrated into the 1961-1965 social plan. Again, the proposal was blocked by undeveloped republics who feared their source of funds would dry up. Secondly, the drastic devaluation and lifting of price controls caused a serious inflation. (Many enterprises acted in defiance of government guidelines and raised prices.) The pressures the inflation placed upon most of the population emboldened the centralists to oppose the reforms more strenuously.

Although the 1961 reforms were intended to cut down on administrative meddling, particularism continued. Communes, regions, and republics tended toward autarchy, at the expense of the free market forces which the reforms were to encourage. Local bureaucrats were later accused of wanting

To set up feudal barriers . . . within which they will be tutors over "their" enterprises . . . manipulate the profits of labor, close the market . . . protect the extensive business of economic enterprises, economic organizations, and so forth.24

The 1961 reforms also failed to tackle the problem of the inefficient "political" factories which continued to be a drain on the economy. Local political authorities exerted control over these factories, which often produced an astounding variety of goods at unrealistically high prices. Although most of the criticism for setting up such installations was directed towards the undeveloped regions, a prize example existed in Slovenia in the form of a fourteen-plant complex, Iskra. The reforms left Iskra untouched. The Yugoslav press later revealed that local Party officials had pressured the company into such expansion that by 1966 Iskra employed 13,000 workers, produced a fantastic array of 8,000 products, and was $35 million in debt. Many of the products were produced in infinitesimal quantities at unrealistically high costs.

By the spring of 1962 the economy was beset by inflation, agricultural production was down by 6 per cent,

25 Such installations are termed "political factories" because it is generally accepted by the public that political rather than economic reasons have been responsible for their existence. Secondly, local functionaries often then try to assume the credit for obtaining the federal money for such factories, and try to control the operation of the installation.

labor productivity had increased only slightly despite a
new wage incentive system, and the annual growth rate
had fallen. Consequently, aid to the undeveloped areas
fell off. In March of 1962 the Party Plenum was held at
which it appears that the Rankovich faction, although in
the minority, felt that the failure of the reforms had
so discredited the liberalizers that they could afford
to flatly refuse to further implement the reforms. Their
rebuff occurred in the face of Tito's warning to the re­
calcitrants, in a speech before the LCY Executive Com­
mittee, that Party deviations would bring expulsion if
"negative attitudes" continued.27

The March Plenum was the gravest confrontation to
that date: rumors circulated of grave dissent from the
Serbs and Macedonians. Whatever the truth--a full report
of the Plenum has never been published--it seems certain
that the split in the Party hierarchy stood clearly re­
vealed.28 Given the gravity of the situation, it is not
surprising that two months later Tito delivered a major
speech at Split which seemed aimed at preserving Party


When Rankovich was brought down at the Brioni Plenum of
1966, it was revealed that he had ordered the March 1962
Plenum taped.
unity at the cost of the reforms. Price controls were reinstated and measures restricting private artisans were introduced.

The Early Sixties: Tentative Reforms

The enactment of the 1963 Constitution improved the chances for economic liberalization. As Tito had pledged as early as 1960, the new constitution curbed the role of the state by placing greater reliance on workers' self-management.\textsuperscript{29} The power of local functionaries was curtailed through broadening the scope of the Federal Assembly and expanding the rights of the workers' councils.

As economic rivalry between the republics increased, the northern republics became more rebellious. Tito, in a speech to newsmen, publicly recognized the validity of their complaints. He stated that "means created on the soil of Slovenia and Croatia" were sometimes misused by the undeveloped republics, for "monumental buildings" and highly inefficient factories.\textsuperscript{30} In 1964 the Croat Party leader, Bakarich, openly opposed any increased investment


in the undeveloped areas. Bakarich pointed out that during 1961-1963 the per capita investment rate for Montenegro had been twice that of Slovenia but that the Montenegrin rate of return on investment was only half that of Slovenia and Croatia.31

At the end of 1963 the General Investment Fund, the chief source of aid to the undeveloped regions, was abolished and federal assistance was limited to those projects already underway. Although the Party and the government emphasized that the serious inflation and the poor balance of trade dictated a drastic cutback in federal aid, the republics and the provinces persisted in formulating extensive investment plans based on large amounts of federal aid.32 The 1965 budget for the Kosmet set a goal of an 18-19 per cent increase in industrial production, while Serbia's budget called for an investment of 351 billion dinars over the next seven years.33

The Eighth Congress of 1964 dealt mainly with internal problems. The gravity of the nationality problem


32 The republics and provinces were granted the right to formulate their own budgets and plans in 1963.

was openly admitted and discussed. Miko Tripalo, the Zagreb Party chief, criticized

... some groups who want to preserve the system of centralized control and even to de-emphasize decentralization. ... A certain gap between the decisions of the League of Communists and the practical work of some state and other agencies is so visible that it causes dissatisfaction among the working people and even creates doubt that anything serious will be done.34

That a leader of the LCY, the party which once claimed that it had solved Yugoslavia's nationality problem, should speak so plainly indicated the depth of the revived antagonisms. Significantly, Rankovich, while paying lip service to the ideals of economic liberalization, delivered a speech stressing the necessity of democratic centralism and conformity.

We cannot speak of the legalization of minority rights. ... The League of Communists of Yugoslavia will remain a party of cadres rather than developing into a "mass party."35

Although ideology received scant attention at the Eighth Congress, ideological considerations were central to the debate over economic policy. Neither the liberalizers nor the centralists could avoid the fact that the self-management system is the linchpin of the Yugoslav


Party's claim that they have developed a unique form of socialism. Although the Congress unanimously passed a resolution supporting the self-management system, this futile gesture did nothing to bridge the gap between the factions.

The 1965 Economic Reforms

Inflation and a worsening balance of trade reinforced the liberalizers' contention that a drastic overhaul of the economic structure was necessary if the country was to be economically viable. By 1965, it was apparent that Yugoslavia could not effectively compete in the world market unless economic reforms were effected. The 1965 economic reforms constituted a major revision of the Yugoslav economy. Price controls were removed on most raw materials, the dinar was devalued by 66 per cent, individual enterprises were now permitted to retain 71 per cent of their profits, and the credit and banking systems were revised. Communal banks were now free to determine, on the basis of economic potential, who should receive loans. In order to guarantee that the communal banks would use their power wisely, they were made responsible for any losses they incurred on loans. A special fund for the undeveloped areas was instituted. (For the first time, the term "undeveloped areas" was expanded to
include the pockets of poverty which exist in Slovenia and Croatia, and which have been a major source of dissatisfaction to the Slovenes and Croats who feel that their profits should be first utilized to aid their own nationals.)

A landmark decision was the government's announcement that enterprises would be liquidated if they could not show a profit. At a speech in Kraljevica, Tito stated:

We know that we have factories which are not profitable. After the war . . . we built factories which are not profitable today. Some barely scrape along. With the economic reforms we shall cease to pour our resources from those factories which . . . earn well into those which have operated unprofitably. This kind of charity must disappear. We are now creating funds to assist those enterprises which need help, but only enough to enable them to stand on their own feet, and then they must take care of their own further development.36

Thus, for the first time the League admitted its responsibility for past mistakes. In addition, subsidies to unprofitable enterprises which produced goods for export were abolished. Tito flatly declared that . . . we have taken resources from those who have achieved accumulation and given them to those who operated unprofitably. This practice is now being abandoned.37

37Ibid., p. 4.
With the 1965 economic reforms, the split in the League became irreconcilable. The reforms constituted a major economic gamble, and were a major affront to the conservatives. Prices spiraled above the level anticipated by the government, necessitating short-term price freezes. As enterprises were forced to cut back, unemployment increased by 200,000. The reaction from conservatives was immediate and open. Within a few months, Tito was using one of the strongest terms in the Communist lexicon to describe those who impeded the reforms: "class enemy." Demanding discipline and implementation of the reforms, he stated that

There is no place in the Communist League for those who are not carrying out its instructions. They should get out... Obstructionists have created confusion... used by class enemies and various chauvinistic and nationalistic elements.

Party ideologist Veljko Vlahovich had already hinted that conservative officials might be purged:

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38 Indicative of the regime's determination to implement the reforms is the official encouragement of emigration to Western Europe. This policy is followed despite the fact that the country loses badly-needed skilled personnel. In an area of the world where passports generally are difficult to obtain, they are a matter of course in Yugoslavia. In 1966, 300,000 Yugoslavs were employed in Western Europe. ________, "Fewer Jobs at Home--and Abroad," Economist, CCXII (October 14, 1967), pp. 149-150.

Toward those who impede the reforms but occupy responsible posts, it is necessary to be stricter... must be replaced by men who will resolutely fight for... the aims that have been set.

At the Third Plenum of March 1966, a final effort was made to bring the Rankovich forces into line. Tito emphasized that deliberate blocking of the reforms would no longer be tolerated. Action taken by the Serbian and Macedonian parties immediately after the Plenum made it plain that the Rankovich forces were irrevocably opposed.41 The Brioni Plenum of July which forced Rankovich's ouster marked a turning point for the League. At the price of revealing the depth of national antagonisms and the ouster of Tito's right-hand man, the Party remained committed to decentralization.

That the liberals succeeded in the first place in instituting the reforms and then preserving them in the face of Rankovich's opposition is due generally to two sets of factors: internal and external. Internally, 1964 had been a crisis year: the country incurred a balance of payments deficit of over $200 million and sizable debt repayments were due soon to Western creditors. Although the dinar was pegged at 750 per dollar, by 1964 it was

worth only half that on the open market. Severe floods in 1964 had crippled agriculture production. By 1965 foreign currency reserves were exhausted, unemployment had risen, and many industries were operating at half capacity. Confronted with a truly dire economic situation, the Party had little option but to give the liberals the opportunity to overhaul the economy.

Externally, the necessity for reform was reinforced by conditions in both the East and the West. With the ouster of Krushchev in 1964, the period of good relations which he had fostered with Yugoslavia was replaced by great uncertainty as to how the new Soviet leadership would act; the Yugoslavs had little hope that the Soviets would bail them out of their economic difficulties.42 Secondly, the International Monetary Fund pressured the Yugoslavs to strive, through an effective overhaul of the economy, for a convertible currency. The IMF backed their proposals with the promise of loans. The credits the IMF granted once the reforms passed, loans from the U.S.A., and the postponement of foreign debts gave the liberals enough ammunition to win the battle with Rankovich.

42 The Soviets sent a delegation of significantly low level officials to the Eighth Congress, which was held two months after Krushchev's fall from power. New York Times, December 14, 1964, p. 34.
The Economy Since 1966

Although the liberals won the showdown with Rankovich, the progress of the economy has been mixed. In general, the reforms have not functioned as well as their most ardent proponents had hoped, but the Yugoslav economy is working better than its Soviet bloc critics care to admit. The reforms have generally affected the sectors least able to bear dislocations— the undeveloped areas, the unskilled and semi-skilled workers, the illiterate and elderly, and the small marginal producers. For example, the Kosmet, long at the bottom of the Yugoslav economic structure, suffered a drastic cutback in federal investments. Kosmet planners were forced to relinquish projects for developing plastics, textile, and woodworking industries because unused capacity existed elsewhere. Overall unemployment, averaging 8 per cent, has been higher than anticipated, and has only been mitigated by the fact that 200,000-plus Yugoslavs have been employed abroad. Macedonia is still burdened with an unemployment rate of 20 per cent. Of these, almost one-fourth are educated or highly skilled workers, indicating how deeply the reforms have affected all sectors of the economy, especially in the undeveloped republics. 43

On the other hand, despite higher Common Market tariffs exports have risen since 1965. In particular, trade has increased with the West at the expense of the Soviet bloc— in 1968 alone trade with the Soviet bloc fell by 17 per cent.\(^4\) With two-thirds of her trade in hard currency areas, Yugoslavia's economy is now on a firmer footing. In addition, a booming tourist industry has greatly helped to offset the dislocations of the reform.

The chief drag on the economy is the inefficient installations, generally located in the undeveloped areas, whose phasing out involves a multiplicity of problems. The undeveloped areas feel that they are forced to bear the brunt of the reforms; yet the Slovenes and Croats are increasingly reluctant to see their profits go to inefficient enterprises while their own industries, many of which operate with outdated equipment, continue to produce a much higher rate of return. As a Slovene critic complained early in the reforms,

> When the decision was made not to close down the Nikshich steelworks in Montenegro which eats up millions of dinars every day, we knew that the plan of the reformers to do away with unprofitable ventures was not going to be carried out after all. It was a signal to others to resist closures.\(^5\)

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The decision to try to improve the efficiency of such dinar-eaters has not always proven feasible; the economy is still burdened with many a white elephant. Obviously, political factors must be considered. The undeveloped areas such as Montenegro have been the center of conservative resistance to the reforms. In the case of a huge installation such as Nikshich, it may be that the political uproar which would result from its closure outweighs economic considerations. If the north remembers and fears Serbian hegemony, the Belgrade government also remembers the violence endemic in prewar Montenegro, Macedonia, and the Kosmet.

Branko Horvat, director of the Yugoslav Institute for Economics, predicts that a recession is due because the reforms have failed to force unprofitable enterprises to liquidate. Horvat holds that the economy is severely hampered by rising unemployment, strikes, "national excesses," and "fragmentation."\(^{46}\) His concern with the latter two phenomena indicates another failure of the reforms. The regime has yet to evolve a satisfactory method for controlling economic nationalism and the resulting duplication of facilities.

It should be noted that although the communal banks have been made responsible for their own losses, interference by local officials and outright local chauvinism have often counteracted the intent of the reforms. For example, despite repeated warnings by the Yugoslav Steelworks Association that unused steel capacity exists elsewhere, the Split communal government and the local bank have persisted with plans to build a small steelworks there. 47 A typical example of the duplication of expensive facilities is the existence of approximately 120 computers employing a variety of incompatible systems, most of which are woefully underutilized. 48

On the other hand, since 1965 the government has been far more insistent that the enterprises be self-sufficient. Such installations as Iskra have been ordered to effect stringent reforms. The reforms granted enterprises the right to operate across republic boundaries. The increased competition has driven out many marginal producers. It has also added fuel to the north-south antagonism—the competition has in general moved down from Slovenia and Croatia, so that the undeveloped republics now complain

47 Borba, November 6, 1968; Joint Translation Service, no. 5167, November 6, 1969.

that they are being exploited economically for the benefit of the Slovenes and Croats. Again, economic reform is no simple matter in Yugoslavia; there is no simple answer for the multiplicity of problems which exist. A solution to one problem may create new problems, or aggravate existing problems.

That the regime in general is serious about requiring enterprises to be self-sufficient is illustrated by the financial problems of Borba. Borba is the official newspaper of the federal Socialist Alliance, and by extension the LCY, since the LCY itself has no official newspaper. As Borba has discovered, a position as an official organ is not enough to sell newspapers. The economic reforms have subjected Borba to the requirements of self-management and forced it to compete with livelier newspapers. Like many Party institutions, it has lagged behind the changes in society, and has consequently suffered a drastic drop in circulation.

In many ways Borba exemplifies the sea changes which the standard Communist institution may undergo when exposed to the Yugoslav innovations. In the immediate post-war years Borba was a turgid copy of Pravda. Self-management dictated that Borba had to become more attractive to the average reader, who was anything but fascinated by lengthy Party documents. Although Borba still publishes
the documents, it also publishes serial stories, articles from western news services, and reports on the latest horrendous auto accident. Nevertheless, this transformation has not saved Borba from impinging economic disgrace. The reforms decreed that Borba must not only preach socialism but must also attract readers. Its inability to do so has placed it far behind such publications as Politika in the chase for circulation and advertising dinars.

The Executive Committee of the Socialist Alliance, which is responsible for Borba and its debts, has raised the possibility that even this remnant of a traditional Communist press might disappear. Noting that the paper has continually lost circulation, the SA Executive Committee declared

... there is no need for Borba ... in the present way. Retention of Borba, besides other mouthpieces, has no justification from a financial aspect. ... 49

Although it granted the paper a temporary reprieve, the SA Committee plainly indicated that it expected Borba to mend its financial ways. If Borba goes the way of the Saturday Evening Post, bemoaning falling circulation and advertising losses, it may not shake the Yugoslavs but it

will be an event which could occur no where else in Eastern Europe.

The predicament which Borba faces illustrates the basic effect of the economic reforms: the League has lost a great deal of its power to interfere with the operation of the economy. Although in other Communist regimes the role of innovator is exclusively reserved for the Party, in Yugoslavia the LCY has relinquished part of this role to the economic sector. The extent of some of the economic innovations indicates the degree of freedom granted to the economic sphere. Two recent examples are the federal law on foreign investments and the bond issue floated by the Crvena Zastava (Fiat) automotive plant in Kragujevac.

The law permitting foreign capital investment was passed after two years of debate which centered mainly around the problem of meshing private capital with the workers' council system. The first law of this type in Eastern Europe, it gives Yugoslav industry the opportunity to draw upon both foreign technology and foreign capital. The law guarantees the foreign investor a percentage of profits recoverable in hard currency, stipulates that 50 per cent of the employees must be Yugoslav, and sets maximum taxation levels. The details are to be regulated by individual contracts; the only specification is that

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the foreign investor abide by Yugoslav law. 50

The Fiat plant at Kragujevac, in an action even more shocking to conservatives, recently sold fixed-rate bonds to private investors. The bond issue produced a storm of discussion. Many conservatives maintain that it is improper for private investors to hold a special interest in an enterprise established with socialist funds, especially when the funds in question were federal funds drawn from every republic. On the other hand, the defense claims that bond issues could free the enterprises from bank control and could tap private savings. 51

Although conservative elements did manage to block the foreign investment bill for two years, they have been powerless to block even partially the full range of economic innovations. This impotence stems in part from changes in the social structure of the League itself.

50 The distance that the Yugoslavs have traveled since the tentative reforms of 1961 may be measured by a statement in 1961 that "... enterprises in the Yugoslav economy are socialist and there is neither private nor foreign capital... beyond doubt that any change in the... creation of private capital or the like is involved." Nenad Popovich, "Foreign Exchange Reform," Yugoslav Facts and Views, No. 124 (March 8, 1961), p. 6.

The percentage of white collar workers and technicians has risen sharply since the fifties, while the percentage of worker members has decreased. The white collar workers and technicians stand to gain the most from the economic reforms, and their increased voice in Party circles has given them enough leverage to often overcome the conservatives.

As pluralism, in the sense of a dispersal of power, has increased in Yugoslav political life, a growing number of pressure groups, such as the technicians, the republic leaders, the conservatives, the liberal economists, and the intellectuals, are able to exercise power on specific issues. In general, it has been the decentralization process which is responsible for the dispersal of power and the resulting pluralism.

The Growth of Parliamentary Debate

In the legislative sphere, a multiplicity of pressure groups also has evolved. Yugoslavia's complex nationality makeup has brought about a general division in the Federal Assembly in which debate has increasingly divided along national lines--north versus south, liberal versus

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conservative, industrialized republics versus undeveloped republics. Within this broad division there are various legislative pressure groups, such as those deputies who speak for the agricultural sector. These various pressure groups include both long-term and short-term interest groups, the latter usually oriented around specific issues.

The 1963 Constitution greatly enlarged the role of the Federal Assembly. However, it was the Rankovich ouster which accelerated meaningful parliamentary debate. As late as 1962, parliamentary opposition to government policies could be characterized as

... almost never successful except on minor matters. Sharp and articulate opposition to many Federal Council proposals is commonplace in the Skupshtina, for example, but after it is over the Council invariably has its way.\textsuperscript{53}

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) can no longer depend on acceptance of all proposals. Since 1966, FEC-sponsored bills have not only been opposed but have gone down to defeat in the Federal Assembly.\textsuperscript{54} In 1968 the

\textsuperscript{53} Hoffman and Neal, \textit{Yugoslavia}, p. 397.

\textsuperscript{54} Since 1963 the Federal Executive Council can initiate only regulations concerning the enforcement of laws and acts; all other legislation is now initiated by individual deputies and the relevant Assembly chamber. The same process is followed in the republican, provincial, and communal assemblies.
Assembly turned down a bill which prohibited abortions except for medical reasons, on the grounds that it violated personal liberty and was therefore unconstitutional. Only by resorting to public airing of the issue did the government prevail with another FEC-sponsored bill, which was designed to freeze the incomes of bank employees, foreign trade officials, and other technicians whose unreasonably high pay scales have drawn rising public criticism. The bill finally cleared the Assembly only after the government made the measure a vote of confidence.55

Deputies in the Assembly often take stands coincident with the interests of their constituents, and at odds with the League. (It should be noted that the overwhelming majority of deputies are members of the League.) Recent debates over federal economic policy illustrate the growing independence of the deputies. For example, a deputy from Leskovac, the textile center of Serbia, recently demanded that the FEC seek a ban on all textile imports, despite the fact that Yugoslavia itself exports

55_public discussion of the issue swung much citizen support to the FEC since many Yugoslavs resented the relative affluence of these technicians. 

On the other side of the economic fence, a Croatian deputy criticized the Federal Institute of Planning for neglecting the "poor results of export activities." 57

Deputies from agricultural regions have leveled biting criticism of the regime for the scanty aid allotted to private agriculture (which includes over 90 per cent of Yugoslav farm land). A deputy from Shabac, Serbia, complained that

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... it is being stressed that a peasant has rights, but it is a fact that he does not have them. It is being planned to cut down next year the payroll tax, but not a word is being said anywhere about cutting down the taxes which the private producer has to pay. 58
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Reviewing such parliamentary debate, it sometimes appears that almost every sector feels exploited. The Slovenes and Croats maintain that their industries are exploited for the benefit of the less efficient republics; the underdeveloped areas answer that the north is exploiting them;


57 Ibid.

58 Borba, October 30, 1968, p. 4; Joint Translation Service, no. 5161, October 30, 1968. Shabac lies in an area of profitable orchards, most of them privately owned.
private farmers and producers feel exploited by everyone. Since others than the Slovenes and Croats have come to desire cars, television sets, and better housing, the LCY and the government is forced to cope with a mood of rising expectations from all areas.

It is in the realm of republic politics that opposition to federal policies has become pronounced. In a move unprecedented in a Communist state, the entire cabinet of the Slovene government resigned in December of 1966, when the Slovene parliament refused to accept the draft of a federal law. The bill was not the first to be turned down by a Yugoslav parliament, but it marked the first time that a cabinet presenting such a bill had interpreted the refusal as a vote of no-confidence. The Slovene Premier, Janko Smole, stated

> It is not only a question of social security but of the whole attitude towards economic reform. The country cannot afford to go on living as it is . . . . This is not a personal issue. We wish to force the issue on public attention.\(^59\)

Kardelj added that

> It is becoming more and more obvious from parliamentary rostrums that controversial and contradictory opinions are emerging. . . . Unless we accept the fact that people can resign when they disagree we might as well retain Stalinist methods.\(^60\)


\(^{60}\) Ibid.
A compromise measure was accepted by the Slovene parliament at the end of December and the resignations withdrawn. The lesson however remained: it is now possible for a top government body to place responsibility to its electorate over responsibility to the Party. Thus the Party's power to act arbitrarily has been further curtailed.

In January of 1968 the Croats and Slovenes joined forces in another challenge to federal authority. Insisting on a 27½ per cent ceiling, the assemblies of the two republics refused to accept the Federal government's proposal for a tax ceiling of 26 per cent. The issue was not so much the level of the ceiling as it was the industrialized republics' determination to increase their control over their own profits.61 Another issue which the Slovenes have raised is the high amount of their earnings which are siphoned off through federal taxes. With 8.8 per cent of the population, Slovenia's contribution to the federation has averaged 13.1 per cent over the past six years (in 1963 Slovenia's share was 19.2 per cent).62

The issues raised by the Slovenes have been taken up


by other Yugoslav national groups. In November of 1968 the Economic Chamber of the Vojvodina Assembly threatened to resign unless the federal government responded to their demands for agricultural aid. The Vojvodina deputies demanded special funds for crediting grain purchases, premium prices for high grade meat, and better credit mechanisms for agricultural producers. The revolt reached a peak in December when the executive committee of the Vojvodina League objected to the proposed budget for Serbia, asking, "Who is to pay Belgrade's expenditures?"--it is obvious that they felt the Vojvodina would be paying them. In a more serious move, in view of the grave tensions in the Kosmet, the Vojvodina Party Executive Committee rejected a budgetary provision which granted the Kosmet 22 million dinars from Serbian republic


64 Agriculture has long been the problem child of the Yugoslav economy. As the prime agricultural area, the Vojvodina has suffered especially from the poor position of agriculture. Due to rising costs in 1967, the profits on agriculture in the Vojvodina decreased by 760 million dinars. On the farms in the socialized sector alone, profits from beef production dropped 170 million dinars. "Special Economic Bulletin," Belgrade Press Service, XV (August 10, 1968), pp. 17-18.

funds. The Vojvodina Party leaders demanded that either the bulk of the grant be provided through federal funds, or else the grant be reduced to 14 million dinars.66 This places the Serbs squarely in the middle. Either they placate the Vojvodina by attempting to exact additional federal funds for the Kosmet, which will of course antagonize the northern republics, or else they overrule the objections of the Vojvodina and accept the budget. The third course is even more inherently dangerous: cutting investments in an area which has recently erupted in widespread demonstrations by the Albanian populace. What is more pertinent, there is no feasible course open to the Serbian Communist Party and government which will not involve it in bitter controversy. Not only has dissent broadened in legislative affairs, it has also begun to place the League in untenable positions.

At the root of the increasing nationality strife which plagues the Party is the growing gap in income levels. Under the banner of equality for all Yugoslavs, the Party set out in the fifties to industrialize the whole country. This was consistent with Soviet and Yugoslav ideology, that through industrialization lies the path to freedom for the workers. Unfortunately, the lack

66 Ibid.
of an economic base in the backward regions has meant that even with massive investments there, incomes have not risen at the same rate as in Slovenia and Croatia. A revolution of rising expectations, which the regime has not been able to satisfy, has occurred. The people of the Kosmet, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro look with mounting dissatisfaction at the ever-widening gap between their incomes and those of the north. The revival of national rivalries means that there is no economic program which will please all. The Croats and Slovenes no longer are willing to underwrite investment in the undeveloped regions. The south is equally adamant that its poor position in the Yugoslav economy must be improved.

The economic and administrative decentralization which has been effected in Yugoslavia provided a natural vehicle for the growth of pluralistic pressures. Since nationalism is never far below the surface in Yugoslav political life, decentralization also became intertwined with the revival of nationalism. The huge economic disparities which exist among the republics made it inevitable that federal policy would not go unchallenged once the republics were granted substantial discretion over their own economies. Thus, the republics and their governments have come to constitute a check on the federal levels and, at times, provide an opposition to Belgrade.
Pluralism and the Trade Unions

The plurality of interest groups which is now operant in the legislative sphere has begun to appear in the trade unions. The importance of the Yugoslav trade unions has increased as the workers' council system became institutionalized. While nearly all Party members employed in the social sector belong to a trade union, the percentage of Party members in a workers' council may vary from 10 to 85 per cent. Since nearly all members of the workers' councils belong to a trade union, the importance of the unions as a method of Party control is obvious. The Party views the unions in the standard Communist manner: as a mechanism of control rather than as a device to protect the interest of the workers. This is, of course, also consistent with Yugoslav ideology, which maintains that since the workers operate the enterprises through the system of self-management, there is no need for any intervention to protect the workers.

Each enterprise has its own union organization, which in turn is part of the opshtina union conference; the opshtine union conferences are organized into the federal body, the Sindikat. The importance that the

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67 Hoffman and Neal, Yugoslavia, p. 245.
League attaches to union affairs is underlined by the fact that the chief positions are entrusted to high-ranking Party members. (From 1958 to 1967, the Sindikat president was Svetozar Vukmanovich, long-time member of the LCY Executive Committee.) Several levers of informal control are made available to the unions. They recruit and train new workers, oversee the adult education system, provide a means of communication between government technicians and the enterprises, and assist enterprises who wish to integrate. 68

However, the Yugoslav worker has not always agreed with the LCY's interpretation of the proper role of the unions. Neither the unions nor the workers' councils have provided a satisfactory mechanism for settling disputes between workers and the management. Since 1958 the Yugoslav workers have clearly demonstrated that they consider the unions more an arm of the League than a servant of the workers. In that year the first of many strikes occurred at the Trbovlje coal mine in Slovenia. The miners struck when the workers' council, backed by the union, refused to grant a wage increase. Despite the regime's oft-repeated statement that strikes were

unnecessary if workers' self-management operated correctly, the authorities conceded that wage conditions at Trbovlje were indeed unfair and the workers were granted an increase.

The Trbovlje strike opened up a new avenue of political expression outside the Party-union channel. Between 1958 and 1966, approximately 1,365 strikes occurred, a good indication of the extent to which the unions have been forced to abdicate control over the workers. In August of 1967 alone, there were ten major strikes in the industrial centers of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Maribor, Novi Sad, and Zadar. The crux of the problem is that the workers are understandably reluctant to bear the consequences of working for an inefficient enterprise. (The Trbovlje strike was such an instance; the mine is old and equipment so out-dated that operating costs were extremely high.) There is much truth to their complaint that they are being asked to bear the brunt of the economic reforms.

Since individual trade unions, consistent with their role as an arm of the League, do not organize strikes, the strikes often cause greater economic disruption than

69 "What is Stoppage of Work?" Yugoslav Trade Unions, VIII (December 1968), p. 9.

would be the case if the unions organized strikes, gave advance warning, and attempted to bargain with the management. As the number of strikes has increased, there have been public suggestions that the trade unions be allowed greater independence from the League and be granted the power to truly represent the interests of the workers.  

It is possible that this may develop even without the official blessing of the League. In December of 1968 the trade union (TU) conference of the Maribor opshtina backed the workers of the TAM automotive plant when they threatened to strike. In an explanation which must have been discomforting in its honesty, the Maribor TU president stated that "It is far better that the TU be the organizer . . . rather than an observer." When asked by opshtina officials if the unions' decision to back the strike was constitutional, he replied, "It does not matter whether this is written


72 TAM was protesting an agreement to import 800 trucks from West Germany, to be sold on four-year loans at 4 per cent interest, when TAM trucks are sold on two-year loans at 8 per cent interest.


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down or not. It occurs."  

Since the Maribor work stoppage involved a total of 36,000 industrial workers, it represented a notable confrontation to the official view that

... Trade Unions should take sides neither with those who are ceasing work nor with those opposed to such action, but ... should strive for a consistent implementation of income distribution according to the working results and for direct self-management. For, the realization of those principles will automatically eliminate the cause of work stoppages.

That not all union members accept this philosophy became evident at the Sixth Congress of the Trade Unions in June of 1968. The Congress exploded into an unprecedented storm of criticism against government bureaucrats and the widening gap between rich and poor.

For the first time delegates spoke out freely, without regard to Party sensibilities, causing Le Monde to term it "An historic Trade Union Congress." A group of peasant and worker delegates refused to attend their scheduled committee meetings and instead demanded a plenary session, stating that they were tired of

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74 Ibid.


76 The Times (London), June 26, 1968, p. 29.
resolutions and wanted action.\textsuperscript{77}

The criticism directed at bureaucrats was especially blunt—and especially suggestive of the image the Party presents to the ordinary citizen. A worker delegate from Smederevo proclaimed, "We have broken the chains of the Quislings. We shall now break the chains of bureaucracy."\textsuperscript{78} Other worker delegates charged that "the working class can no longer support the bureaucrats" and "it's the others who pocket the revenue of the producers."\textsuperscript{79}

Throughout the Congress workers demanded that the unions be given their independence and that government bureaucrats get out of trade union affairs. Pleading for strong unions which will truly represent the workers, a delegate from Zagreb demanded that a permanent TU Conference be set up to protect the interests of the workers.\textsuperscript{80}

Thus far the Party has not acted to release its hold on the trade unions. Nevertheless, since the 1968 TU


\textsuperscript{78}The Times (London), p. 29.

\textsuperscript{79}Ibid.

. Congress, individual unions have openly opposed official Party views. In February of 1969 the opshtina trade union council in Pozarevac made the startling demand that the highest organs of the trade unions, the Presidium and Plenum of the TU Federation (the Sindikat), resign. 81

The Pozarevac council charged that

The way in which our top forums have begun to discuss and decide the political stands of the Sixth Congress is extremely irresponsible. . . . High personal incomes prevent them fully from understanding demands of the majority of workers. 82

Whether the League will permit the unions the independence desired by some remains to be seen. Some recent proposals indicate that this is at least being discussed. At the October 1968 Congress of the Serbian Trade Unions, officials stated that

. . . the TU organization should secure a wider and more direct participation of all workers in making proposals and decisions. All members of the Trade Unions should participate in determining the policy . . . instead of the various TU forums which have been so far mostly the centers of decision-making. 83

The Trade Union Council of the Kosmet recently proposed that deputies for union councils be elected directly


82 Ibid.

83 Borba, September 17, 1968, p. 4; Joint Translation Service, no. 5123, September 17, 1968.
by the workers. In addition, rather than being nominated by the Socialist Alliance, the Council of the Kosmet sug-
gested that candidates be nominated by union members. Since the Socialist Alliance is headed by Party members, and in general serves to articulate Party desires, this was a direct call for the Party to get out of union elections.

The recent action taken by the Maribor TU Council demonstrates that it has become possible for union offi-
cials to take the workers' side in a dispute with the government. Similarly, the governing body of the Trade Union Federation is currently in open opposition to the decision made by the Federal Executive Council to change the working day from 7 a.m.-2 p.m. to the West European hours, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. The TU Central Committee has challenged the FEC to explain why it refuses to consider the workers' complaints, asking

How is it possible for us to develop self-management relations when unanimously expressed and quite jus-
tified demands of working people are ignored in such a way?

The failure of the Federal Executive Council to

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84 Borba, September 17, 1968, p. 4; Joint Translation Service, no. 5123, September 17, 1968.

enforce the new working hours even in governmental bodies--they were almost immediately abandoned in most opshtine offices--indicates how much the power of the Party has been eroded by decentralization.

As with much of the increasing pluralism in Yugoslav society, the growing independence of the trade unions has resulted from decentralization. Once the enterprises were granted the right to operate autonomously, the trade unions became less powerful. Like the Party, they were out of step with the freedom permitted by decentralization. Specifically, once wages were no longer centrally determined, the role of the trade unions as a centrally-directed body was in conflict with the realities of an independent economy. Decentralization has created a climate wherein such bodies as the trade unions are increasingly demanding the right to dissent from Party policies. As a number of forces, representing different groups and opinions, have begun to act upon the Party, it has lost the ability to be the sole arbitrator of all decision-making. The recent moves toward the freeing of the unions from Party control is another manifestation of the pluralism which now permeates Yugoslav politics and government.
"Continuing the revolution today means renouncing its obsolete forms for the sake of developing its democratic essence through new forms ... a return to obsolete forms which under present conditions hinder progress ... It would be much more useful to think about what can be done with the League of Communists as it is ... than to stagnate in old forms and to dream of things that used to be—even if those things were great—but which like everything else, cannot be recreated. Today's revolution is democratic practice, which demands a revolutionary vocation and spirit." Milovan Djilas, Borba, January 7, 1954.1

"The raising of demands for party pluralism relies on a political and social crisis a Communist party may land in if it does not accommodate forms and methods of political struggle and organization to new political and social conditions ... socialist countries have had ... crises not because of a surplus of democracy but because of a gradual reduction of its scope." Slavko Milosavlevski, Komunist, June 20, 1968, p. 19.2

"The political power of the industrial worker as a separate group has been disappearing in proportion


to the disappearance of social classes. Due to such indoctrination, no wonder that monopolistic ideology frequently becomes extremely simplistic, schematic, one-sided, intolerant, petrified, sterile, and almost a caricature . . . . Brutal purges of one group of Communist hierarchs by another are nothing but a manifestation of factionalism within a Communist party. Why, then, not recognize this two-party phenomenon for what it is? Both parties would then safely fight for socialism . . . . However, each party would have to recognize the fact that it could not perpetuate itself."


Milovan Djilas, the author of the first statement, spent nine years in Yugoslav jails, emerging only in 1967. Steven Vracar, the author of the last statement, which proposes to legitimate opposing Party factions, continues to teach international law at the University of Belgrade. The rebuttal to Vracar's proposal was not the jail cell, but merely another article in *Gledista* replying that socialism is impossible in a multiparty system. And the second statement, heretical by the standards applied to Djilas fourteen years previously, is quoted from the official theoretical organ of the Party, *Komunist*. Although *Gledista* itself has been under fire from Party officials for its free-wheeling critique of Yugoslav Marxism, its very publication would have been

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unthinkable in 1954 when Djilas called for the Party to relinquish its monolithic power. The 1968 *Komunist* article, which appears to grant the legitimacy of pluralistic pressures in a Communist system, would have horrified the Party which incarcerated Djilas. However, it is the same Party, complete with many of the same personnel.

These opposing quotations indicate the distance which Yugoslav society has moved toward a free discussion of the very bases of Marxist socialism. By the time Gledista published Vracar's article, the limits of permissible criticism had been extended to include almost anything but the legitimacy of Marxist socialism itself. Vracar's proposal that the League itself recognize opposing factions raised heated debate. But it was openly published, not confined to Party circles.

The rethinking of standard Marxist philosophy in light of contemporary socio-economic conditions is one of the most interesting phenomena resulting from the reorganization of the LCY. Once freed from the ideological

5 Vracar did not propose the formation of separate political parties, the *bete noire* of Yugoslav political thought. Whatever the western viewpoint, as to whether they are necessary for the existence of democracy, the Yugoslav viewpoint is understandable both in light of Marxist ideology and in light of the generally disastrous history of such parties in interwar Yugoslavia. The League's contention that opposition parties would inevitably become instruments of nationalism is supported by historical fact.
strictures imposed by Stalinism, the Yugoslav philosophers have explored many approaches to Marxism. In their examination of modern, technocratic society and its ills—namely, the alienation of man from the world and himself—many liberal philosophers have returned to the early writings of Marx, which place much more emphasis upon moral questions and much less emphasis upon the evils of capitalism. Their explication of early Marxist writings places the blame for alienation upon technological society, not upon the economic system itself. Their conclusion—that the worker can be just as easily alienated in a socialist society as in a capitalist society—is of course unacceptable still to many Yugoslav Party members, but it is a natural outgrowth of the ideological questioning produced by the break with Stalin.

After the Soviet-Yugoslav split, it was no longer possible for the Yugoslavs to base their regime on Soviet dogma. They were therefore forced to develop an ideology which would justify their new position. The Yugoslavs accused the Soviets of "statism,"—i.e., of having erected a dictatorship over the proletariat through

6 The main source for early Marxism is the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. These were first published in 1927 and were therefore unavailable to Lenin. See Karl Marx: Early Writings, T. B. Bottomore, ed. and trans. (New York-Toronto-London: McGraw-Hill, 1964).
central control over the means of production. They hold this to be as exploitive of the workers as is capitalism, for the reason that under central state control the worker still has no authority over the means of production. Initially, it was necessary that the Yugoslavs create institutional forms to buttress their critique of Stalinism. With the creation of the workers' councils and the communal system, the League first began to articulate its ideas. However, during the fifties there was great uncertainty as to just what effect these new institutions were supposed to have upon the League. Both liberals and conservatives within the League seemed to agree that decentralization required some change in the role of the LCY. But they were far from agreeing on the practical application.

A Heretic among Heretics: Djilas Opens the Controversy

The ideological confusion culminated in the Djilas affair, which unleashed arguments which affect the League even today. A great gust of intellectual ferment blew through the Party as "democratization" and the "withering away" of the Party were openly discussed. For Tito and most of the hierarchy, such pronouncements were meant to reinforce decentralization, to strengthen the workers' council system, and to further differentiate the Yugoslav
way from the Stalinist way. Any references to "democratization" alluded to the greater participation of the masses through such institutions as the councils and the newly-revived Socialist Alliance (the old Popular Front), which served as a vehicle to involve millions of non-Party members. However, there were some Yugoslavs who took such ideas as indication that the revolution had been accomplished, and that country should be turned over to the people. Given the low ideological and educational level of the thousands who had joined the Party since the Cominform ouster, and who therefore had no indoctrination in Stalinism, the assumption was understandable.

One man who came to believe that the Party should cease to be the sole political authority was Milovan Djilas, long-time Party member, Partisan hero, intellectual, and leading Party theoretician who was generally believed to be second-in-command to Tito. In the fall of 1953 Djilas began a series of articles in Borba, ostensibly to elaborate the new doctrines. Djilas objected to the Brioni Plenum of June of 1953, which was called to stem the ideological disarray and tighten Party discipline. 7

7 Of the 72,067 members expelled and the 32,000 who voluntarily left the Party in 1953, the majority departed Party ranks after the Brioni Plenum. This high percentage--out of a 1952 membership of 779,382, over 300,000 of whom had joined after 1948--indicates to what depth the ideological confusion had penetrated. George W. Hoffman and Fred Warner Neal, Yugoslavia and the New Communism (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1962), pp. 196-197.
In the Borba series he set about to correct what he considered to be a mistaken return to bureaucratism.

The Borba series represent a rare phenomena: the public evolution of one man's conscience. Opening with fairly mild criticism of entrenched bureaucrats, the articles went on to explore the changed nature of Yugoslav society and the proper role of the Party under these changed conditions. Ultimately, Djilas reached the conclusion that Yugoslavia could never achieve socialism unless its citizens were both economically and politically free. To Djilas, this meant that the Communist Party must abdicate its position as a monopoly political power. The articles illuminate a philosophical pilgrimage from simplistic formulae to an expression of faith in the utterly free man. Unfortunately, in 1954 Yugoslavia's position was precarious; her leadership was unused to its new role outside the Soviet bloc, and in general highly suspicious of any suggestion that they dilute their ultimate authority. Djilas recognized the dilemma: if the Party exerted too much pressure, it could stifle the initiative so desperately needed to create a viable economic system; yet, if it relaxed discipline, it could no longer be in a position of total authority. This, of course, has been a recurring dilemma; Djilas' sin was that he recognized it far too early.
By December 20, 1953, Djilas was writing,

No one party or group, nor even a single class, can be the exclusive expression of the objective imperatives of contemporary society. None can claim the exclusive right 'to administer' the development. . . . There is no alternative but more democracy.®

It is indicative of the prevailing ideological uncertainty that Djilas was not immediately silenced. The public assumed that Djilas was speaking for the Party. The Borba articles generated much enthusiasm from non-Communists, liberal Communists, and confused Communists, all of whom presumed that such a shocking reversal from a top hierarch must have had the approval of his co-rulers. By January of 1954, Djilas had arrived at the point of no return: he declared that it was time to do away with the Party:

The roots of evil are in the present organizational structures. . . . That is why the present methods . . . are not only barren of results but have also become a direct obstacle to more productive and creative activity among Communists themselves. . . . The present League of Communists would 'weaken,' 'wither away' as a classical party . . . lose its party character . . . and the communists would merge with the ordinary citizen.®

This was too much for his comrades. Djilas was quickly silenced and a Party Plenum called to discipline


® Ibid., pp. 135, 137.
him--in effect, to negate his ideas. Like the millions of art-lovers who admired the Van Meegren forgeries of Vermeer until a court decision deemed them worthless forgeries, the participants of the Plenum proceeded as if no one had ever seriously considered Djilas' philosophy. This was far from the reality, which was precisely why the Party had to refute Djilas. Their rationale that Djilas' ideas would lead to anarchy represented an honest fear. (Djilas' critique offered no viable political alternative to the rule of the Party.) Only Vladimir Dedijer refused to ostracize Djilas for saying the unthinkable. With blunt honesty, he stated,

Until a few days ago, the views expressed by Djilas in Borba were more or less accepted by all of us sitting here. . . . All of us, if we put our hands on our hearts, would admit it. . . . How can we think one thing today and all of a sudden change our minds overnight?11

This was of course precisely what the leadership demanded.

10 Several newspapers had published letters lauding Djilas' articles; one citizen of Bosnia stated that the majority of the people agreed with Djilas. Thomas Taylor Hammond, "The Djilas Affair and Yugoslav Communism," Foreign Affairs, XXXIII (January 1955), p. 307. Several members of the Central Committee admitted that they had agreed with Djilas, and one confessed that he had written an article which followed Djilas' philosophy. Ibid., citing Krste Crvenkovski, Borba, January 19, 1954.

In refuting Djilas, the leadership was forced to admit that he had been far too optimistic in assessing the country's adherence to socialism. Tito showed a far more realistic outlook when he declared that if Djilas' ideas were adopted, "in a year's time our socialist reality would not exist. It would not exist, I tell you, without a bloody battle." Tito and the leadership made it plain that Party discipline would be maintained, and that no thought of the Party withering away would be considered until that far-off day when the last "class enemy" disappeared. The Party could only have viewed with apprehension the reception that Djilas' ideas had generated. The price of delivering democracy in small doses was apparent: ideological uncertainty and an increased desire for more democracy.

Djilas' fate was a striking indication of how far Titoism had moved from the Soviet example. He was expelled from the Central Committee but not from the Party.


\(^{13}\) The whole affair would be an impossibility in the Soviet Union. Djilas' articles would never be published (let alone in an official Party paper), the trial not open, nor his sentence anywhere near so light. The proceedings of the Djilas Plenum may be found in Komunist, No. 1, January-February 1954. True to the decisions of the Sixth Congress, the Plenum was open to the public and was broadcast.
(some months later he voluntarily resigned). Djilas' attempt to rethink Yugoslav politics did not stop with the Plenum. Denied access to Yugoslav media, he published abroad. On January 24, 1955, he was convicted of disseminating "hostile propaganda," but once again the decision was ambiguous: his sentence was suspended. Finally, in December of 1956, after he had denounced the regime for its actions during the Hungarian Revolution, Milovan Djilas entered jail. While in jail he smuggled out to western publishers *The New Class*, a book so scathingly critical of the Communist rulers that its title has become synonomous with Communist bureaucracy. The timing of publication was extremely unpropitious for the regime, which was at the time effecting a rapprochement with Krushchev. Djilas' sentence was increased to ten years.

The Debate Revived

Initially, Djilas stood alone as the arch heretic. The 1954 Plenum which condemned him and his ideas ushered in a decade of ideological stagnation and oscillation in Party liberalization. However, the continuing economic and administrative reforms were a constant goad to the Party to restructure itself. The Seventh Congress of 1958 made many changes which could be laid at the steps of
Djilas' jail: the demand that Party functionaries give up undue privileges, the increased emphasis on the participation of the citizen, and the command that Party bureaucrats stop interfering in non-Party organizations, particularly economic organizations. If the ideas of Djilas have surfaced again and again to haunt his old comrades, it is to their credit. Only through a return to the pre-1948 situation can the Party ever totally refute Djilas' ideas. Having chosen to hew to national communism, the Party can not return to Stalinism.

By 1964 others had taken up the role of rethinking Yugoslav Marxism. In that year a group of young philosophers at the University of Zagreb founded *Praxis*, a journal which is both committed to Marxism and to criticism of all that exists. Praxis and several of the journals which follow its example have been in constant difficulties with the Party, but there have been no lengthy jail terms as Djilas received.

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14 The influence of *Praxis* in the debate over Marxism, or, as the *Praxis* writers term it, Marxist humanism, has also been notable abroad. The editorial board is composed of highly respected scholars from several countries (perhaps one reason why it has been able to survive). The board includes Alfred Ayer (Oxford), Norman Bernbaum (New York), Robert Cohen (Boston), Ernst Bloch (Tubingen), Lucien Goldman (Paris), Erich Heintel (Vienna), Leszek Kolakowski (Warsaw), Karel Kosik (Prague), George Lukacs (Budapest), Herbert Marcuse, Howard Parsons, David Reisman, Erich Fromm, and Thomas Bottomore.
Although Praxis has endured, the LCY leadership has often met the growing demand for freedom of criticism with repression, plainly indicating that it still insists on determining what constitutes permissible criticism. In April of 1963 the small Belgrade fortnightly Danas, which had been critical of the regime and Party bureaucrats, was closed "for lack of funds."\(^{15}\) Three months later the district public prosecutor of Sarajevo barred distribution of the film "Grad" because it supposedly debunked the Partisan mythology and socialism in general. Censorship was invoked for the third time that year when Alojz Majetich's novel about the youth brigades, Cangi, was banned for depicting youth in a "pornographic manner."\(^{16}\)

A more serious breach with the intellectuals occurred in June of 1964 when the Slovene journal Perspektive was closed and two writers associated with it arrested. This marked the first time in several years that intellectuals associated with a banned journal were punished as well. The action was taken during the period when Tito and the leadership were apparently intent upon tightening discipline prior to the Eighth Congress of December of 1964.

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\(^{15}\) *New York Times*, June 14, 1964, p. 32.

\(^{16}\) Ibid.
Perspektive was accused of criticizing some fundamentals of Yugoslav Marxism, including that most sacred of Yugoslav sacred cows, workers' self-management. However, unlike the period when Djilas entered jail without a public outcry, the Slovene case aroused much comment. Although Delo publically attacked the two writers arrested, it also published letters in their defense, one of which stated that "impolite people also have their rights." The general dismay caused by the arrests was emphasized by the fact that fifty-seven prominent Slovene writers, who were associated with the more conservative journal Nasha Sodobnost, filed a protest. In light of the promises made by the 1963 Constitution, their protest underlined a crucial inquiry: just how far did the constitutional guarantees of free speech extend?

17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
The constitutional issue was focused by the case of Mihailo Mihajlov, a young university lecturer who attempted to set up an opposition journal loosely based upon Christian ethics and definitely outside the Party and Marxism. Mihajlov finally forced the regime to jail him, demonstrating in the process that the constitutional guarantees of free speech were limited in the political area to what the Party deemed permissible. Mihajlov's apparently deliberate confrontation with the regime began in 1965 with the publication of Moscow Summer in Delo, a small Belgrade literary review. Among the biting criticism which Mihajlov leveled at the Soviets was the statement, "The first death camps were not formed by the Germans but by the Russians in the year 1921. Even as far as genocide is concerned, Hitler was not the first." After outraged cries from the Soviets--"No American journalists have written this critically"--Delo was banned by the Belgrade public prosecutor, who was publicly rebuked by Tito for not having taken immediate action.  

22 Ibid.
In a sense, Mihajlov and Delo were victims of the time, a period when the Party leadership was trying to avoid controversy with Krushchev's successors. (Mihajlov's rebuttal that his article didn't exceed the criticism permitted during the periods of Soviet-Yugoslav antagonism was irrefutable.) Thus, the Delo incident demonstrated that Yugoslav intellectuals still had to trim their sails to suit the political winds. Whether Mihajlov originally intended to mount a crusade against the regime is not easily determined. However, the banning of Delo set the young iconoclast on a course which eventually forced the regime to admit publically that political considerations still prevail over constitutionality.

In retaliation for the Delo ban, Mihajlov pressed two lawsuits, both affirming that his constitutional rights had been violated. On the grounds that his views were "contrary to the present life, attitude, and social system of Yugoslavia," he was denied a passport and readmittance to the Zagreb faculty. Mihajlov argued that this was not consistent with the 1963 Constitution. However, he went much further than a test of constitutionality. He argued for, and tried to set up, a non-Marxist

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journal which was to be in opposition to the Party. At the same time, he began publishing critical articles abroad. In September of 1966, after the Croatian Supreme Court had suspended a previous sentence, he was brought to trial for spreading "false rumors." He was convicted, but allowed to go free pending an appeal—an appeal it was apparent he had every intention of making. The pattern is one similar to the Djilas case. The government prosecuted reluctantly, as indicated by the suspended sentences, but still was unwilling to give Mihajlov free rein.

At this juncture, it might be useful to distinguish between the furor the Mihajlov case aroused abroad and his stature within the country. Whatever the intellectuals' private feelings about the issue of constitutionality raised by Mihajlov, many liberals and intellectuals were angered that an obscure university lecturer should presume to speak for them. They found offensive his statement to western journalists that the intellectuals "feel like traitors" to Yugoslavia when "expressing

\[24\] Specifically, Mihajlov challenged the political monopoly of the League and its control of the information media. It seems plain that he intended his journal to be the nucleus of a non-Communist political force. For a full test of his proposal, see Mihajlo Mihajlov, A Historical Proposal (New York: Freedom House, June 16, 1966).
themselves before the West." Secondly, the Mihajlov trial coincided with the Rankovich ouster. The fall of Rankovich and the 1966 reforms encouraged many liberals to hope that meaningful political reforms would be effected. Mihajlov's challenge to Tito, via an open letter circulated throughout the country, did not endear him to those more realistic liberals who sought to channel the League into more democratic channels.

With the regime committed to prohibiting outright political opposition, and Mihajlov daring Tito to lock him up, a judicial showdown became unavoidable. In April of 1967 he was sentenced to four and a half years' imprisonment for publishing hostile propaganda. At the trial, which was open, the defendant was allowed to speak freely. He challenged the court to prove that he had violated the constitution. In a sense, Mihajlov's challenge went unanswered. Side-stepping the issue of


\[26\text{The role Soviet pressure played throughout the Mihajlov confrontation can only be presumed. His battle with the regime came at a time when Soviet-Yugoslav trade was increasing due to a relaxation of tensions between the two countries. (From 1963 to 1965, trade with the Soviet Union increased by 90 per cent.) In 1966 the Soviets granted Yugoslavia $160 million credit, and in January of 1967 Tito visited Moscow. Mihajlov, due to his relative obscurity within the country, probably provided a convenient balancing act for the Rankovich ouster which jeopardized the bettered relations.}\]
constitutionality, the prosecution struck most heavily at his alleged ties with emigré organizations and the accusation that he sought to foment Croat nationalism. The trial was conducted with such scrupulous attention to legal niceties that the London Times described it as remarkable for the display of the court's impartiality. Nonetheless, Mihajlov did go to jail for what appears to be actions supposedly guaranteed under the 1963 Constitution.

Paradoxically, a month before the Mihajlov trial, Praxis reappeared after an eight-month suspension. At this time it announced plans to become an international journal—one of the charges against Mihajlov was that he planned to open his journal to western contributors, which is precisely what Praxis has done since 1965. However, the crucial difference between Praxis and the lone-wolf writer who went to jail is that Praxis has never set itself up in total opposition to Marxism and the Party. Praxis' raison d'être is based on an attempt to redefine Marxism; Mihajlov's argument for a multi-party system was posited entirely outside Marxism and the Party. Whatever the Party in general may feel about Praxis, it operates within the periphery of Party life. Its contributors are

27 The Times (London), April 19, 1967, p. 4.
Party members, or ex-members. Members or not, the Praxis philosophers are Marxists, albeit very eclectic ones. Unlike Mihajlov, they remain committed to Marxism.

At this writing, Mihajlov still is confined to jail although there is repeated agitation for his release. What did the affair demonstrate? First, while censorship sits more lightly upon Yugoslav writers than at the time of Djilas' trials, far-ranging freedom of expression is still not permissible no matter what the Constitution specifies. Secondly, the constitutional guarantees of free speech are not adhered to literally. A Yugoslav writer still may not exceed the limits of politically acceptable criticism, especially by advocating a multi-party system or national separatism. Thirdly, no matter how reluctantly, the government will prosecute such deviations. Mihajlov appears to have set out to test the limits of permissible criticism. By landing in jail, he proved that the constitutional guarantees of free speech fall before Party interests.

Although many western writers drew a parallel between Djilas and Mihajlov, the cases are actually

28 The Praxis philosophers are also much more skilled in writing effective criticism than Mihajlov. The rejoicing in heaven over the salvation of a reformed heretic may be because the heretic is a far tougher opponent than the mere unwashed infidel.
dissimilar. The Djilas heresy occurred during the early fifties, when the Yugoslav Party was still reeling from the effects of the Cominform ouster. The government was disoriented politically and ideologically, and threatened by a belligerent Soviet Union. In contrast, Mihajlov's confrontation took place in a much more relaxed milieu. If the government hesitated to jail Mihajlov, it was not from ideological uncertainty but from a reluctance to draw the constitutional issue.

Secondly, Djilas was and is a far more important personage. His heresy was therefore much more shattering to his Communist colleagues, and far more serious. As one of the acknowledged leaders, Djilas' writings carried great authority. In contrast, Mihajlov was not a Party member. He was merely a lecturer in Russian literature at the Zadar branch of the University of Zagreb, and, before his trial, an obscure intellectual. Despite his use of the title of professor, Mihajlov does not hold a Ph.D. degree. His stature was therefore infinitely less than Djilas'. In such a highly nationalistic country, the fact that he is the child of Russian emigrés may also be considered a detriment. In short, while the end result was the jail cell for both, Mihajlov is no Djilas. In contrast to Djilas, it appears that Mihajlov sought out the western press from the beginning, and the western
press in turn reinforced him and inflated his importance. While Djilas wrote out of an inner conviction, with apparent disregard for the consequences, Mihajlov made it quite plain that he courted the confrontation with the government. It is erroneous to assign to Mihajlov the stature and intellectual capability of Djilas.

Discipline Versus Anarchy: The Serb-Croat Linguistic Battle

The limitations of acceptable dissent were further defined by the 1967 language dispute between the Serb and Croat intellectuals. As Mihajlov's "Christian socialism" was unacceptable to the regime, constitutionally protected or not, so was the Croatian writers' attempt to foster Croat nationalism through linguistic separation. The Party demonstrated that those two forms of dissent, the multi-party ideal and advocacy of national separatism, simply will not be tolerated.

The linguistic battle erupted on March 15, 1967. The Croatian Writers Association, backed by seventeen

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Mihajlov's writings were widely circulated, and some of his publishers compared him to Djilas. In several western publications he was erroneously identified as "doctor" or "professor" and as a faculty member of the University of Zagreb, all of which of course drew attention abroad.
other Croatian cultural and scientific organizations, published a manifesto in the Zagreb paper Telegram demanding that the Croatian dialect be recognized as an official and separate Yugoslav language through a constitutional amendment. The Croat intellectuals charged that the federal government had deliberately relegated the Croatian dialect to an inferior place through such practices as publishing federal documents only in the ekavian (Belgrade) variant of Serbo-Croatian. (Of course, for dissemination in Croatia the Latin alphabet was used. Such documents are also published in Slovenian, Macedonian, and Albanian.)

The Croat Communist Party immediately disciplined the dissident intellectuals. Despite the fact that the Central Committee of the Serb Party warned against any Serbian reaction, forty-five Serb writers retaliated by

30 There are two forms of literary Serbo-Croatian in use today, both variants of the Shtokavian dialect (two other dialects are recognized: Chakavian, spoken on the Adriatic littoral, and Kajkavian, spoken in northern Croatia). The ekavian variant of Shtokavian centers upon Belgrade; the ijekavian variant centers upon Zagreb, and is used by the Montenegrins, and the Bosnians east of the Bosna and Neretva Rivers. Although the pronunciation and vocabulary of the two sub-dialects vary to some degree, the most pronounced difference is that usually ekavian is written in Cyrillic and ijekavian in the Latin alphabet. Since ijekavian is used by the Montenegrins and perhaps a majority of Bosnians, the linguistic dispute entangled all the republics but Slovenia and Macedonia. Monica Partridge, Serbo-Croatian Practical Grammar and Reader (Beograd: Jugoslavija, 1964), pp. 13-14.
demanding in a letter to Borba that the 650,000 Serbs residing in Croatia be taught the Cyrillic alphabet. Although members of the LCY agree that National separatism must not be encouraged, the officials in the republics differed as to what action to take. The Croat Party hierarchy called for criminal prosecution and immediately expelled more than ten writers who had signed the manifesto. However, the Serb Party leaders stated that the Serbian writers involved would not be prosecuted. The Croatian signatories were banned from candidacy in the forthcoming spring elections.31

The disciplinary actions taken against the intellectuals were decisive, involving expulsion for Party members who were signatories. Those expelled were permitted to defend their positions through the newspapers. However, apparently some writers involved found difficulty publishing their works after the affair. One such writer, Matija Beckovich, a Serb who had sided with the Croats, charged in Knjizevne Novine that he had been unjustly barred from Belgrade TV-radio. He abused Party members who headed the networks as "imposters, poltroons, idiots,

31 The controversy also cost the League one of its most respected spokesmen, Miroslav Krleza, internationally known writer and member of the Croatian Central Committee. Krleza, who had signed the manifesto, refused to moderate his position and then resigned from the Party.
and cowards," who were "free of any requirements for producing evidence" of their wit and talent.\(^\text{32}\) (Such language would indicate that "freedom of the press" does have some meaning in Yugoslavia.) During the dispute the papers published the full texts of both declarations and the defense of those denounced.

The public conflict over language destroyed most of the facade of cultural cooperation among the Yugoslav nationalities which had been so carefully erected. All the important Croatian cultural organizations repudiated the 1954 Novi Sad language agreement. As work on a new Serbo-Croatian dictionary continues, the battle simmers even though the Party has managed to enforce an agreement between Serbian and Croatian publishing houses.\(^\text{33}\) The dispute of course ran far deeper than linguistic resentments--it exacerbated the poor relations between the more industrialized Croats, who resent financing Serbia's development, and the Serbs, who have tangled with Croat separatism since 1919. Thus it represented a serious


\(^{33}\)Zagreb critics of the new dictionary have termed it "a product of etatism and centralism" while Serb critics have accused the Croats of being "non-scientific, reactionary, and counter-revolutionary." Komunist, January 9, 1969, p. 3; Joint Translation Service, no. 5218, January 9, 1969.
threat to the ruling Party which must manage to keep national passions within bounds.

Stating that the League "will not tolerate anything that could lead to a revival of the old divisions," Tito enunciated the LCY's determination to squelch such manifestations. In a subsequent speech, in which he severely criticized the liberals, he decreed that liberalism as well as dogmatism should be eliminated from the League:

We have no right to be liberal towards those who hinder our development. Liberalism and democracy are different things . . . it was a mistake not to expel those who said the party has withered away. No Communist Party can act efficiently if inside of it exists different attitudes on the most essential questions.

Since it caused the League to harden the line on acceptable dissent, the language conflict affected the overall ideological debate. The League clearly announced that it intended to retain ideological hegemony and that it alone could determine the proper attitude on essential questions. The rift between the Party leadership and the intellectuals deepened.

The language dispute also illustrated the erosion of

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Party control. Both declarations were announced without prior consultation with the League. The Croatian intellectuals who supported the Croat declaration were in many cases Party members and held office in Party organs. They should have known that such action would be outside permissible Party activity. The League is faced with a dilemma. Having given up many of the tools of authoritarianism, such as secret police control, can the Party prevent national rivalries from reverting to the old hatreds and violence? The linguistic conflict demonstrated that the Party can no longer police the people to the extent that such outbursts will not occur; yet the hierarchy served notice that it would not tolerate any attempts to arouse national passions. It also demonstrated how deep the Serb-Croat conflict runs, and the great reservoir of antipathy which exists for Serbian hegemony.

36 Although the constitutional issue of freedom of speech was involved here, as with the Mihajlov case, another issue is also pertinent. Article 41 states that "The citizen shall be guaranteed the freedom . . . to speak his language" but seemingly qualifies this by stating, "The dissemination . . . of national inequality, as well as all incitement to national . . . hatred or intolerance, is unconstitutional. . . ." Considering the depth of antagonism between Serbs and Croats, commonly conceded to be the most sensitive nationality problem, the regime's action is understandable. If article 41 seems too elastic by western standards, it must be remembered that it has been a bare twenty-five years since the Croat Ustashe murdered thousands of Serbs, and the Chetniks retaliated in kind.
Discipline Versus Anarchy: The Foundations Questioned

Tito's speech at Prishtina during the linguistic uproar contained the warning, "... it is wrong to think the Party has given up and that citizens can do whatever they wish." Nevertheless, the Party has found that it is no longer the sole determinator of ideological debate. The most significant ideological debate has centered around the philosophical journal Praxis. The Praxis philosophers, many of them young intellectuals, with no ties to Soviet practice, are determined to salvage what they see as the essence of Marxism by jettisoning the Soviet accretions. For them, this means less emphasis on the Marx of the Manifesto and more reliance on the pre-1848 Marx who was concerned with the alienation of man and labor:

... the work is external to the worker ... consequently, he does not fulfill himself in his work but denies himself, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies ... The worker, therefore, feels himself at home only during his leisure time, whereas at work he feels homeless ... His work is not ... the satisfaction of a need, but only a means for satisfying other needs.  


In addition, these Marxist humanists point out that Marx's insights into the alienation of man are even more pertinent in the twentieth century, the age of technology and the fragmentation of labor into small, meaningless components. The humanists hold that affluent alienation is every bit as dehumanizing as impoverished alienation, for the basic reason that the source of alienation itself has not been changed. "Humanism" (the term itself was used by Marx) as the Yugoslav philosophers view it, postulates an ideal community of men, able to develop freely to their fullest possibility in harmony with each other.

Marx was influenced by the philosophers of the Enlightenment, who upheld the innate goodness of man and the power of human reason, or, as William Godwin termed it, man's perfectibility. Marx's contribution was the recognition that man could be easily alienated from his work, and that political emancipation differs from human emancipation. The Marxist humanists have concluded that modern technology causes the further alienation of man, and that

39 "A distinction is made between the rights of man and the rights of the citizen. . . . Thus . . . political life declares itself to be only a means, whose end is the life of civil society. . . . Human emancipation will be complete only when the real, individual man has absorbed into himself the abstract citizen." Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in Karl Marx: Early Writings, pp. 24, 27, and 31.
only by ceaseless criticism and effort can the system be changed enough to embody a humanistic society. Predrag Vranicki has written

The classless society of commodity production has converted everything into a commodity, a thing .... Relationships have clearly been deprived of the fundamental characteristics of humanity if the entire society amounts to a relationship of buying and selling .... if man is regarded as though he were part of a mechanism ....

So long as man under whatever system (socialism included) .... experiences his powers .... apart from himself, the possibility will exist for such power to act .... as a superior authority ....

Since the concern with the alienated man of technocratic society is not confined to a few Yugoslav philosophers, these observations seem valid enough. The Marxist humanism of Praxis has led many Yugoslav intellectuals to critically analyze all aspects of Yugoslav society -- Praxis itself is based on the freedom to criticize all which exists, a freedom which the League has not yet granted. The result has been that neither Party nor workers' council, technocrat nor bureaucrat, is exempt. On many occasions the League has publicly stated that it intends to determine the limits of permissible criticism:

The League of Communists must also oppose all form of criticism which .... wishes to create an

atmosphere of 'emergency' in society and which is calling for extraordinary measures . . . . extraordinary measures can only be adopted by the supreme state and political organs.41

There is a noticeable tendency now of ideological differences growing into differences of political action. . . . The possible consequences of this state of affairs are a return to the multiparty system, or to the legality of factions within the League of Communists. . . . The tolerance of objectively different ideological concepts . . . hinders the unity of action.42

Yet within the League itself the lines are not clearly drawn. Echoes from Praxis thought are sometimes found in unexpected places—such as a Borba article on the 1967 Theses for the Reform of the LCY. Borba admitted that the self-management system had not functioned as well as the Party would have critics believe. Stating the self-management plan had been set up too hastily, Borba criticized the producers for being too passive and uninterested in technical developments.43

Party liberals are far from agreeing on what issues should be debated, and for that matter, what can be debated.

41 Politika, June 30, p. 9; Joint Translation Service, no. 5057, July 1, 1968.

42 Vecernje Novosti, August 1, 1968, p. 2; Joint Translation Service, no. 5086, August 1, 1968.

The differences are far-ranging; for example, statements calling for renewed discipline within the League may be contrasted to Vracar's opinion that legal opposition within the Party framework would present minority views but would have normal political dialogue within the Party and would support a mutually accepted policy. Thus the worst aspects of the one-party system would disappear without threatening socialism as such. Would it not be more natural to have two parties? Of course these two parties would, perhaps, differ in structure, followers, and ideological approach. In such a case the majority party, as the ruling party, would face an organized opposition. Even though liberal elements of the League may be willing to permit dissent, they are far from being ready to allow this dialogue to evolve into a multiparty system, or even into definite factions within the League. Their reluctance to discuss ideas such as a multiparty system stems from the uncertainty as to whether or not the League would be able to remain a viable political force and maintain its self-conceived role as the leading element in Yugoslav society. In other words, the League is faced with an identity crisis.

At times the ideological uncertainty surfaces in semi-official publications. For example, the Review of International Affairs published side-by-side two articles

44Ibid., p. 46, citing Gledista, August-September 1967, pp. 1053-1066.
which could certainly create an ambiguous impression of Yugoslav ideology. An article by Krste Crvenkovski reiterated the League's official stance on discipline and debate:

The multiparty system is irreconcilable with the conception of direct democracy which is abolishing every kind of monopoly, especially in politics.

Retaining and developing real democratic centralism . . . the League of Communists, determining, in its centres, a uniform and obligatory political line that can be realized with discipline and definite sanctions, puts emphasis on self-consciousness, self-responsibility and self-discipline.

It is only in this way that it is possible to achieve . . . the revolutionary political engagement in changing relations towards an ever better, contemporary and more humane society. 45

Preceding Crvenkovski's statements was an article which criticized some fundamental institutions of LCY ideology. The author, a political science professor at Zagreb University, scored the bureaucratic tendencies of the self-management system and the much-touted system of rotation which the League maintains has effected internal democracy:

Workers councils and other self-managing bodies are constantly renewed. . . . If in the process . . . there are still some leftovers of bureaucratic tendencies, they are more related to professional groups in the enterprises or to socio-political

groups which wield some influence on the process of workers self-management. . . . Rotation, on the other hand, presupposes professional political functions, carried out . . . on different levels. Such closed rotation within a closed circle constitutes a purely bureaucratic principle.46

However, this is mild compared to some of the criticism leveled by the various journals outside direct Party control. Journals such as Knjizevne Novine, Delo, Razlog, Susret, Student, and of course Praxis have continually pointed out the differences between the official ideology and the actual practice of the Party. They have been officially denounced by leading Party members, banned, and many of their leading writers expelled from the Party, but the ideological debate has not lessened. In some ways, the heavy artillery which the Party has brought to bear upon the dissidents has only served to further disseminate their views. Praxis itself has a circulation limited to 3,000 (the journal is subsidized by Zagreb University; i.e., through public funds), but when Borba or Politika inveigh against the views of Praxis by publishing horrendous examples of its heresy, presumably their entire readership is exposed to the Praxis philosophy. For instance, Politika published

several excerpts from Praxis and concluded with what it stated were the main theses of the journal: a need to change everything; extreme criticism of the progress to date; opposition to the economic reforms in the sense of creating more dehumanization through a market economy; the accusation that the majority of the League is bureaucratic, and the conclusion that further social progress is impossible if a bureaucratic class is at the head of the state and society. It is not too unrealistic to presume that among the thousands of Politika readers there are some to whom such a program is compatible.

The Belgrade literary paper, Knjizevne Novine, has achieved an uncomfortable (to the League) popularity by repeatedly pointing out the contrasts between Party pronouncements and Part action. It has violated one of the few remaining taboos of Yugoslav journalism: attacking Party figures by name. It has also taken up the cause of those disciplined or expelled from the Party for


48 Praxis has also enraged Party officials by criticizing functionaries by name. In one article, Milan Kangrga of Zagreb University attacked Milentije Popovich, then General Secretary of the Socialist Alliance, as being "unfamiliar with even the simplest Marxian concepts." New York Times, April 28, 1965, p. 7. Kangrga has since been expelled from the League.
dissent, and in most cases has concluded that such sanctions were unjustified. *Knjizevne Novine* has not only called for an end to such Party infighting, but has also stated that the parliament should be the strongest political body in the country, above even the Party.

Such a parliament would be a representative democracy, a direct antithesis to a totalitarian regime in which the dictator wants to view the people as an incarnation of his private and personal conception. . . . Individuals can be protected only by a democratic state.49

*Knjizevne Novine* managed to survive through the summer of 1968, although its outspoken editor, Tansije Mladenovich, was eventually replaced after a public battle which involved a drastic denunciation by a special joint commission of the Belgrade and Serbian Central Committees.

The Zagreb student paper, Razlog, was banned following the June 1968 student riots. Similar action was taken against Delo, Susret, and Student, all Belgrade publications who definitely sided with the students and enunciated their determination to back the students' criticisms. That Yugoslav publications are increasingly determined, and able, to criticize the prevailing dominance of the League is demonstrated by what the youth

paper, Mladost, recently wrote about the Socialist Alliance (SAWP) and its operation of the nominations for the 1969 elections:

Stories for good obedient children--this is to what . . . all those convincing promises of the SAWP in January . . . turn out. . . . It seemed that voters will have a real chance to elect . . . until the opshtine nomination conferences assembled: afterwards the lists of candidates were soon reduced to one or two names, the best known in the opshtina.50

The Belgrade journal Delo articulated the position of dissident liberals. After the Serbian Supreme Court banned Delo in August of 1968 for publishing articles which were aimed at the students and which "would affect law and order," Delo's rejoinder was, "We are convinced that the contested passages of these articles should be considered through a struggle of opinions and not through bans."51

While the League is apparently not willing to grant the legitimacy of Delo's argument, at this point it appears that the League has lost the initiative in ideological thought. (It should be noted that some Yugoslav journals criticize Party policy simply because it is Party

50 Mladost, March 27, 1969, p. 3; Joint Translation Service, no. 5294, April 8, 1969.

51 Borba, September 17, 1968, p. 6; Joint Translation Service, no. 5124, September 17, 1968.
policy; if the LCY were to adopt their ideas tomorrow, such journals might immediately deny their validity.)

The most vital debate arises from outside the LCY. Within the LCY, ideological questioning has been reduced mainly to banning dissident magazines and expelling the writers from the League. However, as Yugoslavia becomes more industrialized, and national pride continues to rise, as it appears it will, the Party must eventually consider some of the issues raised by those who wish to rethink her ideology. The Praxis philosophers are more aware than the Party hierarchy of the consequences of industrialization, and as avowed Marxists, their ideas represent a genuine attempt to fit Yugoslav socialism into a workable scheme which might avoid the ills of technology. Their criticism of the failings of the self-management system are postulated on the thought that this is not unavoidable—that such a system can function effectively. Such statements as the following are pertinent indeed if the workers' councils are to achieve what they should be meant to:

It is irrelevant that capitalists would be replaced by self-governing groups if these behave as 'collective capitalists.' For a man who is ruthlessly thrown into the street by such a group in the interest of income, the difference is more or less one of terminology.

The alienation of products and the means of work from society is also possible in the form of a monopolistic appropriation of them on the part of individual self-governing groups.
All these are questions which true Marxists and revolutionaries should express before it becomes too late . . . humanism demands that we should start to be concerned with these matters as well. 52

. . . technology by itself not only is not humane, but threatens to become the most inhumane thing that mankind has ever created unless society itself becomes humanized. . . . progress of technology leads toward genuine human freedom only if it is an instrument of humanization. . . . social trends can no longer be explained exclusively by means of categories formed in the 19th century. . . . 53

The liberal philosophers, most of whom have been cast out of the Party, recognize what the Party has not fully faced up to: that ideological values are susceptible to the transformations of time. The increasingly literate Yugoslav youth have become impatient with the manipulations of the Party and mistrustful of its claim to ideological certainty. The support which such journals as Praxis, Knjizenve Novine, and Delo have gained demonstrates that, despite the Party's determination to control ideological dialogue, the Party has lost complete control over the debate.

It is fitting to conclude this discussion of Yugoslav


ideology and all the uncertainties it currently embodies with the man who began the debate, Milovan Djilas.

Djilas first recognized what the Party might come to once it began decentralization, loosed the forces of nationalism, and gave the economy free rein. Djilas was released from prison January 1, 1967, following the decision of the Party not to prosecute Rankovich due to his "great services to the country." The New York Times termed his release the "capstone of the moral and political revolution that has swept Yugoslavia in the mid 1960's." It was not so much a "capstone" after all; since his release the debate has broadened.

In a statement which might have been taken from the pages of Praxis, Djilas recently wrote:

The fact is that modern technology in itself facilitates rather than hinders totalitarian rule, unless forces in socialism are found to prevent this.

Djilas' prediction about what sort of government might rule Yugoslavia by 1984 takes full note of the growing pluralistic pressures, especially nationalism, to which the Party must adapt if it is to survive:


By 1984 Yugoslavia should have attained the status of a confederation. . . . If, indeed, there will not exist various political parties, the Communist Party—that is, the Communist Parties of the various republics—will be an organization with free currents and guaranteed rights for party minorities.56

In an interview with the New York Times, Djilas said of Tito, "We are not so far apart. . . . I feel we are not so against each other."57 If this is not true of Tito, it may well be true now for many of the Party members he leads.

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56 Ibid., p. 140.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAJOR REORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY

From the Rankovich Ouster to the Ninth Congress

In the time span discussed in this chapter (1966-1969) the Yugoslav League of Communists underwent two major reorganizations. The most recent reorganization was effected at the March 1969 Ninth Party Congress. The Ninth Congress followed in the wake of the Czechoslovak invasion and was basically a response to the threat of Soviet intervention. The first major reorganization was a response to the Rankovich expulsion in 1966 and the internal threat of a centralist takeover. The Ninth Congress was concerned with creating Party institutions strong enough to survive Tito’s demise, to prevent a centralist takeover, and to preserve the fragile unity of the country.

With the ouster of Rankovich in 1966, the power of the centralists was broken. The way was opened for the possible evolution of institutions divorced from the whims of Party hierarchs. The Rankovich ouster shattered the power of the secret police, the last bastion of an authoritarian regime. The secret police forces were
totally discredited by the revelations of police brutality which came to light during the Rankovich affair. Fear of the secret police was removed as files on two million police suspects were closed, wiretaps ended, and police budgets cut drastically.\(^1\) Restraints were lifted on the thousands of Yugoslavs formerly obliged to report periodically to the secret police. Once the fear of the secret police disappeared, the regime was forced to rely on compromise rather than compulsion. The Party was unable to enforce discipline. Without police restraints, Yugoslav society became increasingly open to expressions of dissent.

The crisis of 1966 brought to the fore the question of Tito's successor as head of the LCY. By the time of the Ninth Congress, Tito's age (77) made it imperative that the Party restructure itself in order to ensure some continuity unless it was to resort to centralism. The answer of the Ninth Congress appears to be a system where the institutions will be strong enough to carry on without Tito, and flexible enough to grant each of the nationalities a satisfactory voice in Party affairs.

There have been two decisive Party congresses in Yugoslavia: the Seventh and the Ninth. Their significance

lies in different spheres. Articulating the LCY's crucial differences from the Soviet system, with emphasis upon decentralization and the self-management system, the Seventh Congress of 1958 concentrated on constructing an ideological base. The Ninth Congress dealt with the operational methods of the Party. At the Ninth Congress, the Party tackled the "how" of governing, not just the "why." For the first time an attempt was made to alleviate the animosities among the nationalities which have become so prominent since the Rankovich ouster removed police power. With the threat of the Czech invasion hanging over them, the Party appears to have finally recognized the realities of governing the country which they have created. The emphasis on granting each nationality a fair and equitable voice indicates a major change which has taken place since Rankovich: the direction of the flow of power has changed. Power is no longer distributed exclusively from the center; instead, the base is beginning to influence the center.

The Ninth Congress

The Ninth Congress made extensive structural changes in the League of Communists. The 153-member Central Committee, the major body of a traditional Communist Party, was abolished. It was replaced by a 300-member
League Conference which will convene yearly. The Conference is to be drawn on a proportional basis from the republic and province parties.\(^2\)

The 11-member Executive Committee, which was in effect the ruling organ of the LCY, was replaced by a 15-member Executive Bureau. The creation of the Bureau emphasized the Party's recognition of two factors which threatened the Party's future: Tito's advanced years and the increasing pressures from the republics. The new Bureau is composed of two top leaders from each republic, one from each of the autonomous provinces, and Tito himself.

A 52-man Presidium replaces the old 35-man Presidium. The Presidium is also based geographically. Each republic is allotted six members; each province, three, and, indicative of yet another series of innovations, the Party Conference of the Army is also allotted three places.\(^3\)

\(^2\)The Serbs and Montenegrins long enjoyed a numerical advantage in the Central Committee, to the disadvantage of the other nationalities. It was not until 1963 that an Albanian was included in the Central Committee. In the 1963 Committee only nineteen Croats held seats, while tiny Montenegro had fourteen seats. There are almost as many Albanians as Macedonians and twice as many Montenegrins. Paul Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 275.

\(^3\)This is the first time that the Army LCY organization has been treated as a separate entity and permitted to select its own representatives; previously they were named by the league.
Also sitting on the Presidium are the Presidents of the six republics and the 15 men who comprise the Executive Bureau. Thus, it seems fair to predict that the Executive Bureau will wield the most power over Party policies.

In his opening speech to the Congress, Tito clearly delineated the reason for the changes.

. . . The League of Communists of Yugoslavia needs a strong executive body . . . which will work collectively and in which nobody will be the first, the second, or the third. Consequently, the Executive Bureau must include two prominent leaders from each republic and one leader from each province.

The League of Communists needs continuity. Some of us are already rather old and continuity must be assured in the top ranking leadership for the experiences of the old to be transferred to the young. 4

The key words here are "collectively" and "continuity." The Executive Bureau apparently is the structure by which the leadership hopes to avoid a struggle among the nationalities for hegemony after Tito's demise.

The Presidium includes both liberals and members of the elder generation, such as Petar Stambolich and Milentje Popovich. The Bureau, however, is of the young generation of liberals. Disregarding Tito, the average age is 48--the age of the Executive Committee which it

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replaced ranged from 52 to 70. The new Bureau also marks the first time that such republican leaders as Bakarich have been persuaded to leave their power bases in their republics for service in Belgrade. The republican leaders who comprise the Bureau are Kardelj and Stane Dolenc, Slovenia; Vlahovich and Budislav Soskich, Montenegro; Bakarich and Mika Tripalo, Croatia; Krste Crvenkovski and Kiro Gligorov, Macedonia; Nijaz Dizdarevich and Cvijetin Mijatovich, Bosnia-Hercegovina; Miroslav Pechujlich and Mijalko Todorovich, Serbia; Steven Doronjski, Vojvodina, and Fadil Hodza, the Kosmet.

The Bureau is to function as the main policy-making body of the LCY. If such a collective body were to exist in the Soviet Union, the members would inevitably occupy top government posts; indicative of the implementation of the Yugoslav reforms, these men are forbidden to hold government office. The Presidium oversees the day-to-day

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6 The only man known to have refused to serve in the Bureau is Stane Kavchich, Slovene, who argued that the Bureau was incompatible with decentralization and the proper role of the party. The Times (London), March 17, 1969, p. 4.

operation of the Party. It is headed by Mitija Ribichich, a Slovene noted for his outspoken and liberal views, who was charged also with forming the new Federal Executive Council.  

Additional organs of the LCY are the 14-man Commission for Statutory Affairs, which also includes counterparts in the republican and provincial parties and Army Conference; the 6-man Auditing Committee, and the Control Commission, which includes the presidents of the auditing organs of the various parties. As with the Presidium, these posts are allocated on a proportional national basis, again with the innovation of the Army Conference being granted a separate voice. The power is diffused; Party members sitting on these committees do not serve in either the Presidium or the Bureau.

Tito's closing speech at the Ninth Congress outlined the extensive structural changes and the changed direction of the Party, especially the increase in internal democracy.


10 Ibid.
A great number of comrades who have been members of the central committee so far will no longer be in the leading body of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Numerous new, younger comrades have been elected to leading bodies of the LCY. . . . They are now abandoning certain functions and younger people, younger comrades, are coming.

All of us must abide by the statute . . . according to the provisions of the statute, the one who has a different opinion may retain it, but in his work he cannot oppose the opinion adopted by the majority.

It is necessary for us to have collective leadership, and also collective responsibility.

Of course, also the Presidium of the LCY will have to meet more frequently . . . than has been the case with the plenary sessions of the Central Committee. . . . we, in the Executive Bureau, must meet even more frequently.11

It is too soon to evaluate the New Party structure. For the first time the membership of the central Party organs has been allocated on a strictly proportional basis among the republics and provinces. Until the Ninth Congress, the lines of communication between the republic and federal parties were tenuous; the flow was horizontal, from republic to republic. The new structure of the LCY should facilitate dialogue between Belgrade and the republics. Most importantly, it should help eliminate the undercurrent which has always been present in Yugoslav politics: that some members of the LCY organs spoke for

the "Yugoslav" cause while others were suspected of advocating purely nationalistic aims. Each member of the Bureau is now plainly there to speak for his own republic, and to bring the viewpoints of his co-nationals to the attention of the federal Party structure. By institutionalizing national differences, the cries of "chauvinism" should at least decrease.

The same principal of proportional representation has been applied to the republic and province Party structures in areas of mixed nationality. For example, the new 35-man Central Committee of the Vojvodina Province League includes fifteen Serbs, six Hungarians, two Croats, one Montenegrin, one Rumanian, one Slovak, and one Ruthenian. Proportional representation should be especially welcome to the parties of the Vojvodina and the Kosmet, which have long chaffed under Serbian dominance.

The new Party structure promises to be a more efficient mechanism for governing the Party. The old Central Committee was too unwieldy for rapid decision-making; thus, the devolution of power upon its Executive Committee. The new Conference of the LCY, which is twice as large as

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the old Central Committee, is not analogous to the former body since its responsibilities are light and its meetings are to be held only yearly.

One of the most striking developments of the Ninth Congress is the definite break it represents with the Partisan generation. Of the older generation, only liberals such as Kardelj gained a seat in the Executive Bureau. There was a strong infusion of liberals into the Presidium as well; especially notable is the Slovene delegation, Kardelj, Dolenc, Kavchich, Sergej Krajger, Stane Kranje, and Ribichich, all noted for their liberal outlook.13

According to the Ninth Congress, the Executive Bureau is "to be in frequent session and to have effective powers over the state apparatus during an emergency."14 It is to be permanently available and located in Belgrade. All this has led some observers to compare it with a "war cabinet."15 Considering the threat which the Yugoslavs feel the Soviets pose, this may not be too far off the mark.

15 Ibid.
Consistent with this impression is the recent reorganization of the party units in the armed forces into an all-Army Conference. The Conference convened for the first time a week before the Ninth Congress. Delegates to the Conference were elected by the individual army units, not designated by superior Party organs as formerly. As noted, the Army Conference was given a separate voice in the affairs of the LCY through inclusion of its representatives in the Presidium, standing Conference, and commissions. Thus the army is now included in the collective leadership, and is subject to collective responsibility. Presumably, the LCY now has more direct control over the army Party units. The Draft Resolution of the new Army Conference stated:

Besides being accountable to the membership, the . . . leaderships in the Yugoslav People’s Army are directly accountable to the Praesidium, the President, and the Conference of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. . . . The Conferences of the League . . . in individual armies . . . are considered as forums. Their term will last for two years.16

Although top Army officers, such as General Ivan Gosnjak, have always been included in the central Party organs, the idea of delegating a specific number of seats to a unified Army Conference is new. The reorganization

of the Army League breached another stronghold of conservatism. Although in the upper echelons the officer corps has been fairly evenly divided among the nationalities, on the lower levels there has been a preponderance of Serbs and Macedonians who are, in the main, centralists. With the Army decentralized into republic units, the voice of the Serbs has been diminished.

The Czech invasion forced the Yugoslav leadership to take a long, hard look at their defense system. To their chagrin, they apparently discovered that, despite twenty years of on-and-off acrimony with the Soviet Union, the defense system was postulated only against an invasion from the West. In particular, the broad Vojvodinian plain, which provides easy access from Hungary to Belgrade, had been left virtually unprotected—"shocking discoveries of unpreparedness" the leadership termed it.17

Immediately following the Ninth Congress a drastic alteration was made in the Army leadership. Twelve top generals were pensioned off, including the man second only to Tito in Army affairs, Ivan Gosnjak, the Assistant Supreme Commander and a prominent Party member since the

thirties. The General Chief of Staff, Rade Hamovich, was also replaced. At least nine of those generals removed were Serbs. Thus another Serb-conservative stronghold was breached.

Although concern with the country’s defenses were the reason publicly given for the dismissals, it is entirely possible that political considerations were also involved. Underneath the concern with defense there may have lurked the fear of a return to Serbian hegemony via a military coup—a not uncommon happening in prewar Serbia. The army leadership’s apparent negligence in providing defenses against a Soviet invasion added to the suspicion that some officers, especially Serbs, might well accept Soviet aid to reimpose a centralist regime.

The reforms taken at the Ninth Congress recognized several realities, most of them probably unpleasant for the veteran Party member. First, Yugoslavia’s future is tied to the West, for at least the near future. The fluid situation in current Soviet politics offers no

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18 It is worth noting how the reforms of the Yugoslav Party have separated Tito from his old comrades; Gosnjak, who was in Moscow with Tito during the thirties, being the latest to go. At this point, only Vlahovich, Kardelj, and Bakarich remain in chief Party positions.

guarantee that the Soviets won't impose the doctrine of the Limited Sovereignty of Socialist Countries, and intervene in Yugoslavia. Second, once bereft of support from the secret police, the Yugoslav Party no longer has the power to order all aspects of Yugoslav society. It must adapt itself to open discussion and a conflict of ideas. Third, it follows that the Party must develop the mentality to compromise. Fourth, the Party can no longer pretend to be a central, unified body, but must accommodate itself to the desires of its components. Fifth, the June student riots in Belgrade demonstrated the grave differences which exist between the older party leaders and the younger generation. Last, and most importantly, the inclusion of republic leaders in the LCY leadership demonstrates the increasing power of the republic parties.

Democratic Centralism and the Ninth Congress

The Party statutes adopted at the Ninth Congress epitomize the distance the Yugoslav Party has traveled from Soviet practice. Marxism-Leninism was mentioned only once, and that as a passing reference to "... scientific socialism, that is, Marxism-Leninism." The

new statutes are designed for a Party which has finally recognized that pluralistic pressures dictate that the Party can no longer direct by fiat but must effect compromises. The statutes place an official seal of recognition on the changed direction of political action:

The old organizational scheme, the cell-system, and the constructing of the organizations and leading organs from lower toward higher, in which authority and influence are derived from the position on the hierarchial ladder, is untenable in this new concept. . . . 21

In the hands of the Yugoslavs, democratic centralism has undergone a mutation which resembles more the western theory of a "loyal opposition" rather than the Soviet's strict adherence to absolute party discipline. A tentative step was taken at the Eighth Congress of 1964 when members were granted the right to criticize Party functionaries. The Ninth Congress greatly expanded internal democracy. Party members now have the right to retain their opinions--and to voice them--even after the majority has accepted another course of action. The only proviso is that a minority cannot attempt to sabotage the decision.

What, if anything, remains of the traditional interpretation of democratic centralism is questionable. The

Yugoslave interpretation grants freedom of expression without fear of Party sanctions:

As for the opinions and criticism expounded within the League . . . members cannot be accused for it. No regard should hamper the Communist to express freely his own convictions and criticisms. . . .

Whilst discussions and decision-making take place . . . the member has the right to retain his opinion and can neither be condemned nor criticized. . . . If the given member is not convinced in the justification of the stand taken . . . should not consider himself compelled to 'adjust himself' formally and in reality conceal his opinion, since this would ruin his moral integrity and would induce him to behave as a hypocrite.

The fundamental viewpoint taken is that criticism should become an essential characteristic . . . relations within the League are based on the consciousness . . . that sanctions cannot be the first and foremost tool for . . . discipline.22

Ideologically, the LCY recognizes the independence of the republican parties. A discussion of the draft statute explains:

The republican leagues of communists . . . have been established at different times and under different conditions. They are acting under specific social conditions. . . . Their definite physiognomy will only be obtained on the basis of a coordination of this document with the republican statutes. . . .

Still, bureaucratic hierarchy, in the sense of badly understood democratic centralism, . . . represents the foundation for a monopolistic position of the party. . . . The essential change lies in the fact

that the process of decision-making...is transferred from political organizations to all the cells of society—to where the problems actually occur.  

The new Party statutes embody other innovations vital to a free exchange of ideas. Members are granted the right to resign, without Party disciplinary action being taken. The Statutes pledge to honor the commitment to decentralization and self-management.

Obviously, it is no longer a question only of perfecting the work methods of the LCY. The transformations which are underway are an expression of the changes in what is increasingly a self-management society.

Finally, the Statutes pay due note to one of the chief causes of these innovations: the Czech invasion and Moscow's insistence on ideological hegemony.

...the intervention in Czechoslovakia was unanimously assessed as harmful. The so-called doctrine of limited sovereignty which negates the sovereignty of a socialist state and

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23 Komatina, "The LCY Statute."

24 Although members have been granted the right to resign for several years, it seems apparent that the League often must have applied pressure to those wishing to resign. The number of resignations has been quite low, while a large proportion of those leaving the League were expelled for non-payment of dues or "political inactivity." Thus it appears that many members choose this method of leaving the Party over open resignation. See Slavko Filipi, "Membership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia," Yugoslav Survey, VIII (November 1967), pp. 39-48.

25 Komatina, "The LCY Statute."
tries to legalize the right of one or more states to impose their will on others, even by military intervention, was energetically rejected. Such concepts are contrary to the elementary rights of all states. 26

1966: The Halfway House

The reorganization of the League in 1966 paved the way for the Ninth Congress. At the Fifth Plenum of 1966, which followed the Rankovich expulsion, the League for the first time restructured its highest body—the Central Committee. The 1966 reforms were effected in a crisis situation, when the League felt threatened by a centralist takeover. In contrast to the Ninth Congress reforms, they were a response to an internal crisis.

The 1966 reforms revitalized the Central Committee, which in a large part had become impotent under the old system. In a key move, the old Executive Committee, with its four-man secretariat on which Rankovich had been included, was abolished and absorbed into a new 35-man Presidium. (The old Secretariat, composed of Tito, Kardelj, Vlahovich, and Rankovich, had in fact made most of the decisions. Its demise meant that such a concentration of power was now less likely.) In order to

strengthen the Central Committee and open it to outside opinion, five permanent commissions were established. Their membership included functionaries outside the Central Committee, technicians, and leaders from the republics. A new 11-man Executive Committee was formed to execute policy set by the Presidium. The five commissions reported to both bodies and were responsible to the whole Central Committee. Thus, policy-making was diffused for the first time.

Other than the secretary, Miljako Todorovich, the post-Rankovich Executive Committee was composed of men new to the top LCY organs. Both the Executive Committee and the Presidium were made fully responsible to the Central Committee. Members of the Executive Committee were not permitted to hold high-ranking government posts as had Rankovich (Kocha Popovich replaced Rankovich as Vice President of the Federal Assembly). The Executive Committee included mainly young members of a liberal bent; the Presidium was strongly Partisan and older. 

27 The Partisan generation's hold on Party posts was in direct contrast to the composition of the Party itself--by 1966, 93 per cent of the LCY membership had no links to the period prior to 1948. New York Times, Oct. 10, 1966, p. 1. However, Partisan and conservative should not be considered as necessarily synonomous, as is demonstrated by the fact that Kardelj, Vlahovich, and Bakarich have generally been in the forefront of the moves toward Party democratization and decentralization.
The new Presidium included all but two of the old Executive Committee. Since the Presidium did not have executive functions within the Party, members were allowed to retain positions in state organs and other quasi-political organizations such as the Trade Unions and the Socialist Alliance. Presidium members such as Vlahovich, Vukmanovich, and Stambolich kept their seats in the Federal Assembly.

For the first time, Serbs were in the minority in the top Party organs. In a tentative move towards proportional national representation, the first Albanian and Hungarian were named to the Presidium. Tito's post of Secretary-General was abolished; he became President of the LCY and presided over the Presidium.

The 1966 reforms mark the beginning of the dilution of democratic centralism. Supreme authority was split between two Party organs, both of which were to be fully responsible to the entire Central Committee. A new principle was introduced by the Rankovitch reforms: election

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28 "Remaking the Party," Economist, CCXXI (October 15, 1966), p. 241. This should be compared to the Ninth Congress, where the old leadership actually stepped down instead of being moved horizontally.

to the Executive Committee was limited to members who agreed with the policies determined by the Central Committee. Those disagreeing were granted the right to resign from the Executive Committee without resigning from the Party. This allowed minority opinion to exist within the Party and freed members from the strict application of democratic centralism. Hopefully, it would prevent a minority like the Rankovich faction from resorting to outside support such as the secret police and the republic parties.

The five new commissions represented another departure from classical Marxist democratic centralism. The commissions briefed the Central Committee on matters concerning their respective areas, drew upon outside opinion in making their reports, and in the process presented minority reports. Thus, the 1966 reforms institutionalized an avenue of expression for minority opinion within the top Party structure. The proceedings of the Fifth Plenum stated, "Each Commission shall be bound to inform the Central Committee of alternative views expressed and proposals made in the course of its work."  

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However, despite the restructuring of the Party to diffuse decision-making and to permit some variance in opinion, the actual extent of internal Party democracy was not so clearly defined. The limits proposed by some members may be gauged by a description of the post-Rankovic Party by one Serbian writer as

... a live political organism where democratic differentiation will be constantly practiced, which means that those who will be unable to further develop and carry out its ideas and general line must go, and those who can and want to ... must be admitted.32

On the other hand, Krste Crvenkovski, the liberal Macedonian Party leader, advocated free expression of opinion within the Party, explaining that democratic centralism should be democratic rather than centralist.33 One speaker at the Fifth Plenum, voicing a philosophy which the Ninth Congress seems to have accepted, asked for reforms which would "create such a democratic atmosphere that one would be able to speak openly and tell everything he thinks without fear of the consequences."34

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34 The Times (London), October 5, 1966, p. 9.
The actual leeway granted remained limited. Although Tito emphasized that the reforms were intended to democratize the Party, he also called for Party discipline:

... there are those who wish to prevent ... the development and strengthening of the LCY. We must not allow this .... We naturally have the right to apply all the necessary means to secure the correct course of our development.

In particular, Tito emphasized that tighter controls over intellectuals might be instituted if liberal journals, presumably such as Praxis, continued to severely criticize Party affairs and ideology. Thus there remained a disparity between the 1966 reorganization of the League of Communists, which the leadership termed democratization, and the leadership's demand for discipline.

However, after the Rankovich ouster, the demands for Party discipline could not be backed up by recourse to the secret police. Because Rankovich had utilized the secret police as an independent power base outside the Party, the 1966 reorganization took steps to ensure that the secret police apparatus would not again offer an attractive target for a dissident faction. The security forces were halved and their budget drastically cut.

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Most of the day-to-day operation of the remaining personnel was turned over to the republics. In addition, the removal of police fear caused chaos in the area of cadre discipline, since Rankovich had been in charge of cadre policy, and had utilized the secret police apparatus to enforce his will. The local governments were made responsible for their own police forces; federal writ ran small in the local police organizations after the 1966 reforms.

The decimation of police power continued in the two years following the Rankovich ouster. In March of 1968 a Federal Assembly Commission was set up to control the secret police. The Commission was specifically ordered to safeguard the rights of citizens and to ensure that police work was in accordance with the law.\(^{37}\) The security forces now must inform the Commission of all activities, especially those which relate to the constitutional rights of citizens. The Commission supervises both the methods of the security force and oversees its operations.

\(^{37}\) "Current Developments: Areawide," *East Europe*, XVII (May 1968), p. 43. During the March debates on secret police activities, it was also suggested that the military intelligence also be subject to a similar commission. The discussion was not resolved then, but it marked the first time that the military intelligence, until recently controlled by General Gosnjak, had been publicly questioned.
funding. If necessary, the Commission informs the Federal Executive Council of any infractions and submits proposals. 38

The Rankovich ouster also brought a renewed drive against undue privileges for Party functionaries. Officials were ordered to give up free cars and villas and even such minor items as free newspapers. Liberal members such as Crvenkovski, Miljatovich, and Tripalo were especially insistent that the Party finally become equalitarian. 39 That functionaries were still being ordered to relinquish their privileges illustrates something about the progress of socialist equality within the Party. However, in the post-Rankovich era, Party privileges did decrease significantly.

The 1966 reforms constituted an important restructuring of inner Party circles. Decision-making was diffused and some minority opinion at least technically permitted. Most crucially, the power of the secret police was abrogated, and with it, the power of the Party hierarchy to control all levels of action. However, many conservatives and older members of the Party remained in high positions. The 1966 reforms broke the ground for

38 Vjesnik, September 15, 1968, p. 3; Joint Translation Service, no. 5125, September 15, 1968.

the Ninth Congress, but they did not effectively assuage tensions among the Yugoslav nationalities. In fact, the increasingly open life granted by the removal of police restraints permitted an upsurge in the expression of national rivalries. For the most part, the rivalry was expressed in terms of economic self-interests. Centralism, especially centralism buttressed by police power, had been discredited by the Rankovich ouster, but in the undeveloped republics it remained strong. This was especially true of Serbia. Under the economic reforms, investments in Serbia were greatly reduced—once industrial criteria determined investments, Serbia suffered due to her undeveloped status. Centralism in Serbia was strong for other than political reasons. Many Serbs viewed it as a matter of simple injustice that the Slovenes should enjoy a living standard equal to western Europe's while portions of Serbia remained mired in poverty not much above the level of an Asian village.

The 1966 reforms restructured the top Party organs but did not provide adequate access for the republics to voice their opinions to the central leadership.

Disarray in the Republican Parties: the Serbian Party

After the Fifth Plenum of 1966, similar structural changes were made in the republic parties. The emphasis
was placed upon implementing the economic reforms and bringing new blood into the republic leaderships. For those parties where the conservative element was strong, the reorganization proved difficult. This was especially true in Montenegro, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and Serbia. Bosnia-Hercegovina was long considered the most "aged organization" and the most resistant to change; Partisans filled most of its top Party posts. The LCY as a whole was an aging organization; by January of 1968 only 11 per cent of the members were under 25--during the past five years the number of members under 25 had dropped by 42 per cent. In the Montenegrin Party, one of the strongholds of centralist sentiment, only 7.3 per cent of the membership was young. Rotation in these republican parties was effected, but it was a horizontal rotation, with few younger members allowed a place in the republic hierarchies.

The greatest disarray was evident in the Serbian Party. Controlled by Rankovich for years, the Serbian


41 Politika, August 30, 1938, p. 7; Joint Translation Service, no. 5111, October 1, 1968.

42 Ibid.
Party was a conservative stronghold. Rankovich's control meant that conservative elements, their power reinforced by the security forces, held power in the local Party units. Despite numerous expulsions--Tanjug reported that 400 members were expelled for "alien ideological attitudes"--the reforms faced rough going in Serbia. Serbs such as Milentije Popovich, whom Praxis once described as an "adherent of Stalinist Positivism," remained in key positions. Because the Rankovich affair had involved outspoken accusations of Serbian chauvinism, the Serbs were attacked from all sides--which may have served to strengthen their resistance to the reforms. The new chief, Radivoje Radosavljevich, carried out limited reforms of the Serbian Party, but it was generally acknowledged that enough conservatives remained to block much effective action. In an ambiguous move, Radosavljevich was replaced for "reasons of ill health" by Stambolich, who although he has generally followed the

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44 "Current Developments: Areawide," East Europe, XV (July 1966), p. 33. Popovich also has been President of the Federal Assembly.

leadership is not considered a liberal.\textsuperscript{46}

The continuing crisis in the Serbian Party demonstrated how far out of step the LCY remained with the increasing liberalization in other spheres. The Serbian Party was the target of mounting criticism from liberals and intellectuals. In a January 1968 article published by \textit{Borba}, Professor Markovich of Belgrade University stated that the central problem of Yugoslavia stemmed from the fact that the Party "claimed to do things which it no longer can do."\textsuperscript{47} Todorovich admitted the problem of implementing the decisions of the Fifth Plenum in an address over Radio Belgrade:

\begin{quote}
... not all Communists understand the new political reality. ... Pluralistic changes are being resisted by conservative elements.\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

The Serbian Party's inability to adapt to the changed direction wrought by the 1966 reforms was manifested in several ways. In June of 1968 student riots erupted in Belgrade. Many observers believe that the Belgrade students were made more critical of the LCY's failures due to the strong conservative element present

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 21.
in the Serbian Party. The Serb writer Dobrica Chosich, a member of the Serbian Central Committee, laid the blame for the students' dissatisfaction on his party's failure to deal with nationalism and anti-Serb sentiment. This was peripheral to the students' main demands, but it did apply to the Serbian Party inasmuch as it had failed to adapt to the changes in Yugoslavia. Although the Rankovich ouster had discredited authoritarian police measures, the Belgrade City Committee reacted immediately to the student demonstrations by setting up police blockades around university buildings, preventing by force a march to downtown Belgrade, and, in general, refusing to listen to the students' complaints. Indicative of the polarization in the Serbian Party, many university professors who were Party members sided with the students. When the students charged the Belgrade Committee with perpetuating police brutality, even the Institute of Criminology at the University backed them.

At an extraordinary session of the University Conference of the League, much of the blame for the demonstrations was placed squarely upon the authoritarian


methods of the Serbian Party and the Belgrade Committee. The Conference charged that the Belgrade Student Federation had submitted several analyses during the recent years, had attempted to discuss the problems of the University with the City Committee, and had, failing to secure any satisfaction, sent several petitions which were ignored. The Conference charged that many "extremists" remained in prominent positions, and that misunderstandings resulted from "the one-sided and mostly incorrect writing of the major part of our press." The Serbian Party rejected the students' demand that several Belgrade police officials be ousted. Throughout the demonstrations, until Tito's speech backing the students, the Serbian Party exhibited a bias towards authoritarianism, a disinclination to discuss the problems of the political and economic reform, and a tendency to rely on police authority to squelch dissidents.

The Serbian Party: the Kosmet Erupts

The Serbian Party's inability to cope with the changed directions in Yugoslav politics was underlined by

52 Ibid.
the violence which broke out in the Kosmet in 1968. Relations between the Serbs and Albanians have generally been poor. In the course of the Rankovich ouster, the Party revealed that he had utilized the secret police, in league with the Serbian Party, to control the Kosmet Province as they saw fit. The Yugoslav press published reports of police brutality in the Kosmet which spanned the past several years. As these revelations became public, old hostilities were rekindled. With the fear of the Serbian secret police lifted from the Kosmet, the Albanians began to openly oppose Serb hegemony.

It is apparent that throughout the postwar period the Serbs regarded the Albanians as both primitive and

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53 The Albanians are the poorest and most illiterate of the Yugoslav nationalities; in addition they are isolated by both language and religion from the dominant Serbs. Serbian police repression in the Kosmet was indicative of the general manner in which the Serbs regard the Albanians. During the Partisan War, the Albanians gave little support to Partisan forces. In return, the Partisans were guilty of much savagery towards them. At the end of the war, large portions of the Kosmet rose in armed rebellion against the new regime. The region was finally pacified in the summer of 1945. However, deep hostility remained on the part of many Serbs, and the Albanians were substantially alienated from the Party. Shoup, *The Yugoslav National Question*, pp. 105-105.

54 *Vecernje Novosti* reported that eight Albanians were killed by Serb police in Prizren. The warden of Prizren was said to have listed 200 Albanians who were invalided by police brutality, many of whom were not guilty of any charge. *New York Times*, September 7, 1966, p. 12.
untrustworthy. As Albania's hostility to Yugoslavia increased during the sixties, Serb-Albanian relations in the Kosmet worsened. Arrests of Albanians for "spying" rose precipitously. The economic plight of the Kosmet added fuel to the tension; the Albanians felt repressed by the Serbs and neglected by the federal government.

In 1964, when federal funds to the Kosmet were decreased, there occurred what appears to have been an abortive conspiracy by local Albanian Party members against Belgrade, aimed at securing more autonomy for the region.

The Rankovich affair really unlocked the gates of overt national hatred. Unfortunately, the Serbian Party was too bound by conservatism to move effectively—if, indeed, this would have been possible after more than a decade of Serbian repression in the Kosmet. Serb conservatives in the Province League apparently tried to block the 1968 Constitutional amendments which granted the provinces increased autonomy.

56 Ibid., pp. 217-218.
57 Politika, September 15, 1968, p. 7; Joint Translation Service, no. 5125, September 17, 1968. The Serbs, who comprise only about 25 per cent of the population of the Kosmet, managed to dominate the Province Party through the secret police. The Rankovich ouster meant that they lost the power to treat the Kosmet as a private fief.
the Provincial Assembly, in an obvious reference to Serbian centralists, complained that "chauvinist and other hostile elements" had used "the lack of vigilence of some of our leading bodies" to try to block the amendments. 58

Veli Deva, the Province Party chief, accused the Serbian centralists of clinging to

. . . greater-state unitarian nationalism . . . are dissatisfied with national affirmation . . . as a 'menace to . . . the Serbian and Montenegrin nation.' This kind of nationalism also attacks the LCY because it gives many rights to the Albanians and Turks. 59

The lid was finally blown off at the end of 1968 when the Kosmet erupted in widespread riots. Tanks patrolled the streets of Prishtina, at least one person was killed, and many western newsmen were barred from the area. Severe rioting occurred in Suva Reka, Petch, Prishtina, and Tetovo, a border town in Macedonia. A complex of factors interacted to produce the outbreak. The economic plight of the Kosmet caused many Albanians to blame the Serbs, the Rankovich ouster publicly opened old wounds, and the very granting of a measure of freedom to a

58Borba, September 14, 1968, p. 3; Joint Translation Service, no. 5122, September 14, 1968.

long-repressed minority encouraged national pride. A main factor seems to have been the conservative bias of the Serbian Party. It was unwilling to fully implement the 1966 reforms and to compromise effectively with the Albanians.

The failures of the Serbian Party in turn illustrate some of the failures of the 1966 reforms. By the time of the Ninth Congress, it appeared that the political reforms had not worked satisfactorily in several crucial areas: (1) Centralists retained a strong voice in the LCY. A return to centralism was always possible, especially if the undeveloped south suffered too harshly. (2) Liberals, intellectuals, and the youth were becoming more alienated from the regime. (3) The reforms failed to provide leadership sufficiently strong to resist centrifugal forces while at the same time permitting the growth of liberty demanded by the increasingly pluralistic society. (4) The reforms served to lift the lid on national animosities but created no structures which were capable of dealing with the rise in nationalism.

The June Student Riots

Many of the forces which batter the Party were in plain evidence during the June 1968 student riots. The demonstrations, which began at Belgrade University,
within a few days spread to every republic except Montenegro and involved some 40,000 students. Resolutions in favor of the student demonstrations were passed at numerous factory meetings throughout Belgrade. The issues that the students raised were a severe criticism of their society and their government. They minced no words about the failures of both the political and economic reforms.

In an open letter to Tito, the students stated

We are embittered because of the enormous social and economic differences in our society. We are against the fact that the working class alone bears the brunt of the economic reforms. We are in favor of economic self-management from top to bottom... We are pained by the fact that thousands of our people have had to emigrate.

The students pointed out some very uncomfortable truths: that it has been the workers who have sacrificed the most, that equal educational opportunity does not exist, and that the Party has become irrelevant to much of Yugoslav life. The overwhelmingly favorable reception

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62 Even the gymnasia (secondary schools) are prohibitively expensive for rural youths who must commute. School supplies are a burden for the peasant or worker, and for them the university is usually impossible. Full scholarship aid is extended to few peasant and worker youths, part-time work difficult to secure, and housing sparse. In general, the regime's educational policy embodies many serious inequalities in a system which is committed to equal opportunity.
the student demonstrations elicited indicates that they articulated some of the basic grievances which plague Yugoslav society. Their charge that the Party has made the workers bear the brunt of the reforms was irrefutable; their complaint that "socialist equality" was non-existent hit home. The students scorned the LCY as not a reactionary force but an irrelevent force: "ideological nit-picking when dire economic and social problems remain," they complained. Student demands included a thorough dedication to self-management—and the extension of it to the university—an end to social and economic discrimination, effective means to lessen unemployment, meaningful rotation of officials, more equality among the republics, and, in general, more freedom. In the light of what was accomplished by the Ninth Congress, a statement by a Belgrade philosophy student is revealing:

What we really want is that the minority should have the right within the Party to defend its views even after a Party decision, although without trying to block its implementation. After all, today's minority may well turn out to be tomorrow's majority.

Despite the attempts of the Belgrade police and the LCY City Committee to squelch the demonstrations, student

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63 The Students and the Talkers, Economist, CCXXVIII (September 28, 1968), p. 35.

unrest grew, and support for the students came from all quarters. On June 9th, Tito declared his support of the students' cause in an extraordinary speech over Radio-TV Belgrade. Declaring that "If I am not capable of settling these questions, then I should no longer be in this position," Tito blamed himself and the LCY leadership for not having met effectively the social problems of the country. He acknowledged that the students' criticisms were justified, and that the LCY and the government had failed to effectively implement the principles of self-management. In this instance, Tito proved himself to be in advance of many of the Party conservatives, who have failed to realize that police repression is no longer a tool for the Party to use as it sees fit against dissidents.

Once Tito had chosen the students' side, the LCY hastened to praise the students' devotion to socialism. In a speech to the chastened Belgrade City Committee, Stambolich stated that the students were anxious only to achieve full self-management, "the system we have been developing since 1950," as opposed to the Western students whose "struggle is directed against the social order  

itself." 66 (Many a Western university administrator might wish for so neat an ideological peg upon which to hang his student unrest.)

Nonetheless, under the fine words remained the reality. The students had illustrated the widening gap between the Party hierarchy and the younger, better-educated generation. If the Party is to operate without police support, it must be acceptable to the oncoming generation. The student demonstrations catalyzed the Party into a thorough consideration of many policies. Out of this came an extensive set of Guidelines meant to implement the reforms and revitalize the Party. In addition, the Guidelines paved the way for the Ninth Congress. Issued in August after a joint session of the Presidium and the Executive Committee, the Guidelines constituted an endorsement of the students. They pledged to change labor legislation, increase the independence of the workers' councils, provide better housing, reform the educational system, open the Party to the young, end bureaucratic interference, create better job opportunities for the youth and university graduates, increase aid to the undeveloped regions, and stiffen the criteria for

political and administrative posts. 67

The Czechoslovak Crisis

On the heels of the student demonstrations came the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 21. These two events provided the main impetus for the reforms taken at the Ninth Congress. The student riots emphasized the grave inequalities and discontent which alienate many Yugoslavs, especially the younger generation, from the regime. On the other hand, the invasion of Czechoslovakia dramatized a fact which many Yugoslav Party members have been slow to recognize—unless Yugoslavia is willing to give up much that she has fought for, her future lies with the West rather than with the bloc she broke with twenty-one years ago. 68 The political effects of these two crucial events of the summer of 1968 are intertwined. With the threat of Soviet intervention poised over the


68 Indicative of the refusal to recognize this reality was the revelation, following the army dismissals in April of 1969, that the Officers' Training Schools were instructing their men in strategy based on a western attack. The official army handbook stated that the "main danger" was an "attack from Western Imperialists." New York Times, April 18, 1969, p. 12.
country, the Party felt compelled to make a start on resolving some of the issues so clearly articulated, lest the Soviets be able to undermine a fragmented country. Without the Czech invasion, the Party might have moved less quickly. Without the students, the issues would have been less public and less clearly focused.

The threat of invasion was real indeed, for the Soviets defended the Czech invasion by formulating the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine, which limits the sovereignty of members of the "socialist commonwealth," and upholds the U.S.S.R.'s right to intervene in another socialist country to secure the "socialist community." As Vjesnik u Srijedu of Zagreb put it,

It would seem that in the Soviet Union the Stalinist dogma that socialism stretches as far as the state frontiers of socialist countries--and according to the latest Czech experiences, as far as the Soviet soldier stands--not only exists but is being reaffirmed.

The events of 1968 were a clear warning to the Party against retaining the status quo. The Party was forced to recognize that it had made little preparation to ensure a smooth succession once Tito departs. This well may be the trickiest phase in the separate path blazed by the

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Yugoslav Party, yet there existed practically no structures in the Party which would ensure the succession. With the possibility of Soviet intervention poised over them, the Party can ill afford an internal power struggle which might fragment the country. The divisive nationality problem lent even more gravity to the question of Tito's successor. It dictates that a bridge must be erected through which the republics can participate equitably in the choice of a successor. The only other alternative, centralism and Serbian hegemony, might well fragment the country. Both Serbian hegemony and centralism have been discredited by the Rankovich ouster, the reforms of 1966, and, in fact, the whole history of Yugoslavia since 1919.

Conservative Party voices did surface after the invasion. Some charged that Tito was manipulating the country's sympathy for the Czechs in order to bolster unity and create support for the reforms. Conservatives argued that while a military threat did exist the country could afford no more liberalization until the threat was dissipated. The liberals and the students argued in turn that the best defense against the possibility of Soviet aggression would be even more freedom and

liberalization—that the regime must demonstrate once and for all that their system can indeed work. The leadership obviously opted for the second viewpoint, stating that the county must "undertake all necessary measures to defend our independence, to fight to the end for our autonomous self-managing socialist movement."\(^\text{72}\)

Although the conservatives were a definite minority, there still must have existed uncertainty within Party circles. Indicative of this, the Ninth Congress was repeatedly postponed, presumably to formulate a definite course of action. Originally scheduled for November of 1968, it was rescheduled for December, then January, and was finally convened in March of 1969.\(^\text{73}\)

In some ways, the Czech invasion is a plus for the regime. When Tito, in a speech at Leskovac, paralleled the Czech crisis with the 1948 break, his analogy was apt. For, in a manner similar to the 1948 break, the country rallied around its leadership. In a country where mass


\(^{73}\)Although the Draft Theses were widely distributed before the Ninth Congress, one major innovation was not discussed prior to the Congress: the creation of the Executive Bureau. Whether this represented a reluctance to openly discuss such a drastic move, or a last minute decision on the part of Tito and a few top men, cannot be ascertained on the basis of information currently available.
political meetings have become a thing of the past, over 200,000 people jammed Marx-Engels Square in Belgrade immediately after the invasion to proclaim their sympathy for the Czech cause. Party units all over the country reported that great numbers of youth applied for Party membership. By the time of the Ninth Congress, Komunist stated that 10 per cent of the LCY membership was composed of young people admitted after the August crisis. It is also indicative of the changed tenor of Party affairs that so many young people were admitted, for before the Czech invasion the LCY had followed the traditional Communist practice of limited, elite membership. Therefore, many students and youths who might have desired membership were shut out. The students complained that before the summer of 1968 the League had deliberately blocked many student applications and imposed rigidly


75 Hundreds of young people applied for admission to the Sarajevo Party unit. In Montenegro membership jumped by 2,700 in three months; one-third of these were students and young people. Borba, November 3, 1968, p. 1; Joint Translation Service, no. 5173, November 3, 1968.

stiff criteria. 77

Although the regime could scarcely do anything but resist any suggestion of Soviet intervention, they denounced the Soviet Union in terms which left little ground for a retreat to centralism. The League immediately organized a nationwide campaign to educate the citizens about the differences between the Soviet and Yugoslav versions of socialism. Hundreds of meetings were convened; the chief topic was the self-management system. This meant that the League was now committed to fully implementing the self-management system, with the freedoms which such a system entails.

The Czech invasion speeded up the decentralization of the Army. This involved a switch from a traditional army of defense to guerilla forces, based independently in each opshtina and under the command of the republic. Under a law drafted in September of 1968, the federal government retains competence over military matters concerning the whole country, but all else is controlled by the republics, the provinces, and the opshtine. Although the law was not adopted by the Federal Assembly until

77 Vjesnik, October 15, 1968, p. 5; Joint Translation Service, no. 5162, October 19, 1968. See Chapter II, p. 81, for Rankovich's speech before the Eighth Congress where he reiterated the LCY's intent to remain a party of select cadres rather than a "mass party."
February 11, 1969, the citizens actually "enacted" it almost as soon as Czechoslovakia was invaded. Under the law, everyone, male and female, is obligated to undergo training unless disabled. As the Yugoslav Defense Minister stated, "every part of the country, every city, and every village" will be turned into "a center of resistance, and the whole country into a fortress." Individual and territorial units are obliged to provide their own arms and equipment, and with what appears to be enthusiasm the local units had already laid in a fair arsenal by the time the new defense law was enacted.

The Yugoslav penchant for guerilla-style warfare is not quixotic; the chances of a traditional army of defense against the preponderant might of a Soviet army are nil. Although the guerilla style of defense is definitely suited to the terrain, it does call for great decentralization of authority. Therefore, the country cannot afford to be divided in loyalties in the face of an invasion.

All these considerations faced the Party leadership as they prepared for the Ninth Congress. The institutions

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79 Ibid.
which were set up at the Ninth Congress constitute a definite attempt to face realities. The most threatening of these realities was the lack of adequate mechanism for succession and the Soviet's insistence on hegemony over the East European nations. Yugoslavia's isolation from the Soviet bloc was underscored by menacing statements from the other Warsaw Treaty members. The Bulgarians were especially vehement. Yugoslav commentators interpreted the Bulgarians' enthusiasm for "socialist" intervention as aimed at justifying Bulgarian intervention in that old Balkan bone of contention, Macedonia. It sometimes appears that the Yugoslavs operate best in a crisis situation. It is unarguable that the Czech invasion solidified support behind the government and the Party which has structured that government. As in 1948, once it became a choice of Soviet-style or Yugoslav Communism, masses of non-Party members supported the regime. However, in 1968 there were two issues involved in their

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The Yugoslav Central Committee disclosed that the Bulgarian press immediately supported with enthusiasm the idea of "socialist" intervention in other countries. New York Times, August 26, 1968, p. 16. The Polish paper, Trybuny Ludu, accused the Yugoslavs of aiding imperialism and scathingly denounced her policy of non-alignment. New York Times, September 1, 1968, p. 41. As a not too subtle warning, the Bulgarians staged army maneuvers between August 8 and September 6 on the Romanian and Yugoslavian borders.
resistance to Soviet hegemony, while in 1948 it was a matter of sheer national independence. The Czech invasion involved both the right of a nation to political independence and to its own economic and ideological system. In 1948, the latter consideration did not exist in Yugoslavia. Twenty years later the Yugoslav regime also had to defend the separate ideology which it had evolved and a unique economic system which has become increasingly autonomous and increasingly tied to the West.

Party Reforms and the Republic Parties

The six republic parties have inevitably been affected by the long series of reforms undertaken by the League of Communists. As decentralization has gathered momentum, they have become a prime source of pluralistic pressure upon the federal Party. Yugoslavia does not have--and has not had since 1948--a single national party. The League of Communists is federative, being divided into six republic parties and two province parties. Each has its own party apparatus, congresses, and statutes. Until 1969 the League of Communists was unitary only at the level of the LCY Central Committee. With the Ninth Congress even this disappeared. The LCY now appears to be a federation of separate and equal parties. As the result of the Ninth Congress, membership in all LCY organs is now allocated
proportionally among the six republic and two province parties. Below the top level of the LCY organs, party power is immediately diffused to the republics.

The federative nature of the Yugoslav Party meant that as decentralization became institutionalized the republic parties gained strength, with a consequent loss of power on the federal level. This is the same phenomena which has operated in the administrative sphere. The decentralization which began in the fifties transferred authority to the republic governments, which had had little function during the Stalinist era. The same transferral of power was effected in Party affairs. The republic parties were no longer completely directed by the center. They gained increasing authority, especially in economic affairs, at the expense of the Federal LCY.

The republic parties date back to 1937, when Tito took over the leadership of the Yugoslav Party and instituted separate Slovenian and Croatian parties with their own central committees. The Macedonian Party was set up during the war to help counter Macedonian separatism. The Serbian Party was organized in 1945; the parties of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Montenegro at the time of the Cominform break. Although originally these parties enjoyed little independence, the structure did exist. Once decentralization began to be effective, the structure
assumed increasing importance. Similarly, in 1952 the local Party units were granted the right to regulate their own membership, expelling and admitting people as they saw fit. This was a right which meant little at first, but as it has become possible to disagree with the hierarchy, it has recently been utilized. By the late 1960's, local units were refusing to obey the wishes of the hierarchy in matters of membership. Orders from the top are no longer automatically carried out. The Party leadership cannot expect all its decisions to be endorsed without debate; it must now work through compromise.

The Yugoslav republic parties have never been similar to those of the Soviet Union, where the republic leadership migrates from republic to republic at the will of the Central Committee. In contrast, the Yugoslav leadership has never shifted from one republic to another. No

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81 An example of the utilization of this perogative is the case of Tansije Mladenovich, former editor of Knjizevne Novine, who has been in constant conflict with the regime for his outspoken criticism. Although the Serbian Party demanded that he be expelled, the party cell of which he was a member refused to do so, on the grounds that there was insufficient evidence that the editor was guilty of political deviations. After much argument, he was replaced as editor and received a strong reprimand, but the impotence of the Party hierarchy to order local affairs stood clearly revealed. The Times (London), February 2, 1968, p. 6.
matter what his standing in the Party, it is impossible for a leader to transfer from his own republic. Party officials retain, so to speak, their home constituencies, which are not transferable. As more power has accrued to the republic parties, some leaders such as Bakarich have refused to transfer to the federal seat in Belgrade. The creation of the Executive Bureau marks the first time such powerful republic chiefs have been persuaded to leave their republic power bases—possibly because it appears that the Executive Committee will either designate Tito's successor or will rule collectively.

The power of the republic parties has been so enhanced that it has become as important for their leaders to satisfy their co-nationals as to satisfy Belgrade. The national Party apparatus can no longer act arbitrarily

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Kardelj's shaky position in his home republic, Slovenia, illustrates this. His position in the federal government and Party hierarchy has meant that he has often espoused policies which are anathema to the Slovenes, namely using Slovene profits to support the undeveloped areas. A recent poll taken by the Ljubljana paper, Dnevnik, showed that Kavchich is the most popular political figure in Slovenia, trailed by Krajger and Ribichich. *Ekonomska Politika*, March 17, 1969, p. 13; Joint Translation Service, no. 5278, March 20, 1969. The myriad western publications which term Kardelj "Tito's heir-apparent" ignore a basic fact of Yugoslav political life: the necessity for a republic political base. If Kardelj does succeed Tito, it will not be through much pressure from Slovenia. In fact, Kardelj's best hope of support might derive from those who would prefer anything but a Serb, and might therefore find him the lesser evil.
without consulting them. Thus, the reforms taken by the Ninth Congress institutionalize a situation which has existed for several years: the pluralism of the Party. The LCY has become an organization encompassing differing power groups which all term themselves "Communists" but which represent different interests and different groups.

In 1969, the republic party congresses preceded the national LCY Congresses for the first time (this had been provided for at the Eighth Congress). The congresses evidenced the growing independence of the republic parties. At their congress the Slovenes practically disregarded the Draft Statute for the Ninth Congress. Instead, the Slovene statutes concentrated solely on an appraisal of political development, calling for an open conflict of ideas and complete self-management.\(^8^3\) Five of the congresses passed a single Resolution, based on the Guidelines issued by the Tenth Plenum. Serbia, however, expanded on several points, and passed six Resolutions.\(^8^4\) The Serbian Congress also instituted another

\(^8^3\) *Politika*, November 3, 1968, p. 8; *Joint Translation Service*, no. 5165, November 3 and 4.

\(^8^4\) *Borba*, November 19, 1968, p. 5; *Joint Translation Service*, no. 5179, November 20, 1968.
innovation by openly debating the pros and cons of the Draft Resolution, instead of discussing it in closed committees. The suggestion, eventually adopted at the Ninth Congress, that members not be liable to Party sanctions if they refuse to back majority decisions they cannot accept, was first advocated at one of the republic congresses. Much of the foregoing may be straws in the wind, but the vital point is the independence of operation which the republic parties are assuming.

The republic congresses also demonstrated that the Partisan generation is finally losing its grip on the apparatus. In Bosnia-Hercegovina, where the Partisan generation was especially entrenched, only 10 of the 103-man Central Committee were returned to office. The remaining 93 were either pensioned off or relegated to insignificant posts. The Croatian Congress re-elected only 27 of its 111-member Central Committee. Equally

85 "From Now On We Start at the Bottom," Economist, CCXXIX (December 14, 1968), p. 20.
88 Ibid.
striking was the youth of those elected to the republic Party organs. The average age of the Montenegrin Central Committee is now 36; of these 70 per cent are university educated. In Slovenia, the average age of the new Central Committee is 38. There was a tremendous turnover in the leadership of all the republic parties; almost 70 per cent of the leadership of the republic parties are men new to the leadership. The Serbian Party underwent the greatest personnel change since its inception. On the local level, 73.5 per cent of the officials are serving for the first time; over half of the top Serbian Party posts are held by new men.

The opshtine, Army, and university organs named the delegates to the Ninth Congress; it was here that the new look of the LCY was especially evident. Over 90 per cent of the delegates were attending their first national Party Congress. The break with the past is underlined by the

89 V. Kralejevich, "New Men for Party Leadership," Yugoslav Life, XIV (February 1969), p. 3.
90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.
93 Borba, February 27, 1969, p. 1; Joint Translation Service, no. 5173, February 27, 1969.
fact that, excluding the 154 members of the old LCY Central Committee, only 26 of the 1093 delegates had attended the Seventh Congress in 1958. 94

There is another facet to be considered in the evolution of the republic parties: as decentralization devolved power upon the republics, the authority of local units has atrophied. Whereas formerly the opshtine party units were responsible for enforcing party discipline in the local enterprises, the individual enterprises are now independent in much of their activity. They look neither to the local level nor the federal level in economic matters, but to the republic. A large factory will have a factory committee, which is part of the opshtine party unit, but the members of the factory committee have no authority to impose decisions on the workers' council--they are supposed to operate as individuals, not as representatives of a power structure. In many factories, the percentage of workers belonging to the Party is low, so Party influence has waned.

The Rankovich ouster and the subsequent removal of arbitrary police power stripped the local units of much of their authority. The decline in local authority is

94 Ibid.
mirrored by the decline in membership. By 1967 there were 891 units with less than six members, and 4,589 units with less than ten.\textsuperscript{95} In many rural areas, party organization is practically non-existent.\textsuperscript{96}

The crux of the matter is, of course, economic. Local Party functionaries have been left without a clearly defined role. Certainly, many of the poorly-educated Party chiefs in rural areas must be confused by the profusion of decrees and guidelines emanating from Belgrade. As the reforms continue to place emphasis on ability, they stand in real danger of losing their positions. Prior to the congresses, the Montenegrin Central Committee issued a pertinent warning that

\begin{quote}
. . . a solution must be found for personnel from the time of the revolution and political workers of
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{95}Filipi, "Membership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia," p. 48.

\textsuperscript{96}Vjesnik reported that between 1954 and 1967 the percentage of LCY members engaged in agriculture dropped precipitously. For every 100 new members admitted, 50 peasants left the LCY, generally for failing to pay dues or attend meetings. The most frequent reason given by the former peasant members was that they "could see no benefits from membership" and the "unsatisfactory position of agriculture has destroyed the peasants' belief in the LCY." Vjesnik, August 15, 1968, p. 5; Joint Translation Service, no. 5100, August 20, 1968. Since almost half the country is still peasant, this means that a substantial percentage of the citizenry is being pushed to the periphery of LCY affairs.

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long standing who are not able to carry out operative social functions, and, on the other hand, do not fulfill the requirements for pensioning.  

It appears that at the republic congresses many of the old party war horses did indeed lose their jobs.

To recapitulate, the economic and administrative reforms meant that power devolved from the federal to the republic level. Given the peculiar organization of the Yugoslav Party, a federation of six structurally independent parties, decentralization served to enhance the power of the republic components. The shift in decision-making also cut into the power of the local units, decreased their initiative, and threatened the jobs of many local bureaucrats.

The independence of the republic parties has been reinforced by the absence of supra-republic institutions outside of the federal government. The last fully centralized organization in the country disappeared with the reorganization of the Army in 1967. Half of the 200,000-plus Army was placed under republic command and the permanent officer corps reduced.  


98 The Army LCY reforms taken in 1969 should place Army functionaries more under the direct control of the LCY. The officer corps has been a pillar of the Party;
The lack of official, regulated channels between the republic parties and the federal LCY played a role in the Rankovich case. Because there were no direct lines of communication under federal supervision between the republic parties, the Serbian Party under Rankovich's leadership was able to undercut the federation by seeking allies among its undeveloped neighbors. For example, in December of 1963 the central committees of Serbia and Montenegro announced what amounted to a policy of independent action. Billed as a joint agreement on intra-republic cooperation, the real intent of the joint meeting was to obstruct the reforms. This was indicated by the agreement that the Belgrade-Bar railway project should be revived, a project which the economic reforms of 1961 had scuttled as uneconomic.\footnote{Shoup, \textit{The Yugoslav National Question}, p. 251.} It was this development that posed one of the gravest threats of Rankovich's attempted takeover—the fact that he could bypass the federation and enlist allies among the republic parties, and that the federal LCY was helpless to prevent

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the majority are Party members, and generally conservative. With the Army organization decentralized into units which elect their own officials, and Gosnjak removed from power, this important source of conservative sentiment has been fragmented.
this. Just prior to Rankovich's ouster, the Serbian and Macedonian leaderships met jointly, apparently to line up forces for Rankovich.\textsuperscript{100} Pluralism in Party affairs had increased to such an extent that it was possible for the republic leaderships to seek action which ran directly counter to the Federal LCY program. Although the expulsion of Rankovich definitely placed the LCY leadership on the side of reform, it did not solve the problem of the increasing ability of the republic parties to bargain with each other at the expense of the federation.

This lack of institutionalized channels for intra-republican party action probably helped to prompt the extensive reforms of the 1969 Congress. With few official channels of communication between the republics, and even fewer between the republic and federal levels, the Party was faced with autarchy. At the Ninth Congress, the LCY acted to provide institutions to accommodate the revitalized republic parties and the changed flow of power.

\textsuperscript{100}Ibid., p. 256.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Although the League of Communists has undergone a significant reorganization, it has been the reforms in the economy and administration which have been the prime influence upon the League. Party reforms have lagged behind reform in other spheres; the Party has been the follower rather than the leader. Although the Yugoslav Party has exhibited the capacity to innovate, it has not used this capacity until pressures from outside the Party have become intense. In other words, the League of Communists has not been the leader of society; it has innovated, usually reluctantly, only as pluralistic pressures have mounted.

The single most important factor spurring Party reform has been the freeing of the economy from Party rule. Once the Party relinquished the power to determine all the needs of society, the economic sphere was permitted to initiate change. The system of workers' councils, which the Yugoslavs proclaim as the cornerstone of their ideology, has become institutionalized to the extent that it would mean a complete reversal to negate the independence of the councils. Thus, although the
economic reforms have been the vehicle for political and
social reforms, they are also anchored in the ideology
which the Yugoslavs have formulated. Apart from the
fact that the liberal economists hold that decentrali-
ization is more efficient than a centralized economic
system, the economic system is an integral part of Party
ideology. It was through economic decentralization that
the Yugoslavs first articulated their determination to
withstand Soviet hegemony. Because decentralization has
now become intricately intertwined with the resurging
national rivalries, any major move to recentralize the
economy would mean jettisoning the rationale of the re-
gime and antagonizing the industrialized areas which
support the economy.

Pluralism has become a vital facet of Yugoslav
political life. The decentralization of the economy,
the granting of real power to local governments, and the
heightened national rivalries have all increased the
pluralistic pressures which now operate upon the League.
The result has not been a withering away of the Party,
but a shift in the location of power. The base has be-
gun to influence the center. Important political de-
cision-making has been diffused. There has resulted an
accretion of power on the republic level at the expense
of the federal organs. The complex nationality problem
dictates that the central Party organs act prudently, lest the fragile unity of the country be shattered. The Party has been trapped between advocating centralism, which is more acceptable to the undeveloped south, and decentralization, which is most desired by the industrial north. The Party often has been reluctant to act because of the fear that one or the other section would be seriously antagonized. In general, Party innovations have been forced by external conditions, when the Party became so out of step with the economy and government that it was forced to revitalize itself through restructuring.

Despite the Party's avowed intent to remain the ideological determinator, pluralism has also become evident in the ideological sphere. Ideological factions outside the Party have been able to find avenues of expression, such as Praxis or Gledista. The refusal of these critics to bow to Party fiat and the support which they have apparently gained may force the Party to rethink its ideological base. The distance which the Ninth Congress moved from the classical Marxist-Leninist conception of democratic socialism indicates that the impetus to rethink the ideology now exists within the Party hierarchy itself.
There has been a marked growth of constitutionality. Governmental forms are acquiring increasing meaning, to the point where these too constitute another source of pluralistic pressure. The creation of constitutional courts under the 1963 Constitution has stripped the Party of the power to arbitrarily rule on constitutional questions.

The 1963 Constitution also provided for the resignation of cabinet and assembly members. This creates the possibility that elected representatives may come to place responsibility to the electorate above responsibility to the Party. This phenomenon has been demonstrated in Slovenia and Croatia, and it appears that it may also develop in other regions. The new Premier, Matija Ribichich, has clearly indicated this:

> We must get used to possible cabinet crises and to the government submitting its resignation, and also the Federal Assembly dismissing not only individual members but also the whole government.

Such a concept demonstrates that the governmental institutions in Yugoslavia have acquired separate meaning. The governmental apparatus is becoming increasingly institutionalized and free from central Party dictate.

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1Politiška, April 4, 1960, p. 5; Joint Translation Service, no. 5291, April 4, 1969.
Yugoslav elections in general are still controlled by the League, operating through the Socialist Alliance, but many elections are contested and have become meaningful enough that complaints have been made about a "lame duck" situation developing before the last parliamentary elections. Politika complained before the 1969 elections that

At one time it seemed that work in the Federal Assembly would stop altogether even though the terms of office of the present Assembly expires on May 15. The present deputies and functionaries have been affected by election fever. . . . A new government has been accepted as an accomplished fact. . . and the present one is considered as non-existant.  

Although the Socialist Alliance is supposed to oversee the nomination of candidates for local, state, and federal posts, in some areas voters meetings debated for as long as eighteen hours over candidate lists--certainly an indication that the nominations are not the cut-and-dried affair that critics insist.

The freedom of debate permitted in assembly sessions has created an avenue of expression for those who disagree with federal and Party policies. Since the Rankovich ouster, dissidents have made frequent use of this outlet. Because top Party officials are forbidden to hold

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important government offices, the direct power of the Party has been further diluted. In addition, rotation of offices, which is written into both the 1963 Constitution and the Party Statutes, applies the principle of limited terms to all officials.

Despite the growth of pluralism, there are some factors which reinforce recentralization. Recently, some attention has been paid to the increase of technology in the Yugoslav economy, resulting in the amalgamation of industries and the elimination, through competition, of many small firms. However, even if one considers technology to be a factor impeding decentralization, this factor is so new to Yugoslav industry that its effects are not ascertainable at present.

The rapid urbanization of the country might also be considered as a factor which favors recentralization. That is, the urban migrants, and, most particularly, the younger generation, are less inclined to cling to narrow localism. However, this too is a phenomenon so recent that its effects cannot be weighed. The changing social patterns of the country also break down the old ties of localism. The decline of religious influence and the divisions engendered by religious differences, the better educational opportunities, and the mobility of part of the labor force may not have created a Yugoslav identity,
but there is increased contact between the nationalities.

One important reservoir of centralist sentiment remains: the undeveloped areas who see their economy falling ever further behind that of the north. For many in these areas, recentralization appears to be the only way to reverse this process. It is both an economic and a political problem. Many of those who feel that recentralization would allow the economy of the undeveloped areas to catch up with the industrialized areas also feel that the regime has "sold out" socialism. They believe that the regime has never made good on their myriad promises of equality. Up to this point, the regime has not found a workable method of coping with the problem without jeopardizing the entire economic structure.

Apart from the reforms enacted, the Party itself has undergone a significant evolution. The reforms themselves undoubtedly played a role in this evolution by attracting a different type of recruit to the Party. The rigid, centralist mentality of the forties has been breached by the new technicians and educated personnel who have enrolled in the LCY. At the time of the Cominform break, over three-fourths of the members were peasants and workers. By 1967, 53.5 per cent of the members had some secondary education, 21.9 per cent had finished secondary school,
and 15.5 per cent were university graduates.\(^3\)

Until 1968 the League of Communists was an aging organization; the percentage of young members fell each year. This raised serious questions about the viability of the League, especially since it must cope with a multiplicity of pressures and an ever-changing social situation in order to govern effectively. The Czech invasion brought a flood of young and generally well-educated recruits into the League. Many of the young people who remain outside the League have taken an increased interest in political matters. They may be severely critical of many Party policies, but this at least represents a change from the early sixties when the most common complaint was that the youth were apathetic. If the League can maintain the momentum of young recruits, it will be a vital plus for the survival of the LCY.

The reforms taken by the Ninth Congress of 1969 constitute a major restructuring of the League. Prior to the Ninth Congress, the central leadership of the LCY failed to perceive the sizable devolution of power to the republic level. When one realizes that, by the time of

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the Ninth Congress, the republic parties possessed the power to veto centrally-determined Party policies, the significance of this oversight is apparent. Through a major reorganization, the Ninth Congress recognized the political realities. The Congress made a serious attempt to meet the gravest and the potentially most destructive problem which faces the League: nationalism. Most of the political infighting in the League has been along national lines. The Ninth Congress recognized that the best hope of maintaining a viable political structure lay in granting each major nationality an equal voice. Since membership in all the central Party organs is now allocated on a strict republic-province basis, the Party has become in essence a federation of separate and equal parties. The Party has now institutionalized national pressure groups.

It is highly significant that the Ninth Congress also overhauled the leadership; for the first time a high percentage of the top officials are young men new to the Party leadership. Although the reforms instituted after the Rankovitch ouster restructured the Party, they did not appreciably change the leadership. The Ninth Congress retired many of the hierarchy who had led the LCY for two decades. This demonstrates that the LCY is determined to succeed in its attempt to relate to the political and
social realities which exist in the country. The leadership which was phased out at the Ninth Congress was composed in general of centralists. In order to maintain decentralization and to ensure that the structural changes made by the Congress would be effective, the centralists had to be replaced. The League demonstrated that it is capable of effecting a change in top personnel without dissolving in open conflict--however, the fact that Tito still holds the ultimate power in the LCY made this change more feasible.

Much has been written--and probably more will be--about Yugoslavia's role as a model for the other East European regimes. The complex history of the country, the lack of a land border with the Soviet Union, and the uniqueness of the Party and its path to power through an indigenous revolution should illustrate the ineptitude of any strict analogy. At this point, the Yugoslav Party is so far distant from any other East European Communist Party that comparisons are in the realm of fantasy. The failure of the Czechs to break with the Soviets points up the main reason why this is so: the Soviets will not permit the East European regimes to copy the Yugoslav model. The basic question asked by such commentators is whether or not the Yugoslav experience will not only motivate the other East European countries to seek
independence from Soviet hegemony, but also will provide a tested means to gain this end.

However, in another sense comparisons are valid. The Yugoslav experience has been of great influence in the Soviet bloc. Workers' Councils were set up during the Polish October and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, and during the Prague Spring of 1968. In a less dramatic way, the Yugoslav economic system has influenced the Soviet bloc, including the Soviet Union. Many aspects of the economic decentralization pioneered by the Yugoslavs have been quietly copied throughout the Comecon states. During the Czech Spring, the Czech leadership admitted that many of their reforms were copied from the Yugoslav system. Secondly, in states where substantial minorities exist--such as the Slovaks in Czechoslovakia and the Hungarians in Rumania--it is possible that the Yugoslav system of granting equal status within the Party to component nationalities may be applicable.

Therefore, although Yugoslavia does not supply a model of escape from Soviet hegemony, it does supply possible solutions to problems in other areas, such as economics and national rivalries. The problem is that these solutions cannot be applied to the Yugoslav degree as long as the Soviets hold East Europe. A general evolution along the Yugoslav lines may be possible, although
the specifics won't necessarily be the same. However, if, for example, the other East European parties were to follow the Yugoslav economic innovations, they too would become just as out of step with the economy as the Yugoslav Party has been. The overriding consideration of course is that it is militarily impossible for an East European nation to stand against the Soviets.

The application of the model theory to Yugoslavia slight another facet of Yugoslav society: it is not a static system. In particular, the increased pluralism of Yugoslav society raises the question of the possible development of democratic forms—namely, official opposition. (Unofficial opposition of course exists, a fact recognized by the Ninth Congress.) The Ninth Congress provided for official opposition through two innovations. First, the republic parties are now granted the right to speak for their republics in Party affairs, and are assured of equal status. Secondly, the concept of democratic centralism has been diluted to the extent that individual Party members are permitted to retain and voice opposition views even after a majority decision has been made. The reforms of the Ninth Congress are too recent to permit evaluation, but it appears that a significant amount of pluralism is to be permitted in Party affairs.
In summary, those factors reinforcing decentralization and pluralism are stronger than those stimulating centralism. The whole tenor of life has been revolutionized since 1948, with crucial effect upon the Party itself. The mutual suspicion endemic in a Stalinist system has disappeared. The Yugoslav Party no longer holds the power to control all aspects of society. The system of ubiquitous spying which shores up a Stalinist, centralist regime is gone. Shorn of police support, the Party must seek to make itself acceptable to a broader sector of the citizenry. This dictates that the Party must be responsive to pluralistic pressures. Pluralistic pressures upon the monopolistic federal Party have effected a radical change in the direction of power flow in Yugoslav politics. The republics now constitute a check upon the federal level and, oftentimes, act in opposition. Therefore, the LCY is inhibited by increased pluralization of the political life, and must compromise between conflicting loyalties. It is entirely possible that the League of Communists may eventually split into its component parts and develop into a type of multiparty socialist system centered around a socialist-Marxist ideology. The Ninth Congress seems to have assured the momentum of the reforms. This has been reinforced by the potential threat from the Soviets, and the realization
that Yugoslavia's escape from Soviet hegemony has greatly altered her society. Barring a major upheaval, the reforms should stand.
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