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MEMORANDUM
OF THE SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
ANSWERS TO CRITICISMS

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SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
P R E S I D E N C Y

Kosta Mihailovic
Vasilije Krestic

MEMORANDUM
OF THE SERBIAN ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES AND ARTS
ANSWERS TO CRITICISMS

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FOREWORD

Readers might well ask why the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts has kept silent for so long and why it has not responded earlier to all the criticism voiced against it and the Memorandum, both at home and abroad. People must be wondering why to this day the Memorandum has not become generally available, and why it has not been translated into any of the world languages.

There is one short answer to all these questions: the work on writing the Memorandum, which was leaked to the public before times, was never completed. Not a single body of the Serbian Academy has yet approved the Memorandum. In its uncompleted, draft version, the Serbian Academy could not endorse it as a document which it could stand behind and defend. Therefore, the Academy felt that there was no reason to enter into premature polemics with those quarters which have incessantly and unjustly attacked it and the Memorandum as part of the general assault on Serbia and the entire Serbian nation. The Serbian Academy bided its time, carefully noting down everything said and written about it and the Memorandum, waiting for the right moment to make itself heard in a manner befitting its prestige and place in Serbian society.

Now that all those who have been moved or obliged to pass judgement on the Serbian Academy and the Memorandum have had their say, the Serbian Academy has decided to speak out.

The Academy believes that the best answer to all those who have attacked it over the Memorandum is to publish the complete document, not just in the original Serbian language, but also in English, German and French. The objective reader having some background knowledge of political conditions in Yugoslavia and the Memorandum affair can now see for himself how unwarranted and malicious the accusations were that the Academy destroyed Yugoslavia and was a war-monger.

A commentary is provided along with the unabridged text of the Memorandum, whose task is not to defend what was written in it but rather to inform the reader when, how and why this document came about. The commentary has provided answers only to the most serious criticisms levelled against the Serbian

Academy and the Memorandum but not to that litany of criticism which has sought to convince by sheer force of repetition. In the selection of which criticism to be rebutted, the deciding factor was the actual criticism made and not who made it. The aim was not to let a single serious objection made to the Serbian Academy and Memorandum go by without a response.

The authors of the commentary did not take their cue from the critics of the Serbian Academy and Memorandum who, in the absence of hard evidence, resorted to slander and insults against the highest learned institution of the Serbian nation, its members, and the entire Serbian people. Ever mindful of the dignity of the Serbian Academy and in possession of facts which are incontrovertible, the writers of the commentary took great pains to respond to the broadside attacks in a manner and language befitting academic scholarship.

The commentary was not written with the intention of entering into polemics with the critics of the Serbian Academy and Memorandum; its purpose was rather to draw attention to all the political machinations and fabrications. Nor is the publication of the unabridged text of the Memorandum and the commentary intended only for the contemporary reader. There is no doubt that history will give its verdict, and that it will be more fair than the judgement pronounced by present-day politics. In this conviction, the Serbian Academy is putting its case to the public.

Academician Kosta Mihailovic
Academician Vasilije Krestic

WHY THE MEMORANDUM WAS WRITTEN

When they first started thinking about writing a document which would put forward their view of the state of society, the members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts were already well acquainted with the extent and nature of the Yugoslav crisis. In 1985, the economic crisis was already in its sixth year, without any outlook for improvement. The Serbian Academy had by that time already organized a number of well received symposia to discuss the country's economic ills. The suggestions of experts, which were duly communicated to the authorities, fell on deaf ears, for the principles of economic rationality were being sacrificed to vested interests and ideological dogma. To make matters worse, the political establishment itself was in the throes of a profound crisis and on the verge of collapse. Lumbered with an anachronistic ideology and organizationally splintered, the Communist Party was less and less capable of responding effectively to mounting political problems. The 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, with its confederal bias, threw the system of decision-making into a state of paralysis, all the more hopeless as the conflict of interests between the republics had become irreconcilable. Not a single important decision which might have remedied the situation could be taken. The constitutional crisis which inevitably ensued acted as a signal to Slovenia and Croatia to formalize their already strongly expressed separatist leanings by insisting on a confederation. The separatism of these two republics gave the political crisis dramatic tones. The already considerable social and moral difficulties of the country, where traditional society was rapidly being replaced by an industrial society, were further exacerbated by the economic slump and political stalemate.

The members of the Serbian Academy were particularly alarmed by the malignant nature of social trends. As early as 1985 it had become clear that unless timely steps were taken to head them off, such trends would prove catastrophic for the entire country. However, this was not the only burning concern. As a learned institution which for an entire century had shared the fate of its nation, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts found it hard to bear the subjugated status of Serbia in Yugoslavia. Be it in respect to initiatives for tackling the problems in the economic and political system, be it the ability to oppose decisions

with which it did not agree, Serbia's influence was negligible in political power centres, where Croats and Slovenes were the supreme arbiters on all matters.

Although the largest Yugoslav republic in territory and population, Serbia had been dispossessed of its attributes of statehood by the new Constitution promulgated in 1974. The spectre of disintegration hovered not just over Yugoslavia but also over Serbia. Because its two autonomous provinces had *thede facto* prerogatives of full-fledged republics, Serbia found that its hands were tied, for the republican government could not take sovereign decisions affecting the republic as a whole. Serbia's provinces even entered into coalition with other republics, as a result of which the Republic of Serbia invariably found itself outvoted at the federal level. This bizarre situation is easier to understand if we remember that Tito, a Croat, and Kardelj, a Slovene, had the final say on appointments of officials to the provincial administrations.

Serbia's political impotence made it possible for others to exert pressure on the two million Serbs (25% of the total Serbian population) living outside the mother republic. The popular political slogan of the day that "everyone should put his own house in order" meant in practice that officials from the Republic of Serbia, or anyone else for that matter, could not express an interest in the status of Serbs in the other republics. The republican governments had a green light to treat the Serbs as best suited the separatist agenda of the majority national group. In Croatia there was growing advocacy of "Croatian state and historical rights," on which the Frankist-ustasa Greater Croatian intolerance of everything Serbian was based. The Serbs in Croatia were perfidiously stripped one by one of their national, political, cultural, religious, civil and human rights, which they had won for themselves so painfully down through the ages. The aim of this pressure, as so many times in the past, was to force the Serbs to renounce their nationality and religion, and if they refused, to force them to move away from their ancestral homes so that Croatia could become ethnically pure. Systematically disenfranchised in all areas of life, in practice if not according to the letter of the law, Serbs became demoted from a constituent nation of Croatia to second-class citizens.

The leaders of the artificially created Muslim nation did everything in their power to turn Bosnia and Hercegovina into a republic under the domination of the Muslim population. The statistic that between 1948 and 1991, Muslims increased their share in the overall population of Bosnia and Hercegovina from 30.7% to 43.7% is the most eloquent proof that they were well on the way to achieving their goal.¹ Taught by their experience of genocide in the Second World

1 Figures on the national composition of the population of Bosnia and Hercegovina for 1948 have been taken from the publication *Konacni rezultati popisa stanovništva od 15. marta 1948* (Final Results of the Population Census of 15 March 1948), Vol. IX, "Stanovništvo po narodnosti" (Population Breakdown by Nationality) (Belgrade: Federal Statistical Office, 1954), p. xvi; figures for 1991 are provided in Bulletin No. 1934 of the Federal Statistical Office, "Nacionalni sastav stanovništva po opstinama" (Breakdown of the National Composition of the Population by Communes) (Belgrade, 1992).

War and aware that at any given moment the genocide might repeat itself, as unfortunately has been the case, Serbs began moving out of Bosnia and Hercegovina, especially since in this republic acts of discrimination against Serbs in public life were becoming more and more frequent. Their exodus presents a sad picture. In 1948, Serbs accounted for 44.3% of the population of Bosnia and Hercegovina, but by 1991 this share had fallen to 31.4%. In the space of just 43 years, the shares of Serbs and Muslims in the overall population of Bosnia and Hercegovina had been reversed; the former lost and the latter gained a relative majority.

Nor did the young Macedonian nation lose any opportunity to exploit the subjugated status of the Serbs in order to carry out a policy of assimilation. However, nothing shows the tragic plight of the Serbs so graphically as the genocidal pressure exerted against them by the ethnic Albanians living in Kosovo, a part of the Serbs' own republic. The autonomy granted to Kosovo by the 1974 Constitution was for the Serbian population tantamount to a return to the time of the Ottoman Empire. The state of affairs in which Muslims were above the law and could harass non-Muslim population with impunity was reproduced in many of its aspects, in ways beyond the imagination of Europeans. The Serbs were denied not just their national and civil rights but all other basic human rights. Without recourse to judicial remedy or any other kind of protection from the authorities, Serbs were assaulted and murdered; Serbian women were raped, livestock mutilated, houses put to the torch, orchards cut down, wells poisoned. Harassment of non-Muslim population was the most powerful weapon of Islamization in the past, and in Kosovo it was the most powerful modern-day means of exerting pressure on the Serbs to make them move out, leaving the local Albanians an ethnically pure Kosovo. This pressure was not without results. Serbs moved out of Kosovo in droves, and this mass exodus filled the entire Serbian nation with enormous resentment.

The relative economic underdevelopment of Serbia was another fact which pained Serbian Academy members. The political establishment had to acknowledge that Serbia was lagging behind in its development, but it did not take appropriate steps to stop this trend.

Serbia's disadvantaged position was evident. Even some politicians and public figures from other national groups and national minorities could not help but note the gravity of the situation. For instance, Macedonian politician Lazar Kolisevski publicly condemned the policy of "a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia." This catchphrase eloquently shows that a discriminatory policy was deliberately conducted against Serbia. Slovenian politician Stane Kavcic, in his *Diary and Memoirs* confirmed the existence of such a policy when he noted that, "the policy of 'a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia' is experiencing a debacle."² The frustration felt by Serbian intellectuals because of the position to

2 *Borba*, Belgrade, 28 February 1990.

which they had been relegated was described by a member of the Romanian national minority, writer Florika Stefan: "I think that both the political and cultural leaders of Serbian nationality are suffering from a kind of preordained guilt complex, and out of compunction allow the proscribing of those actions and those deeds, or even just intentions, which under normal circumstances are naturally manifested by every nation and minority. I view this unbearable atmosphere of intrigue, scheming, slander and mud-slinging from a distance, and I see that many human and creative values are being trampled upon for no reason."³ Therefore, the disadvantaged position of the Serbs and the Serbian nation in Yugoslavia was not a figment of the imagination of the members of the Serbian Academy but a fact which was noted by members of other national groups in Yugoslavia.

The crisis permeating every pore of Yugoslavia and Serbia's unenviable position called for radical measures. Keenly aware of this need, the members of the Serbian Academy sought changes within the framework of federal Yugoslavia, considering that only a state with a federal system could function effectively and achieve full equality for the republics and national groups. It was their intention to warn the authorities about the dimensions of the crisis, in a manner which would implicitly rather than explicitly suggest possible solutions. The academicians had no illusion that they would be able to effect a turnaround with a single warning, but they felt sure that their efforts would give even those who might publicly oppose them pause for thought. And yet they hesitated to take such a step. They were aware that their analysis and criticism of the social realities in a country where the ruling party held a monopoly on decision-making and the shaping of public opinion would meet strong opposition, all the stronger since every critical assessment would indirectly remind the leaders of their responsibility for what they had done or failed to do. However, feeling the moral obligation to speak out at a critical juncture and help the nation to which they belonged, the academicians were prepared to bear all the consequences of their actions.

It might seem paradoxical that it was easier to resolve this dilemma than it was to decide whether writing the Memorandum would infringe the Academy's Statute, which requires that it remain aloof from politics. Long debates were held on this score, and full consensus was never reached. The overwhelming majority of Academy members were of the opinion that given the strong processes of disintegration in the entire country and endless postponement of restoring Serbia to an equal footing with the other republics, a document from the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts would not be meddling in politics and that it was a duty which the Academy, as a national institution, must not shirk. It was with such motives that the academicians came to the regular session of the Assembly of the Serbian Academy in May 1985, at which the pros and cons of writing the Memorandum were to be considered.

3 *Politika*, Belgrade, 16 April 1971.

THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE MEMORANDUM COMMITTEE'S WORK

At the Assembly convened on 23 May 1985, a number of academicians expressed their concern over the country's economic crisis and the status of Serbia in the federation. Everything said was to the point and reflected the strong feeling that the Serbian Academy should do its part in the general efforts being made by the country to find a way out of the crisis. And so it happened that Academician Ivan Maksimovic put forward the proposal, which was approved by the Assembly, that "the most acute social, political, economic, welfare, scientific and cultural problems should be addressed in the form of a memorandum, and this memorandum should be circulated to all those in charge of public affairs in Serbia and Yugoslavia."

Acting on the Assembly's resolution and recommendation of its Executive Board, the Presidency of the Serbian Academy, at its fourth meeting held on 13 June 1985, appointed a "committee to prepare a memorandum on current social issues," which was made up of the following academicians: Pavle Ivic, Antonije Isakovic, Dusan Kanazir, Mihailo Markovic, Milos Macura, Dejan Medakovic, Miroslav Pantic, Nikola Pantic, Ljubisa Rakic, Radovan Samard'ic, Miomir Vukobratovic, Vasilije Krestic, Ivan Maksimovic, Kosta Mihailovic, Stojan Celic, and Nikola Cobeljic.

The Memorandum Committee held its first meeting on June 28th, and Dusan Kanazir and Antonije Isakovic, both holding high office in the Academy, were elected chairman and vice-chairman respectively. At this meeting organizational matters were considered. It was agreed that a synopsis be drawn up to provide an outline of the contents of the document and that the writing of the text be assigned to various individuals. It was also decided that to facilitate its day-to-day business, the Committee should form a Working Group to be headed by Antonije Isakovic and to include Mihailo Markovic, Nikola Pantic, Miroslav Pantic, Ljubisa Rakic, Radovan Samard'ic, Vasilije Krestic, and Kosta Mihailovic.

The Working Group met several times before its meetings of 8, 9 and 15 January 1986, at which the first drafts of the Memorandum were considered; these drafts were subsequently discussed at the second meeting of the Committee held on March 31st. As work progressed, it was decided to form six teams to deal with

specific topics, and to this end four academicians who had acted as consultants for the Committee on various questions were coopted.

The third meeting of the Committee was held on 19 September 1986, and since the editing of the final version of the text could not be completed in a single day, the Committee was reconvened on September 23rd. The next day, September 24th, the Committee's work came to an abrupt end with the appearance of an article in the Belgrade evening newspaper *Vecernje novosti* which attacked the Serbian Academy because of the Memorandum. At the fifth and final meeting, held on 5 October 1986, the Committee decided that in view of the new situation, writing of the Memorandum could not continue. The Committee's work was thereby ended, and the Presidency of the Serbian Academy assumed responsibility for the further fate of this document.

There is a general misconception that the Memorandum Committee's work was covert. This belief gained currency when *Vecernje novosti* published excerpts from the unedited text, treating them as sensational news. The real truth is that the Memorandum was not written covertly in any of its phases. Before the proposal to write the Memorandum was approved at the Serbian Academy's Assembly and the Memorandum Committee set up, this proposal received public comment from several academicians. The newsmen covering the Assembly gave a full report to the public. Nor during the Committee's work was there any intention of hiding anything. Nevertheless, the theft of a copy of the uncompleted document was enough to cause an uproar.

The real work of the Committee began with the approval of the synopsis which organized the future content of the Memorandum into two main sections. The first dealt with the Yugoslav crisis and the second with the status of Serbia and the Serbian nation. The debate on the synopsis greatly facilitated work by focusing attention on the principal issues to be addressed.

It goes without saying that the 16-member Committee could not collectively write the Memorandum. A division of labour was carried out in that individual members of the Committee assumed the task of writing different chapters. The Committee members considered it natural that academicians from the Department of Social Sciences and History should take relatively greater responsibility for drafting the text than academicians from other fields.

Debates were held on the character of the document not just at the beginning but on several later occasions, during review of the written contributions. A few members of the Committee insisted that the document should have the character of a programme, and failing this, that at least elements of a programme should be included in it. This opinion, despite the insistence of its sponsors, did not meet with the approval of the majority, who wanted the Memorandum to provide a critical analysis of the current state of affairs in Yugoslavia and in Serbia. The need for a national programme was not denied, but it was felt that preparation of such a programme should be a separate project carried out by a differently composed committee.

Since the Memorandum was being written by the Serbian Academy, the question arose of whether such a document would have a scholarly character or, if not, what character should it have without compromising the institution sponsoring it. After a long discussion, the Committee took the view that, regardless of the fact that the Memorandum did not have the attributes of an academic study written following a proper analytical methodology, it nevertheless should not include anything that had not already been investigated and verified in research studies, regardless of where and for whom they had been carried out. The writers of the Memorandum conscientiously adhered to this principle.

Several times the point was discussed as to whether or not the Memorandum should mention political personalities such as Tito and Kardelj. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that this would be necessary for the sake of a comprehensive analysis; the question was whether the political opposition might seize upon the mention of these names and distract attention from the basic messages to the Yugoslav and Serbian public. It was decided in the end that names must be mentioned in the interest of the full truth.

Antonije Isakovic was in charge of the day-to-day business of the Committee and Working Group. After the synopsis was approved and the content and character of the Memorandum decided upon, he convened meetings whenever there was completed material which had to be gone over. Academicians Dobrica Cosic, Jovan Djordjevic and Ljubomir Tadic were also invited to sit in on some of these meetings.

In addition to the generally known Serbian language version of 74 typewritten pages (in fact 73), there were two other versions, one somewhat shorter and the other quite a bit longer. At the outset and also in the course of work there was much argument over how long the text should be. Some academicians were of the opinion that the Memorandum should be written in concise language and be confined to a few pages, but the view prevailed that enough space should be allowed to explain the nature of trends, provide a complete articulation of theses and put forward arguments in support of them.

Minutes were kept of the meetings, and all the written contributions were duly filed, regardless of whether they were included in the final document. Several texts were submitted during the final editing, which was carried out collectively by the Committee. The first portion of the text, up to about page 30, can be considered to have been approved by the Committee, but the editing of the remaining text was broken off because of the leak and publication of excerpts in the daily press. As a result, several amendments to the text from pages 30 to 74 never had a chance to be considered. These were written contributions and suggestions made by a number of Academy members, which, in our opinion, would have improved the document. The written contributions are of value in their own right, but some of them could not easily find their place in the succinctly worded text of the Memorandum.

THE WITCH HUNT AGAINST THE MEMORANDUM

The appearance of the newspaper article “A Proposal for Hopelessness” in *Vecernje novosti* of September 24th and 25th, 1986, signalled the beginning of a witch hunt against the Serbian Academy and the Memorandum, which was quickly joined by virtually all the media in the country. The political leadership in Serbia assumed command of this campaign with two aims in view: first, to force the Serbian Academy to distance itself from the Memorandum and its authors, and second, through its agents and the mass media, to neutralize the impact on public opinion of the Memorandum’s messages.

THE SERBIAN ACADEMY AND POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT AT DAGGERS DRAWN

The Academy, its officers and individual members did not take this attack lying down. The newspaper *Politika ekspres* of September 25th carried statements by Milos Macura, president of the Party chapter in the Serbian Academy, Antonije Isakovic, chairman of the Memorandum Committee, and Dusan Kanazir, President of the Serbian Academy. All deplored the underhanded way in which part of a text which was “still in the draft stage” had been leaked to the press. They pointed out that no one can take “official responsibility” for an unfinished text which had not been approved by any body of the Academy. The September 27th edition of *Vecernje novosti* also published a special statement by Serbian Academy Vice-President Antonije Isakovic, who took pains to explain that “until such time as the Committee completes its work and until such time as the Presidency of the Serbian Academy approves its content and use, the document itself truly can neither be considered a ‘draft proposal’ nor be discussed before the text is submitted to the competent bodies of the Academy.”

As the uproar over the Memorandum was not quietened by these statements and in the meantime a request had been received from the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia for a report on the incriminated text, on September 30th the Executive Board of the Serbian Academy sent a letter to the Vice-President of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, Vukoje Bulatovic, in

which they attempted to clarify the situation. This letter rejected out of hand the accusation that in its working drafts of the Memorandum the Serbian Academy was “calling for a fratricidal war and renewed bloodshed.” The Serbian Academy had no intention for the text, “which was supposed to be approved according to the customary legal and democratic procedure,” to be made public. On the contrary, it was to be circulated exclusively among the competent political bodies of the Republic for “internal use.” The letter also denied any intention on the part of the Serbian Academy to set itself up “as a political partner.” In a letter written on October 3rd to Serbian Academy President Dusan Kanazir, Vice-President Bulatovic asked to be given the version of the Memorandum which had become public. The Executive Board answered this letter on October 6th, reiterating that the reproduction of this text for public dissemination was a breach of fundamental ethical principles. By the same token, it was also unacceptable to take public issue with a text which had not even been approved “by the Committee charged with the task of drafting it.” A strong protest was voiced at the way in which the Academy was being discredited in the eyes of the public. The impassioned polemics over a text which had not reached the stage of becoming an official document of the Academy were, as the letter pointed out, “inflicting enormous harm on our entire community.” In the same letter, the Vice-President of Serbia was informed that “no one in the Academy, including the Committee, was authorized to release for circulation material which had not been completed and approved by the competent bodies.”

At a meeting held on October 14th, the chapter of the Serbian League of Communists in the Academy discussed the situation. This meeting was attended by the president of the LC Belgrade City Conference, Dr. Dragisa Pavlovic, its secretary Radmilo Kljajic, and Dusan Mitevic, member of the Presidency. The Party chapter formulated its conclusions in five points. It rejected as “groundless and malicious” the newspaper articles of September 24th and 25th, in particular the epithets and judgements contained in these articles and later repeated in the press. The materials of the Committee had been “leaked to the public against the will of the Committee and other bodies of the Academy” and had been exploited. The text had still been in the draft stage, and in the Committee itself a large number of critical comments had already been made on it. Therefore, the Committee had concluded that certain parts of the text should be replaced, pursuant to which new texts had been written, and “all statements that could not be supported by proven facts” were to be deleted. The unauthorized version of the text which was leaked to the public “had not received approval.” Finally, the chapter stated its opinion that there were “compelling reasons” for work on this important project to be continued and trusted that “the Presidency of the Academy will find the appropriate ways to carry on this project.”

Unfortunately, the public outcry over the Memorandum did not die down even after the meeting of the Party chapter. On October 21st, the Academy’s Presidency convened to consider the adverse climate of opinion that had been

created by the leak and sent out a communiqué to the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, the LC Belgrade City Conference, and the Tanjug news agency. The communiqué contained six points, for the most part repeating the already discussed reasons for the decision to write the Memorandum and condemning the impermissible and illegal way in which the draft text had been leaked to the public. It was pointed out that the Academy's Presidency had not considered or approved the unfinished working text. This text did not reflect the general opinion, for work on giving it its final shape had been interrupted. "The Presidency feels that the climate which has been created over this draft and which is in itself a real and present danger to public security has prevented all further work on it, and therefore it is to be terminated," but that "considering the importance and complexity of the matters concerned, scientific gatherings should be organized to discuss the fundamental problems in society, and other forms of research in this field should be organized." This last conclusion was adopted by the Academy Presidency as a sign of confidence that by organizing symposia to discuss current social issues it would be possible to overcome the crises convulsing our country. Therefore, it was decided that a meeting to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Academy should be scheduled for May 1987 as the first of such gatherings.

The complicated preparations for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Serbian Academy, especially as regards the organization of a Centennial Ceremony and special exhibition, coincided with the Memorandum scandal. The urgency of these preparations prompted the Executive Board to ask for an appointment with the President of the Presidency of SR Serbia, Ivan Stambolic. On October 29th, Ivan Stambolic received a deputation made up of the following academicians: President Dusan Kanazir, Secretary General Dejan Medakovic, and Secretary Dr. Radosav Boskovic. This meeting was also attended by Vice-President of the Presidency of Serbia, Vukoje Bulatovic. The Academy was given the official minutes from the meeting. In his introductory remarks, Kanazir stressed the importance of this consultation, especially for resolving questions connected with the centennial celebration, such as financing and hospitality for a large number of guests from various parts of the country and from abroad. The Academy's secretary general spoke along the same lines. President Stambolic spoke at length, making reference to the long years of public support which the Academy had enjoyed, because of which it had been expected to do its part in helping cope with the crisis which had arisen. The Memorandum, he said, had upset previously good relations. The leaderships had made political assessments of this document, and now "strength, courage, determination and realism are needed more than ever before" for the document to be evaluated in the proper light by the Academy itself and for the Academy to take a clear and unambiguous position. He expressed hope that "the Serbian Academy has the strength to make such an evaluation and take such a position," noting that it was clear that an attempt was being made to follow this course, but only with partial success. He

warned that the Academy's Assembly was "at one and the same time an opportunity and a risk, and the consequences that it will provoke will crucially depend on the individuals within the Academy itself.. The Assembly might turn into a dangerous political demonstration and reanimation of the Memorandum." He reiterated his conviction that obviously this great problem was being caused not by the institution as a whole but by a small group of men within it who must be stopped. As regards the celebration of the Academy's 100th anniversary, Stambolic was in favour of its postponement as the most rational course, noting that "the leadership of Serbia are very anxious that this incident be closed in a civilized manner, and this means that the Committee must stop its work and Vice-President Isakovic should hand in his resignation."

It was agreed at this meeting that in view of the circumstances it would be best for all activities connected with the centennial, including the exhibition and laying of the cornerstone for the new library and archives building, to be postponed for the spring of 1987, but for work to be continued on preparing the publications to mark this occasion.

The members of the Academy Presidency, at a meeting on October 30th, agreed with the proposal made by Ivan Stambolic in his capacity as head of the Republican Committee for the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Serbian Academy. Thus all the questions concerning the centennial were finally resolved.

At the same meeting, the Presidency decided to convene a special session of the Academy's Assembly on December 18th, to consider the situation which had arisen in connection with the Memorandum. At this Assembly, the Executive Board asked for a vote of confidence; in a secret ballot, each of its members received an affirmative vote.⁴

From this chronology of events it can be seen that the Serbian Academy deemed it best to avoid entering into polemics with the press and to concentrate on just a few of the most important accusations. Such a line was also taken in its letters to political officials of the Republic of Serbia. The Serbian Academy stood firm in refusing to renounce the Memorandum. It felt that the real issues at stake were why the scandal had occurred, who stood to benefit from it, and above all, why the Academy was being held responsible for the serious moral injuries inflicted on it, especially since it was prepared to cooperate and not contend with the nation to which it belonged.

It may also be asked whether the Assembly of May 1985 had been wrong to have decided to write the Memorandum at all, and in doing so to "descend," as some reproached it, into the arena of mundane political affairs. The former Secretary General of the Serbian Academy, Dejan Medakovic, has provided the

⁴ Serbian Academy Yearbook XCIII for 1986, p. 111. All authorized discussions at this Assembly were also published in *Vanredna skupstina SANU* (The Special Assembly of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts) (Belgrade: SANU, 1989).

best answer to this question: "At dramatic moments in our times, an Academy oblivious to society is virtually inconceivable, and it would inevitably disappoint the expectations of its own people. Truly it is neither our desire nor need to do battle with society, but we also do not want to be a bystander on the sidelines of events in society, or play it safe and only concern ourselves with social and economic trends and upheavals that are long past."

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE MEMORANDUM IN SERBIA

The clash between the political leadership of Serbia and the Serbian Academy was generated by suspicion of the motives for writing the Memorandum. The Academy had intended to warn the highest bodies of Serbia about the gravity of the crisis and the threat it posed to the political and economic stability of Yugoslavia, and particularly to inter-communal relations. If the top leadership of Serbia had been willing to understand this fact and had been capable of appreciating how much the opinion of an authoritative institution could help in resolving the crisis, it would have allowed the Memorandum to be completed. In this way the Serbian Academy would have acted according to its academic conscience and patriotic sense of duty, and the country would have been given a public initiative which might have proven useful.

The reasons that events did not take such a course should not be sought merely in the absence of political wisdom. The political leaders of the time were not able to break out of their ideologically blinkered thought patterns and modes of behaviour. As soon as it appeared in public, the Memorandum became a cause célèbre, and then everything else happened according to the familiar scenario. In line with the well-established political practice that "everyone should put his own house in order," it fell to the political leaders of Serbia to deal with the Serbian Academy and neutralize the influence of the Memorandum. So as not to be accused by the other republican centres of nationalism, liberalism, and political expediency, and in an attempt to prove their loyalty, they were the first to mount a fierce attack on the Memorandum and its authors in a political witch hunt which they personally organized and orchestrated.

The Memorandum took the politicians by surprise because it did not follow the strictly codified rules of behaviour in the one-party system. They were particularly sensitive to the possibility that their monopoly over public affairs might be broken or curtailed. The academicians' unforgivable sin was that they had dared to speak out publicly and without inhibition on topics which until then had only been discussed in the top echelons. For daring to encroach upon bureaucratic political preserves, the Serbian Academy found itself the target of all political and party centres.

The strong opinions about the most sensitive social issues put forward in the Memorandum gave its critics a pretext for claiming that the Serbian Academy

wanted to set up a political party. This was a very serious charge in a one-party state. The further course of events showed how completely unfounded this accusation was and how in fact it revealed the Communist Party's fears of losing its political monopoly.

The claim that the Serbian Academy was preparing the ground for a political party of its own was a red herring designed to limit the impact of the Memorandum. The Memorandum struck a chord with the public, which had many of its own observations about the situation in the country confirmed. The Memorandum's lucid analyses of the situation and its clear messages had a powerful effect on shaping public opinion. Overnight this document received huge popularity. It was mimeographed, passed from hand to hand, and sold on street corners. This was a sure sign that the political witch hunt had been counter-productive, compromising its organizers. Keenly aware of the threat posed to their own positions, the political leaders were forced to step up their propaganda campaign to the highest pitch in order to stifle the Memorandum's influence.

The sharp reaction to the Memorandum's criticism of Tito and Kardelj shows that objections to this document were made on ideological grounds. The initiators of the political campaign obviously thought that the charisma of these personalities was still pervasive and that playing upon the emotions of the public would be a good way to compromise the Memorandum and its authors. Such an assumption proved to be mistaken. The Memorandum received even greater popularity, which goes to show that these two figures were not infallible nor should they be held untouchable.

Denial of the Memorandum's assertion that Slovenia and Croatia, through their influential leaders in political power centres, had achieved political and economic dominance over Serbia also had an ideological background. The critics did not try to explain whether such dominance existed or not but rather took the attitude that brotherhood and unity, and the equality of republics and national groups, were sacrosanct and must not be questioned. Accordingly, the political campaign attempted to use the ideological catchphrase of brotherhood and unity to bludgeon the Memorandum.

The political leaders were upset because the Memorandum had made a searching reappraisal of the entire political system and within it the place of the League of Communists in society, together with the internal state of affairs in that sole political party. In their eyes it must have seemed the height of impudence for the Party, whose monopoly position allowed it to control all relationships in society and which was an unimpeachable critic of all those who did not support its programmes and directives, to be subjected to the scrutiny of an independent learned institution. As a result, the Memorandum was branded as a highly dangerous political diversion, which had to be dealt with in a fight to the finish.

Some criticisms levelled at the Memorandum and designed to defend the political monopoly were quite out of keeping with the mores of a democratic

society, in which it is unthinkable that one individual can be above criticism or that anyone can be denied the right to voice criticism. With the democratization of Yugoslavia, the introduction of a multiparty system, and freedom of the press and speech, criticism of the Memorandum on ideological grounds has completely disappeared. Ten years after the decision to write the Memorandum, it no longer occurs to anyone to take exception to this document because it criticizes the political system, Tito and Kardelj, or because it dared to address the question of inter-communal relations.

Since it was not able to deny the importance of the matters dealt with by the Memorandum, the political witch hunt increasingly resorted to ideological weapons. Before the appearance of the Memorandum, Serbian political leaders had asked for some of these questions to be resolved. Therefore they could not deny that the problems existed without themselves losing credibility. However, they tried to shift the blame for their own failure to push through their demands onto the shoulders of the Serbian Academy. The political leadership of Serbia put forward the claim that the Memorandum had caught them at a time when they were on the verge of bringing about "important changes in the Constitution and Associated Labour Act," when they had entered into a "highly important and sensitive phase in dealing with many questions concerning the system in the Socialist Republic of Serbia, in the direction of establishing it as an integrated state and sociopolitical community." It was stressed that much effort and tolerance had been needed to achieve this awareness of the need for change, "and in the middle of all this work and all this effort, in the middle of this superhuman effort by all the progressive forces in society, which had closed ranks on the principal fronts of the struggle to end the crisis," that is the moment the Memorandum appeared, and now "part of the forces which had been mobilized for the real task at hand" had to turn their attention instead to the Memorandum and the Serbian Academy. As figuratively put by one of the highest officials of Serbia, "instead of coming to help the Serbian leadership and putting its shoulder to the wheel, (the Academy) had put a spoke in the wheel." In other words, according to the official line, the Serbian Academy and Memorandum had to bear the guilt for all the failures of Serbian politics. Having singled out the Serbian Academy as a scapegoat, the Serbian leaders thought that they would be able to rid themselves of blame for incompetence, blind adherence to the party line, and lack of an elementary sense of patriotism. The public's anger was supposed to have been shunted onto the Serbian Academy, thereby permitting the "well intentioned" Serbian leadership to continue indefinitely organizing progressive forces in society "on the principal fronts of the struggle to end the crisis."

The Memorandum had not singled out any political leader as being responsible for anything he had done or failed to do, but even so it was easy to identify those who were responsible. Condemnation of the opportunistic behaviour of the Serbian political leaders voiced in the Memorandum was the main reason that its authors were pilloried and explains the fierceness with which the campaign

against them was conducted. The assertion that the appearance of the Memorandum had hampered them at a critical moment, when important political and economic solutions were in the offing, can only sound plausible to those who understand this “moment” as having lasted for four decades. The unconvincing arguments with which they defended their own failings, concessions and failures merely show how groundless such a defence was.

Aware of the implausibility of ideologically based criticism of the Memorandum, the political leaders of Serbia attempted to make up for their lack of real arguments against it by resorting to insinuations, unfounded accusations and even blows below the belt. The accusations were calculated to discredit the Serbian Academy and its members. The public was meant to gain the impression that the Memorandum incited a fratricidal war, that it was a pro-cetnik document which sought to tear down everything that had been so painfully built up, that it was a pamphlet whose aim was the political destabilization of Yugoslavia, that among the writers of the Memorandum there were those who had links with various “reactionary centres abroad,” etc. There were no holds barred. The monolithic Party system stopped at nothing to destroy anyone who thought differently.

In its virulence and the manner in which it was waged, the smear campaign unleashed against the Memorandum can only be compared with the campaign against those who took the side of the Cominform after its anti-Yugoslav Resolution back in 1948. The only thing missing was the wave of arrests, although in 1986 Slovenian politician Stane Dolanc, then member of the LCY Presidency, urged such a step. It was intimated to the President of the Serbian Academy that the authors of the text might be held criminally liable. The announcement by the secretary of the Belgrade League of Communists at a meeting of the Academy’s Party chapter that a stylistic analysis was being made of the Memorandum in order to determine who wrote which sections of it can only be interpreted as an overture to reprisals. The Party chapter in the Serbian Academy was under particular pressure to repudiate the Memorandum and, by initiating a scholarly debate on its content, to lend the League of Communists an air of legitimacy for the leak of the unedited document and the political campaign launched against the Serbian Academy.

The Presidency of the League of Communists of Serbia was dismayed to see its pressure fail to produce a split within the Academy according to the time-honoured recipe of separating the sheep from the goats. It sent out a directive to local Party organizations throughout the republic to discuss or, more precisely, to speak out against the document, often regardless of whether or not the rank and file had read it. All this was accompanied by a well orchestrated media campaign directed against individual academicians but also against the Academy as a whole. The satirical article “Vojko and Savle,” published in the daily *Politika*, which was intended to compromise academician Gojko Nikolis, undoubtedly marked the moral nadir not just of the politicians but also of the journalistic profession. This article in fact boomeranged, as a result of which the

politicians and journalists found themselves caught short, unable to reveal the author of this squib or explain how it had found its way into print.

Having made a whole series of wrong moves, the political leaders of Serbia were themselves much to blame for the failure of the campaign against the Memorandum. The purloining of this document was the first wrong move. As they could not inform the public who had carried out the theft, they tacitly admitted that they had masterminded it, or at the very least were accomplices. The political campaign could not rid itself of this shadow. The leaking of an unfinished document for public debate was no less immoral. A debate on the postulates and arguments put forward was supposed to justify the leak and by sleight of hand pass off a draft version as a final document. This would have justified the political campaign and reprisals that were in the making. However, the expectation that public opinion would turn against the Serbian Academy came to nothing. Predictions about the way the Serbian Academy and its members would react proved no more accurate. Their preparedness to stand up in defence of their own integrity and convictions had been vastly underestimated.

Even though the propaganda against the Serbian Academy and Memorandum was far from innocuous, the Serbian public did not allow itself to be hoodwinked. A small section of the public might let itself be taken in out of ignorance and might believe the propaganda being drummed into them, but the majority of educated citizens who had some knowledge of the contents of the Memorandum realized that the accusations levelled against the Serbian Academy were unfounded and the interpretation given of its motives and messages skewed. The Serbian Academy's prestige rose rapidly in the eyes of Serbian society, for this learned institution, celebrating its centennial, inspired hope that there were still individuals who had the vital national and state interests of the Serbian people and Serbia at heart. Contrary to the politicians' expectations, the Memorandum acted on Serbs as a rallying call. At the same time, it gave moral support to all those opposed to dogmatism and its protagonists.

CROATIAN CRITICISM OF THE MEMORANDUM

In contrast to Serbia, the top politicians in Croatia did not go public to any great extent as critics of the Memorandum. The policy that "everyone should put his own house in order" meant not just that the leaders of Serbia had the duty to deal directly with the Serbian Academy and authors of the Memorandum, but also that the other republics should stand aloof from such a settling of scores. But this does not mean that the political leaders of Croatia were not keenly interested in seeing the Serbian Academy suffer a political debacle, and they did everything in their power to make sure this came about.

Pulling strings behind the scenes, Croatia's political leaders could count on the great propaganda potential of the press, of the chauvinistic intelligentsia, ever hostile to anything coming from Belgrade, of official organizations, and even of

the then Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts. We should not fail to mention the enterprising Croatian political emigrés, who, as it transpired, could hardly wait to enter into polemics with the Memorandum. All this potential was widely mobilized for propaganda against the Memorandum, not just at home but also abroad. Croatia became the most important centre for the manufacture of lies about the Serbian Academy and Serbia.

It comes as no surprise to anyone familiar with conditions in Yugoslavia that Croatia produced the most savage attacks against the Memorandum. Ever since it was publicly articulated by Ante Starcevic in the last century and incorporated into the programme of the Party of Rights, Serbophobia in Croatia had constantly been nurtured and represented the principal if not sole component of Croatian nationalism. The appearance of the Memorandum was seen as a heaven-sent opportunity to keep Serbia in a passive and subjugated position by mounting attacks on its intelligentsia.

Croatia also had practical reasons to oppose the Memorandum. In conjunction with Slovenia, it had tailored inter-republican and other relationships to suit itself and therefore did not wish to see anyone rocking the boat, particularly since it had guarantees in the most recent constitution for its policies. By seeking an efficient federation and an equal status for the republics and nations, the Memorandum was at cross purposes with the strategy being pursued by Croatia and Slovenia. At the time this document became public, they had already made it clear to everyone what kind of system suited them best and that they were not interested in either a strong or a weak Yugoslavia. They had entered the common state after the First World War in order not to be left on the losing side. Deeming this to be a temporary situation, from the very moment they became part of Yugoslavia they strove to become independent. At a time when the two republics had the stage set for secession, the Memorandum appeared quite by surprise with different viewpoints. An all-out assault on this document was therefore required to prevent it from changing the trends which were playing into the hands of the future secessionists.

Much is revealed about the character of the Croatian criticism by the fact that the first serious reactions to the Memorandum came from the Croatian political emigrés. By 1987 the Croatian National Congress had published in the United States *The Croatian Standpoint on the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts*⁵ As far as we know, this pamphlet of 30 printed pages so far represents the sole attempt at a comprehensive rebuttal of the Memorandum, and this is why it has been called the "Croatian Anti-Memorandum." This pamphlet was written in the spirit of separatism, the starting point of all Croatian criticism. It is not of any great import that the text was written by Croatian emigrés. There

⁵ *Hrvatsko stanoviste o Memorandumu Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti* (The Croatian Standpoint on the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts) (Saddle River, N.J. : Croatian National Congress, 1987).

is a time difference but not a difference in quality between the arguments put forward in *The Croatian Standpoint* and official and unofficial Croatian propaganda after Croatia's secession. What the Croatian political emigrés were saying in 1987 and the Croats in Yugoslavia were thinking became both official and unofficial propaganda in Croatia after 1991. There is nothing strange in this fact if we know that the "sources" drawn upon for facts were books written by Rudolf Bicanic⁶ and Franjo Tudjman.⁷

The Croatian Standpoint was one of the publications used to slander the Serbs in the media and arm the Croatian lobby with their own view of ethnic relations in Yugoslavia. The European Community never explained its decision taken in mid-December 1991 to advocate recognition of Slovenia and Croatia and invite the other Yugoslav republics to secede if they so desired. One might well ask whether it had adopted the views put forward in the concluding sentence of *The Croatian Standpoint* to the effect that "the Yugoslav state community, in any form whatsoever, is today being rejected by the majority of non-Serb nations of Yugoslavia, particularly by the Croatian nation, which seeks Croatian independence."⁸

The Memorandum's condemnation of disintegration, nationalism and separatism as anti-historical was rejected in *The Croatian Standpoint* which argues that "the fact cannot be ignored that the aspirations of Croats, as well as of other subjugated and non-Serb nations, are part of a universal world process in modern times, according to which every nation, as soon as it gains an awareness of its own identity, its special national individuality, seeks to establish its own national state."⁹ This assumption has coloured all the arguments of *The Croatian Standpoint*. The Memorandum's assertion that the new Constitution of 1974 turned Yugoslavia into a confederation was countered by the claim that it was not at all a case of Yugoslavia being a union of sovereign states; rather, the 1974 Constitution represented administrative regulations giving greater autonomy to the republican units. According to this interpretation, the republics lacked the vital attributes of sovereignty: confederal state bodies, sovereignty in matters of legislation, internal administration, foreign affairs and the army.¹⁰ The passages quoted here, and indeed the entire drift of the pamphlet, clearly show that a confederation was an intermediate goal. The republics would thereby acquire the status of sovereign states, while the federal state would become transformed into a union of states. Thus the administrative republican borders would tacitly

6 Rudolf Bicanic, *Ekonomska podloga hrvatskog pitanja* (The Economic Background to the Croatian Question) (Zagreb: Vladko Macek, 1938)

7 Franjo Tudjman, *Nacionalno pitanje u savremenoj Evropi* (The National Question in Modern-Day Europe) (Barcelona: KHP, 1981).

8 *The Croatian Standpoint*, p. 30.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

10 Stipe Mesic obviously did not agree with this opinion when he said that Serbia was "the first to overturn the 1974 Constitution with its confederal arrangements." Stipe Mesic, *Kako smo rasturili Jugoslaviju* (How We Broke Up Yugoslavia) (Zagreb: Globus, 1992), p. 20.

become legalized as state frontiers. In that case there would be no legal or other difficulty standing in the way of complete independence, as the end goal. Secession could be carried out at any time by a unilateral declaration of withdrawal from the state union.

This tactical plan was in fact obvious from the proposed model for a Yugoslav confederation submitted by a joint working group of experts from the Presidencies of Croatia and Slovenia on 4 October 1990. The transitional and concluding provisions of this document (p. 74) state:

1. The states members of the Union and parties to the present Agreement shall ratify a Treaty and implement its provisions in accordance with their constitutional regulations. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the government of one of the ratifying states, on the day of submission of the instruments of ratification.

2. After this Treaty has been in effect ten (or five?) years, or at any time thereafter, the states members of the Union, at the request of any one of them, may carry out mutual consultations for a review of this Treaty or dissolution of the Union.

3. Depending on the further development and expansion of the European integration, the states members of the Union may, even before the stated time limit, individually or collectively, by their own decision or decision of the Council of Ministers, leave or dissolve the Union and seek membership in the European Community.

These provisions leave no doubt as to what was the intermediate and what the final goal. We need only recall Stipe Mesic's boast that he would be the last president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, or the fact that after Croatia's secession he wrote a book about everything he had done to help bring this about.¹¹

The Croatian Standpoint carefully recorded all the Memorandum's views on nationalism and separatism without denying the presence of such tendencies in Yugoslavia earlier. These instances were not branded as being apt to upset ethnic relations and the political stability of the country. On the contrary, nationalism and separatism were not only not judged to be instances of social pathology but were given the epithet of progressive. These trends were described as the historical "trends of development of the peoples included in the Yugoslav state, which precisely in recent years have come to full expression."¹² Nationalism and separatism as manifested in all the republics were given the seal of approval and even applauded, the only exception being Serbia and more particularly the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. "There is no doubt that the programme of 'integral, democratic federalism' advocated by the Serbian Academy's Memorandum in political parlance means a return to legalized unitarianism and progressive

11 Ibid.

12 *The Croatian Standpoint*, p. 5.

hegemony of the Serbian people over the other nations and national minorities of Yugoslavia.”¹³ It is interesting that *The Croatian Standpoint* in 1987, long before Croatia’s secession, came out with the idea of Serbia’s isolation, a favourite theme of some Serbian intellectuals and politicians: “This ideological and political clash between Serbia and these nations and national minorities is taking the Serbian people into a position of isolation and real inferiority vis-à-vis all the other nations of Yugoslavia, from which Serbia can extricate itself only by recognizing their rights and aspirations for self-determination and independence.”¹⁴ As far as we know, neither official nor unofficial Serbia had ever opposed the desire of the republics to secede, but it insisted that this be done by agreement on a “peaceful, good-neighbourly parting of ways,”¹⁵ and provided the Serbian people received the same rights to “self-determination” as the other national groups. Instead, Slovenia and Croatia seceded by force of arms, and the Serbs in Bosnia and in Croatia were denied their “right to self-determination.” In conclusion, *The Croatian Standpoint* declared that the Memorandum represented a warning to the peoples of Yugoslavia that a large portion of the Serbian intelligentsia “is still persistently championing the idea of a Greater Serbia.”¹⁶ When words such as Serbia’s “isolation” and “Greater Serbia” are bandied about, it is good to know the source and time period in which these phrases were pronounced and what effect was supposed to be achieved.

The Memorandum’s assertion that since the Second World War Slovenia and Croatia had gained the upper hand over Serbia did not fail to make a stir among the politicians and intellectuals in these former republics. First the writers of *The Croatian Standpoint* rushed to respond, explaining their haste by the repressive regime in the country, which did not allow Croatian politicians and intellectuals to speak their mind. The authors of this pamphlet attempted to deny political dominance by Croatia and Slovenia with the counter-argument that “the hegemonistic position of Serbia remains intact to this day.” To prove their claims they did not shrink even from citing their own arbitrary judgements and facts of little relevance, while at the same time ignoring circumstances that were of essential importance.

For instance, as one of the first proofs of Serbia’s hegemony this pamphlet states that Belgrade remained the capital city of Yugoslavia. One of the arguments mustered to show how this fact guaranteed Serbia’s domination had to do with the national composition of the federal civil service. A relative majority of Serbian civil servants in the federal administration was in fact to be expected, not because the Serbs were privileged, but because civil servants of that rank from some of the other republics did not wish to take positions in federal agencies. This fact was

13 Ibid., pp. 26 and 27.

14 Ibid., p. 28.

15 Ibid., p. 30.

16 Ibid.

well known in the case of Slovenes, who in their own republic had far higher salaries than were offered to them by the federal civil service. The shortage of housing in Belgrade was another serious impediment to recruiting federal civil servants from other republics, and a further reason that more civil servants of Serbian nationality were employed is that Belgrade, as the capital city, had experts and professionals of all profiles who were able to meet the requirements for federal employment.

The authors of *The Croatian Standpoint* sought further evidence for Serbian domination in the larger percentage of Serbs in the officer corps and police force, passing over the fact that such a percentage reflected the difficulties Serbs had, in view of Serbia's relatively low employment rate, of finding other jobs to the same extent as Croats or Slovenes, who in their own republics were even over-employed. It was common knowledge that in applications to military academies, non-Serb candidates received precedence, even if it meant lowering criteria, just so that the composition of the officer corps would have all the nationalities proportionally represented. It is another matter that many Slovenes and Croats, obsessed with their separatist ideology, did not want to become professional soldiers in Yugoslavia.

No doubt sensing that no one in his right mind would accept such arguments as proof of Serbian hegemony if they were based merely on civil servants and officers of lower ranks, who only carry out decisions but do not shape policy, particularly since the numbers cited were obviously arbitrary ("Serbs make up an even higher percentage in the army and police: 75-80%!"),¹⁷ the authors of *The Croatian Standpoint* go on to claim that the "leading state officials and military officers were predominantly Serbs," giving the names of Aleksandar Rankovic and Sreten Ujovic, both of whom had been removed from office, and Arso Jovanovic, who had been physically liquidated. The discrepancy between the claims made and examples given is obvious. However, in order to back up their assertion as best they could, the authors also mentioned the names of some officers, political officials, and supreme court justices of Serbian nationality who, holding posts of secondary importance, did not have a voice in some of the most important decisions and did not even have much opportunity to put their own personal stamp on the execution of major decisions.

Despite attempts to prove that Serbia had hegemony, *The Croatian Standpoint* was not able to gloss over the well known fact stated in the Memorandum that Tito and Kardelj exercised supreme authority in political power centres and that their monopoly on official appointments allowed them to hand pick the top political officials of Yugoslavia. Admission of this fact alone would be sufficient to topple the claim of Serbia's political hegemony. The authors tried to diminish its importance by making the absurd pronouncement that Tito conducted a

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

Serbian policy or, more precisely, that he pursued the line of Serbian imperialism within Yugoslavia and particularly within Croatia, as well as in foreign affairs! The case of Andrija Hebrang was put forward as one of the key proofs for this claim, his case being described as “a decisive step in the liquidation of the pro-Croat leaders of the Communist Party of Croatia.” The real truth is that Tito put up with Hebrang’s chauvinistic ideas and actions for a long time, up until the moment when Hebrang began to show signs of wanting to supplant him with the help of the Cominform. Therefore, it was a case of a personal power struggle, in which the Serbian communists did not play any part whatsoever. Tito used Hebrang’s notorious chauvinism as one of his arguments to justify his actions to the public.

Another case in point, perhaps even more telling, is the Croatian “mass movement” of 1969-1971. This nationalistic movement not only did not ruffle Tito, but in Zagreb two months before the showdown with the Croatian mass movement at the meeting in Karadjordjevo, addressing the leaders of this movement in full view of the TV cameras, Tito appalled the entire Yugoslav public by stating that “there is no nationalism in Croatia.” If soon afterwards he changed his mind and removed the leaders of the mass movement from the political scene, the reasons should be sought in the fact that they had unmistakably declared their intention of seizing power from him and Bakaric and not in the intrigues of the less influential Serb politicians.

The authors of *The Croatian Standpoint* however, pass over in silence the number of leading Serbian politicians removed from political life by Tito, Kardelj and Bakaric, and the manner in which it was done. The list is indeed a long one, starting with Sima Markovic and going all the way to Aleksandar Rankovic, who was wrongly thought to be the third man in the political hierarchy of the SFRY. Because of his naive devotion to Tito and limited intellectual capacity, not to mention his training to carry out orders unquestioningly, Rankovic was an enforcer and not a creator of decisions. His removal from political life caused public consternation, for people thought that Tito had acted against his own best interests, depriving himself of the services of a man who was completely dedicated to him, particularly since in the public eye this individual had enjoyed the reputation of being a Serbian political leader. However, Rankovic was one of the last in a long line of Serbian politicians to go. Blagoje Neskovic, secretary of the Central Committee of the Serbian Communist Party and prime minister of Serbia, was removed in the early 1950s because he had opposed Tito and Kardelj over the high taxes levied on Serbia as well as over the obligatory state purchase of agricultural produce and the brutal way in which it was carried out. This fall from grace was at the same time a lesson to every successive Serbian politician that Tito was not to be crossed. He exploited to the hilt the showdown with the Cominform in order to purge every Serbian politician whose loyalty was the least bit suspect. Whereas the method of gentle persuasion was used towards the top politicians of other ethnic groups, often over a very long period of time, the Serbian politicians

were removed at one fell swoop, sometimes for a single word spoken or hint of suspicion. Serbs eliminated from the scene included Sreten@ujovic, a prominent member of the Politbureau, and Rade @igic, Dusan Brkic and Stanko Opacic-Canica, respected political leaders of the Serbian community in Croatia. An investigation into the death in an automobile accident of SlobodanPenezic, prime minister of Serbia, who, it is reliably known, was critical of the policy pursued by Tito and Kardelj, was never completed. Particularly instructive was the affair of the so-called liberals from Serbia, Marko Nikezic and others, the majority of whom enjoyed the support of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia. Despite this fact, they were removed at a sign from Tito not just from their official posts but also from political life in general. Tito's next step was to bring to positions of power in Serbia men of unswerving loyalty, who were heedless of the fact that they had lost the people's respect, if they had ever had it.

The monopoly exercised by Tito and Kardelj in initiating and adopting major decisions was also evident in appointments policy. Without their seal of approval, not one even remotely important state or party official could be appointed, not just at the federal level but also in the republics and provinces. The Slovenian politician Stane Kavcic noted in his diary on 27 December 1986: "The times are past when Slovenian politicians headed byKardelj and with Tito's help removed various politicians throughout Yugoslavia as they saw fit."¹⁸ Next to the Tito-Kardelj-Bakaric troika, the federal prime minister had relatively the greatest influence over political, economic and other spheres of life. In the postwar period, the Croats virtually monopolized this exceptionally important political office. From the end of the Second World War up until 1963, Tito also served as prime minister, and up until 1991 three other Croats (MilkaPlaninc, Branko Mikulic and Ante Markovic) held the post of prime minister for four-year terms of office (with the exception of the last mentioned). Over a period of 46 years, it was only from 1963 to 1967 that a Serb was federal prime minister, including here Serbs from the provinces or other republics. At the height of the Yugoslav crisis, the president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (StipeMesic), the federal prime minister (Ante Markovic) and the minister of foreign affairs (Budimir Loncar) – three key actors in this crisis – were all Croats.

The ability to influence the appointment of officials was undoubtedly a powerful lever in the hands of Tito, Kardelj and Bakaric in their policy of domination over Serbia. This troika made their own job easier by institutionalizing the policy of rotating representation of national groups in allocating important posts among the republics. Regardless of their size, all the republics could provide the same number of ambassadors, generals, supreme court justices and other high officials. The citizens of Serbia were thereby deprived of an opportunity to compete for high office with the same chances and to wield commensurate

¹⁸ *Borba*, Belgrade, 28 February 1990, p. 7.

influence over foreign and all other policy-making. The problem was all the greater since in legislative bodies Serbia was exposed to personnel and thereby political discrimination. All the republics had the same number of members of parliament, not just in the Chamber of Republics and Provinces, which might be considered normal, but also in the Federal Chamber, which could not be considered normal. The same number of deputies to the Federal Chamber meant that in Serbia proper, not even counting its autonomous provinces, ten times more citizens elected one member of parliament than in Montenegro. The political inequality of citizens under such an electoral law is obvious.

In number of inhabitants a large republic, Croatia in formal terms also found itself in a similarly disadvantaged position. However, this fact did not unduly worry Croatia, since together with Slovenia it was at the head of the anti-Serbian coalition, which, in addition to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia, included the two provinces which formed part of the Republic of Serbia. The autonomous provinces, which gave twenty deputies each to the Federal Chamber, could not for this reason improve the political position of Serbia in the federal parliament. On the contrary, the political leaders from Serbia's provinces, together with the members of parliament, selected according to the lights of the leading political troika in Yugoslavia, carried out their bidding in every respect, particularly as regards keeping Serbia down.

The true significance of the domination over Serbia reflected in the national composition of leading politicians in legislative and executive branches of government can be appreciated only if the percentage of Serbs living in other republics, or rather outside Serbia proper, is borne in mind. At the same time, the Republic of Serbia's constitutional status was abnormal in that it had two autonomous provinces which were endowed with the prerogatives of republics. Legislation for the republic as a whole could only be passed subject to the approval of the autonomous provinces, whereas the provinces were able to pass legislation without the approval of Serbia proper. Serbia proper had been relegated to a constitutional and legal limbo, a fact which certainly encouraged the appearance of separatist-minded political establishments in the provinces that acted as powerful levers helping to keep Serbia in a subordinated position.

In this context a link can be traced between the Comintern's policy between the two world wars and the policy of maintaining domination over Serbia in the post-war period. For a better assessment of the claims made by *The Croatian Standpoint*, we should mention the contradiction in which it finds itself. Whereas on the one hand, as political emigrés, the authors take an outspokenly anti-communist stand, on the other hand they agree with the communist publication *The Proletarian* when it says that unlike the Slovenian and Croatian working class, the Serbian working class did not try to set up its own communist party allegedly because it belonged to an oppressor nation. Such a theory, which no one could possibly take seriously, was good enough when it was needed to explain the earlier organization of the communist parties of Croatia and Slovenia and when it served

to incite separatism, while after the war it was used to justify political domination over the Serbs.

We have commented at considerable length on *The Croatian Standpoint* for three reasons. First, individuals and institutions of Croatia and the Croatian emigré community have been the main source of malicious interpretations of the Memorandum. Second, this publication contains all the prejudices about Serbs which have been repeated *ad nauseum* for decades, regardless of the actual situation in society. Third, the question of domination within the political system did not gain wide publicity, so that *The Croatian Standpoint* is the most comprehensive critical commentary of this system, which was discussed in the Memorandum. These reasons alone, and not the content of this pamphlet, justify the space given to it here. *The Croatian Standpoint* on the whole deserves the appraisal it received from Belgrade journalist Zoran Bogavac: "In fact there is nothing out of the ordinary in this text – it has merely seized the opportunity presented by the appearance of the Serbian Academy's Memorandum and, under the pretext of 'analyzing' what it calls the 'Serbian Memorandum,' trots out an arsenal of threadbare theories, hostile propaganda, fabricated data and inflammatory slogans."¹⁹

After this document, the Croatian public at home raised a voice against the Memorandum, in line with the growing popularity of the separatist movement. The Zagreb periodical *Nase teme* (No. 1-2, 1989) was the first in the SFRY to print the entire text of the Memorandum. The real reason was not so that it could serve as a "precondition for a public debate" (under the circumstances a genuine debate would not have been possible), but rather to publish along with it a foreword by Dragutin Lalevic, who, by giving a recapitulation of the course of events and carefully selected quotes from public statements, attempted to instruct readers in how to understand what they would be reading and to "reveal" to them the nationalism which cannot be found in the text. The selected quotations printed along with the Memorandum were from statements made by those politicians in Serbia who had directly orchestrated the campaign against the Serbian Academy before, during and after its special Assembly. Lalevic made the interesting observation that the most scathing condemnations of the Memorandum came from Vojvodina. He wrote: "At the meeting of Party members from cultural life in the Novi Sad League of Communists organization, on 23 October 1986, Tomislav Marcinko, then executive secretary of the Novi Sad Committee, expressed his dissatisfaction with the 'reactions of those who had the duty to speak out first and most energetically' along with a sharp and pretentious comment, obviously meant for the Belgrade League of Communists, that 'proclaimed nationalists, creators of the slogan – Serbs rally round! – were merely chided that they must not do such things, that it was not nice, that their judgement was wrong. Meanwhile, what we have here is an obviously counter-revolutionary tract."²⁰

19 Special issue of *Duga*, June 1989, p.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

The attempt to compromise the Memorandum by quoting Marcinko appears quite misguided in light of the fact that Tomislav Marcinko is from a pro-ustasa Croatian family which had been resettled to Vojvodina during the Second World War and that after the armed secession he went back to Croatia, where he has been appointed editor of the news desk of the Zagreb TV station, a position which could only be held by a trusted individual. Marcinko, who did not remain loyal either to the state or to the ideology on whose behalf he castigated the Serbian Academy, confirms the Memorandum's assessments as to personnel appointments in Vojvodina, which were calculated to bolster the anti-Serbian, autonomist policy. However, Lalevic did not fail to include in his selection of texts statements by two Serbian academicians, Pavle Savic and Vasa Cubrilovic, who held a different opinion from that of the majority of the other Academy members. However, even these two dissenting opinions do not represent an essentially different view of the situation in society, for they merely question the Serbian Academy's decision to write the Memorandum and oppose "meddling in politics" by a learned institution.

The authors of *The Croatian Standpoint* also did not fail to comment on the section of the Memorandum dealing with economic questions. They devoted the bulk of their commentary to the development of the various parts of Yugoslavia between the two world wars. As they had not carried out their own research and were not acquainted with more recent research findings, all they could do was take over lock, stock and barrel the figures and conclusions found in Rudolf Bicanic's book.²¹

As the head of the Croatian Peasant Party and publisher of this book, Vladko Macek stated in his foreword that Croatia had been exploited in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Bicanic took it upon himself to adduce proof for this thesis. Since it did not correspond to economic realities, this assertion could not be proven by using proper methodology. Therefore the author tried to achieve his ends by juggling figures and in doing so almost completely ignored statistics for Yugoslav industry from 1938, the only reliable basis for an assessment of how the individual sections of Yugoslavia had fared in the period between the two wars. If he had not done so, he would not have been able to maintain the assertion that Croatia was exploited.

Bicanic's book, ideologically and politically tendentious as it was, soon came under fire from Belgrade economists, who overturned his findings with documented criticism.²² In the early years after the war, the Economic Institute of Serbia attempted to adjust the statistics for industry from 1938 to the political and territorial division of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and on the basis of verified figures arrived at the following conclusion: "Nevertheless,

²¹ Bicanic, op. cit.

²² Gojko Grdjic, et al, *Istine o ekonomskoj podlozi hrvatskog pitanja* (The Truth about the Economic Background to the Croatian Question) (Belgrade: Sloboda Publishing House, 1940).

nothing shows more vividly the rate of industrial growth of these regions in the two decades between the two world wars than a breakdown of the foregoing statistics per 1000 inhabitants in each region. Whereas in Slovenia 697,000 dinars per 1,000 inhabitants was invested, in Croatia (including Slavonia and Dalmatia) this figure was 481,000 dinars, but in Serbia including Vojvodina (but without Srem), it was just 281,000 dinars. If we take Serbia proper, the situation appears even more unfavourable, for here there was 247,000 dinars of capital investment per 1,000 inhabitants. However we look at things, in these two decades Slovenia grew at a rate that was 2.5 times faster than Serbia and 2.6 times faster than Vojvodina. The growth of industry in Croatia was 1.7 times faster than in Serbia proper and Vojvodina taken together, or 1.9 and 1.7 times faster in Serbia proper and Vojvodina respectively.”²³

These figures show that in Yugoslavia between the two world wars, Slovenia and Croatia enjoyed the highest rate of development. Such results are economically understandable, and it would be strange if it had been otherwise. Once these two republics had gained this head start in their development, the gap tended to widen, as has happened between the developed and underdeveloped sections of other countries. Tariff protection of domestic industry, terms of trade and the established footholds in the Yugoslav market also tended to increase these advantages. Not only was Serbia not one of the sections of Yugoslavia which had the fastest growth rate but, if we are to judge from the rate of investment per 1,000 inhabitants, not even the average level of per capita investment in the Yugoslav economy was achieved.

As regards the economic growth of the Republic of Serbia after the Second World War, the authors of *The Croatian Standpoint* either were not properly informed or pretended not to be. Whatever the case, they proved themselves totally incompetent to pass judgement on this development. The commentary on economic growth after the Second World War barely fills half a page, where we find the incredible statement that in 1971 Serbia had exceeded the level where Croatia was in 1925, and that Croatia in 1971 had dropped below the level at which Serbia was in 1925! Since in the period between 1947 and 1971 alone the per capita GNP of Croatia was quadrupled, this absurd claim shows the abysmal ignorance of the postwar period in Yugoslavia of those who took it upon themselves to criticize the Memorandum.

SLOVENIAN INSINUATIONS AND SYMPATHY

In the years after the war, Slovenia was hand in glove with Croatia on all vital policy matters and actions. Its attitude toward the Memorandum was no exception. Slovenia’s political leaders did not hide the fact that they were anxious

²³ G. Grdjić, “Razvoj Srbije i Vojvodine od oslobodjenja od Turaka” (The Development of Serbia and Vojvodina after Liberation from the Turks), in *Proizvodne snage NR Srbije* (Productive Forces of the People’s Republic of Serbia) (Belgrade: Economic Institute of PR Serbia, 1953), p. 55.

to neutralize the influence of this document. It is true that such an impression might not have been gained from the low-key public statements made by the Slovenes, but the fact that some of them went so far as to demand criminal prosecution of the writers of the Memorandum shows that those who flaunted their democratic credentials before the domestic and foreign public were quite prepared to call for blood.

The Slovenian politicians, like their Croatian counterparts, left the media and local intelligentsia, who were well indoctrinated with Slovenia's political agenda, to do most of the dirty work in the smear campaign against the Memorandum. Long constitutional debates crystallized the views of Slovenia, which in the media and in intellectual circles served as a sure signpost for an attack on the Memorandum. Their job was made much easier by the fact that the propaganda had become stereotyped, attempting through sheer repetition to lend credibility to a few catchphrases, often taken over from other parts of the country, especially Serbia and Croatia.

If any text deserved attention from the Slovenian public it was the commentary on the Memorandum made by Stane Kavcic, Slovenian politician who in 1972 was ousted from political life as a liberal. At that time he kept a diary (up until his death in 1987), which was later published under the title, *Diary and Memoirs Borba* of 28 February 1990 carried excerpts from this diary in which Kavcic talks about the Memorandum.

Kavcic did not think any differently from other Slovenes as regards Slovenia's historical dilemma of whether to stay in Yugoslavia or leave it. He was strongly in favour of a confederation and attempted to convince the Slovenes that they should not be a slave to the idea that Slovenia would necessarily be exposed to assimilation and economic setbacks if it were to leave Yugoslavia and lose its market. Slovenia only saw benefit from remaining in Yugoslavia if the political system and other relationships suited it. Therefore, whether to leave or stay in Yugoslavia was according to him an open question. Kavcic held the view that Serbia's economic problems were not caused by domination by Slovenia and Croatia but rather that these problems were common to everyone in Yugoslavia. He also believed that Slovenia did not have a clearly defined programme which would have protected its interests, and that the ethnic Albanians from Kosovo should be allowed to unite with Albania.

All these convictions, which Kavcic articulated in the form of comments on the Memorandum, should be borne in mind when we assess the positive remarks he made about this document. In the diary entry for 20 December 1986, he wrote: "The Serbian Academy, at its special Assembly, gave a slap in the face to the Yugoslav and Serbian political leadership. The politicians made fools of themselves, acting as though they were dealing with a local Party committee from the suburb of Karaburma. The academicians have taught us a lesson not just about Serbia but also about political tactics." Noting that "along with all this Serbia's position has remained unclear" and that "the doors are being closed on

any further exploitation of Serbia," he makes a very strong statement: "The policy of a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia is undergoing a debacle. The slogan of a strong self-reliant Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia is taking on some new possibilities." No less significant is another diary entry a week later: "I have read the draft of the Serbian Academy's Memorandum. Now I am all the more convinced that a major political mistake was made when the politicians did not let the Serbian Academy finish this project. Probably the politicians did not intervene just because of what was inaccurate and unacceptable in the Memorandum but more because of what was accurate, genuine and justifiably critical. Since they did not feel themselves capable of entering into a meaningful dialogue with the Serbian Academy about the crisis in Yugoslav society, and particularly in Serbia, they opted to politically discredit the document before it was finished and approved by the Academy." Further on we find: "Now the document officially does not exist. Essentially it reflects the spiritual and intellectual horizons of the Serbian Academy vis-à-vis the state of society in Serbia and in Yugoslavia. It contains many correct assessments and good suggestions."

No less important is the message he has for his compatriots: "I feel that the Slovenes do not appreciate Serbia's position. The Slovenian political leadership has managed, at least for the moment, to pull the wool over the eyes of the Slovenes. That is why the Slovenes only see nationalism and unitarianism in Serbia and nothing else. This is short-sighted and dangerous. Many of the Serbian assessments and demands are justified... The Serbs know that they can no longer control the whole of Yugoslavia. Their present position, essentially subjugated, is intolerable to them... The most radical opponent of change in either direction is the Slovenian political leadership. It persistently defends the status quo. It is defending, then, the Tito-Kardelj line, which has undergone an historical defeat. The political myopia of Slovenian politics is repeating itself. That is why even Dolanc proposed criminal sanctions against the Serbian Academy. He remained isolated. The times are past when Slovenian politicians headed by Kardelj and with Tito's help removed various politicians throughout Yugoslavia as they saw fit."

These remarks made in Slovenia are all the more valuable and objective in that they were confided to a personal diary. Kavcic's death made it possible for his views, which essentially confirm some of the basic theses of the Memorandum, to become known to the public. These views differ radically from those launched for propaganda purposes and particularly from the views and behaviour of this republic after its armed secession.

SUPPORT FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

As in all similar situations, foreign observers vigilantly followed events connected with the Memorandum and the Serbian Academy. This was a topic that for months was in the centre of attention of many media. Foreign political

circles realized that the Memorandum had shaken up the political system. As it had withstood all the regime's pressures (threats to cut off funding and to amend the law in order to make the Academy more dependent on republican authorities, wholesale censure by Party organizations, blatant attempts to cause splits in the Academy's membership and to force the Academy itself to single out and condemn various members), the Serbian Academy received unconcealed sympathy from the democratic countries of the West. At the ceremony held in May 1987 to commemorate the Academy's centennial, the Serbian Academy was given strong moral support from the diplomatic corps in Belgrade. Whereas all the top officials of Yugoslavia and Serbia boycotted this modest ceremony, the diplomatic corps attended the celebration almost to a man. All the streets in the vicinity of the Academy were full of the limousines of diplomats from a large number of countries.

It is noteworthy that in foreign political circles, no one had then attacked the Memorandum as a document which incited the disintegration of Yugoslavia and advocated violence. As there is nothing of the sort in the Memorandum, such accusations would not even have been possible. This fact should be remembered when assessing the propaganda accusations against the Memorandum, now that a bloody civil, communal and religious war has broken out in Yugoslavia.

THE WITCH HUNT DIES DOWN

The political leaders of Serbia had to draw the appropriate lessons from what occurred at the special Assembly of the Serbian Academy. The only way open to them was either to close down the Serbian Academy, a step which they dared not take lest they undercut their own positions, or gradually to call off the witch hunt, which in any case was doomed to failure for lack of real arguments. The second option was chosen. Articles railing against the Memorandum, the Serbian Academy, and some of its members became more widely spaced and lost their edge. There was a lull in which threats against the Serbian Academy did not cease altogether but became more infrequent and less virulent. The dying down of the campaign was the logical consequence of the realization that its political objective could not be achieved, that the academicians were not prepared to repudiate the Memorandum and its authors. The campaign's chances of success were also lessened by the fact that it had been morally compromised by using a purloined document and resorting to insinuations, untruths, and threats. Furthermore, after the Academy's centennial, the politicians in Serbia soon became involved with their own affairs, and for this reason as well the Memorandum was less in the focus of public attention.

The cessation of the official smear campaign and normalization of relations with the Serbian Academy occurred after the removal of Ivan Stambolic and other officials in the League of Communists who had been the ring-leaders of the attack. The change in Serbia's political leadership signalled a change of heart towards the Serbian intellectuals, freedom of the press, and responsibility for public pronouncements. In the new climate there was less reason to maintain tensions between the establishment and the Serbian Academy. Out of inertia, however, the Party officials and other elements who had taken an active part in the witch hunt were slow to change their attitude. Accordingly, a formal normalization of relations between the authorities and the Serbian Academy, in the form of a joint communiqué or similar document, never materialized. The normalization occurred tacitly, and the dispute was consigned to oblivion. Many are prone to see the visit by the Serbian Academy's Executive Board to the offices of *Politika* as an

official act of normalization. However, this visit, which took place in January 1989, could rather be taken as a sign to the public that the Serbian Academy was no longer politically anathematized and that normalization had already occurred and was not just beginning.

It is a little known fact that behind the scenes and out of public view strained negotiations were being held on another normalization of relations. The Memorandum had caused a split between the Presidency of the League of Communists of Serbia and Belgrade, on the one hand, and the Party chapter in the Serbian Academy on the other. From the very first day that the document was leaked, the two Party executive bodies began to exert pressure on the Academy's Party activists to bow to the demands being set before them. There was little likelihood that these demands would be met since some members of the Party chapter had written the Memorandum or agreed with it. The public was not informed of the fact that the incriminated parts of the Memorandum, such as the sections dealing with Tito and Kardelj, had been written by communists. Defending the Memorandum, they were defending their own integrity, but this brought them into conflict with the Party and accounts for the complaints and threats against the communists for not having followed orders that came before, during, and immediately after the Serbian Academy's special Assembly.

However, by the end of 1987 and especially in 1988 there were some major changes. The commission set up by the Presidency of the League of Communists of Serbia made several attempts to find a common language with the members of the Party chapter in the Serbian Academy. Efforts were concentrated on preparing a communiqué for publication. Several versions of such a communiqué were unacceptable to the Academy Party members because they expressed reservations about the Memorandum. When at last a completely neutral version was agreed upon, without the earlier reservations, the question arose whether such a version of the communiqué should be approved at all and revive issues which had ceased to be on the front pages. The communiqué was never approved and never published. Everything was passed over in silence, just as had happened with the Memorandum.

The dying down of the attacks on the Memorandum and its authors became evident in the second half of 1988. Individuals did from time to time criticize it, but now protests began to be raised against the distortion of the Memorandum's text, and an objective look at its findings was demanded. The popular magazine *Duga* in June 1989 published the Memorandum in full in a special edition, together with excerpts from the debate at the Academy's special Assembly and relatively objective commentaries from prominent journalists. At last the public was able to read the original text and judge for itself how much the official criticism was justified. Calls for a studious critical review of the contents of the Memorandum, however, fell on deaf ears. Mention of this document became infrequent and was as a rule malicious, without any quotations cited from the original text.

Late in 1989, Slobodan Milosevic stated at a press conference: “As regards the Serbian Academy of Sciences, I really do not see why it should not have a say in politics in Serbia; what nation in the world, what reasonable government, has ever been ashamed of its own Academy of Sciences?”²⁴ It was encouraging when the key political figure in Serbia so clearly came out in support of the place which the Academy should have in society. The government which waged war with the Academy up until that time had not been reasonable, and this statement holds true both for the government of Serbia and the government of Yugoslavia. Probably in the modern-day world there is no government which would mount a political campaign against its own academy of sciences simply because it had its own opinion on social problems; is the link between the academy and politics in seeking solutions to social problems anywhere considered impermissible? To make the entire affair even more baffling, when vilification of Serbia, the Serbian nation and the Memorandum began, foreign countries also accepted the anomalous relations between the official politics of Serbia and the Serbian Academy as normal, something they would never have done at home. The first chapter in the life of the Memorandum can be considered closed with the subsidence of this unprecedented political smear campaign.

²⁴ *Politika*, 22 December 1989, p. 7.

A NEW WAVE OF ATTACKS ON THE MEMORANDUM

The ending of the anti-Memorandum campaign in Serbia meant much more than just an easing of the political pressure on the Serbian Academy and writers of the Memorandum. The role that Serbia had played up until that time as the main instigator of the smear campaign was taken over in its entirety by Croatia. It was all the easier for Croatia to do so, because it had never had a let-up in its campaign. Once it had gotten in motion, the Croatian propaganda mill never stopped turning. Croatia ostensibly seconded Serbia, but events in Yugoslavia in 1989-1991 gave the anti-Memorandum campaign a new lease of life. Croatian propaganda now took the lead, and with occasional articles published at home and the spreading of lies abroad it assumed the role of the principal anti-Memorandum centre, whose activities were stepped up after Croatia's secession. The need to justify the illegal act of secession in the light of domestic and international law motivated Croatia to seize upon all the means of propaganda available to it.

The basic aim of this propaganda was patent: the secessionists were to be portrayed in the eyes of the world as victims fighting for their freedom, and the Serbs, who were being denied the right to self-determination which had already been given to others, were to be depicted as aggressors and enemies, inspired by the ideas of the Memorandum. This propaganda fabrication, which was in complete contradiction with the real course of events, was intended for a world which had not had an opportunity to read the original document in translation. Exploiting this fact, the masterminds of this propaganda imputed to the Memorandum everything they could think of that might compromise the Serbs and justify secession. Claims that the Memorandum called for a Greater Serbia and ethnic cleansing, that it was a war-mongering and chauvinistic tract, were never backed up by citing relevant passages from the original text. Nobody read what was really written in the Memorandum but only criticized what had been unfairly ascribed to it by secessionist propaganda. It is incredible how many people and institutions were taken in by this blatant propaganda or knowingly went along with it. The relentless attacks by the secessionist republics, along with the hiring of high-powered foreign public relations agencies, succeeded in creating wide

spread misconceptions about the contents of the Memorandum. Probably some people will never get over their prejudices even if, after reading the original, they realize that there is no real basis to them. The present state of mind in the West is highly reminiscent of Anderson's fairy tale, "The Emperor's New Clothes." Everyone is trying very hard to see what does not exist in reality so as to appear clever in the eyes of others.

The first wave of the smear campaign against the Memorandum hit the SFRY at a time when other countries, more as bystanders than as participants in events, discreetly supported this document as a courageous democratic act. The second wave took shape abroad, under the crucial influence of propaganda from the secessionist republics, mainly Croatia. Therefore, when the focus of the campaign moved abroad, foreign countries changed their attitude toward the Memorandum. The original approbation turned into a biased condemnation. The ordinary man in the street cannot be blamed for gullibility, but it is hard to understand how semi-official and official bodies in the West, which should be accurately informed, could subsequently make different interpretations of the clear positions of the Memorandum. What is hard to explain in terms of the actual course of events and original text can be explained by the interests of the countries which continue to give political and moral support to the secessionist republics. These countries have exerted the principal influence which has changed the climate of opinion of foreign countries toward the Memorandum.

OLD AND NEW TONES IN SERBIA

The introduction of a multiparty system in Serbia was accompanied by a rapid politization in which feelings ran high and many wild declarations were made. In the absence of serious reassessments, the off-the-cuff criticisms and insinuations made by deposed politicians, apparatchiks and their media lackeys became a familiar part of the political scene. With the upsurge of political passions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the attitude taken toward the Memorandum became less and less objective, even in intellectual quarters. One segment, and not an insignificant one either, of the politically active Serbian intelligentsia began to tailor the views of the Memorandum to fit their own newly acquired political beliefs or the interests of the political party to which they belonged. Not infrequently individuals would change their attitude toward the document, and their earlier support would give way to condemnation. The Memorandum was branded a nationalistic document by a small section of the intelligentsia, but no one even attempted to back up such claims by citing the original text. Not counting that part of the intelligentsia which did not see fit to read the Memorandum before passing judgement on it, another section of the intelligentsia, under the influence of adverse foreign opinion, called the document nationalistic. A feeling of inferiority vis-à-vis the West was shown, among other things, by an uncritical acceptance of everything that was professed to be genuine and

progressive there. The worst of all is that this segment of the Serbian intelligentsia has convinced itself that it was objective, that it belonged to the great civilized democratic world, that it had risen above its backward Balkan roots, characterized by primitive nationalism. As the 19th century Serbian educationalist Djordje Natosevic observed, "When a Serb wants to appear objective, he goes over to the opposition's side," a trait that his contemporary, writer Stevan Sremac, described as a strange quirk in the Serbian personality.²⁵

There is no doubt that chauvinism is a great evil and, with any luck, it should be an anachronism by the end of the 20th century. It must therefore be combatted wherever it raises its ugly head. At first sight, there is such a trend in the world. However, if we bear in mind that today it is the great powers of the West who speak out most loudly against nationalism but against other people's nationalism and not their own, and that those countries are labelled chauvinistic which are trying to maintain their sovereignty and independence, which are trying to avoid being "regionalized" and deprived of the opportunity to put up economic and political resistance to the great powers and multinational companies, then we see that the newfangled internationalism of today is a highly unconvincing platform for other values as well, such as civil rights and democracy. The acceptance of such an internationalism inevitably clashes with the patriotism of the Memorandum, which, within the framework of Yugoslavia, asked for nothing more than political and economic equality for the Serbian people.

It is as though since 1991, after a short breathing space, Memorandum-bashing has again come into fashion. This is a curious development, especially since the popular press has tried to provide a better documented and more objective interpretation of this document. The above-mentioned special issue of *Duga* deserves attention for its publication of the comments made by several academicians at the Academy's special Assembly held on 18 December 1986, and especially for its editorial commentaries and documentation. In this issue the general public could read extensive excerpts from *The Croatian Standpoint* with a critique by Zoran Bogavac. This author also wrote the introduction, in which he explains why the editors decided to publish the special issue on the Memorandum. Making it clear that the purpose was not "rehabilitation," Bogavac explains that the intention was to invite genuine critical assessments but at the same time to prevent tendentious interpretations.

The special issue of *Duga* also included an article by Milorad Vucelic entitled, "Is the Memorandum a Serbian National Programme?" The author gave a negative answer to this oft repeated question. Some criticisms of the text in the framework of an objective assessment of the Memorandum previously unrecorded in Serbian journalism should be seen as an attempt to give the impression of a more evenhanded approach. Such an opinion is supported by the fact that this

25 Stevan Sremac, *Rabosi* (On Tick), Collected Works (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1977), VI, 116.

issue of *Duga* also carried a reprint of an article by Dragutin Lalevic entitled: "How Yugoslavia Has Been Used," which was in fact the foreword to the Memorandum printed in the periodical *Nase teme*, No. 7, of 1-2 January 1989.

The article by journalist Milos Misovic, "From the Memorandum to War," published in August 1992 as a supplement to the periodical *Vreme*, presented a fair picture of the chronology of events in its first part, but in the second part contains quite arbitrary allegations about the Memorandum's link with the later policy of the ruling party and its president: "it would be hard to deny that the key positions of this document were incorporated in the foundations of his militant policy." It is hard to deny what can be proven, but a mere assertion which is not backed up by facts and cannot be proven only deserves attention as an example of guile and treachery in modern-day Yugoslav politics. By making such claims, Misovic was at the same time attacking the Serbian Academy as a war-mongering and nationalistic institution, but he did not attempt to quote a single passage from the Memorandum to support any of his statements. The strangest thing of all is that he criticizes the Serbian Academy for not being active in political life after the Memorandum, naturally along the lines of Misovic's own political goals and beliefs. In short, a text which started out as being an objective recapitulation of the events connected with the Memorandum in the end turned into a bludgeon for a political showdown and endorsement of the vision of the war events held by the secessionists and members of the international community which support them.

If Misovic grafted onto a relatively correct chronology of events an attack on the official policy of the Republic of Serbia, a long-time member of the highest state and Party echelons, Milos Minic, took the opposite tack when in August 1993 in the daily *Borba* he published a series of five articles under the title: "Fifty Years Later." After laying any number of sins at the door of official political leaders, Milos Minic devoted the last two installments in the series to the Memorandum. These articles deserve attention not only because the author is a former government official, well acquainted with the official and unofficial background of decisions which were crucial for Yugoslavia, but also because his assessments are typical of generations of politicians who were to blame for the situation in Yugoslavia and Serbia, as pointed out by the Memorandum. We see here an example of hidebound ideology and political convictions. Also unchanged is the preparedness to accept as right and reasonable everything that Tito did in his day for Serbia, and during the Yugoslav crisis everything proposed by Slovenia and Croatia and, it goes without saying, the international community.

Minic writes that the peoples of Yugoslavia have been catapulted into a disaster, but he does not make any mention of the secession by force of arms. The main reason for everything that happened, in his opinion, was the pervasive bureaucratization at all levels, a line constantly fed to the public over the past few decades. Even if this interpretation were correct, the question arises of where this incurable bureaucracy came from and is it not perhaps inherent in a one-party

system; or, who were the real bureaucrats, the politicians or the high civil servants? He sees another basic cause of the Yugoslav drama in the fact that the Serbian intelligentsia believed in and widely protested against the existence of the policy that “a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia” and succeeded thereby in “hoodwinking” the Serbian public but not the other members of the public in Yugoslavia and the world. These are essentially the terms in which he attempted to counter the findings of the Memorandum. We might pass over Minic’s defence of Titoist policy if it did not contain assertions which have also been made by others and if Minic had not unwittingly provided additional arguments in support of the Memorandum’s theses.

It is unusual in Yugoslavia that a Macedonian politician should have openly taken exception to the policy of discrimination against Serbia, as did Lazar Kolisevski in 1981, when he publicly divulged the existence of the catchphrase: “a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia,” which, as we have already said, was even mentioned by the Slovenian politician Stane Kavcic. It is certainly even more unusual that a leading Serbian politician, Milos Minic, should deny that such a policy existed and challenge its veracity. Although this slogan was mentioned many times in public debates, Kolisevski never tried to deny it. Minic attempted to cast doubt on it by saying that Kolisevski did not identify the person who had originated it. This remark is both unseemly and incorrect. Just because the authors of the catchphrase are not named does not mean that the existence of the above formula can be doubted. If the slogan “a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia” were the invention of just one individual, however influential, certainly Kolisevski would never have mentioned such an individual view and would have left it up to the holder of this opinion to state it himself. What we have here is undoubtedly a policy and practice pursued by a centre of political power, of anonymous authors, or authors whose names have been lost in anonymity, because they had articulated the collective opinion of the political leaders or one segment of them.

More important is the attempt to challenge the truth of political domination over Serbia, which was also implied in Kolisevski’s thesis. Minic bases his attempt on criticism of the slogan “all Serbs in a single state,” which originated at a time when the secessionists’ intentions had already been clearly articulated. The Memorandum therefore does not contain this slogan, but it does contain a strong criticism of the system as established in the course of the Second World War by the communist Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), of the 1974 Constitution, of the republican boundaries, and of the status of the Serbian people, all of which Minic tries to refute and in this way deprive Serbs of the right to self-determination and by the same token of the right to a state in their own ethnic territory. His arguments, voiced at a time when Croatia and Slovenia had already been recognized and Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were soon to gain recognition, have been rendered completely obsolete by events.

Minic claims that in Yugoslavia the Serbs, as indeed other national groups, had gained the opportunity to live in one state. The borders between republics were administrative, and there was no impediment keeping the mother republic from communicating with Serbs living in other republics. One is led to believe that it was all the same whether a section of the Serbs lived in the Republic of Serbia or outside it. This is a strange opinion to come out of the mouth of a former prime minister of Serbia, who knows from his own experience that it was not possible to inquire about the political, economic and cultural status of Serbs in Croatia, Bosnia, or Macedonia, or even in Kosovo, without its being taken as interference in the internal affairs of these republics and provinces.

As regards the republican boundaries, they were both administrative borders and state frontiers according to need. They were administrative when it was to be proven that in the earlier Yugoslavia the Serbs had been able to live in a single state, but the fact that later they became state frontiers and were recognized as such was explained away as a "formal legal adjustment to the *de facto* situation." Opines Minic: "No one can any longer challenge the boundaries of Croatia and Slovenia, for they have now become state frontiers," and he goes on to criticize everyone in Serbia and presumably outside Serbia who does challenge them. It is interesting to see the indulgence with which he speaks of the 1974 Constitution, despite the fact that it represented a watershed in the achievement of separatist goals, bringing the functioning of the country to a complete standstill. It is no less interesting that the political leaders of the Serbs at the time were prepared to accept a "less centralized federation," in other words a confederation, as insisted upon by the political leaders of Slovenia and Croatia. The confederation, which for the secessionist republics was a way station on the road to secession, in the eyes of this former Serbian politician was a state system which would have politically stabilized Yugoslavia. Most probably it is not so much a case of political naivety as it is an attempt, by accusing others, to evade his own responsibility because the danger of separatism was not identified in time and properly understood. No doubt because of this, separatism and the foreign states which supported this separatism and provided the armaments for it to turn into armed secession receive virtually no mention at all as a cause of the break-up of Yugoslavia. If the Slovenian and Croatian separatists had succeeded in convincing a segment of the Serbian politicians that by creating an asymmetrical federation Yugoslavia would become politically consolidated, it is not to be wondered at that some US senators found justification for the secession of Slovenia and Croatia in the fact that such a proposal had been turned down.

The question asked in some intellectual quarters in Serbia: Why was a confederation not officially acknowledged if it already existed in fact?— seems ill considered. If we turn the question around and ask: Why did Slovenia and Croatia seek an official, legally recognized confederation if it already existed in fact?— then the answer would be obvious. Legal recognition would have enabled them, after

seceding, to acquire international recognition without difficulty, and the boundaries of the republics would have been legalized as state frontiers.

It is an historical truth that the Serbs achieved their aspiration to live in a single country in 1918. Nothing seems more normal than at the moment when others were gaining independence they should put forward their own demand to remain in their ethnic territory. Whoever wants to leave Yugoslavia, good luck to him, but let the Serbs be allowed to continue living in the state in which they had been living up until now. This is not a case of the creation of a "Greater Serbia," of a desire on the part of Serbs to conquer other ethnic territories so as to incorporate them into their own state; rather it is the wish to maintain their own state on their ancestral lands. It is in this sense and by no means otherwise that the slogan "all Serbs in a single state" should be understood. What specifically can be held against the right to self-determination articulated in this way? Denial of this right to the Serbs in fact means that Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina are being rewarded for their illegal act of secession by being allowed to have other people's ethnic territory. It is hard to imagine anything more unfair.

The Memorandum's observation that a political and territorial partitioning had been carried out to the detriment of the Serbs, who for this reason were left in large numbers in other republics, is challenged by Minic, who ignores the heart of the problem. His thesis that not just the Serbs but sections of other national groups have been left outside their republics proves absolutely nothing. It is inconceivable that literally all the members of a national group should live in their mother republic. What is relevant, however, is to ask how large a section of the various national groups live in different republics. Almost 95% of all Slovenes and Macedonians live in their mother republics, and since these are relatively small nations, the remainder living in other republics in absolute numbers is so small as to be negligible. The matter is different for Serbia. In 1991, 75% of all Serbs were living in the territory of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, which means that 25%, or 2,098,000 in absolute numbers, lived in other republics. Of this number, 581,000 Serbs lived in Croatia, virtually equivalent to the entire population of Montenegro, and 1,369,000 in Bosnia and Hercegovina, more than the entire population of Macedonians in the Republic of Macedonia. During the time the Memorandum was being written, the autonomous provinces of Serbia had gone so far towards gaining complete autonomy, which was taking on all the attributes of statehood, that they became permanent members of the anti-Serbian coalition. Accordingly, it was not of no importance that 16% of all Serbs, or 1,347,000,²⁶ lived in these two provinces, often under difficult circumstances, as was the case in Kosmet.

These absolute numbers, which show the dimensions and thereby gravity of the problem, are simply ignored by Minic. What is surprising in his criticism,

²⁶ Population figures have been taken from the Federal Statistical Office Bulletin No. 1934, "Breakdown of the National Composition of the Population by Communes", op. cit.

however, is his failure to grasp the implications for the position in which the Serbian population would find itself given the existing republican borders once separatism turned into secession. No less surprising is the way in which he ends his consideration of this question: the international community recognized the administrative boundaries as state frontiers, and therefore the matter is to be considered closed.

Minic called nationalism a narrow-minded interpretation of the national interest and neglect of the interests of the other republics. In the context of the Memorandum such a verdict is quite unfounded. This document pointed out the disadvantaged political and economic position of Serbia, demanding that this inequality be rectified – and no more nor less than that. The last US ambassador to Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmermann, held a different view. Commenting on the Slovenes, he wrote: “Their virtue was democracy and their vice was selfishness. In their drive to separate from Yugoslavia they simply ignored the 22 million Yugoslavs who were not Slovenes. They bear considerable responsibility for the bloodbath that followed their secession.”²⁷ It is curious that Minic makes no mention of the proverbial Slovenian self-centredness, which he had to cope with for decades, and that he passes over the fact that the Slovenes started the war, for which they must bear particular responsibility.

It is worth repeating here Minic’s concluding thoughts:

“The major part of the facts used in the Memorandum’s critical analysis are for the most part real, genuine facts; the questions which were raised were real ones, regardless of the manner and direction in which they were handled and explained, and many of them are of vital importance, not just for the fate of the Serbian people but also for the fate of the Yugoslav state and other Yugoslav nations; and the warnings of the collapse of Yugoslavia – regardless of who contributed to this collapse and to what extent – unfortunately received an early confirmation in the crisis of 1990-1992 and in the outbreak of the Serb-Croat war in Croatia in 1991.”

This passage not only represents a contrast to Minic’s criticisms but also completely undermines most of them. The accuracy of predictions about what would happen to Yugoslavia cannot be denied, since unfortunately they have come true. It does not occur to critics to wonder how it was possible for predictions about the future course of events to be accurate if the analyses about the Yugoslav situation on which they were based were not. The fact that predictions of the Memorandum were borne out goes to prove the correctness of its analysis of the Yugoslav situation.

That Minic’s opinions are shared by other politicians can be seen from an interview given by Milovan Djilas to the German weekly *Stern*, which was carried by *Politika* on 5 July 1994. In Djilas’ eyes, the assertion that the West is to blame

²⁷ Warren Zimmermann, “The Last Ambassador, A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1995, p. 6.

for the war and that Germany brought pressure to bear on its partners to recognize Croatia is propaganda by nationalists. In short, he denies what today is common knowledge and what some of the participants at the meeting in Maastricht, such as De Michelis and Lord Carrington, have publicly admitted. According to Djilas, the Serbs and Croats bear joint responsibility for the outbreak of the war, while James Baker and Warren Zimmermann say that the war was started by Slovenia! Djilas would have us believe that the intellectuals, who inflamed nationalistic sentiments in their notorious Memorandum of 1988 (presumably he meant 1986), caused the Serbs to go too far and to be a bit more to blame for the war than the Croats. It is the old, old story: the intellectuals are the most to blame for the Yugoslav crisis and not the politicians, such as Djilas, who artificially created various nations and according to who knows what kind of criteria drew the boundaries between the republics. This politician had no intention of denying the statement, adroitly contained in one journalist's question, to the effect that for the first time in the postwar era the Memorandum articulated the idea of a Greater Serbia, and instead tacitly agreed with this statement when he replied that "great ideals for the most part end in tragedy." Djilas always knew how to say what foreign countries wanted to hear.

CROATIAN PROPAGANDA TRUE TO ITSELF

When the anti-Memorandum campaign in Serbia began to lose steam early in 1989, in Zagreb the complete text of the Memorandum was published together with speeches by the ousted Serbian politicians who had orchestrated political pressure on the Serbian Academy. After publication of the Memorandum in Croatia, the next step was not long in coming. The mass circulation Croatian daily *Vjesnik* from May 3rd to 23rd published passages from the Memorandum and critical commentary. There was no direct logical link between the published excerpts and the commentaries. The excerpts from the Memorandum seemed to stand alone, as though the readers were expected to ferret out the incriminating parts themselves. As a result, these twenty-odd installments did not represent polemics or provide material for a public debate. It was not even the intention of the commentator to enter into a debate on the contents of the Memorandum. Rather he used it as a pretext for intimidation and even a showdown within the League of Communists. For instance, in the fourth installment in the May 6th issue of *Vjesnik*, the caption under a photograph of Macedonian politician Vasil Tupurkovski reads: "From the Memorandum to the Party podium: the thesis of an unprincipled coalition put forward in the 'non-existent document' of the Serbian Academy has been publicly launched at the 17th meeting of the LCY Central Committee by Vasil Tupurkovski." There was indeed quite a bit said in the Memorandum about the "anti-Serbian coalition" as a permanent policy of some republics, but Tupurkovski was referring to the "unprincipled coalition" which was formed at this particular Party meeting in order to prevent the election

of candidates from one republic to the Presidency of the SFRY. The character of these two coalitions is not the same, but this fact did not prevent the *Vjesnik* commentator from equating them with one another. Suspicion was aroused not just by the similarity of opinions with the arguments in the Memorandum, but also the terminology found in it. The word "coalition" had obviously become suspect.

The second and certainly most important aim of the *Vjesnik* series was to discredit the Serbian critical intelligentsia. Instead of a discussion about the veracity of the findings and messages of the Memorandum, *Vjesnik* attempted to extract from the written passages and speeches of some Serbian intellectuals ideas which appeared to it analogous with the positions of this document. In this way the charge sheet raised against the authors of the Memorandum was extended to include the nucleus of the Serbian political intelligentsia. An attack on this intelligentsia was nothing new, but this time it was stripped of subterfuge, and there were no holds barred.

It should be remembered that up until the removal of Ivan Stambolic the Serbian intelligentsia had constantly been the butt of criticism both in Serbia and in the other republics. The politicians of Serbia could be subject to attack only for a short time, as long as it took to remove them, as happened in the case of Blagoje Neskovic, Aleksandar Rankovic, the group of liberals led by Marko Nikezic and some Serbian politicians who, not publicly but behind closed doors, showed that they were not absolutely obedient on all questions (Dragi Stamenkovic, Mihajlo Svabic, Vojkan Lukic, etc.). The political team which came to power after Marko Nikezic proved to be highly obedient to Tito and Kardelj. During the campaign against the Memorandum they were careful not to come into conflict with the anti-Serbian coalition. The political leaders of Serbia did not give Croatia reason to criticize them, and what is more the Croats supported them in their witch hunt against the Serbian Academy.

The behaviour of the Serbian intelligentsia was radically different. Serbia's democratic tradition came to expression in the public speeches of intellectuals, who incomparably more than the intellectuals of the other republics made their own critical assessments of the system, as a result of which they were more exposed to retaliation. One number of eminent economists, philosophers, jurists and sociologists were demoted, fired, or sometimes even criminally prosecuted. Not even prominent businessmen in Serbia or army officers were spared. Deeply dissatisfied with the way in which the political leaders were defending Serbia's economic and political interests, Serbian intellectuals attempted to make up for this through their own efforts, which of course throughout Yugoslavia were branded as an act of nationalism, even though all they asked for was an equal status for Serbia.

The leaders of Slovenia and Croatia, who headed the anti-Serbian coalition, viewed the Serbian intelligentsia as the principal force resisting their aspirations to maintain their domination. They therefore attempted on an ongoing basis to

neutralize the influence of these intellectuals. As the crisis in Yugoslavia spiralled, this action became better organized and more ruthless. During the time of the “mass movement” in Croatia, which was deeply imbued with nationalism and separatism, a similar phenomenon was sought in Serbia for the sake of an artificial symmetry. The Serbian publishing house *Srpska knji'evna zadruka* at all costs had to be tarred with the same brush as *Matica Hrvatska* the ideological command centre of the Croatian mass movement. Stipe Suvar, Croatian politician from intellectual circles, compiled his notorious White Paper, in which he noted down all the publicly expressed opinions of the Serbian intelligentsia which in his opinion departed from the ruling communist ideology. As someone so aptly remarked, this informal charge sheet was not just for internal use. The Serbian intelligentsia had to be denounced to Moscow. *Vjesnik's* series of twenty excerpts from the Memorandum and commentary had the same intentions, except that this time the Serbian intelligentsia was being made to look bad in the eyes of the West. The Memorandum served as a pretext to implicate individuals who had no connection with it, in order to show that the document was the product of a Serbian intelligentsia poisoned with nationalism and not just of its authors. In other words, the Serbian intelligentsia was a constant target of political attack and slander, sometimes from the left and sometimes from the right, with the Memorandum, Garasanin's *Nacertanije* of 1844 or something else serving as the immediate pretext for the attack. The Memorandum did not have to be debated on its merits. Its mere existence was enough to unleash a flood of dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the Serbian intellectuals.

The Croatian propaganda was very complicated. It was based on the racist ideology of Ante Starcevic which had been incorporated into the programme of the Party of Rights and one hundred and thirty years later had become fully revived in modern Croatia. This ideology put Serbophobia on a racist principle, considering the Croats to be a superior race and the Serbs an inferior race, towards whom all measures could be applied, even genocide. The ustasas showed the practical results of this ideology, which was not checked by democratic institutions or international control. Unfortunately, Starcevic has been proclaimed the “father of the nation,” without whom Croatia, as they say, would not exist. If during the Second World War Croatia resorted to genocide under the programme of “one third of the Serbs are to be killed, one third converted to Catholicism, and one third deported,” then it is easy to understand how strong is the hatred of Serbia which is woven into the fabric of Croatian propaganda and with what tenacity this propaganda maintains its assertions of the threat from a Greater Serbia, Serbian hegemony, and other fabrications which it took over from the anti-Serbian propaganda of the former Austria-Hungary. The appearance of the Memorandum, and especially Croatia's secession, provided opportunities for maximum use of the Starcevic-ustasa arsenal of ideological propaganda against Serbia. The weakness of this propaganda lies in its racist principles and fabrications without any real basis, but it draws its strength from the constant reiteration of a few

principal untruths which have been enthusiastically taken up by Croatian politicians, intellectuals, and media.

If the media in Croatia willingly or unwillingly took part in the campaign against the Memorandum, it is to some extent understandable. The ruling Communist Party undoubtedly had a powerful influence over the press. However, the Croatian politicians were no longer merely putting pressure on the media but became directly involved in criticizing the Memorandum, especially at a time when it became necessary to justify Croatia's armed secession. The nature of this criticism is best illustrated by Stipe Mesic's book,²⁸ in whose foreword we find the following words:

"In the case of Croatia this meant kowtowing to Milosevic, who embodied the hegemonistic plan of Garasanin from the last century, Pasic's Karadjordjevician plan for partitioning the Balkans according to the London agreement of 1915, the cetnik Mihailovic agenda from 1941 ('a homogeneous Serbia') and Cosic's Memorandum of the Serbian Academy from the post-Tito years: Serbs must fulfil their historic mission, and they can do so only if they are together in a homogeneous Serbia within a Yugoslavia which they will infuse with their spirit and to which they will give their stamp. The Serbs have to have hegemony in the Balkans, and in order to have hegemony in the Balkans, they must first have hegemony in Yugoslavia. That is why today the Serbs have one basic task: to create and organize a homogeneous Serbia which must cover the entire ethnic area where Serbs live, even though in some places today they would not form a majority."

Since the Memorandum was mentioned just before the passage quoted here and was followed by a colon, the impression is given that what Mesic wrote came from the Serbian Academy's Memorandum, especially since no other source is mentioned. Neither in letter nor in spirit does this passage have any connection whatsoever with the Memorandum. This fabrication best shows the means used by Croatian propaganda in its attempt to discredit the Serbian Academy in the eyes of a public which is not acquainted with the original document. Stipe Mesic mentions the Memorandum another thirteen times in his book. His intentions and the context can best be seen from the following excerpts from his book:

"I saw danger from a third variant, from an increasingly strong and ever less concealed advocacy by the decisive factors in Serbia of a 'third Yugoslavia,' which would have been nothing other than the creation of a Greater Serbia, such as – following the dreams of the old Greater Serbian ideologues, the London treaty of 1915, and Mihailovic's cetniks – a few years ago under the direction of Dobrica Cosic was planned by the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts" (p. 2). "I did not share, at least not in its entirety, Markovic's conviction about what kind of integrity and alteration of Yugoslavia was desired by the EC

28 Stipe Mesic, *op. cit.*

or by Ante and his 'Government of Unity.' God forbid that it would even occur to me that he and his reformists had any sympathy for the policy which the Serbian Academy of the Memorandum had inaugurated for Milosevic (according to Milosevic's wishes) – Yugoslavia as a Great or extended Serbia, if possible stretching from Salonika to Zadar, Karlobag, Karlovac and Virovitica' (p. 20). "All this is a Memorandum scenario for a Greater Serbia" (p. 22). "Back in May, and for the greater part of the summer, the Army top brass publicly acknowledged the legitimacy and legality of the Croatian authorities' desire to counter the implementation of Milosevic's Memorandum-inspired policy of aggrandizing Serbia 'by saving the rest of Yugoslavia'" (p. 23). "Dr. Jovic, in menacing tones, has for weeks been threatening the use of force because, according to him, his ideas having been formed by Garasanin's *Nacertanije*, the Mihailovician insatiable appetite for territory and by the same token the Serbian Academy's Memorandum – 'the Serbian population in Croatia and in Bosnia and Hercegovina can be taken out of Yugoslavia only by force of arms'" (p. 47). "As regards this scenario, I was truly sorry for our Croatian Serbs, who – to the extent to which they are forced into Milosevic's corner according to the plans of Dobrica Cosic and the Serbian Academy – will be scapegoats" (p. 84). "Unfortunately, the Garasaninian scenario cooked up by Cosic's Serbian Academy's Greater Serbian kitchen cares nothing for the fate of the Croatian Serbs and only for the aggrandizement of Serbia, and in this expansion they even condone war, and a war at the expense of the Croatian Serbs at that" (p. 134). "Many people are sickened by Kostic's ineptly fabricated lies cooked up in the Serbian Academy and Milosevic's office, but I remain isolated in my demand that Croatia must be allowed – by establishing its legal order – to establish control over the entirety of its territory" (p. 138). "Its exclusion would mean a radical change in the set-up of Yugoslavia, but at the same time would facilitate realization of the Garasanin-Milosevic idea of the Serbian Academy's Memorandum!" (pp. 148-149). "And indeed all this is not the general opinion of the Serbs from Croatia but rather is Belgrade's and Cosic's scenario devised in the Serbian Academy" (p. 149). "In fact, it should have been pointed out that the military leaders are displaying Greater Serbian behaviour; they are initiating, organizing and carrying out a policy of aggression conceived in the Serbian Academy and elaborated, not without the presence of the generals, in Milosevic's administration" (p. 204). "Recalling missed opportunities ('in the first year after the last war it was possible simply to exterminate a good portion of the undesirables without anyone turning a hair'), the members of Milosevic's political committee, as indeed Slobodan Milosevic's contemporaneous ideological committee (the Serbian Academy headed by the Cosic-Isakovic team), believe that at last it is now possible 'simply to exterminate' a portion of the Croats and Muslims" (p. 235). "Once again Milosevic rejected the proposal, with an argument which was earlier put forward by one of the authors of the Serbian Academy's Memorandum, academician Kosta Mihailovic, for whom the Hague arrangements were 'an attempt at an international putsch'" (p. 293).

These quotations show that for many of its critics the Memorandum was a political wild card making up for the lack of facts and logic; Serbia, its intelligentsia and politicians, could thereby arbitrarily be charged with motives, intentions and behaviour, and as the need arose the Memorandum could also serve as proof of accusations. All the same, elementary facts and information must be acknowledged. Stipe Mesic failed to honour this minimum when he ignored the fact that Dobrica Cosic was not a member of the Committee for drafting the Memorandum and that up until 1986 not a single member of the Serbian Academy knew Slobodan Milosevic personally. Unfortunately, Mesic was just one of many Croatian politicians acting in this way.

If politicians are not even expected to tell the whole truth, scholars and learned institutions certainly are. Such expectations were dashed when it came to Croatia. Even leading learned institutions, such as the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (now the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts), put themselves into the service of the propaganda machine in the worst possible fashion. This particular institution and its members sent out circular letters and in other ways addressed themselves to various academic institutions in the world calling upon them to “condemn Serbian aggression.” Such a letter was even sent to the Serbian Academy on 17 September 1991, calling for an end to Serbian aggression against Croatia and urging the Serbian Academy “to influence public opinion in the world so as to help Croatia with a formal recognition of its independence,” as phrased by Jakov Sirotkovic, former president of the Croatian Academy.²⁹ It is hard to imagine that any learned institution in the world would permit itself such a distortion of the facts, which every Croatian academician could verify for himself just by looking out his window. The Croatian Academy denied what was obvious to everyone in the world and in the previous Yugoslavia: that an illegal armed secession had taken place with the seizure of border posts, the blockade of military barracks and mobilization of territorial defence forces. Greater political cynicism cannot be imagined than to ask the Serbian Academy to go along with a formal recognition of the secession carried out by these means. Such a demand received the answer it deserved, a fact which gave the Croatian Academy a pretext for breaking off all relations with the Serbian Academy. Members of the Serbian Academy from Croatia renounced their membership by letter. After the secession, Croatia’s attacks on the Memorandum went into high gear, in that it became a regular weapon in the propaganda war against Serbia waged at the world level. A book by three Croatian authors entitled *Nettoyage ethnique* and published in the French language³⁰ does not stop at merely accusing Serbia for alleged aggression but also accuses it of ethnic cleansing, arguing that this has been Serbia’s policy

29 Jakov Sirotkovic, *Hrvatsko Gospodarstvo, 1945-1992* (The Croatian Economy, 1945-1992) (Zagreb: Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993), p. 127.

30 Mirko Grmek, Mark Djidara and Neven Simac, *Nettoyage ethnique* (Ethnic Cleansing) (Paris: Fayard, 1993).

from the time of Vuk Karadžić³¹ and Njegoš³² to the present day. Thus the Memorandum became all things to all men, something which could be used to prove whatever anyone wanted at any given moment. One chapter in the Croatian book is devoted to the Memorandum. Or to be more precise, this chapter gives the French translation of the second section of the Memorandum, which calls for political and economic equality of Serbia and the Serbs within Yugoslavia. Typically, the authors do not enter into polemics with any of the theses put forward by the Memorandum; rather, after a short informative introduction with a few platitudes, they merely leave it up to the readers to find the damning passages for themselves. The only guidance given to readers to help them see things that do not exist in the text is provided in the footnotes. Of the more than forty footnotes, some twenty fall into this category, while the rest provide additional information. It holds true for all critics of the Memorandum that no one has proven capable of producing arguments to refute it, and if excerpts from it were quoted, they were never properly commented upon.

SLOVENIAN MANIPULATION OF THE MEMORANDUM

Stane Kavcic's attempt to give the assessments and messages of the Memorandum more serious consideration long remained an isolated phenomenon in Slovenia. Even before Slovenia's secession, the Slovenes did not treat this document as the work of a learned institution deserving serious treatment; instead, it was journalists and politicians who handed down the verdict on its contents, on whether or not its assessments were justified, and particularly on whether its predictions about the tragic outcome of the Yugoslav crisis were warranted. Having become completely politicized during the time final preparations for secession were being made, the Memorandum served Slovenia not only for an attack on the Serbian Academy but also as a lever for exerting pressure on Serbia to have a confrontation with its own intellectuals.

After Slovenia's armed secession, Slovenian propaganda, in the absence of good arguments which would explain and warrant its act, attempted to blame the Memorandum for all the tragic events which occurred in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Slovenia took every opportunity to display its hostility to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with public accusations, diplomatic intrigues and the spreading of misinformation of all kinds. The Slovenian propaganda mill took ample advantage of ignorance of the original text of the Memorandum in Slovenia and abroad, and it unscrupulously doctored the original text as circumstances required. The ruthlessness of Slovenian propaganda is perhaps most fully seen in the fact that public figures who had read the Memorandum attributed to it positions and messages which are not to be found in it at all. A good illustration

31 Vuk Karadžić (1787-1864), the greatest Serbian reformer in the sphere of language and culture.

32 Petar Petrović II Njegoš (1813-1851), poet, bishop and ruler of Montenegro.

is the appeal by five Slovenian writers to Serbian intellectuals to renounce the Memorandum, as reported in *Borba* of 19 April 1993:

'In the hope of a future tolerable world of a life in common, which will undoubtedly come to us as well, for the sake of our common dedication to a world of intellectual freedom, we call upon you to take upon yourselves all the consequences of the Memorandum, as a document which initiated crime and madness, and to renounce it publicly,' concludes an open letter sent to Serbian intellectuals by five Slovenian writers: Rudi Seligo, Dane Zajc, Veno Taufer, Niko Grafenauer and Drago Jancar.

'In the beginning was the Word' – write the Slovenian writers – and this was the word spoken by the Memorandum of 1986, 'this charter for a Greater Serbia which was put together by the Serbian intellectuals and not by the politicians or soldiers.' What followed was destruction, ethnic cleansing, systematic rape, the letter continues, which are not words and because of which the 'aspiration of Serbs to live in one state has become transformed into a crime without precedent in the history of war and conquest in the world.'

A house built on crime, and in view of the moral erosion of East and West this is even a possibility, cannot be for anyone a house of prosperity, peace, happiness or a place of human dignity – the letter goes on to say – and at some point will have to crumble into dust out of shame.

Your Memorandum's words – write the Slovenian writers, addressing 'reasonable men' in Serbia – have lent moral force and legitimacy to an aggressive frenzy with which you surely cannot agree, and it is not hard to foresee that even you yourselves will not be able to put a stop to the killing and madness.

It is hard to imagine anything more paradoxical than the fact that the ideological champions of separatism, who did not distance themselves from the armed secession by Slovenia which sparked off the war in the former Yugoslavia, presume to point an accusing finger at the Serbian intellectuals because they did not condemn a document which, without any grounds, has been falsely accused of providing moral support for subsequent armed conflicts. The Slovenian intellectuals do not feel responsible for the outbreak of these conflicts and seem to have forgotten that Slovenia started the war. Such public appeals were politically calculated to draw attention away from this republic's own culpability. One might well ask why Stane Kavcic, a man of political acumen, in 1987 did not find anything in the Memorandum that would have borne any resemblance to a call for armed conflict or moral encouragement for such conflicts, things which with hindsight the Slovenian writers "discovered" in 1993, under changed circumstances. The total number of casualties in Slovenia was 37 members of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and 12 Slovenes, members of the territorial defence forces or civilians. Do these figures not tell us who was the aggressor and who tried to keep the commitment of armed force to the smallest possible

measure? Did the Slovenian intelligentsia, who with the other citizens celebrated Slovenia's military victory, really think that the JNA could not have reacted more robustly while remaining within the bounds of a legal intervention?

The behaviour of the Slovenian public becomes understandable if we know that the Memorandum's warnings came true in the sense that the separatists, with the help of foreign patrons, were trying to break up Yugoslavia. Since separatism, especially if it is carried out by force of arms, is an illegal act, characterized as such by the United Nations, Slovenia, finding itself unable to deny its armed secession, tried to use the Memorandum as a red herring to draw attention away from its own guilt. Since armed conflicts had already occurred, fabrication of the contents of the Memorandum helped this republic make trumped up charges against Serbia for aggression.

Slovenia would not have taken this tack if it had not been sure of the sympathies of the foreign media and countries which helped it be the first to carry out armed secession and receive premature international recognition. However, those familiar with events sooner or later had to inform the world about what really did take place in those critical moments in the territory of Yugoslavia. James Baker, former US Secretary of State, has said on three occasions, most recently before the US Senate on 12 January 1995, that the war was started by Slovenia. Warren Zimmermann, the last US ambassador to Yugoslavia, also came to the same conclusion: "Contrary to the general view, it was the Slovenes who started the war. Their independence declaration, which had not been preceded by the most token effort to negotiate, effectively put under their control all the border and customs posts between Slovenia and its two neighbors, Italy and Austria. This meant that Slovenia, the only international gateway between the West and Yugoslavia, had unilaterally appropriated the right to goods destined for other republics, as well as customs revenues estimated at some 75 percent of the Yugoslav federal budget. Even an army less primitive than the JNA would have reacted. Worst of all, the Slovenes' understandable desire to be independent condemned the rest of Yugoslavia to war."³³ Ambassador Zimmermann also wrote: "It was no surprise to me that Milosevic was willing to let Slovenia go."³⁴

This opinion, which was not alone abroad, did not fail to make its mark in Slovenia. Zimmermann's view of the Yugoslav drama encouraged journalist Bostjan Horvat to express identical sentiments in the Ljubljana *Dnevnik* in May 1995: "It should be publicly admitted that it was a mistake that we seceded, that the Slovenes started the war and that we selfishly closed 75 border crossings to other national groups." The article in the 24 May 1995 issue of *Borba* from which this quote was taken ended by saying that "before Bostjan Horvat, only Dr. Jurij Zalokar and Stanko Botič in letters to the editor had publicly talked about the

³³ Warren Zimmermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 12.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

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responsibility of the Slovenian leadership for the break-up of the former SFRY, but the newspapers had stopped printing their letters two years ago because of their 'undesirable content'."

It seems that the time has come when Slovenia, instead of seeking an excuse for its sins in the Memorandum, is beginning to realize its own blame for what it did to itself and to the whole of Yugoslavia.

DENIAL THAT SERBIA WAS ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

The Memorandum's assertion that in the period between the two world wars Serbia did not economically exploit the other parts of Yugoslavia but that after the Second World War it itself became economically disadvantaged raised less of a furore than the objections made concerning the state system and inter-communal relations. This fact is to some extent understandable: endorsement or refutation of economic assessments require a professional who is well versed in the use of statistics and other economic indicators. One of this small number of critics was the former president of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, academician Jakov Sirotkovic. The pretensions with which his critique was written call for an exhaustive and documented reply.

Whereas *The Croatian Standpoint* focused its criticism of the economic section of the Memorandum on the interwar period, Dr. Sirotkovic dealt with the period after the Second World War. However, he does not completely ignore the interwar period.³⁵ He was well acquainted with the earlier mentioned studies of the Economic Institute of Serbia on how the various parts of Yugoslavia had fared economically, which no one has attempted to challenge, even after forty years. Nor did this Croatian scholar take the cue to do so until he was compelled out of propaganda considerations. But instead of rebutting the findings of the Economic Institute of Serbia, he avoided a scientific approach and simply dismissed the correct adjustment of statistics on industry from 1938 to the territorial division of Yugoslavia after the Second World War as "statistics juggling," going on to paraphrase a few of Bicanic's figures and commentaries.

Bicanic's research will evidently serve future generations of Croatian economists from here to eternity. His contribution to Croatian economic thought is particularly great as an instructive example of how, by manipulating figures, to portray faster development as lagging behind and vice versa, i.e. how a propaganda catchword for Croatia's momentary needs can be shown as the product of a scientific analysis. He has set the intellectual tone for generations of Croatian

³⁵ Sirotkovic, op. cit.

economists and left them a legacy of a methodologically arbitrary procedure for interpreting the state of the Croatian economy.

THE VOICE OF THE CROATIAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

There is an astounding similarity between the approaches taken by Bicanic and Sirotkovic. Both men first put forward the thesis that Croatia has been exploited, and then they go into methodological acrobatics to prove it. There are, nonetheless, some differences. Whereas the lack of statistical data and particularly regional statistics prior to the Second World War gave Bicanic considerable scope for rigging the figures, the abundance of statistics, particularly for regions, greatly restricted opportunities for juggling figures after the Second World War. This fact makes it easy to refute claims such as we find on page 125 of Sirotkovic's book, where at the beginning of the penultimate paragraph he says: "Serbia proper started off in Yugoslavia after the Second World War with a 20% lower per capita GNP than the Yugoslav average," but begins the last paragraph on the same page with the sentence: "Obviously in former Yugoslavia (before the Second World War) Serbia did not lag behind ~~statistically~~ ^{in any way} respect." This is a contradictory statement. If Serbia proper at the beginning of the postwar period lagged behind by 20%, then the Republic of Serbia had to lag behind even more. If the beginning of the postwar period is taken as being the same as the end of the prewar period, then the mentioned 20% lower per capita GNP was proof that Serbia was economically less developed in the interwar period and not the opposite. The real truth is that in this period, given the below average level of investment and slow pace of industrialization, Serbia did not manage to employ the new generation of agricultural population in non-agricultural activities. The below average share of industry in forming the GNP and the above average percentage of agricultural population, characteristic of a predominantly agrarian economy, kept Serbia from achieving the Yugoslav average per capita GNP. Serbia's per capita GNP, which was 94.6% of the Yugoslav average in 1947, bearing witness to the level reached on the eve of the war and not postwar development, gives proof of this economic underdevelopment, which continued on into the postwar period.

Dr. Sirotkovic obviously did not take into consideration the fact that progress made in the science of statistics and methodology makes it possible to see right away the contradiction between his own argument and the relevant figures. In his criticism he not only challenges the Memorandum's findings that after the Second World War Serbia was relatively underdeveloped, while Slovenia and Croatia enjoyed the highest rates of development, but in fact claims exactly the opposite: that Croatia was the one to lag behind in relative terms, while Serbia had an above average and privileged development. As proof for his allegation he gives the indices of the GNP for a 35 year period, from 1952 to 1987, from which

36 Ibid.

we see that Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia had indices above, and Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro and Croatia indices below the Yugoslav average (the first column in Table 1).

This claim, which at first sight appears to be backed up by figures, is based on a number of methodological errors. The first of these errors is that the conclusion is reached on the basis of the index of the growth rate of the GNP as a whole and not per capita GNP. Sirotkovic's avoidance of using the per capita GNP is certainly no oversight. He invested quite a bit of effort to undermine the validity of using such an indicator with the argument that the growth rate of the population was not even throughout the republics, a fact which affected the magnitude of the index. By challenging this indicator he rejects a generally accepted scientific yardstick. Most likely these challenges were of an ideological rather than academic nature, motivated by the knowledge that Serbia's rate of economic growth appears quite different when shown in terms of per capita GNP. For the period 1952-1987, the growth rate index of per capita GNP for Slovenia was 574, and for Croatia 536, for Serbia 498 and SFRJ 484. Therefore, if we remove just one deliberate methodological error we are able to overturn the assertion that Croatia grew at a slower rate than the Yugoslav average and Serbia. This assertion is based on another methodological error made by Sirotkovic when he took 1952 as the base year for calculating indices.

Table 1. GNP INDICES
(at 1972 prices)

	1987/52		1988/47	
	Total	Per capita	Total	Per capita
SFRY	675	484	730	486
B-H	576	336	671	382
Croatia	640	440	745	598
Macedonia	759	536	828	444
Montenegro	661	470	653	383
Serbia	701	574	702	464
Slovenia	743	498	817	601

Note: The indices were calculated according to data from the Statistical Yearbook of the Federal Statistical Office: *Yugoslavia 1918-1988*, pp. 101 and 105, the 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, pp. 407 and 411, and *Yugoslavia 1945-1985*, Federal Statistical Office, 1986, p. 204.

The selection of 1952 as the base year for calculating indices in fact involves two methodological mistakes. In the first place, this year cannot be taken as a base year for a reason which was made public back in 1970: "It is common knowledge that the first and last year selected have a great influence on the calculation of growth rates and index numbers. For these reasons, we cannot help but wonder

37 Ibid., pp. 112-119.

why series beginning with the year 1952 are used with such persistence, for this was certainly the most abnormal year in the entire postwar period. All calculations of growth rates and index numbers which take 1952 as their base year give a distorted picture of development of individual regions and of the economy as a whole.”³⁸ In another study,³⁹ the author issues a similar warning, as was also done in an extensive commentary by the Federal Statistical Office.⁴⁰ The fact is that the repercussions of the catastrophic drought in 1952 on agriculture caused the formation of the GNP at a lower level, so that the unequal effect on the different republics resulted in unbalanced indices.

The second major drawback in taking 1952 as a base year lies in the fact that it ignores the rates of development prior to this year, which in Serbia could not be at all favourable because of obligatory government purchases of agricultural products, collectivization, the dismantling and relocation of industrial plants, and partial suspension of investment activities during the Cominform crisis. On the basis of data in the 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia and the Federal Statistical Office publication *Yugoslavia 1945-1985* (Belgrade, 1986), in the period 1947-1952 the GNP in Croatia increased by 17.5% (per capita GNP by 12.8%), in Slovenia by 13.9% (per capita GNP by 8.0%), and in Serbia by 1.3% (per capita by -5.1%). In 1947, Croatia had a GNP that was 10.3% greater than that of Serbia, but by 1952 it was as much as 31.2% greater! The showing of these two republics in the first years after the war can be linked with Andrija Hebrang's speech on the first five-year plan, in which he declared that next to Slovenia, Serbia would have the lowest growth rate of industrial output. This was no empty threat for Serbia, as it turned out to be in the case of Slovenia, which did not pay any attention to the growth rates prescribed for it. However, the important thing is that because of the unequal development up until 1952, in this year Croatia started with the relatively higher per capita GNP level of 4,074 dinars, 968 dinars more than in Serbia. The indices for Croatia in later years were formed at a lower level, and for Serbia at a higher level, a fact which makes Sirotkovic jump to the incorrect conclusion that Serbia had a growth rate above that of both Yugoslavia and Croatia.

In view of these two shortcomings, it is methodologically impermissible to take 1952 as the base year for calculating indicators. It would be correct to take 1947 as the first year and 1988 as the last in the series, covering a period of 41 years, for which there are figures given at constant prices, and, for the above-mentioned reasons, to use per capita GNP as a relevant indicator for measuring development.

³⁸ Kosta Mihailovic, *Nerazvijena podruca Jugoslavije* (The Underdeveloped Regions of Yugoslavia), second edition (Belgrade: Economic Institute, 1970), p. 40.

³⁹ Kosta Mihailovic and Eva Berkovic, *Razvoj iivotni standard Jugoslavije* (Yugoslavia's Development and Standard of Living) (Belgrade: Economic Institute, 1970), p. 107.

⁴⁰ *Neki pokazatelji razvoja Jugoslavije, socijalistickih republika i autonomnih pokrajina 1947-1970* (Some Indicators of the Development of Yugoslavia, the Socialist Republics, and the Autonomous Provinces, 1950-1970) (Belgrade: Federal Statistical Office, 1971), pp. 11 and 12.

When calculated on this basis, this indicator reveals the gap which constantly widened between Slovenia and Croatia on one side and the other republics (the last column of Table 1). The two most developed republics in the years since the war increased their GNP sixfold. They not only had a higher index of growth than the Yugoslav average but also considerably improved their relative position, constantly moving ahead of this average. In contrast, the four remaining republics had a lower index of growth of the per capita GNP than the Yugoslav average. Serbia and Macedonia were not even close to increasing it fivefold, and Bosnia and Hercegovina did not manage even to quadruple it.

Another serious methodological mistake made by Sirotkovic is that he did not use absolute figures, without which it is not possible to cross-check the accuracy of the index numbers or to acquire full information about effects on the growth of per capita GNP. Precisely because of these shortcomings, the use of index numbers without absolute numbers was for a long time prevalent in the USSR, so as to paint a rosier picture of economic performance. But under the pressure of scholarly criticism, this method had to be abandoned even in the country where it was used most widely. How all the more strange, then, that a compromised method of showing development results, without scientific basis, has been rehabilitated by the member of an academy of sciences.⁴¹ The use of absolute numbers and increment of income show why Sirotkovic had to resort to such a method.

Table 2. INCREMENT OF PER CAPITA GNP
(at 1972 prices, in dinars)

	Per capita GNP		Increment
	1947	1988	1988-1947
SFRY	3,460	16,814	13,354
B-H	2,968	11,344	8,376
Croatia	3,610	21,587	17,977
Macedonia	2,432	10,800	8,368
Montenegro	3,243	12,417	9,174
Serbia	3,274	15,183	11,909
Slovenia	5,648	33,932	28,284

Source: *Yugoslavia 1945-1985* (Belgrade: Federal Statistical Office, 1986), p. 204, and 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, pp. 407 and 411.

Nothing shows how the various parts of Yugoslavia fared in their economic growth as graphically as the increment of per capita GNP (the difference between

41 If Dr. Sirotkovic uses index numbers instead of more precise growth rates in his work, it is because he needs them to provide the same quantitative amounts. It should be remembered that despite their imperfections, index numbers are more readily understood by the general public, since they give an idea of how many times the GNP has been increased, which cannot be seen from the growth rates.

the first and last year of the series). With an increment of 11,909 dinars, Serbia lagged behind the average by 10.8%, or by 1,445 dinars (at 1972 prices). The underdeveloped republics were even farther behind, whereas Slovenia and Croatia were the only republics to achieve a per capita increment higher than the Yugoslav average. For every 100 dinars of per capita GNP gained in Serbia, Croatia had 151 dinars, and Slovenia as much as 237 dinars. This increment gives full meaning to the higher indices of Slovenia and Croatia and shows the true dimensions of the improvement in their relative economic standing.

Avoiding the issue of increment and consistent in his attempts to prove by whatever means necessary that Serbia had been economically privileged and that Croatia lagged behind, Sirotkovic in the end decided to use per capita GNP index numbers, but in doing so he did not avoid falling into yet another methodological pitfall: "According to these figures, levels of development compared with the Yugoslav average from 1955 to 1988 rose as follows: in Slovenia from 160 to 200 index points, in Vojvodina from 80 to 118, in Serbia proper from 80 to 100, in Croatia from 120 to 125, and in Macedonia from 60 to 65. During the same period, the level of development in Kosovo declined from 40 to 24 index points, in Bosnia and Hercegovina from 80 to 65, and in Montenegro from 80 to 71."⁴² In this short text there are three arithmetical, i.e. methodological, mistakes. First, the per capita GNP for the SFRY in 1955 was 4,628 dinars at 1972 prices, which means that the per capita GNP of Serbia proper of 4,204 dinars was 90.8% and not 80% of the Yugoslav average, while that of Vojvodina with 4,333 dinars was 93.6% and not 80%⁴³ of the Yugoslav average. Second, figures are cited for the different parts of Serbia and not for Serbia as a whole! This would be the same as if figures were to be given for Slavonia and Dalmatia but not for Croatia as a whole. The omission of Serbia suggests that figures for it could not be given, for they would contradict the argument that it had a privileged development. Third, there is no justification for taking 1955 as the first year of the series instead of the earliest year for which statistics are available.

Table 3. PER CAPITA GNP IN 1947 AND 1988
(at 1972 prices, in dinars)

	SFRY	B-H	Croatia	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia	Slovenia
1947 (din)	3,460	2,968	3,610	2,436	3,243	3,274	5,648
Index	100.0	85.8	104.3	70.3	99.7	94.6	163.2
1988 (din)	16,814	11,344	21,587	10,800	12,417	15,183	33,932
Index	100.0	67.5	128.4	64.2	73.8	90.3	201.8

Source: *Yugoslavia 1945-1985* (Belgrade: Federal Statistical Office, 1986), and 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, pp. 407 and 411.

⁴² Sirotkovic, op. cit., p. 113.

⁴³ *Jugoslavija 1918-1988* (Yugoslavia 1918-1988) (Belgrade, Federal Statistical Office, 1989), p. 105.

A comparison of the levels at the beginning and at the end of the period under review, as given in Table 3, leaves no room for doubt as to which republic had a relatively improved and which a relatively worsened position in comparison with the Yugoslav average. Just as could be expected on the basis of the per capita GNP growth index, Slovenia and Croatia greatly improved their relative standing. The improvement for Croatia amounted to 20.1 index points, and for Slovenia to as much as 38.6 index points! Therefore, the relative positions of the two advanced republics became visibly improved and not the other way around. Sirotkovic agrees that after the Second World War Croatia started with a per capita GNP that was above the Yugoslav average, but nowhere does he say by how much, giving the impression that it was greatly above the average so that the claim that Croatia lagged behind later might appear more convincing. However, statistics show the opposite to be the case. In 1947 Croatia's per capita GNP was just 4.3% higher than the Yugoslav average, but in 1988 it was 28.4% higher. In this period Slovenia was first 63.2% higher than the average and ended up being 101.8% higher. The Memorandum's findings that these two republics had a more rapid and privileged economic growth have thereby been statistically corroborated. The other four republics saw their relative positions steadily worsened in a range from 4.3 index points for Serbia, to 29.9 index points for Montenegro. Serbia's per capita GNP, which was 5.4% below the Yugoslav average in 1947, dropped to 9.7% below the average, confirming the Memorandum's claim of its economic underdevelopment.

The fact that in 1988 Serbia's per capita GNP was 90.3% of the Yugoslav average compared with 94.6% in 1947 is certainly the reason that Dr. Sirotkovic simply omitted Serbia when he compared the levels of development of the republics for 1988! Says he: "Slovenia, as measured by per capita GNP, has a level of development double that of the Yugoslav average. According to figures for 1988, its growth index was 200 as compared with 100 for Yugoslavia, 125 for Croatia, 118 for Vojvodina, 100 for Serbia proper, 71 for Montenegro, 65 each for Bosnia and Hercegovina and Macedonia, and 24 for Kosovo."⁴⁴ In this comparison it is not just incorrect that instead of giving figures for the Republic of Serbia, the author gives figures for its three component parts, thereby making a comparison between the republics impossible. If we ignore the fact that the indices are not quite precisely calculated, a fundamental shortcoming is the fact that the comparison in 1988 was given at constant prices and not at current prices. Constant prices are indispensable in that the effects of price oscillations in calculating the indices for several years are removed. However, constant prices are not only unnecessary when giving the average for a single year but misleading, since to a greater or lesser extent they depart from actual economic relationships in the specific year, which is not the case when current prices are used, for they

⁴⁴ Sirotkovic, op. cit., p. 113.

give a true picture of these relationships. Therefore, the selection of per capita GNP at 1972 constant prices for a comparison of the levels of development of the republics in 1988 was an impermissible methodological error.

Table 4. PER CAPITA GNP IN 1988

	in dinars		indices		indices of remaining territory = 100	
	constant prices	current prices	constant prices	current prices	constant prices	current prices
SFRY	16,814	62,939	100.0	100.0	—	—
B-H	11,344	41,741	67.4	66.3	62.7	61.4
Croatia	21,587	82,063	128.4	130.4	138.3	134.0
Maced.	10,800	38,789	64.2	61.6	62.0	59.3
Mont.	12,417	46,198	73.8	73.4	72.9	72.8
Serbia	15,183	54,201	90.3	86.1	84.5	78.1
Slovenia	33,932	144,775	201.8	230.0	222.1	260.3

Source: 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, pp. 407, 411, and 472.

Table 4 shows that the differences between the republics appear greater if the per capita GNP is calculated at current prices. Thus the index of the Republic of Serbia at 90.3 index points at constant prices falls to 86.1 at current prices, whereas Croatia's index increases from 128.4 to 130.4, and that of Slovenia from 201.8 to as much as 230. Increased disparities in levels of development between Slovenia and Croatia on the one hand and the remaining four republics on the other are closer to the truth. However, for a comparison to express reality fully, it must avoid the mediation of the Yugoslav average. A comparison between levels of development which uses the Yugoslav average would not be such a serious methodological shortcoming if the differences between republics in number of inhabitants and levels of development were relatively slight. As such was not the case in the SFRY, where differences of this kind were large, a comparison of levels of development using the Yugoslav average gives a distorted picture and makes a precise calculation impossible. The problem lies in the fact that republics with a strong economy participate to a greater extent in forming the overall mass used in making the comparison, so that to some extent they are being compared with themselves. Therefore, the differences in levels of development between the republics appear smaller than they are in fact. In order to remove this shortcoming, it is methodologically correct to compare each republic with the rest of the country (taken as 100 index points). The results of such a calculation are given in the next to last and last columns of Table 4. Whether constant or current prices are used, comparisons in levels of development between republics with the rest of the territory as a base give a different and certainly more accurate picture. Since current prices are relevant to such a comparison, and in comparison vis-à-vis the rest of the territory of the SFRY, Croatia has a per capita GNP higher by 34.2%

and Slovenia by 160%, whereas Serbia with an index of 78.1 has a per capita GNP which is lower by 21.9%! With the secession of four republics, such a manner of comparing levels of development has acquired much greater relevance and importance.

In view of the fact that a quarter of the Serbian nation lives outside Serbia, their political, cultural and economic status had to be assessed in the Memorandum. Dr. Sirotkovic attempted to minimize the importance of the findings put forward in this document regarding the unfavourable economic status of Serbs in Croatia, citing as an argument that over 80% of them live and work in developed regions and urban areas.⁴⁵ It is interesting that Milos Minic as well, in his articles in *Borba*, uses the same argument to challenge the Memorandum. The economic status of Serbs was determined on the basis of statistics on national income and the ethnic composition of the population in the census year of 1981. On the realistic assumption that the members of all national groups within a commune have the same average per capita national income, and by using the method of aggregation at the level of the republics and the entire SFRY, findings concerning the economic standing of each national group in each of the former republics were arrived at, as given below in Table 5.

The figures given in this table prove the Memorandum's assertion that Serbs living in Croatia were in an economically disadvantaged position, since their per capita national income was 13.7% lower than the republican average. No further comment is needed.

An analysis of the GNP, as the most important indicator, gives documented proof to the Memorandum's statement that Serbia was economically underdeveloped and Slovenia and Croatia enjoyed an accelerated growth thanks to their political and economic dominance. These findings have at the same time shown how Dr. Sirotkovic ignored several methodological requirements for a scientifically correct analysis in order to bolster his thesis that Serbia had a faster than average growth and that Croatia lagged behind Serbia and the Yugoslav average. If he has already decided to put himself into the service of the propaganda whitewashing Croatian-Slovenian dominance in the SFRY and their armed secession, he could not do otherwise than try to dupe the insufficiently informed general public with claims based on rigged statistics and sometimes even forged data. He has academically disqualified himself by accepting the assignment to portray the easily demonstrated relationships between the republics as something different from what they are and, what is more, by sleight of hand to make faster development look like economic stagnation and vice versa. It is surprising that the editors of Dr. Sirotkovic's book failed to warn him of its flagrant methodological and other shortcomings. Perhaps they did not know that taken together, Slovenia and Croatia in 1947 accounted for 34.7% of the population of Yugoslavia

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 126.

Table 5. PER CAPITA NATIONAL INCOME BY REPUBLICS AND ETHNIC GROUPS IN 1981
(in dinars, at current prices)

	Per capita national income of republics	Nationalities											
		Mont.	Croats	Macedonians	Muslims	Slovenes	Serbs	Albanians	Hung.	Poles	Gypsies	Yugoslavs	Others
Yugoslavia	89,466	80,745	105,316	63,448	60,236	158,353	85,051	34,099	117,913	106,507	67,654	110,861	96,690
B-H	100.0	90.3	117.7	70.9	67.3	177.0	95.1	38.1	131.8	119.0	75.6	123.9	108.1
Croatia	61,511	88,522	57,885	84,725	60,346	91,101	59,665	75,535	87,937	58,456	64,970	79,762	70,506
Macedonia	114,660	144,958	114,461	148,937	151,415	164,457	98,906	144,505	110,252	124,274	150,700	127,531	124,669
Montenegro	57,643	73,503	72,768	60,950	57,260	81,709	63,948	45,133	68,904	60,538	54,476	68,329	58,373
Serbia	69,709	71,385	96,813	81,371	45,184	86,348	87,989	63,628	100,000	86,667	74,439	96,396	78,380
Serbia proper	82,660	98,745	108,997	110,087	46,927	128,241	88,672	29,149	118,903	116,279	68,947	117,265	95,788
Kosovo	85,892	105,993	122,400	108,432	52,652	135,579	85,286	36,797	123,867	118,933	73,399	115,550	87,703
Vojvodina	29,684	36,495	20,096	43,750	26,200	41,691	35,250	28,443	38,095	40,741	39,876	36,435	34,456
Slovenia	114,863	124,688	112,235	116,336	116,978	119,416	113,654	111,123	118,870	117,114	106,408	121,348	107,246
	160,905	199,658	176,973	185,401	195,151	158,637	195,491	196,423	102,675	180,882	147,944	189,106	188,829

Source: Kosta Mihailovi}, Regionalna stvarnost Jugoslavije (Regional Realities in Yugoslavia) (Belgrade: Ekonomika, 1990), p. 153

and 39.9% of its GNP, whereas in 1988 they had 28.1% of its population and 44.8% of its GNP (at current prices), and that with an unchanged share of the population of 41.5%, Serbia's share in the formation of the Yugoslav GNP declined from 39% in 1947 to 35.5% in 1988.

These simple facts did not prevent Dr. Sirotkovic from taking up this compromising assignment. Nor did he allow himself to be disheartened by the official acknowledgement of Serbia's underdevelopment. He did not admit that the available statistics on the lagging behind of Serbia proper and not just Serbia as a whole were so damning that this underdevelopment had to be taken into account in two government social plans in the decade of the 1980s, as well as in the 1986 Resolution on Implementation of the Plan of the SFRY, which set out the measures for accelerating Serbia proper's growth. The adoption of these partially implemented measures, which largely served as a sop, he ascribes to pressure and political wire-pulling, as though it were Serbia and not Croatia together with Slovenia that in political power centres had the supreme arbiters on all political and economic matters, such as the likes of Tito, Kardelj and Bakaric, along with some other politicians from these two republics.

Why did Sirotkovic wait for seven years to speak out against the Memorandum? One of the reasons might be that a timely warning of the dangers of secession in this document gave all potential critics pause for thought: what reaction should they take to this warning? It was not politically expedient either to challenge or to confirm such a prediction. However, once secession had occurred, masks were dropped, and this illegal act had to be justified. Croatia's armed secession was to be explained as having been provoked by outside aggression. Nothing less convincing could have been dreamed up than that Serbia had resorted to arms in order to defend its "economically privileged position," as this Croatian scholar claims several times in his book. The title of the sixth chapter, "The Economic Background to the War against Croatia," with its subtitle, "From the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy in 1986 to Armed Secession in 1991," clearly shows the purpose of his analysis of economic relations between the republics. The trouble is that Serbia did not have any motivation for defending its relatively adverse economic position. The same could not be said, however, for the two most advanced republics.

No one could deny that economic relations between the republics might have far-reaching political implications. Gojko Grdjic warned many times that Slovenia and Croatia would secede from Yugoslavia the moment they lost their privileged position, and he was proven right. When they reached an advanced level of industrial development and it became necessary to set aside more money to assist the underdeveloped republics, these two republics seceded, thereby evading their moral responsibility to these republics. The Memorandum, which calls for political and economic equality for Serbia and the Serbs, indirectly pointed out the need to abolish privileges. These facts explain the reasons for the mobilization of Slovenian and Croatian political opinion against the

Memorandum. The insistence on preserving their privileges was not unique to Slovenia and Croatia. Separatist leanings have also appeared in Lombardy, the most highly developed section of Italy. There is some logic in all this, but also much historical injustice.

Francesco Vito once remarked that the unification of Italy was the reason for the economic backwardness of its South. He explained that the industry of the underdeveloped region was in the shadow of already established industry in the same country. In other words, the North held possession of the market, thereby discouraging the development of corresponding industries in the South. This argument is completely applicable to Yugoslavia as well.⁴⁶

The economic influence on political relations between the republics in Yugoslavia has been studied by Fred Singleton.⁴⁷ Unlike Dr. Sirotkovic, he does not think that the political tensions arose because of economic domination by Serbia and the Serbs. On the contrary, he states that "many of the less developed areas in Croatia, in Lika, Kordun and Banija, along the old Militärgrenze, are places where the majority of inhabitants are Serbs."⁴⁸ Political tensions, according to him, have arisen because: "The figures show that both Croatia and Slovenia over the last 25 years steadily improved both their absolute per capita income and also their relative position in comparison with the less developed republics."⁴⁹ These tendencies, which were accurately identified in 1972, continued over the next twenty years. Dr. Sirotkovic, however, thinks otherwise. He makes the unsubstantiated claim that the authors of the Memorandum had put forward an untenable and untrue thesis when they said that Slovenia and Croatia attained the most rapid development and thus the gap between them and the rest of Yugoslavia, which means Serbia and the underdeveloped regions, became much wider. The per capita GNP of Slovenia and Croatia taken together and amounting to 4,202 dinars was 40% higher in 1947 than the average of the four other republics (3,070 dinars). In 1988 the average per capita GNP of the two most advanced republics of 100,220 dinars was 101.9% higher than the average for the four other republics (48,259 dinars at current prices)! Therefore, there can be no doubt that the gap had considerably widened.

A balanced development, as the aim of regional development policy, means that the republics undergo development with the aim of approaching the Yugoslav average, thereby reducing relative differences between them. However, exactly the opposite occurred. All the republics became farther away from the Yugoslav average. Slovenia and Croatia improved their relative positions the most, even

46 Francesco Vito, "Problems of the Underdeveloped Regions of Italy," in E.A.G. Robinson, *Backward Areas in Advanced Countries* (Macmillan, 1969).

47 Fred B. Singleton, "The Economic Background to Tensions between the Nationalities in Yugoslavia," in *Probleme des Industrialismus in Ost und West* (Munich-Vienna: Gunter Olzog Verlag).

48 *Ibid.*, p. 285, footnote 5.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 293.

though they were the only ones who had been above the average to start with, whereas the other four republics, which had been below this average, found that they kept falling behind more and more. Not only did the gap between the two most developed republics and the rest of Yugoslavia widen, but within the context of the greatly increased disparities between the most developed and least developed republics other gaps between the republics increased. In such a wide spectrum of levels of development, Sirotkovic has determined that Croatia, together with Serbia proper and Vojvodina, belonged to the same category, with more or less the same level of development. Following this logic, we could say that Zagreb belonged to the same category as Slovenia. Every republic has regions at different levels of development. The republics should be compared with one another as a whole, particularly after the secession of some of them. Regardless of the fact that a republic cannot be compared with one part of another republic, Croatia, with a much higher GNP per capita than Serbia proper, certainly cannot be lumped together with it in the same group.

It was not enough for Dr. Sirotkovic that Slovenia and Croatia increasingly outstripped in development the three undeveloped republics; he even felt moved to express dissatisfaction that they were not dropped from the Fund for aid to the underdeveloped in the early 1970s when they were "two thirds of the way towards achieving the average level of development of Yugoslavia," according to "international standards."⁵⁰ Since this did not happen, Croatia had to set aside a large portion of its savings for the Fund for underdeveloped regions, thereby slowing down its own development. The allocations "for the less developed were not so hard on Slovenia, for it was at a much higher level of development and was able by clever political manoeuvres to compensate for its losses."⁵¹ This manner of thinking lays bare Croatia's exploitative tendencies. The three undeveloped republics did not rise from a low level of development to two thirds of the Yugoslav level of development; rather, in the course of their development their level fell to about two thirds. If it had not been for the subsidies from the Fund, which headed off this tendency of decline, they would not have been able to maintain even this level up until 1988. Secondly, it is a pure invention that there is an international standard for identifying underdeveloped regions. Underdevelopment is a relative relationship, which is determined separately in each country, depending on the level of development of the economy as a whole, the state system, inter-communal relations, and other considerations. Third, paying in contributions to the Fund did not prevent Croatia's economy from growing and its own relative standing from improving. Compensation for losses (what a thing to say!) by clever political manoeuvres, something which Croatia ascribes to Slovenia, was done by this republic as well on a large scale. The two most advanced republics most often benefitted from subsidies for exports, and indirectly they received compensation

⁵⁰ Sirotkovic, op. cit., p. 121.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 126.

through better terms of trade, opportunities to market their products in the underdeveloped regions, protective tariffs, etc.

Past analyses could be criticized because definitive conclusions on the pattern of growth in Yugoslavia are reached only on the basis of the per capita GNP, especially since Dr. Sirotkovic's claim that the rate of employment in Serbia was higher than in Croatia is true. However, in this case as well he has difficulty understanding the relationship between growth rates and quantities, points which must be borne in mind when interpreting this indicator – naturally unless one wishes deliberately to mislead those who are not familiar with the nature of employment trends. The employment rate per thousand inhabitants in the first and last year for which statistics are available is the correct basis for making comparisons between the republics, as given in Table 6.

Table 6. NUMBER OF EMPLOYED PER 1,000 INHABITANTS

	SFRY	B-H	Croatia	Maced.	Mont.	Serbia	Slovenia
1952	103	86	122	70	72	87	178
1989	290	242	346	251	264	264	437
Increment 1989-52	187	156	224	181	192	180	259

Source: For 1952, *Yugoslavia 1945-1985* (Federal Statistical Office, 1986); for 1989, 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia.

In 1952, Serbia was lagging behind the Yugoslav average by 16 index points, and in 1989 by 26. Compared with Croatia, in the same period this gap increased from 35 to a full 80 index points. Dr. Sirotkovic calls this situation a slower growth in employment in Croatia and a faster growth in Serbia! At the same time, he passes over in silence a consideration which is very relevant for assessing the real implications of the growth rate in employment. Unlike the GNP, for which there are no limits to growth, the situation is quite different for employment. Full employment, which is achieved with about 400 job-holders per 1,000 inhabitants, is the limit to which employment normally can grow. Slovenia surpassed this limit and achieved over-employment, in large part thanks to employment of workers from other republics. This fact is very well known to the experts. In such circumstances, not even a zero growth rate can be called lagging behind. With 346 employed per 1,000 inhabitants, Croatia had traversed 86.5% of the road to full employment, and Serbia with 264 employed per 1,000 inhabitants was only 66% along the way.

Employment cannot fully be assessed without a look at unemployment. Of the 1,201,000 job seekers in 1989, 561,000 were in the Republic of Serbia, or 48.3%. The unemployment rate, calculated according to UN methodology, amounted to 14.8% in that year in the SFRY. The three underdeveloped republics had a higher unemployment rate than this (over 20%), as did Serbia (17.6%). Only Slovenia with an unemployment rate of 3.2% and Croatia with a rate of 7.9% had a lower rate of unemployment than the Yugoslav average.

Employment trends confirm the conclusions adopted on the basis of an analysis of per capita GNP trends, as for their part do statistics on the territorial distribution of capital investment and fixed assets. Higher per capita investment in the two most developed republics was of crucial importance in giving them enormous advantages in per capita GNP and relative employment. Whereas in the period 1952-1987 Serbia had 10.9% lower per capita investment than the Yugoslav average, Croatia had 10.7% and Slovenia 74.3% above the average. In other words, Croatia had 24.3% and Slovenia 95.6% higher investment per inhabitant than Serbia (see Table 7).

Table 7. PER CAPITA CAPITAL INVESTMENT OF THE SOCIAL SECTOR AND NON-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – ANNUAL AVERAGE

(in dinars, at 1972 prices)

Period	SFRY	B-H	Croatia	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia	Slovenia
1952-65	1,534	1,212	1,581	1,721	2,391	1,338	2,572
1966-75	2,721	2,198	3,003	2,320	3,339	2,444	4,684
1976-83	4,135	3,362	4,878	2,987	5,633	3,639	7,163
1976-87	4,696	2,993	4,341	2,394	4,747	3,299	6,656
1952-87	2,660	2,172	2,955	2,152	3,553	2,378	4,652

Source: Data from the Federal Statistical Office presented according to the Hollerith syst em.

Such a territorial allocation of investment meant that in Serbia gross fixed capital formation per inhabitant in the social sector of the economy was at a low level, 20.5% lower than the Yugoslav average and 30.6% lower than in the rest of the country.

In contrast, Croatia had 30.1% more fixed assets than the Yugoslav average, and Slovenia 104.5%, while in comparison with the other parts of the country, Croatia had 40.6% more and Slovenia 120.5% more. The per capita GNP and the value of fixed assets per inhabitant are virtually analogous. The percentage by which Slovenia and Croatia had a higher per capita value of fixed assets above the Yugoslav average was approximately the same as the percentage by which their per capita GNP was higher than the Yugoslav average. This means that capital investment was the crucial factor, leaving little room for the influence of other factors on the growth of the GNP and employment. Despite this fact, Dr. Sirotkovic, who avoids analyzing the allocation of investments in the various republics, tries to explain the faster development of Slovenia and Croatia by virtue of their higher labour productivity and greater efficiency of investment.

The available data do indeed show that, in comparison with the other republics, these two republics had an above average labour productivity when measured by GNP per worker. However, the differences for the most part can be attributed to a better capital-labour ratio. In 1988 in Croatia the GNP of the social

sector was 7% per worker, and the value of fixed assets 10% per worker (at 1972 prices), higher than the Yugoslav average.

Table 8. PER CAPITA FIXED ASSETS IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR IN 1988
(in dinars, at 1972 prices)

SFYR	B-H	Croatia	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia proper	Serbia	Kosovo	Vojvodina	Slovenia
46,472	37,625	60,474	30,478	55,782	36,955	38,536	16,478	52,483	95,023
100	81.0	130.1	65.6	120.0	79.5	82.9	35.5	112.9	204.5
Remaining territory = 100	75.5	140.6	63.4	120.6	69.4	78.1	33.6	114.1	225.6

Source: 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, pp. 407 and 412.

In Slovenia these figures were 39% and 37% respectively. In contrast, Serbia, with a 13% lower value of fixed assets per worker had only a 2% lower GNP per worker than the Yugoslav average. The higher labour productivity in Slovenia and Croatia was the result not just of the better capital-labour ratio but also of more favourable terms of trade in the formation of the GNP.

The two most advanced republics certainly cannot explain the improvement in their relative positions by higher efficiency of investment. Even though in the breakdown of investment there was a relatively greater share of manufacturing, with a more favourable capital coefficient, Slovenia did not produce results which are so much better that they could have significantly accounted for the improvement in its relative economic standing. The same particularly holds true for Croatia, for which it can rightly be asked whether it had higher efficiency than the Yugoslav average at all. In the period 1952-1983, at an average growth rate in the GNP, per 100 dinars of economic investment, in Croatia 22.9 dinars grew to 23.5, in Slovenia to 27.0, and in Serbia to 24.1 dinars.⁵² The somewhat greater efficiency in Croatia seems to have disappeared in the period 1971-1988. Given the Yugoslav average of 13.4 dinars, in Croatia the increment was 13.1 dinars, in Slovenia 14.9, and in Serbia 13.9 dinars.⁵³ Other ways of calculating efficiency also show that Croatia was from time to time below the Yugoslav average and Serbia's performance, just as was the case with the efficiency of fixed capital and equipment.⁵⁴ However, just as Serbia's slightly higher efficiency did not help it catch up, so Croatia's below average or average efficiency did not prevent it from getting ahead. Per capita investment was what played the decisive role in the growth of output and employment in all the former republics.

⁵² *Yugoslavia 1945-1985*, op. cit., p. 204.

⁵³ 1990 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, p. 407.

⁵⁴ See *Yugoslavia 1918-1988*, op. cit., p. 189.

On the basis of a number of studies and relevant documents, the Memorandum took the very decided stance that Serbia was lagging behind the Yugoslav average in its economic growth and, it goes without saying, behind the two most developed republics. However, the scope and character of the Memorandum did not allow presentation of the quantitative analysis on which such an assessment was based. Without hard figures, verbal statements do not appear sufficiently convincing, particularly to those whom such assessments for whatever reason do not suit. Such is the case with academician Sirotkovic, who attempted to refute the assertion of Slovenia's and Croatia's economic dominance and the lagging behind of Serbia with verbal statements of his own, backing them up with just a few methodologically incorrectly shown indicators. The Memorandum's findings were based on a quantitative analysis of the per capita GNP, relative employment rates and per capita value of fixed assets, i.e., three of the most relevant indicators. It is precisely on this point that Dr. Sirotkovic's critical analysis shows how low the propagandists of this ilk will stoop.

Academician Sirotkovic also attempted to challenge the Memorandum's assessments of the causes of the economic crisis and its analyses of various periods in the SFRY's economic development. This was an unhappy attempt to say the least. Even politicians who came down hard on the Memorandum admitted off the record that they had nothing to criticize in its economic section. Economists in particular had to agree with it. This is why critics have avoided commenting on the economic section of the Memorandum, and until recently Dr. Sirotkovic was no exception.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ All the points raised by Jakov Sirotkovic in connection with the Memorandum are dealt with by Kosta Mihailovic in his book, *Ekonomska stvarnost Jugoslavije* (Yugoslavia's Economic Realities), second edition (Belgrade: Ekonomika, 1982).

PRINCIPAL MYTHS ABOUT THE MEMORANDUM

When, towards the end of 1991, secession had become the dominant factor in the Yugoslav crisis, the previously indifferent outside world began to evince a lively interest in the Memorandum. This sudden change was due not to academic curiosity about its content, but rather to attempts by the foreign patrons of Slovenia and Croatia to shift onto Serbia's shoulders their own responsibility for the armed conflicts provoked by the forcible secession, in order to discredit it in the eyes of international public opinion. Motives, findings and messages of the Memorandum which before had never been noticed by anyone, for the simple reason that they did not exist, were suddenly "discovered" by foreign countries after the secession and with hindsight.

Zagreb and Ljubljana provided grist for the propaganda mill with trumped up charges against Serbia. The orchestrated propaganda of foreign countries and the breakaway republics took advantage of the fact that the Memorandum had not been translated and, by passing off some blatant lies, gave foreign public opinion a totally warped picture of the character and messages of this document. These persistently repeated myths, which have been swallowed whole even by international organizations and some personalities in Belgrade,⁵⁶ are exploded by the fact

⁵⁶ The Belgrade periodical *Republika*, Nos. 119-120, of 1-31 July 1995, carried an article by Dr. Olivera Milosavljevic, assistant professor at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, entitled "Use of the Authority of Science," with the subtitle, "Public Political Activities of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (1986-1992)." This extensive article attracts attention primarily because it reproduces all the basic features of the above-described Croatian propaganda. It forms a sequel to Stipe Suvar's White Paper and the series of articles in *Vjesnik* inspired by an attempt to disqualify a section of the Serbian intelligentsia. This article has remained true to its Zagreb models not just in terms of its fundamental aim but also in terms of its methods. Excerpts from statements are given out of context, without any feeling for subtleties, with the intention of compromising their authors or to make their views appear contradictory and inconsistent. Just as in the *Vjesnik* articles, the personal beliefs of the Academy members were linked with the Memorandum. As regards the Memorandum itself, the author's assessment consists of insinuations and prejudices. The author starts with an enumeration of statements made by Academy members in the daily press and not with an evaluation of the situation in the country which she would use to refute or corroborate the Memorandum's findings, a fact which seems to indicate that she has scant knowledge about this situation. In the absence of such knowledge, her objections to the Memorandum have no scientific basis. It is possible that the neglect of scientific grounds was a concession to the author's political views.

that there is no basis for them at all in the Memorandum. Things could have ended there, if it had not been for a large-scale indoctrination of the public with these myths.

The attempt by the Memorandum's authors to strip away the layers of lies with which this document has become enveloped brought them into a position of having to defend their innocence as if they were in the dock, instead of the critics supplying evidence to back up their accusations. The critics of the Memorandum, with rare exceptions, were not scholars with whom one could enter into polemics using scientifically verified facts and real arguments. Such polemics are not possible if scholars who are under the obligation to defend their standpoints and convictions are opposed by propagandists, whose only stock in trade is slurs and innuendo. The fact that the Memorandum was not criticized by scholars is very indicative and can be explained by the fact that they found no reason to raise any criticism.

The unpleasant aspect of refuting naked propaganda claims lies in the fact that they are given a significance which they do not deserve, and people may be led to believe that where there is smoke there is fire. Whatever the case, the principal untruths about the Memorandum must be refuted.

ALLEGED COLLUSION BETWEEN THE SERBIAN ACADEMY AND SERBIA'S OFFICIAL POLICY

The uncovering of the roots of the Yugoslav crisis with a candour which had previously been unthinkable in a document from an institution enjoying scientific authority was seen by the public as an example of audacity going far beyond politically tolerable limits. Therefore, after the initial amazement, speculation began that Serbian official policy stood behind it, not wanting or not daring to expose itself, and using the Serbian Academy as a trial balloon to see how Yugoslavia would receive some of the political moves affecting inter-republican relations. This conjecture, which has no real basis in fact, has persisted from the first public appearance of the Memorandum to this day. Politicians from the other republics, who were well acquainted with the nature of the relationship between political circles and the academic community in Serbia, did not set any store by such presumptions, but they tolerated them in the press in their own territories in order to force the Serbian politicians to increase their pressure against the Serbian Academy. Stane Kavcic dismissed this theory in his diary:

"Some hold the opinion that the dispute with the Serbian Academy is merely a rigged game and trial balloon used by influential individuals within the Serbian political leadership. They want to test the leadership. They want to see how Yugoslavia would accept the threat of Serbia striking out on its own and stepping out of Yugoslavia. This game, this manoeuvre, was supposedly uncovered by the federal government, hence such an approach and statement by the two presidencies. Personally I do not believe in such assessments. I am convinced

that the dispute with the Serbian Academy is authentic and fundamental. This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that many leading Serbian politicians who speak in public or formally vote against the Academy are intimate with the latter. I believe that the fate and position of Serbia are very close to their hearts. Differences are rather in method than in content. Furthermore, the present and the former politicians of SR Serbia are worried that in the event of the triumph of Serbian separatism and secession they would have to cede power to new people and answer for the mistakes and sins of the past. In every case the Serbian political leaders are in a very tight spot. They are under double pressure: on the one hand there is their own position in the Republic, and on the other, the great distrust of the other republics as regards the intentions and purposes of Serbia.⁵⁷

Only those who have not read the text of the Memorandum carefully could have come up with the idea that some kind of collusion existed between the regime in Serbia and the Serbian Academy of Sciences. There might be many things fitting such a scenario, but not that the regime should jeopardize its own survival.

It is also unimaginable that the regime, according to a prearranged scenario, should demand that the Serbian Academy call a special session of its Assembly in the expectation that the academicians would distance themselves from the Memorandum and that this failed to come about. Following the agreement to convene a special session of the Assembly, the confrontation between the regime and the Serbian Academy reached its culmination. The stakes had become enormous for both sides, and as such inconceivable if the sides were really in collusion. The academicians' support for the Memorandum was an act of disobedience by a public institution, something that had never before happened in the practice of any socialist country. When it did happen, the regime understood, for the first time, that its possibilities of forcing decisions under political pressure were limited. Accordingly, whatever the decision of the special session, it was bound to have far-reaching and grave consequences for either the Serbian Academy or the regime. That the regime suffered the consequences is additional proof that it was not in collusion with the Serbian Academy, since in such a case it would certainly not demand a special session of the Assembly, whose resolution represented such a crushing political defeat for it. Between partners collaborating on the same project, the risk of grave consequences for either party is precluded in advance.

Anyone who is acquainted with the relationship between the policy-makers and the Serbian Academy knows full well not only that such a scenario was impossible but also that neither side would have entertained such a notion. Politicians and the Serbian Academy had never had the kind of relationship which would have made a joint political conspiracy possible.

57 Kavcic, op. cit., *Borba*, 28 February 1990.

Conjectures about collusion have been raised abroad which implicate not the whole of the Serbian Academy, but only those members who took part in writing the Memorandum. It is being insinuated that these were academicians, members of the ruling League of Communists, who because of their Party affiliations could be drawn into the political arena. This theory could sound plausible only to those who are not in the know. The principal authors of the text were academicians from the Departments of Social Sciences, History and Literature, who even before their admission to the Serbian Academy had been in conflict with the official line, regardless of whether or not they were members of the League of Communists.

THE MEMORANDUM AND SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC

The orchestrated anti-Memorandum propaganda did not fail to serve up to the uninformed public, particularly the foreign public, its own view of Slobodan Milosevic's attitude to the Memorandum, with the unconcealed intention of compromising the President of Serbia and the Serbian Academy with the false accusation that they wanted to create a Greater Serbia.

When secession occurred in Yugoslavia, which resulted in a bloody civil war and clashes between nationalities and religions, the international public became aware of the fundamentalist ideas contained in Alija Izetbegovic's *Islamic Declaration* and the racist contents of Franjo Tudjman's book, *Wastelands of Historical Truth*. The anti-Serbian propaganda was upset to see the political leaders of the Muslims and Croats justly condemned because of their policies and hastened to draw Slobodan Milosevic into its game, accusing him of accepting the Memorandum as Serbia's national programme. It is interesting that this propaganda makes no mention of Slobodan Milosevic's book *The Years of Denouement* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1989), which, in 345 pages, gives all his speeches delivered between 1984 and mid-1989. What was important was to blame the President of Serbia and the Serbian Academy for all the ills which had befallen the peoples of Yugoslavia.

The insinuation that Slobodan Milosevic was carrying out a national agenda contained in the Memorandum is a pure fabrication. This claim was inspired by the course of events and the anti-Serbian propaganda's need to keep the official and unofficial organs of Serbia under a constant barrage of accusations. This fabrication is untenable, because the Memorandum is not a national programme at all. It would seem that this fact must be repeated many times, since the anti-Serbian propaganda, without any grounds whatsoever, is continually trying to convince the world of the opposite.

Another charge against the Memorandum is that it served as a springboard for Slobodan Milosevic's policies. There is nothing strange in the fact that he may have seen some of the problems and solutions in the same or similar light as the document in question. It is more likely that he did not learn about the existence

of these problems for the first time from the Memorandum, but that he found in it confirmation for some of his own personal observations. The Yugoslav crisis was so acute that such a coincidence is very probable. It is quite certain that even without the Memorandum, he would have had to put an end to further abuse of autonomy in Kosovo and to the autonomism in Vojvodina, all of which stood in the way of establishing the normal prerogatives of statehood in the Republic of Serbia. Insistence on economic and political equality in fact amounted to an obligation to complete the job of defining the position of the Republic of Serbia and Yugoslavia. Milosevic was in favour of preserving Yugoslavia, as was clearly seen at the last, 14th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, among other things because the Serbian people were then living in one single state. His subsequent insistence, after the secession occurred, on the right to self-determination for Serbs in their ethnic territory was wrongly interpreted as a bid to create a Greater Serbia

Slobodan Milosevic's attitude to the Memorandum has been the subject of much speculation. The actual truth is that in the course of the political campaign against the Memorandum, he could not have held a view different from the Presidency of the League of Communists of Serbia, of which he was a member. However, some facts suggest that he was critical of the authors of the Memorandum more out of compliance with party discipline than out of personal conviction. During the political witch hunt in Serbia, it was noted that his criticisms were rare and relatively mild. After assuming the key political position in Serbia, finding himself able to influence the direction of political action, he stopped the campaign against the Memorandum. The importance of this is not diminished by the fact that he had stopped the attacks against the Serbian Academy as part of the democratization of society, an official change of heart toward the intelligentsia, freedom of speech and the introduction of a multiparty system.

WHERE IS THE NATIONALISM OF THE MEMORANDUM?

The communist politicians throughout Yugoslavia saw the Memorandum as a nationalistic document, and the same label was also pinned on it by the foreign and secessionist propaganda. As usual, no one ever quoted the passages which explicitly propound nationalistic policies, or passages which, correctly interpreted, could justify such a description. Such passages simply do not exist. However, what does exist in the Memorandum and is being overlooked is the assertion that nationalism was on the rise and that its propagators were the politicians: "After the dramatic inter-communal strife in the course of the Second World War, it seemed as though nationalism had run its course and was well on the way to disappearing completely. Such an impression has proven to be deceptive. Not much time passed before nationalism began to rear its ugly head again, and each successive constitutional change has created more of the

institutional prerequisites needed for it to become full blown. Nationalism has been generated from the top, its prime initiators being the politicians.”⁵⁸

Not one single distinguishing feature of nationalism can be found in the Memorandum. Nationalism is by nature selfish and seeks a privileged position for its own nation. Such qualities cannot be attributed to the Memorandum. By calling for an equitable political and economic position for Serbia, this document admits the same for all the other former republics of the SFRY. What it did not condone were the political and economic privileges which Croatia and Slovenia had obtained in Yugoslavia thanks to their political leaders. The Memorandum asked that Serbia receive exactly the same as the others, nothing more than that.

Nationalism is in its nature aggressive and apt to resort to illegal and even violent means to achieve its ends. The Memorandum does not even begin to think of achieving equality for Serbia in an illegal manner or by resorting to any kind of violence. It is true that it warned against not only nationalism but also separatism, which had been gaining much ground in some republics. These timely warnings had no effect, but subsequent events proved their justification.

One of the essential features of nationalism is the expression of hatred of other nations. Emotions were running high in Serbia at the time of the writing of the Memorandum because of the persecution of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. The temptation to express hatred of the ethnic Albanians, which many in their heart of hearts might regard as just, was very strong. If the people in Serbia overcame those temptations, showing how truly they were nationally tolerant, then such hatred was all the more foreign to the writers of the Memorandum. Hence the charge that the Memorandum was imbued with nationalism is best refuted, as are all the other essential charges, by citing the text of the Memorandum.

NEITHER A POLITICAL NOR A NATIONAL PROGRAMME

The Serbian political leadership described the Memorandum as a political agenda. The official party's view on it was expressed by Vice-President of the Presidency of Serbia, Vukoje Bulatovic, at the Serbian Academy's special Assembly in December 1986: "Regardless of the motivations of the authors of this text, its diction and its messages are immanently political, and they cannot be interpreted in terms of the criteria valid for literary texts. This in other words means that the text of the Memorandum must be judged as a political programme which, like every other political programme, has definite objectives and implies definite actions leading to those goals." It was a charge that the Serbian Academy had undertaken to set up a political party, which on some other occasions was explicitly stated. It is difficult to presume that Serbia's political leadership truly believed that the Serbian Academy was creating a political party and attempting

58 *Memorandum*, p. 137.

to challenge their political monopoly. The charge that the Memorandum was a political agenda served as a means of pressure against the Serbian Academy to distance itself from its own document. Indictment of the Memorandum as a political platform, which obviously had to differ from the programme of the ruling party, gave the green light for attacks against the Memorandum and all those who were in support of it. Needless to say, this charge, as shown by subsequent events, had no real foundation whatever.

If the labelling of the Memorandum as a political platform served the political leadership of Serbia for domestic use, the claim that this document was a national agenda was an invention by the combined propaganda of the secessionist republics and their foreign mentors. Because of its scope, all sorts of things can be imputed to a national programme, and accordingly the Memorandum has been branded as a nationalistic document calling for the creation of a Greater Serbia, for hegemony over the other national groups, for inter-communal strife, and for the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, "although this is not being called for openly," as *The Croatian Standpoint* stated in one place. It has been emphasized several times that the Memorandum is not being challenged for what is really written in it, but for what is not actually written and is being ascribed to it unjustly. This is in any case the common mark of all the charges against the Memorandum.

Before attempting to write the Memorandum, after a long debate the members of the Committee decided on its character, which has remained unchanged. As mentioned earlier, proposals were mooted before the Committee began its work, during its work and when this work was interrupted, not that the Memorandum should be something like a national programme but that it should contain some programme elements. Such proposals were rejected out of hand by the Committee members, who took the view that the Memorandum must be limited to an attempt to provide a comprehensive answer to the Yugoslav crisis. This policy was consistently adhered to by the Committee members in all the stages of their work and afterwards, at the special session of the Assembly, when the Memorandum was criticized for allegedly containing elements of such a programme. All these reproaches were answered as follows:

"Opinions have been voiced at this Assembly that the Memorandum should grant more room to a programme orientation. This issue was hotly debated, and the view prevailed that a look at the crisis should not be burdened by programmes, since every assessment not only gives a diagnosis of the way things are but also implies the way they ought to be. However, a number of Committee members kept returning the discussion to the initial point, insisting that proposals should be of a programme character, such as some indeed were. There was one pragmatic reason against the Memorandum's having a programme orientation. The Committee wanted to forestall the possible reproach that the Academy was creating a programme which could be described as political. Some views that the draft material which you have received is a political programme, which it is not, justify

this prudence. What insistence would have been placed on the political character of the Memorandum if it had really been a programme document!

“The Committee’s decision to limit itself to a view of the crisis did not mean negation of the need to draft a programme as a separate document, entirely independent of the Memorandum. Who would be responsible for drawing up such a programme, in what manner and when, whether under the auspices of academic or government institutions, or with their mutual collaboration, was a question which was left to be discussed at a later date.”

If those who claim that the Memorandum represents a national programme had carefully perused this document, they could have found two passages in which it calls for the elaboration of such a programme. Such a suggestion would have been pointless if the Memorandum were indeed a national programme. Here are those passages from the Memorandum: “If they want to have a future in the family of cultured and civilized nations of the world, the Serbian people must be allowed to find themselves again and become an historical personality in their own right, to regain a sense of their historical and spiritual being, to make a clear assessment of their economic and cultural interests, *to devise a modern social and national programme* which will inspire present generations and generations to come.”⁵⁹

“The first requirement for our transformation and renaissance is a democratic mobilization of all the intellectual and moral forces of the nation, not just in order to carry out the decisions handed down by political leaderships, but rather *to devise programmes* and map out the future in a democratic way. For the first time in recent history, expertise and experience, conscientiousness and boldness, imagination and responsibility would all come together to carry out a task of importance for the entire society, *on the principles of a long-term programme*.”⁶⁰

When the political campaign against the Memorandum petered out, the Serbian Academy came back to its idea of drawing up a national programme. It had not been cowed by the campaign against the Memorandum, nor did it consider a national programme to be sinful, and it took its decision in the conviction that the country which does not know where it is heading does not know where it will end up. A committee was set up which held several sessions, but work did not proceed beyond the drafting of a synopsis. Consequently, the attempt to create a national programme proves that the Memorandum was not one, nor could it have been.

That the Memorandum was an answer to the Yugoslav crisis and not a national programme is easy to see by taking a look at its contents. Every national programme is by definition a long-range document, which foresees structural changes in the economy, population, regional development, system of cities. Such a programme gives the country its place in international affairs and development trends in the world. There is nothing of this kind in the Memorandum, which

59 *Memorandum*, p. 138.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 140.

focuses on coping with the crisis and regulating Serbia's constitutional and economic status within the framework of the then existing state and social system.

THE THESIS OF A GREATER SERBIA

The reason the Memorandum was nonetheless proclaimed to be a national programme lies in the anti-Serbian propaganda's need to portray it as an attempt to create a Greater Serbia. Not only is there not a single word in the Memorandum suggesting such an idea, but nowhere does its text give rise to a thought of the existence of such an aim. The thesis of a Greater Serbia had its birth in Austria-Hungary, which after the Berlin Congress of 1878 imposed itself on Serbia as its political and economic patron. The attempt to free itself of this patronage drew Serbia into a customs war with the Dual Monarchy in 1906. Austria-Hungary vented its dissatisfaction with the outcome of this war in anti-Serbian propaganda, which became particularly virulent following Austria's annexation of Bosnia and Hercegovina in 1908. After the annexation, about 40% of the total number of Serbs became subjects of Austria-Hungary, together with other Slavic peoples (Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Croats, and Poles). Serbia's very existence as an independent, Slav and democratic state represented not only a potential threat to Austria-Hungary, which was keeping the Slav peoples under occupation, but also an impediment to its *Drang nach Osten*. With accusations of a desire to create a Greater Serbia, Austria-Hungary tried to thwart any justified attempt made by Serbia and the Serbian people to achieve national, political, economic and cultural emancipation, but these accusations also served as a smoke screen to conceal its own imperialist aims.

A large number of Croatian and Slovenian politicians and intellectuals expressed loyalty to Austria-Hungary, the state in which they lived, by embracing the thesis of the threat from a Greater Serbia. After the Dual Monarchy lost the First World War, Croatia and Slovenia fell all over themselves in their haste to join this demonized Serbia, so that from the camp of the vanquished they could cross over without any consequences to themselves to the side of the victors. However, this did not prevent them from soon afterwards resurrecting the thesis of a threat from a Greater Serbia, which they have been using as an accusation from 1918 to this day. This thesis can be exploited for any number of political aims, to conceal their own territorial pretensions by making charges against others of having such pretensions, to screen racist prejudices against the Serbs, to incite hatred of the Serbs as the main component of their own nationalism, to gain privileged political and economic positions (which was the case throughout the period following the Second World War), to deny the Serbian people the right to self-determination given to other nations, etc. It did not matter that the alleged idea of a Greater Serbia was not articulated in the Memorandum. The Croatian propaganda machine, in order not to lose one of its principal levers, used all means

at its disposal to propagate the untruth that this document called for a Greater Serbia.

CRITICISM ABROAD

Commentaries about the Memorandum abroad followed about the same line as those at home. Both avoided quoting the source text to back up their claims. The difference was that the authors at home knew that their claims could not be proven, whereas a vast majority of foreign authors were not even able to familiarize themselves with the Memorandum, which had only been translated into French, just one of the world languages, in 1993. The foreign author as a rule took over the assessments launched by Croatia and Slovenia without reservations. In this manner a tissue of lies was created, which was uncritically passed along through the information media. The few people abroad with a knowledge of the Serbian language also claimed that the Memorandum contained something which it did not, as shown by the polemics between the two prominent Czech intellectuals, Dusan Karpatski, editor of *Literary Gazette*, and Jan Pelikan, assistant in the History Department of the Prague University.⁶¹

The profound differences between the two Czech intellectuals in their view of the Yugoslav situation could at first sight be reduced to the difference between the "artistic truth" of a man of letters and the scientific truth of a scholar, whose view gains great weight in the light of his familiarity with the facts and his objectivity, which is obligatory for science, as well as his knowledge about the theses and methods of Croatian nationalist propaganda. However, Dusan Karpatski in his statements showed that it was not just a question of ignorance of the Yugoslav situation. The question arises why he, as a translator of Dobrica Cosic's books, with whom he must have had direct personal contact, should claim that Cosic was one of the creators of the Memorandum, even though he was not even a member of the Committee which wrote it? If he really did not know this, he could easily have found out. If he did not do so, all kinds of different suppositions are possible, and they do not speak in his favour.

The implication of Dobrica Cosic as the main inspirer and architect of the Memorandum is another of the great myths which found a place in the media throughout the world. Even some international organizations, such as the Conference on the former Yugoslavia, became entangled in this web of lies. Three experts of this Conference visited the Serbian Academy in December 1992, wishing to find out how large a part Dobrica Cosic, at that time President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, had in the writing of the Memorandum. They were genuinely surprised when they learned that he was not even one of the sixteen members of the Committee for the writing of the Memorandum, and that he did not contribute one single text for this document. It was also explained to them

⁶¹ As reported in the weekly *Nin*, issue no. 2314, of 5 May 1995, pp. 38-44.

that Dobrica Cosic, as a well known political dissident, was not a suitable person at the time to be included on the Memorandum Committee, lest this document be discredited in the eyes of the politicians, for whom it was written. However, they were not told that the Memorandum was based on scientifically determined rather than on artistic truths or intuitive assessments, which called for a certain profile of the scholars who composed the Committee. Dobrica Cosic had given his contribution in ideas and suggestions at three meetings of the Committee, which heard him out with due respect, but it would be too bold to claim that his verbal suggestions had a major influence on the contents of the Memorandum. Therefore, to say that Dobrica Cosic was the creator or one of the principal authors of the Memorandum amounts to a malicious lie. The aim of such a lie is perfectly clear. Since the Memorandum has been called nationalistic, Greater Serbian, genocidal and other names, the claim that the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was the creator of such a document was calculated to compromise both him and the state which he headed, as had been previously done by linking Slobodan Milosevic to the Memorandum. This was designed to weaken FR Yugoslavia's negotiating position at a time when, following the secession, the crisis in Yugoslavia had become highly complicated.

The mentioned visit by three experts of the Conference on the former Yugoslavia is typical in that they asked for a translation of the Memorandum. The Serbian Academy was under the impression that the Memorandum had been translated into English somewhere abroad. It transpired, however, that such a translation did not exist, and the Conference asked the Serbian Academy to provide a Serbian text, which it had translated into French and in May 1993 submitted to the Serbian Academy for comments. Since one member of the Academy, as agreed, had written the Preface, it was expected that the French version of the Memorandum would be published by the end of 1993. It did not happen then or later. The Conference claimed that it did not have enough financial resources to do so. This did not seem to be the true reason. It was verbally communicated to the Conference experts that the idea of publication was abandoned because what had been expected, or rather what the Conference had been led to believe existed in it, had not been found in the Memorandum. The interest of the Conference on the former Yugoslavia in the text of a learned institution gives rise to speculations as to what it meant to achieve thereby. Such speculation is superfluous in connection with the case filed with the International Court at the Hague on April 15, 1994, by the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in connection with the application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Assuming that an intensive media campaign had sufficiently prepared not only public opinion but also official international organizations to accept any claim about the proscribed Memorandum, the Government of Bosnia and Hercegovina had the gall to cite this document in the section of its charge entitled "The Ideology of a Greater Serbia." This section first asserts that

following the collapse of communism, several republics wanted to seek statehood, but Serbia, being the largest, had tried to stifle these aspirations militarily, subsequently justifying its military intervention with the rhetorics of a Greater Serbian ideology. Reference was made to the inescapable *Nacertanije* of Ilija Garasanin from 1844, to say next that following World War II the idea of a Greater Serbia was successfully stymied by Tito's policy of "divide and rule." However, following Tito's death the idea of a Greater Serbia was revived in the Memorandum, which was "signed by about 200 prominent Belgrade intellectuals." The Memorandum, they said, drew attention to the situation in Kosovo, accused the Albanian ethnic majority of genocide against the Serbs in that province, and called for a Greater Serbia. The main champions of the idea of a Greater Serbia were two members of the Serbian Academy – Dobrica Cosic and Jovan Raskovic, as well as Radovan Karadzic. The Memorandum allegedly prepared the ideological ground for the advent of Slobodan Milosevic to power in September 1987. The ideology of a Greater Serbia proved itself to be a useful means for mobilizing Serbian public opinion.

From its premises to its conclusion, this section of the charge is a fabrication made out of whole cloth, which is very far removed from reality. In the Yugoslav crisis, Serbia did not oppose the wishes of others to secede. It demanded that mutual relations should first be regulated and an agreement reached regarding a legal procedure, in keeping with the Yugoslav Constitution. It is beyond dispute that the illegal armed secession was started by Slovenia and was continued by Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina. Thereby one fourth of the Serbian nation was left in an unregulated position within these republics, without the right to self-determination. It is understandable why Serbia was very unhappy with such secession and its effects. In the whole course of events it is quite irrelevant that the Republic of Serbia was the largest.

The mention of *Nacertanije* 150 years after its appearance is out of place, regardless of which side it is being looked at. This document cannot serve as proof of a Greater Serbian ideology either now or in the past. Its mention counted on ignorance of the text and the historical context in which it was written.

Reference to the Memorandum in a judicial suit filed with the eminent International Court calls for the obligation to provide concrete evidence for the accusations made. An elementary rule of law in all civilized countries is that the onus of proof is on the plaintiff rather than on the defendant. We are living at the end of the 20th century and not in the Middle Ages, when witches were made to prove their innocence. In fact, the Memorandum has constantly been in the position of having to prove its innocence instead of the accusers having to provide evidence for their charges. As a proof of Greater Serbian ideology the Bosnian Muslim government submitted two quotations from *Nacertanije* of 1844, but as regards the charges against the 1986 Memorandum not one single passage from the text was quoted to support the charges made. The only concrete claim, that this document was signed by some 200 Belgrade intellectuals, is a bald-faced lie.

The Memorandum was never signed by anyone, not even by the members of the Committee which wrote it, for the simple reason that it had been stolen before it was even completed. What is there to say about the claim that the Memorandum called for a Greater Serbia? If the accusers did find such an incriminating passage in this document, why did they not quote it?

The Memorandum was the subject of another court case in which the Serbian Academy and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia appeared as plaintiffs. The French history textbook for baccalaureate candidates, *Histoire terminale – édition 1993* on page 328, under the heading “Incitement of Nationalism” contains the following text: “The most severe was the conflict which set Serbia against the other former Yugoslav republics and which aimed at creating a ‘Greater Serbia’ through the application of ‘ethnic cleansing’ of the territories inhabited by the Serbs and expulsion by terror of the other nationalities.” On page 330, under the heading “Glossary,” we find the following definition: “Ethnic cleansing: a theory launched by the members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences of Belgrade, which insists on the ethnic homogenization of the territories of former Yugoslavia inhabited by Serbs and expulsion through terror of the other nationalities in order to make possible a final annexation of these territories by Serbia.”

Since these lies and slanders could not be properly denied through the media, which were closed to such Serbian interventions, the Serbian Academy and the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were compelled to file suit with a court in Paris against the writers of the textbook, Pierre Milza and Serge Berstein and against the publishing house, Éditions Hatier. The suit was rejected by the court on the basis of the statute of limitations. The charges were filed on November 9, 1993, whereas the textbook had been released for sale sometime in August of the same year. The court took the view that in this case the sale of the book had begun on August 1st, which meant that the three months limit for submission of a complaint had elapsed.

This entire court case shows that neither the court nor the defendants were willing either to confirm or deny the incriminated text in the textbook. The court, and more particularly the publishing house, were perfectly able to prove on which date the textbook had been released for sale. The court did not sufficiently insist on finding out this date, nor was the publishing house prepared to offer such evidence. Resort to the pretext of the statute of limitations and the objections that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia could not represent Serbia (!) and that the Serbian Academy of Sciences could not appear on behalf of its members show that the textbook writers were interested that there should be no judicial process in which they would have to prove their claims in the textbook, which could not be proven. Never mind the fact that Yugoslavia under sanctions was not in a position to come into possession of the book in question through normal channels.

That the whole trial should become a farce was seen to by the counter-charges of libel brought by Éditions Hatier and historians Milza and Berstein. To prove the truthfulness of the allegations in the textbook, the counter-charge was

under the obligation to state which work and which member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts put forward the theory of ethnic cleansing and the creation of a "Greater Serbia" and to quote the relevant texts. Aware that such a text does not exist in the Memorandum or in any other work by Serbian academicians, the authors of the textbook and the Éditions Hatier put forward as proof of the veracity of their allegations 91 titles of journalists' articles from the arsenal of anti-Serbian propaganda, which included several resolutions by international organizations. This long list did not include the Memorandum, which seems to suggest that either the textbook writers never read it or, which is more likely, by ignoring it wanted to avoid the danger of being convincingly refuted by its contents.

If they wanted to produce some good examples not only of ethnic cleansing but also of racist theories and genocide in its worst possible form, they could have chosen the works of the father of Croatian racism, Ante Starcevic. From the plethora of anti-Serbian passages, we shall only quote the following: "The Croatian people regard this Slav-Serbian blood as alien: the Croatian people will not tolerate this slavish breed to defile the holy soil of the Croats." resolve the Eastern Question, the Serbs should be liquidated, "to eliminate the breed which has survived in Europe."

Ante Starcevic's racism was fully elaborated by Ivo Pilar (pseudonym L. V. Südland), in his work *Die Südslawische Frage und der Weltkrieg* which was published in 1918. The topicality of this racist work is seen from the fact that it was reprinted in 1990. In the preface to this edition, Dr. Vladimir Veselica, president of the Croatian Democratic Party, expresses his enthusiasm that the author had given "relevant answers" at the highest intellectual level. What thrilled him so was the consistently expressed racist hatred against the Serbs. It is sufficient to submit one quotation that explains the sense and content of this book, which far outdoes the current demonization of the Serbs: "it was not without reason that I tried to show how the Serbs today are dangerous for their ideas and their racial composition, how a bent for conspiracies, revolutions and coups is in their blood."

The Croatian racism on which Starcevic's Party of Rights was founded had its worthy heirs. The British historian A.P.J. Taylor wrote that when in the Party of Rights there appeared men who refused to have the conflict with the Serbs the alpha and omega of their political activities, the party majority formed the Pure Party of Rights – "pure from any trace of realism," notes Taylor. As usually happens, the most fanatic exponents of this harsh patriotism were converts. The

62 "Neke uspomene" (Some Reminiscences), *Djela dr. Ante Starcevica* (The Works of Dr. Ante Starcevic) (Zagreb, 1894), p. 373.

63 "Na cemu smo" (Where We Stand), *ibid.*, III, 401.

64 Ivo Pilar, *Jugoslovensko pitanje* (The South Slav Question), p. 306. It was no accident that the first edition of this book in the Croatian language was published during the time of Pavelic's Independent State of Croatia, in 1943, for it laid the foundations of ustasa ideology.

members of this party were known as Frankists, after the party leader Josip Frank.⁶⁵ The same historian goes on to say that in Croatia Strossmayer's idealism faded away, because the Croatian peasant masses overrode the Zagreb intellectuals. Proof of this was the Croatian Peasant Party founded by Stjepan Radic, which, despite its democratic programme, was just as aggressive and exclusively Croatian as the Pure Party of Rights of the petty nobility.⁶⁶ That Croatian racism and nationalism were quite visible in the case of the "democratic leaders" is borne out by a statement made by Stjepan Radic in 1914, when he said that the Serbs were "implacable enemies of the Exalted Monarchy, our Monarchy, and above all of the Croatian way of life."⁶⁷ This was not an isolated remark.

Croatian Nazism during the Second World War relied in every respect on the racism propagated by Starcevic, Pilar and others. In their notorious death camps with the mass annihilation of Serbs and Jews and ethnic cleansing, the ustasas put into practice what the Croatian racists had planned in theory. Racism in Croatia maintained continuity after the Second World War as well, all the way to Croatia's growing autonomy and especially after its secession. O. Dominik Mandic, in his book *Hrvati i Srbi dva stara razlicita naroda* (Croats and Serbs – Two Ancient and Distinct Peoples), which he wrote in 1956 but published only in 1971, and which was reprinted in 1990 in Croatia, sought to prove that the Serbs were originally from Africa and are a mulatto people! However, present-day Croatia, official and unofficial, has not thrown off this racism. The Croats have proclaimed Starcevic to be "the father of the nation"; they are rehabilitating the Independent State of Croatia, and in his book *Wastelands of Historical Truth* (Zagreb, 1989), Franjo Tudjman attempts to minimize the enormous number of Serbs and Jews killed in Croatia and as much as possible to downplay the responsibility of the perpetrators of these crimes. His explanation is that down through history there has always been genocide, that it has always been resorted to by a large national group when a smaller national group is in its way. Therefore, genocide is not unique to this or that ethnic group but is part of human nature.

Racism and genocide in Croatia vis-à-vis the Serbs have been continuous for more than one hundred years. Having an elaborated theory and being put into practical effect whenever an historical opportunity presents itself, racism and nationalism based on it have given a strong impetus to ethnic cleansing in Croatia, both in the past and in the present Yugoslav crisis. If the Serbs after incorporation of the Military March into Croatia in 1868 accounted for one quarter of the population of Croatia,⁶⁸ but according to the census of 1991 for only 12%, it is clear that this long-term policy of ethnic cleansing in Croatia has amply paid off. The

65 A.P.J. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918, A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, in Croatian translation (Zagreb: Znanje, 1990), pp. 233-234.

66 Ibid., p. 259.

67 Ibid., p. 295.

68 Ibid., p. 233.

authors of the French textbook, Milza and Berstein, failed to use this convincing example of ethnic cleansing, which is odd for historians who must be aware of this fact.

In conclusion, we must ask what opinion about the Memorandum would be held by a scholar with practical experience, free from the pressure of propaganda and politics, and on the basis of direct familiarity with the original text in its entirety? Fortunately, there is one such scholar in the person of Professor Sergio Romano, former Italian ambassador to Moscow and at present special adviser on foreign affairs to the Italian prime minister. During a visit to Belgrade he was interviewed by *Borba*, and the interview appeared in its editions of December 17 and 18, 1994. "The 1986 Memorandum in many ways is an exceptional document... I consider the description of the political evolution of Yugoslavia after the Constitution of 1974 to be a very astute analysis. I think that the Memorandum saw Yugoslavia in 1986 with critical and pessimistic eyes. In a sense it can be said that what happened was the logical result of the situation described in the Memorandum. In this respect the Academy played a highly intellectual role here."

After his return to Italy, early in January 1995, Professor Romano wrote an article which was published in *Corriere della Sera* under the title "Spectres of Yugoslavia." Under the subheading, "The Prophetic Memorandum," he repeats what he said in Belgrade: "The Memorandum is truly an astute and prophetic document. It explains that Tito's Yugoslavia, after promulgation in 1974 of the new Constitution, had become a confederation of sovereign entities, in which each republic or autonomous province was governed by a local Party apparatus and had the right of veto on the conduct of state affairs. The two most developed Central European republics, Slovenia and Croatia, had some advantages from this state of affairs, while Serbia, which the framers of the Constitution deliberately wanted to reduce to the level of the rest and strip of its historical role, was disadvantaged. Thanks to this complicated political and constitutional 'mechanism,' Yugoslavia became a latter-day version of the Polish *Sejm*, where any member of the nobility could paralyze the decisions of all the rest with his vote. The state died as soon as it ceased to be a necessary piece in the mosaic of the cold war."

Is such an opinion a hint of more normal conditions in which the Memorandum will be judged without ideological bias and political axes to grind? The Memorandum is waiting for these conditions in order to begin the third chapter in its life.

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SERBIO

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MEMORANDUM

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A slowdown in society's development, economic difficulties, growing social tensions and open inter-communal clashes have all given cause for deep concern in our country. Not just the political and economic system but the entire public order of the country is undergoing a severe crisis. Laxity and irresponsibility in the workplace, corruption and nepotism, a lack of legal security, bureaucratic high-handedness, flouting of the law, growing distrust among people and crass individual and group egoism are everyday phenomena. A breakdown in the moral standards and prestige of society's leading institutions and a lack of confidence in the capabilities of those in power are combined with public apathy and dissatisfaction and the alienation of the individual from all the representatives and symbols of the public order. An objective examination of the situation in Yugoslavia suggests that the present crisis might well culminate in social upheavals with unforeseeable consequences, not even precluding such a catastrophic outcome as the break-up of the Yugoslav state. No one has the right to shut his eyes to what is happening and to what might happen. And this particularly holds true for the most venerable institution of scientific and cultural achievement of this nation.

The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts feels called upon at this critical juncture to declare its views on the state of society, in the conviction that it will thereby be making its contribution to efforts to find a way out of the present adversities. The nature of this paper, however, does not allow any sidestepping of the key issues of the Yugoslav situation. Unfortunately, one of these issues is the ambiguous and difficult position of the Serbian people, which has been brought into sharp focus by recent events.

THE CRISIS IN THE YUGOSLAV ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

1. The economic crisis has been going on for five years now, and there is no end to it in sight. With a 0.6% growth rate of the GNP in the 1981-1985 period, Yugoslavia joined the ranks of the least economically successful countries in the world. Nor are the other growth indices any more comforting. The figure of over

one million unemployed dims prospects for school-leavers of finding a job and earning a living in the foreseeable future. The steps taken to raise employment have been motivated by social welfare considerations. However, the opening of new jobs at a time when output is stagnating has resulted in lowered labour productivity. Gross fixed capital formation and real personal incomes have declined by one third. A surplus in the balance of payments, finally achieved thanks to the policy of a realistic exchange rate and restrictions on all forms of consumption, is the only positive result of efforts to deal with the crisis. However, the merits of maintaining liquidity in foreign trade should be weighed against the high level of indebtedness, loss of the country's economic independence in formulating economic and to some extent also development policy, and the increasing disarray in the economy, which despite the best efforts has not yet managed to reach the criteria of efficient business performance. Such a situation has given rise to galloping inflation, which is eroding all economic criteria and incentives, at the same time revealing society's powerlessness to channel rampant economic flows.

As time goes on, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the crisis cannot be overcome unless far-reaching changes are made in the economic and political systems. A particular cause for anxiety is that official political circles are unwilling to acknowledge the true reasons for the economic crisis, making it impossible to take the steps necessary for economic recovery. This unwillingness is all the more baffling as economic studies have accurately pinpointed the causes of the crisis. Contrary to attempts to view these causes solely as the result of inappropriate responses on the part of economic policy-makers in the 1976-1980 period, analyses have shown that the roots of the crisis should be looked for in the decade of the 1960s, when economic growth first began to falter, grinding to a complete halt in 1980. The economic reform of that time had some good points, such as: freeing the economy of bureaucratic red tape, granting greater scope to market forces, removing price disparities, and integrating the Yugoslav economy into the world economy. Unfortunately, only price disparities were reduced to some extent, but not completely done away with, whereas the other goals were not even partially accomplished. Instead, unfortunate improvisations in development strategy and inefficacious innovations in the economic system not only remained but underwent even more inopportune transformations in the 1970s.

As early as the decade of the 1960s, economic development found itself in a backwater when in 1964 the 1961-1965 five-year plan was scrapped, a plan which, in an attempt to remove bottlenecks, gave priority to greater production of raw materials and energy resources. It is a well known fact that these bottlenecks have not been removed to this day. Yugoslav development strategy made matters even worse with two major mistakes. First, it did not recognize the basic requirement for optimal growth of the economy, which is that the factors of production must be used in proportion to their availability. While opting for the greater use of social capital, which in this country is one of the scarcest factors of production,

this strategy at the same time saved on living labour, which is in the most abundant supply, so that Yugoslavia did not make use of its comparative advantages in the international division of labour. As a result, economic development was less than optimal, and the doors were thrown open to an explosive rise in unemployment. The second strategical miscalculation was to expect the growth in real personal incomes alone, without any other measures, to give strong impetus to a growth in labour productivity and output, as is being done by the developed countries. The application of this concept in Yugoslav conditions soon proved to be an error with many economic repercussions.

There were a particularly large number of mistakes made in the choice of basic options for the economic system. In the first place, the system of planning was thoroughly disrupted. A five-year plan was not even adopted for the second half of the 1960s, and the subsequent five-year plans, lacking the necessary backing of resources and measures, remained a dead letter, which no one observed. With the abolition of planning, the coordinating functions of the federal government withered away, while the impeding of market forces stifled economic initiative. In other words, neither was the economy subject to direction nor were self-regulating mechanisms allowed to operate freely. The attempt to replace economic planning and the market with a system of compacts and agreements proved to be a total fiasco. A system in which everyone was supposed to consult with everyone else on everything had no prospects of functioning properly. As a result, the "guiding forces" of the regime had to be called upon more than was beneficial, and a political propaganda campaign was needed to regulate economic flows.

Decentralization, originally conceived as a way to free the economy from the fetters of bureaucracy, degenerated into disintegration along territorial lines and branches of the economy. Eight economic areas were created, with the national economies as their ideological base. The unified Yugoslav market was thereby broken up. The republics and provinces increasingly sought to make their economies autarkic. In addition to the fragmentation of the national Yugoslav economy into separate republican economies, economic enterprises were also split up into smaller units, called "basic organizations of associated labour." This was one of the least expected measures, for small enterprises had been crying out for integration in order to take advantage of economies of scale, but instead what they underwent with the introduction of basic organizations of associated labour was a further fragmentation. Thus two forms of disintegration set the economy running on anti-historical tracks of development. This was the worst thing that could happen to any economy.

The mistakes in development strategy, if we can talk at all of a planned strategy, as well as many shortcomings in the economic system, resulted in a decline not just in the growth rate of production and employment but also in the quality of business performance, on which the success of many of the goals of the economic reform hinged. The growth rate of individual labour productivity in the 1966-1979 period, when attempts were made to introduce intensive production

methods, was lower than in the period of extensive growth, from 1953 to 1965. Incentives for workers to increase their labour productivity were not improved, notwithstanding a rapid rise in real personal incomes. This unexpected trend, which came as a surprise to economic planners, points up the untenability of the notion that a growth in personal consumption expenditure is enough to stimulate the growth of the entire economy and reveals the irremediable weaknesses of the officially approved consensus economy, which is devoid of economic inducements to work.

The productivity of social capital met an even worse fate. After 1965, returns on investments began to decline rapidly. The weaknesses in the economic system gave the wrong signals to enterprises and sociopolitical communities in the adoption of investment and other decisions. The autarkic republican and provincial economies were not interested in an optimal structure for the Yugoslav economy, nor did they take into account the dangers of duplicating capacity. Investment credits were put to a variety of badly planned uses, and for the most part repayment was cancelled out by inflation. The obligation to subsidize general public and collective consumption expenditure from the income of their own economies led communes to enter into new investment projects with little forethought. Either because of a lack of information or because the basic structure of investments was not planned, duplicate productive capacity was built. The fragmented capital accumulation, linked to economic sectors and territories, opened up a wide front of ongoing investment projects, with long completion deadlines, inasmuch as these projects were ever completed. The small-scale capital accumulation in dwarf-sized banks induced investors to achieve the greatest possible earnings and employment with little capital, a situation which resulted in the construction of superfluous capacity in the manufacturing industry and insufficient capacity for the production of raw materials and energy. Superficially analyzed investment projects resulted in serious investment fiascos. There were no economic or social sanctions for wrong investments; politicians remained in the background, even though they often had a decisive influence on investment decisions. All the above-enumerated factors causing the low efficiency of investments were products of the economic system. Therefore, mistakes in economic development and in the economic system, manifested *in the drop in overall productivity of the economy (the productivity of labour and of capital taken together), were the main cause of the crisis in the Yugoslav economy.*

Also to blame for the crisis is the economic policy pursued in the 1970s, which did not take the proper measures for subsequent adjustment. In order to offset the effects of the decline in overall productivity and worsened terms of trade caused by the sharp rise in oil prices, with the aim of maintaining the expansion of production without a rise in inflation or deficit in the balance of payments, a different allocation of aggregate income on savings and consumption expenditure was required. The absence of an incomes policy which would regulate the various forms of consumption expenditure in society was particularly critical as not even

a decline in exports was forestalled by the customary policy of introducing a realistic dinar exchange rate and other measures. All these failings, especially when they took the form of illiquidity in foreign trade, forced economic planners at last to introduce long overdue restrictions on all forms of consumption expenditure, which were able to prevent the further deepening of the crisis but not the crisis itself.

The reasons for these economic ills cannot be fully understood without insight into the economic philosophy underlying the economic system. The setting aside of economic laws and coercion, reliance on people's sense of civic duty rather than on their own interests as an incentive for economic behaviour, the emphasis on living labour as the sole creator of income, insufficient attention to costs and economic categories in their real expression—these were all component parts of the official economic philosophy and institutional arrangements which in practice had even worse consequences than they would have had otherwise because they enjoyed ideological support, even when they were obviously at odds with the demands of economically rational behaviour. This, among other things, explains the condoning of economically perverted relations, economic pathology, and social profligacy, all of which has been going on far too long not to have left scars on ways of thinking and the behaviour of the economy. The enormous losses in the economy show that not even after four decades has the principle of profitability become obligatory, and that there are no economic penalties for poor business performance. Subsidies to the economy in the form of credits, the covering of losses from public funds, low rate of amortization, toleration of shoddy quality, a growth rate of real personal incomes which for years exceeded that of labour productivity, all created very easy terms of production, introducing on a large scale a wide variety of forms of parasitism in the economy and elsewhere. Such conditions were able to persist thanks to growing foreign debts, which will have to be serviced not just by present generations, but by generations to come. The principle of remuneration according to work performed could not be applied in the economy either because of the unresolved question of primary allocation, or because many firms are earning interest from public funds. The incentive for workers to increase their labour productivity has inevitably been weak because of social distinctions which are not based on labour. The countenance of idleness and other forms of social demagoguery are a high price to pay for social harmony and maintaining the material privileges of the ruling classes. In view of all these considerations, it is no wonder that people see the tightening up in the terms of production as an attack on their prerogatives, as can be seen from the resistance to the introduction of economically positive interest rates and the priority given to payment of personal incomes. The economy finds good reasons for its resistance to this tightening up in the large contributions which it has to pay to maintain a top-heavy bureaucracy, whose costs represent an intolerable burden for the economy.

Saturated as it is with economic irrationalities, the economic climate has inevitably affected the behaviour of citizens, who, thanks to the contracting of foreign debts by the country, had enjoyed a rapidly rising standard of living. The sharp increase in personal consumption, bordering on extravagance, is still regarded by people as their birthright. The drop in real personal incomes, which should be seen as a necessary correction to bring them into line with the real level of labour productivity, is seen by the public as an unconscionable act of violence against them and not as an objective necessity. Things could not be otherwise in a country where for years people have lived beyond their means. Consumer and investment credits, the purchase of imported goods at low prices, allocation of socially-owned flats and low rentals all meant that a large segment of the population was in fact being subsidized by public funds. Economic irrationalities and the topsy-turvy economic relations have lasted for a long time and can be seen at every turn. As a result, the public considers this situation to be normal. Everyone, motivated by his own selfish interests, has his own model of economic behaviour, which for some groups might even have been successful, but for society and the economy as a whole has as a rule been fatal. The painful question must be tackled of how to reaffirm the work ethic as the basis for existence and for the individual's social and economic status.

2. With the outbreak of the all-pervasive crisis in society, responsibility for Yugoslavia's future made it incumbent first to determine the true dimensions and real causes of the crisis and then to set about at once devising measures to remedy this state of recession and uncertainty. This, however, was not done. Three years had to go by before official reports started referring to an "economic crisis," and this acknowledgement was gradual and reluctant. In the first two years of the crisis it was referred to as "minor," "short-term," or "passing" troubles, but most popular of all was the phrase "difficulties of economic growth." It was *de rigeur* to say in the same breath that there was no need to change the economic system in any major respect and that all that was necessary was to make sure it was fully observed. When these assertions became untenable, the thesis was launched that the Yugoslav crisis was of greater scope than had originally been thought, but that it was exclusively economic in nature, that its causes lay in foreign trade and an inappropriate economic policy after 1976. At the same time an attempt was made to exempt the political factor from any blame for the economic crisis, and by insistence on economic policy as the main culprit to spare the economic system from critical scrutiny. Since this line could also not last forever, a concession was made by at long last subjecting the political system to scrutiny. Unfortunately, this scrutiny has not only bypassed the key issues in the political system, but in its section on the economy it negated the concepts put forward in the Stabilization Programme.

The recognition of the crisis in stages, only for it to be denied again, resulting in valuable time being wasted, belies the irresolution and unwillingness

of official political circles to carry out the changes which the new situation demands. The reluctance to make an accurate diagnosis and to tackle the crisis with timely measures has undermined public confidence in the statesmanship, political courage and sincere intentions of the individuals who are in charge of public affairs, as well as their preparedness to make a break with the delusions which have brought the country to the brink of disaster. A disinclination to look the truth in the face and resistance to any substantive changes are reflected in the fact that it was only under pressure from the International Monetary Fund that some economic measures were adopted which would have been less painful and which would have had a greater effect if they had been taken much earlier on our own initiative. But nothing so eloquently speaks of the opposition to efforts to achieve economic efficiency than the fact that the government did not implement its own Stabilization Programme. Those who said that this document could only have been adopted because it was too generalized to put concrete obligations on anyone were right. It was predicted that the implementation of the programme would encounter unsurmountable obstacles in conflicts of interest between republics, provinces, and industry groups. When these predictions came true, doubt began to grow over whether the Stabilization Programme was really conceived as a plan of action for economic recovery, or whether it had a political propaganda role, calculated to make the public think that something was being done to find a way out of the crisis, whereas in fact the necessary changes were being stymied. The Stabilization Programme, which took a realistic approach to the economy, received its heaviest blow from the Critical Analysis of the Functioning of the Political System, which rehabilitated the already abandoned ideology of a "consensus economy," which has been most responsible for the woes of the Yugoslav economy. What is more, two documents with fundamentally different economic concepts were both officially adopted. Perhaps that was the most effective way to maintain the *status quo*, but it could not provide an answer to the crisis in Yugoslav society.

Justification for the economic difficulties and delayed response to the crisis is sometimes sought in the limitations of the science of economics and the failure of economists to agree on key issues. There have always been disagreements between economists in all countries and at all times, but it is up to the government to decide whose opinions to honour and to take responsibility for its choice. The problem is, however, that the opinion of economists was never sought in the proper manner. Economic science was acceptable to the extent to which it provided rational explanations for official policy. Consequently, those in power did not give due attention to the timely warnings and valuable proposals made by economists on their own initiative. The systematic neglect of professional expertise throughout the entire postwar period is hard to understand, but it is even harder to understand why such a thing could happen in a socialist society, which in principle takes science as the cornerstone of its development. The neglect of academic scholarship, especially in the last two decades, should be regarded as

part and parcel of the tendency to subordinate economic development and economic efficiency to the strengthening and preservation of polycentrism and a monopoly of power in society of the republican and provincial leaders, as an undeclared goal which took absolute priority. This goal stems from the symbiosis of nationalism, separatism, and the lust for power, and it is pursued by the efforts of the political factor to increase its power, using republican states' rights as a power base, and to act as mediator and arbiter in the local economy and society.

This goal has only recently become clear to the general public, when malignant disintegration as the dominant trend in the economy and society took on alarming proportions. The danger that the political system would evolve in the direction of polycentrism unless timely efforts were made to head it off by setting up workers' councils for branches of the economy at the level of Yugoslavia was noted by Boris Kidric as early as 1950. His suggestions, unfortunately, were not heeded. A deaf ear was turned to his warning that, if such councils were not created, the outcome would be "a number of state capitalisms, with localistic proclivities vis-à-vis the whole but with bureaucratic centralist proclivities vis-à-vis work collectives." In Yugoslavia today we have the situation which Kidric dreaded most.

This situation is the upshot of an evolution which has been going on for almost three full decades. During the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s it seemed as though democratization, the substitution of government with self-management institutions, and the deprofessionalization of politics had gained widespread public support. Prospects that progress in this direction would continue were all the brighter in that, thanks to a better balanced programme of investments and a better link between coordination and initiative, the economy had scored convincing success, both in raising output and creating new jobs and in improving the quality of business performance and increasing exports. Labour productivity had grown rapidly; investment efficiency was at a high level, and economic relations with foreign countries were virtually on an equal footing. It was as though there was nothing standing in the way of building the political and economic system on principles which were giving palpable results. It is true that in that period there were already clear intimations of separatism and nationalism in the form of the slogans: "to each his own," or "we are splitting up in order to become reunited," or the persistent campaign against an overly exaggerated and imagined unitarism.

Things started going wrong in the mid 1960s, when, to everyone's surprise, these intimations became the ruling trends, which brought the progressive course of political change to a halt. Some aspects of the system which had almost been eliminated became revived. Instead of withering away, as had been expected, government authority and the state became stronger in the republics, provinces, and communes. As a result, the laws of economic efficiency as imperatives of a modern, civilized society were given short shrift. Admittedly, even before the economic reform of the 1960s politics took precedence over the economy, but economic growth had been the most important political priority. However, when

politics became a goal unto itself, in the economy the emphasis shifted from economic growth to the economic system, from the earning of income to its allocation, from production to consumption. All this shows the extent to which economic development was neglected, precisely in the rejection of the knowledge gained by developed societies and suspension of economic science. Such views found fullest expression in the thesis that the demands of self-management and efficient business performance could not be reconciled.

The abortive attempt to reintegrate the railways and other large systems at the federal level is a concrete example of how the most obvious principles of economic efficiency go by the board if they threaten to limit the power wielded by the republican and provincial leaderships. However, we should also take this as indicative of the extent of political voluntarism, which has cleared the field for itself for complete freedom of action. Serious obstacles to it might have been posed by the economic plan, which, once adopted, does not allow for caprice, even for those who have adopted it, or by the market, implying autonomy of decision-making on the part of economic entities. Precisely because they posed an impediment to voluntarism, the economic plan and market were neutralized, so as to create scope for a brand of economics which is not based on market mechanisms and economic constraints but instead takes all relationships to be arbitrary. In this country the basic task of the economic system is not to promote economic growth and honour the principles of economic efficiency; rather it is designed to serve as a means of strengthening the political factor. We have seen that political voluntarism does not let even the law stand in its way; if laws prove to be constraining, they simply are not enforced. Voluntarism breeds an unholy alliance between ignorance and irresponsibility and abundantly passes on these characteristics to the economy, which it keeps under heel and in a position of dependence. No one needs to be persuaded anymore of the fact that politics takes precedence over economics. This fact is being openly discussed by political leaders, as though they were not the main culprits for such a state of affairs.

The system of self-management did not curb political voluntarism. The reason for this is simple: this system was imposed by the will of the political leaders, who have not the least difficulty in either increasing or restricting the scope of its influence or in controlling it from within. The thesis that self-management is most fully exercised within basic organizations of associated labour in fact is just an excuse not to allow it access to that essential (macroeconomic) field of action in which decisions of vital importance for society are taken. The political factors jealously keep this domain reserved for themselves. In the 1960s, self-management was pushed into a backseat, and herein lie the roots of many of our present troubles. In fact it is non-existent on a global scale, and it never was even elaborated into a comprehensive democratic system, nor have conclusions been drawn from this fact. Consequently, self-management is mere window dressing and not the pillar of society. The system is totally inconsistent. There is no real plan, no real market, no real government, and no real self-management.

3. The disintegration of the Yugoslav economy into separate economic sectors and territories, which is an anachronistic trend, directly stems from an even more widespread and more significant anachronistic trend, which is the transforming of the federal state as constituted in the decisions taken at the Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia and during the first decades of postwar development into a kind of confederation, which became institutionalized in the most recent Constitution of 1974. There have been many cases in history of a confederation turning into a federation, but there is not one single example of the opposite occurring. The changing of a federal state into a federation of states is all the more unacceptable in that after relatively frequent changes in the years after the war, Yugoslavia now has an iron-clad constitution, which for all practical purposes is impossible to change. Eleven years have been more than enough time for the enormous difficulties caused by all the consequences of confederalism in the social order to become clear, as a result of which even the Constitution itself has found itself in the focus of criticism of the political system.

The most important element of confederalism consists of the requirement that the assemblies of all the republics and provinces must first give their consent before even the most minor amendment can be made to the Constitution, as well as the requirement that a decision voted upon in the Chamber of Republics and Provinces may be considered to have been carried only if all the delegations vote in favour of it. In both cases, opposition by just one participant in decision-making has the character of a veto. If we bear in mind the possibility of behind-the-scenes manoeuvring intended to foist decisions on the minority, it is hard to find fault, either in general or on any other basis, with the principle of consensus in the system of decision-making, provided such decision-making concerns major questions affecting the social order, as is envisaged by the Constitution. The trouble, however, is that the principle of unanimous decision-making has overstepped its constitutional framework and without good reason has found a place both in many statutes and regulations and in decision-making within the economy, cultural life, and sports organizations.

The affirmation of republican and provincial attributes of statehood alongside the simultaneous disappearance of the coordinating functions vested in the federal government have opened the doors wide to the promotion of local interests at the expense of national interests. The Constitution ostensibly tried to forestall such an eventuality by including a declarative provision calling upon the republics and provinces to concern themselves both with their own development and with the development of Yugoslavia as a whole. But since "charity begins at home," they concentrated on their own development and largely ignored the development of the entire country. A balance between optimal local and optimal national development is a theoretically untenable construct which has never passed the acid test of practice. Such constructs have not passed muster in other cases as well. Ethnic interests have taken precedence over class interests, and the provinces have

insisted more on their status as a constituent element of the federation than on the fact that they are an integral part of Serbia. Balances of this sort have served as a means of pacifying those who were concerned about maintaining the state and economic integrity of the country as a whole, but they have also encouraged separatists of all stripes to push through their own agendas in practice.

Another element of confederalism is the principle of parity in the composition of the Presidency of the SFRY, as well as of the other highest organs. The constitutional provision stating that federal statutes are in principle to be enforced by the governments of the republics and provinces is essentially confederal in nature, and in practice it often meant that these laws were not enforced at all. Another strong element of confederalism is the fact that there is no requirement for republican and provincial constitutions to be in harmony with the federal constitution; the only stipulation is that they may not conflict with it. No legal remedies have been envisaged for dealing with any conflicts that might arise. On the other hand, in the case of a conflict between a republican or provincial statute and a federal statute, it is the republican or provincial statute that remains in force until such time as the Constitutional Court makes its ruling.

The present-day political system of Yugoslavia is increasingly contradictory, dysfunctional, and expensive. It multiplies the unwieldy machinery of government on three levels, leading to a strong proliferation of red tape and increased public spending. Whether it is a case of political or economic matters, the system can serve as a textbook example of inefficiency. Decision-making at the federal level is so slow that even when appropriate measures are taken, they only have a limited effect because they come late. As a result of conflicts between the participants in decision-making, there is often a complete impasse, and not just at the federal level. The Republic of Serbia has not managed in ten full years to pass republican laws. The insufficient flexibility of the system is seen when it comes to both new decisions and amendment of earlier decisions. The system does not make provision for timely adjustment to new situations. Its inertness does not permit simple changes to be made quickly if such changes become necessary. We should also mention here the frequent impotence on the part of federal agencies to secure enforcement of federal laws. The social system is obviously in a state of paralysis.

In order for the necessary changes to be effected, we must throw off the ideology which lays primary emphasis on ethnic and territorial considerations. Whereas in modern-day civilized society integrational trends are gaining momentum, with full affirmation of civil and human rights, the superseding of authoritarian forms of government, and democratization of government, what we have in our own political system is growing centrifugal forces, local, regional and national egoism, and authoritarian, arbitrary government, which on a large scale and at all levels of society violates universally recognized human rights. The propensity to divisions and fragmentation of global entities in society, which is in fact resistance to a modern, democratic, integrated federation, takes shelter

behind the specious ideological catchword of a struggle against “unitarism” and “centralism.” However, the real alternative to “unitarism” and “centralism” is not ethnic egoism and polycentrism, with local “national” (in fact republican and provincial) economies, with forcible restriction of science, culture, and education within territorial boundaries and the subjugation of all aspects of public life to the unchecked power of republican and provincial oligarchies. The real alternative is a democratic, integrating federalism, in which the principle of autonomy of the parts is in harmony with the principle of coordinating the parts within the framework of a single whole, in which political institutions at all levels of society are set up in a consistently democratic way, in which decision-making is preceded by free, rational, and public debate, and not by secret behind-the-scenes manoeuvring by cabals of self-styled and self-appointed champions of special ethnic interests.

The aforementioned attitude toward the state and nation has blocked the development of self-management. Self-management is stunted and deformed not just because it has been reduced to the level of social micro-entities, but also because it has been completely subordinated to the organs of alienated authority – from the communes all the way up to republican and provincial governments. The disintegrated working class has been turned into a conglomerate of work collectives, placed in a situation where they have to fight with one another over how to divide up income. There are no self-management institutions for groups of enterprises, for economic sectors, or for the economy as a whole which would efficiently regulate production and lay down guidelines for economic development. A welter of legal regulations has reduced to a minimum the area in which self-management organs can exercise freedom of decision-making. This area has been further whittled down by the arbitrary interventions of local authorities, in collusion with technocratic forces. It is paradoxical that in a society which considers itself to be socialist, the working class has no opportunities of becoming organized or of being represented in the Federal Assembly. Just how much the ethnic and territorial principle has gained ascendancy over the economic principle of production can best be seen from the vehemence with which the idea of setting up a chamber of associated labour in the Federal Assembly is being resisted.

For a better understanding of why the ethnic principle takes precedence in the present-day practices of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, we must look to the influence of the Comintern on the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the years between the two world wars. The Comintern’s strategy in this period was based on its conclusion that in view of the failure of proletarian revolutions to materialize in Western Europe, the communist parties in Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe would have to rely on national movements, even if they were expressly anti-socialist and revolved on the idea of national and not class unity. Stalin took a hand personally in breaking down all opposition to this strategy (for instance, one of the founders of the Yugoslav Communist Party, SimaMarkovic, came to grief because of his objections to this policy). It was in this spirit that

Sperans (Kardelj) formulated and gave the theoretical elaboration to the programme for dealing with the national question in his book *The Evolution of the Slovene National Question* which largely served as the ideological model for Yugoslavia's evolution in the direction of a confederation of sovereign republics and provinces, culminating in the 1974 Constitution.

The two most developed republics, which thanks to this Constitution accomplished their nationalist agendas, are today zealous defenders of the existing system. Thanks to the political position of their leaders in the centres of political power, both before and after the critical decade of the 1960s, they have provided the initiative on all matters concerning the political and economic system. They have shaped Yugoslavia's social and economic order to their own measure and to meet their own requirements. Nothing would be more normal than for them now to defend the system which they worked so hard and long on creating, a system in which they see the realization of the major portion of their national programmes.

According to the ruling ideology in these two republics, their political leaders must not defer to the economic interests of the entire country, or indeed even their own economic interests, if doing so would restrict their political autonomy.

There is no need to say that separatism and nationalism are both at work on the social scene, but there is not enough awareness that such trends were made ideologically possible by the 1974 Constitution. The constant strengthening and synergetic effect of separatism and nationalism have cut the national groups off from one another, to a critical degree. Machinations with language and the caging of academics and cultural personalities in republican and provincial enclosures are depressing signs of the burgeoning strength of particularism. All the new ethnogenies are not so much the unfortunate fabrications of an academic community shut up within a provincial bell jar and plagued by the incubus of regional ideologies as they are symptoms of growing alienation, not only from a common present and future but even from the common past. It is as though people were in a hurry to get out of a house which is tumbling down around their ears and were trying to run away as fast and as far as possible. The intellectual climate provides a warning that the political crisis has come close to the flash point of complete destabilization of Yugoslavia. Kosovo is the most obvious portent. Incidents such as Slivnitsa leave no one in doubt that those who have aspirations to Yugoslav territory have already defined their interests.

The bureaucratic decentralization which in recent decades has been carried out by the holders of political power in this country has at one and the same time been an impediment to the advancement of democracy. After the Second World War, political life in Yugoslavia adjusted to peacetime conditions, when there was no longer any need for clandestine activities, slowly and not particularly successfully. The legacy of Stalin and the Comintern is still very much in evidence. The conditions prevailing within the underground communist movement left deep

traces: conspiratorial methods, internal hierarchy, the participation of only a handful of individuals in decision-making, insistence on ideological unanimity and unquestioning acceptance and carrying out of assignments, and harsh epithets (“factionalist,” or “enemy”) for anyone who disagreed with or criticized the adopted political line. If we add to this the tendency for power, once gained, to be strenuously defended, both with repression and with encouragement of slavish obedience, then it is understandable why it has been so hard to find ways of arriving at genuine democracy.

Hopes for progress along democratic lines were raised in the 1950s, when Yugoslavia declared a policy of debureaucratizing the economy and society, at the same time putting forward a programme of socialist democracy in the form of social self-management. The famous passage from the LCY Programme that “nothing is so holy” promised an openness to new ideas which no dogmatism would be allowed to fetter. This social programme was not elaborated in sufficient detail to be clear on all points, any more than were the ways in which it was to be put into effect, but all the same it was widely accepted as an opportunity for democratic development which would be sensitive to modern-day changes and sufficiently determined to make timely adjustments to these changes.

Such expectations, however, have come to nought. In the mid-1960s, efforts to do away with bureaucracy suddenly flagged and gave way to decentralization, which in essence was bureaucratic. The present-day political system of Yugoslavia does not have a single one of the advantages of contemporary political systems. It is not a liberal democracy, nor a consultative democracy, nor even an enlightened bureaucratic system. It lacks political liberty, the direct participation of citizens in political life, and functioning of the system according to set rules and norms. The entire system has been constructed on the principle of an active role for the top leaders in the political hierarchy and hopeless political passivity of the citizens. The Federal Chamber of the Assembly of the SFRY is federal in name alone. Here, too, it is the republics and provinces that are represented, and not the citizens of the federal state regardless of what republic or province they belong to. There is no special chamber (a chamber of associated labour) in the Assembly of the SFRY in which the Yugoslav working class would be represented. Direct elections, as one of the great achievements of civilization, have been replaced by indirect elections. The delegate system which was introduced has proved to be unworkable. Political manipulation of citizens is successfully carried out and constant. Citizens are from time to time called upon to vote in a “plebiscite” to put their rubber stamp on elections which have already been carried out by the ruling hierarchy behind the political scene. The undemocratic electoral system puts voters into a situation where they do not know whom they are electing, or rather for whom they are casting their votes, and the delegates have no one to whom they are accountable for their actions.

In fact, the political system of Yugoslavia is a mixed bag, with hold-overs from the old political state and the authoritarian state inherited from the so-called

“real socialism” in Eastern Europe. A state with such mixed attributes is incapable of creative action, of making necessary changes, and of adjusting its institutions and goals to a society which is in constant flux. The blocked political organization became an organization to preserve the *status quo*, to maintain unproductive, unimaginative professional politics and an appointments policy which ensures the selection of loyal but incompetent individuals.

Democratization is a vital prerequisite both for recovery from the deep-seated crisis and for the imperative revitalization of society. Yugoslavia does not need lip service to democracy, which changes nothing; what it needs is democratization of people’s minds and relationships in society. The demand for a genuinely democratic system is all the more important in that Yugoslav civic-mindedness is particularized and fragmented. It is hard to imagine genuine democratization without alternative concepts of development. The sorely needed accountability might be achieved only if it appeared likely that, because of mistaken ideas or inefficacious work, a different conception and its protagonists might win public confidence. Democratic centralism has a rationale if in the process of arriving at decisions the minority is an equal partner in discussions, and if it is defeated by the force of argument and outvoted after a truly democratic debate. This road was not the one taken. Every dissenting opinion has been proclaimed to be factionalism. The deep-seated aversion to change is best illustrated by resistance to proposals that two or more candidates should stand for each electoral post, even though, there being no alternative concepts, they could not do any harm to the established political line. However, the repercussions of such an innovation would be enormous from the standpoint of the monopoly on appointments held by the top political leadership, which selects delegates in return for their votes. The situation has reached such a pass that within the republics and provinces informal caucuses are formed to bid for the most influential positions. Similarly, at the federal level, instead of a principled and argued battle of opinions, coalitions are formed to satisfy republican and provincial interests and to assure the autonomous, monopolistic status of the ruling political cliques in them.

There are other ways in which the latitude for political action by citizens is restricted. Attempts to make the vitally needed step in the direction of emancipating thought and speech have to date produced only modest results. There is no denying that the mass media are much freer, even when they deal with certain topics which until recently were taboo. From time to time a voice will be raised in political circles talking about the need for debate, or stating that different points of view should not be regarded as something unusual. Unfortunately, public statements are not regarded as binding by the holders of power. Public declarations carry no weight and make no impact whatsoever, even when they communicate important insights. Public opinion does not have a corrective function, nor is it included in debate. Not even academic and professional opinion

succeeds in making a mark by force of argued assessments and suggestions if they differ from the fixed opinions and attitudes of the political factors.

Just how insignificant the role of public opinion is can best be seen from the imprudent contracting of foreign debts and the large number of failed investment projects. An interesting sidenote is that no one had any idea of how much Yugoslavia owed or to which foreign creditors, so that a foreign firm had to be hired to determine the actual state of affairs. It is another question why the extent of the foreign debt was kept a secret from the public. Today we know how much is owed to foreign creditors, but the public does not know how much in loans has been handed out by Yugoslavia and whether or not they are being repaid on a regular basis. The debate on nuclear power plants has shown that undemocratic practices in investment decisions and the contracting of debts abroad are continuing. However, the problem lies not in individual decisions but rather in the absence of fundamental democracy in resolving the dilemma over whether to retain or change the political and economic system. There is no doubt that public and professional opinion is strongly in favour of radical changes, but the political factor still takes no heed of it. This is indeed the most convincing proof that democratic channels have not yet been created for the communication of demands to the political leaders. As regards the institution of "verbal crimes" and their arbitrary interpretation, no society aspiring to democracy can be proud of such a compromising means of repression.

It would be a step forward for civilization and not just for democracy if such repression were to disappear forever. Which is not to say that a clamp-down would not be welcome in regard to economic and other crimes. The reasons for excessive repression where it is not needed and too little where it is indispensable should be sought among other things in the fact that for the state, ideological considerations and criteria are paramount. Disorganized to an unreasonable extent, the state has degenerated into an institutional form of republican, provincial, and communal voluntarism. Many ills are caused by the fact that there is no well organized and democratically controlled state, with a professional and publicly accountable civil service for the implementation of adopted policy. For the moment, there are certain economic functions which no one but the state can successfully perform. These are above all long-term planning, fiscal and monetary policy, and incomes policy. Society needs this kind of government in order to rid itself of parallel institutions of decision-making. As things stand today, those who in formal terms do not have power in fact take decisions, while those who formally hold power in fact do not decide on anything. Society will never be able to establish accountability unless it eliminates the practice of informal decision-making, which is always closed to public scrutiny and control.

The League of Communists of Yugoslavia forms the backbone of the political system, and its leadership holds an absolute monopoly of power in society. There are reliable reports that it has succumbed to the temptations of this monopoly, that the League of Communists is living off the glory of its

revolutionary past, that to a large extent it has become privatized, that it has a hierarchical structure of professional officials who manage to stay in their positions thanks to personal loyalty to their superiors and unquestioning obedience, and that democratic centralism means that the leaders make decisions and the rank and file unquestioningly carry out these decisions. The LCY has fused with the state. From an ideological leader it has become the ruling party. All aspects of the lack of democracy within the League of Communists are transferred to society as a whole. The League's claim to be the vanguard of society is obviously at variance with the unsettled state within it. Such a state of affairs could have been a direct catalyst for a reassessment of all relationships in society, as was attempted in the USSR and in China after the deaths of Stalin and Mao Tse Tung. However this did not take place. The need for a thorough-going reassessment was consistently denied, even though there was a glaring need for it as the situation continued to deteriorate. Not even the bulk of the short-term measures with immediate effect was taken. Instead of energetic action, there were long-winded and fruitless discussions which only gave a pretense that something was being done. No one even pays attention any more to the mass of generalized recommendations. If there is a lackadaisical attitude to problems which brook no delay, there is even less interest in the question of Yugoslavia's inclusion in modern trends and its ability to take part in the third technological revolution.

These questions would not even have arisen if the revolutionary movement had not changed into a party of vested interests, if the self-image of the ruling forces in Yugoslav society had not thereby become highly conservative. Ideas about the structure of society and the working class formed long ago in the past and differing radically from modern-day reality die hard. Conservatism, to be sure, is not manifested merely in the emphasis given to the role of production workers who, it should be noted, have not received the attention from society which would be proper and possible in socialism. It is seen most of all in the deep suspicion with which experts and intellectuals are regarded, who both numerically and in terms of their creative contribution are receiving an ever more important place in the developed countries. The working class cannot stay a genuine vanguard for long if its intellectuals are looked upon as unreliable fellow-travellers of the revolution. The limited confidence placed in the intelligentsia is perhaps most disastrous in that the country is losing step with technical advances. Deliberations on the system of production, the taking of investment decisions, organization and development of production do not go beyond the conceptual framework of the second technological revolution, which is on the way out. The right moment for joining in the third technological revolution has, it appears, been missed.

The shortcomings of the political system are so numerous and of such magnitude that their reverberations are felt throughout Yugoslav society. The tackling of these defects must begin with a thorough reexamination of the Constitution, without any prejudice or ideological bias. Such reassessments are

prompted not just by the weaknesses in the political system, but also by the basic economic flaws in the Constitution, such as: an insufficiently clear definition and institutionalization of socially-owned property, topsy-turvy relations between the parts and the whole, inoperability of the self-management mechanism, an income principle which is not scientifically founded, an insufficiently elaborated concept of planning and the market mechanism, an incorrectly constituted status and responsibility of the basic organization of associated labour, etc.

In jurisprudence there is general agreement that a country's constitution should be concise, with clear enunciation of the basic principles of the social order and with precisely defined rights and obligations, so that they are easily understood and remembered by every citizen. Such a constitution is not merely the product of the experience and knowledge of the science of law; it also derives from the right of citizens in a democratic and civilized country to have this type of constitution. The Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 did not abide by the aforementioned principles. The desire to be original in organizing society at all times, unless there was a deliberate attempt to create ambiguities, resulted in Yugoslavia having the most lengthy constitution in the world. It deals with such minor issues as housing for military personnel, or appointment of managers of firms, matters which are properly topics for statutes or bylaws. An inappropriate terminology makes the text of the constitution hard to understand for ordinary folk, and indeed not just them. Sentences containing over one hundred words, articles which cover many pages of text, and the inconsistent and incorrect use of various terms are all symptomatic of an impermissibly low level of legal expertise in drawing up a legal document. At the same time it shows that jurists did not have enough say in the drafting of the Constitution.

4. In addition to the economic and political crisis there is a moral crisis, which is seriously eroding Yugoslav society. Its numerous causes have deep historical roots. But in an ideological society such as ours, the moral crisis has essentially been caused by the ideological crisis, by the failures of the ideological programme of the revolution, by deviations from avowed socialist goals and principles, by a discrepancy between word and deed on the part of the political leadership, by an imperfect legal order, by an inferior and dependent judiciary, by bureaucratic high-handedness and privileges, by moral conformism and reward of careerism, by an absence of free and open criticism of trends, ideas, people in official positions, in short, by a lack of democratic public opinion which would act as the effective conscience of society. Nothing was done to try to stem the massive migration from the countryside or address all the problems it entails with a programme of cultural education, or by establishing a definite code of conduct and morality. The ubiquitous small-minded peasant mentality, made worse by the notion that everything which is not expressly forbidden is permitted and with a penchant for focussing on immediate interests in the here and now, completely neglecting longer-term or more general interests, has been able to survive for a

long time, and in times of crisis it emerges as a force which completely wrecks the system of morality, creating wide opportunities for criminality and other phenomena which have little in common with the values of a socialist society.

Everywhere we see attempts to appropriate socially-owned property, and theft, embezzlement and corruption have become such a normal way of supplementing their budgets for so many citizens that income of this provenance has to be taken into account when the amount of personal consumption expenditure is being calculated. The bad example set by the often unpunished infractions of the law by enterprises and sometimes even by administrative agencies also takes its toll. Privileges are clung to, despite unanimous public censure. There is virtually no appreciation in society of what it means to do an honest day's work. There are few people who ask themselves just what they have done and how hard they have worked to earn their pay checks. Because the terms of production are not uniform, a situation arises in which the principle of remuneration according to work is abandoned. The salaries paid out in enterprises often depend less on performance and more on someone's agility in fighting for higher prices or lower taxes. The systematic practice of covering the losses of some firms with the earnings of others kills incentive for both sides. A relatively large number of people have acquired wealth in a legal manner but not through their own labour. The widening social disparities caused by the chaotic state of affairs in the economy and society are all the more economically intolerable and morally indefensible as they are appearing in a time of crisis.

Unemployment is also devastatingly demoralizing the masses. Nepotism is universal, and the favouring of relatives when hiring is done has virtually gained the force of customary law. Unemployment is a difficult social problem not just because a large number of young people cannot make an independent living, but also because a large section of the population, younger and with higher qualifications than the employed work force, has remained unproductive, even though the harnessing of their skills would greatly improve the situation. It is painful to see the demoralization of these people and their families, the hopelessness of students who go through school without any prospects of finding a job when they get out, or the state of mind of those people who, having at last found employment after several years of waiting, regard their job as no more than a means of livelihood, with no ambition to excel, especially since the years of waiting for a job have caused them to lose touch with their profession and forget most of what they have learned. Nor is the fashion of seeking "temporary" employment abroad any less disastrous. It has become accepted wisdom that it is impossible to make a decent living at home by honest work. People are losing faith not just in the merits of doing one's job conscientiously but also in socialism, whose halo has become tarnished in the light of the ill repute this system has in the countries to which Yugoslav citizens have gone as "guest workers."

The loss of confidence and low level of motivation are the clearly visible signs of moral crisis. So far it has not been possible to effect a general mobilization

of all the country's energies to tackle present social problems. The general public lacks a clear sense of civic duty, of working towards and sacrificing oneself for general social goals. The official ideology which instead of a real socialist programme only offers empty political proclamations has largely squandered its ability to win people's hearts and minds. The credibility gap between socialist principles and harsh reality is so great that it is giving rise to large-scale apathy, privatization, and growing discontent. The reforms that today might be able to restore a healthy climate in society and perhaps reverse present trends will not be enough tomorrow.

The erosion of the system of values, which has become more and more pervasive with time, goes beyond moral norms. We have come to such a pass that almost nobody knows what values Yugoslav society seeks to uphold. The horizon of needs has never been seriously opened up for democratic debate. Consequently, the scale of priorities of needs is created spontaneously, largely under the influence of the consumer society mentality. This psychology, linked with an untrammled primitivism, has greatly strengthened the propensity towards kitsch in literature, music, film, and entertainment of all types. This propensity is even being deliberately and systematically pandered to by the press, radio and television. Under the assault of the aggressive kitsch which reigns supreme on the scene, genuine cultural values have failed to take root on a large scale in society, despite the large number of important accomplishments in Yugoslavia's cultural life. There are few planned efforts to bring these works to a wider public.

The crisis in culture is seen not just in the fact that genuine social values cannot compete against kitsch. Cultural life is becoming more and more regionalized; the Yugoslav and universal significance of culture is becoming obliterated, and in large part it is putting itself in the service of republican and provincial aspirations to carve out their own fiefdoms in this sphere as well. The overall provincialization of cultural life lowers standards and makes it possible for the less talented to gain wide public recognition. Deep-rooted as they are in provincial cultural life, separatism and nationalism are becoming increasingly aggressive.

5. This sweeping and profound crisis in Yugoslav society poses many questions, two of which are uppermost: What has become of the plan for building a new society for which so many lives were sacrificed? Where do we stand today in relation to modern European civilization?

An objective, scholarly analysis, free both from ideological apologetics (which resist any alterations whatsoever to the system) and from ideological scepticism (which rejects the system out of hand, from its very inception) reveals all the contradictions in postwar development and explains why, after a period of impressive economic growth, progressive democratization and intellectual emancipation, there followed the social strife of the late 1960s, restoration of authoritarianism in the early 1970s, a loss of stability and structural proportions, economic stagnation, and growing spiritual disorientation as the upshot.

The collapse that has occurred would not be so grave and intractable if it were the result of just one misconceived policy. The new political strategy introduced in the 1960s was not just a plan of economic reform but termination of the process of political and economic democratization, of the disalienization of politics, of long-term social planning, of the building of an integrated federation. The new social plan, which gave free rein to group and national egoism, has led to an irreconcilable conflict with all the recognized moral values of the past and to an increasing demoralization of the masses.

In order to explain why the fatal turnabout occurred after a period of successful development from 1953 to 1965, we must take into account a number of factors: precedence to individual and group over general interests; the acquisitiveness of the new middle class; ascendancy of the interests of the most developed republics; defence of the politocratic monopoly of power in the face of growing pressure for further democratic reforms; and the obstinate resistance to emancipation put up by the patriarchal tradition. Of the outside factors, we should especially mention the pressure of the great powers, which in the political sphere have lent their support to authoritarianism, and in the economic sphere strove, in the end successfully, to force the country into technological and economic foreign dependency.

At the same time, we cannot be satisfied with an explanation which would idealize the plan of revolutionary transformation or the undeniable successes scored in the first two decades after the war, and which would regard the subsequent mistakes and decline as merely the deformation of this plan by those in power. It is a home truth that this plan itself has its limitations, both as regards its initial vision, which (notwithstanding all its humanistic and emancipatory ideas) overemphasizes the role of violence and dictatorship in the transitional period, and the manner in which this vision was interpreted and applied in Yugoslavia under the pressure of Stalinism and the legacy of the Comintern.

Successful opposition to Stalinism mobilized considerable social forces, which ensured national independence, industrialization of the country, an enviable economic growth rate in the period 1953-1965, the initial forms of self-management, and intellectual emancipation from narrow ideological frameworks in the sphere of culture. Nonetheless, once established, the hierarchical relationships could not be superseded. They proved to be an insurmountable obstacle to the process of democratization. This process was tolerated and encouraged so long as it liberated creative forces at the micro-level of society and in spheres of activity far removed from politics. It was then strictly controlled when it became extended to political institutions, with the demand for deprofessionalization and debureaucratization of politics, and it was definitively halted when it began to threaten the centres of political power, in the form of a demand for freer elections and for transformation of government agencies into organs of self-management. The economic reform of 1965 essentially marked a change of course in the strategy of social development: the plan for political democratization was supplanted by a

plan of economic liberalization. The idea of self-management, which pivots on the disalienation of politics, was replaced with the idea of decentralization, which led to the setting up of regional centres of alienated power. The ethics of mutual aid and the welfare state gave way to a spirit of grasping individualism and promotion of group interests. Political voluntarism, bold and dynamic in the first postwar decades, when it was able to count on mass support from the citizens, is now becoming hidebound and tenacious in defending the system, even when it is becoming obvious that this system is incoherent and inefficient.

The basic problem of Yugoslav society does not lie in the fact that the historical blueprint which came into being during the national liberation war was not put into effect in its entirety or was distorted. It has been the fate of all programmes in recent history for their implementation to be accompanied by outdated elements from the past, eventually resulting in a variety of mixtures of the old and new society. However, even though they did not accomplish all their emancipatory goals, such hybrids proved to be progressive achievements which helped to overcome the various crises and to accelerate social development.

One of the most typical features of Yugoslav society is the historically unprecedented credibility gap between normative proclamations and reality. According to the official ideology, Yugoslav society has already superseded all the attainments of modern civilization, both in the East and in the West: it has achieved the highest level of democracy; by virtue of the system of self-management it has given the working class power; it has achieved the brotherhood and unity of national groups; it has done away with etatism; for the first time in the world it has proven possible the existence of an efficient market economy in socialism. In actual fact, our society lags behind modern civilization. In Yugoslavia the fundamental civil rights of individuals can still be violated with impunity; elections of officials are a farce; the judiciary depends on the executive branch; freedom of speech, freedom of organization, and public assembly are restricted by bureaucratic arbitrariness and legal prescriptions which make it possible to persecute opinions which differ from the official line. The working class enjoys no legal right of self-organization or strikes, and it does not have any real voice in political decision-making. Relations between national groups are characterized by clashes of conflicting interests, exploitation, and poor cooperation between autarkic national economies. We can no longer even speak seriously of a Yugoslav development policy or an integral Yugoslav market. Etatism has not been abolished; it has merely been transferred to the republican level, where it is the most inefficient and malignant. When undesirable consequences began to appear as early as 1967/68 in the form of stagflation and unemployment, the poorly conceived "economic reform" was tossed out the window, and we never did achieve a modern market economy regulated by instruments of a comprehensive development policy. In contradistinction to other modern mixed societies, the specific Yugoslav mix of features of a pre-modern authoritarian state, a civil society, and socialism, which received its definitive form in the 1974 Constitution,

does not possess even the minimum coherence needed to ensure the further development of society.

Unless there is a change in this Constitution and the political and economic system based on it, it will be impossible to resolve any of the basic problems in our society; it will be impossible to halt the present process of disintegration, and the country will slide ever deeper into crisis. It is imperative to see solutions in the light of the following great principles of civilization which are an indispensable prerequisite for the forward progress of modern society:

a) *The sovereignty of the people* At the very foundations of modern civilization is the idea that political power is vested in the people, that the sole legitimate political authority is the one which derives from the freely expressed will of the people, and that therefore there are no moral or legal grounds for any elite (by the will of God, by blood, religion, race, class, ideological credentials, historical merit or on any other grounds) to arrogate to itself the right to speak, decide, or use force on behalf of a nation. A nation can only devolve political power to its representatives for a limited time, with the right to appoint, oversee, and replace them, and if need be remove them by force if they violate the "social contract" and instead of general national interests begin to pursue their own special interests. The principle of the sovereignty of the people has been affirmed by the democratic political philosophy and practice of the democratic revolutions of the 18th century. However, socialist theory has taken this principle to extremely radical lengths. If a monopoly of economic power is also one of the means by which elites are formed, which can foist themselves upon society and gain full control over its political life, then all the institutions which make such a monopoly of power possible are incompatible with the principle of the sovereignty of the people, regardless of whether it is big capital or a bureaucratic state. In this sense, full sovereignty of the people could be achieved only in a classless society, in which political, economic, and cultural life would be organized in a democratic manner. The prerequisite for such a democracy ("consultative democracy" or "integrated self-management") is the free election and recall of all officials, public oversight of their work, a separation of powers, and the absence of bureaucratic privileges. These prerequisites have long ago been created in modern society. Yugoslavia has still not achieved this level, even though many years have gone by since it proclaimed the ideas of self-management, debureaucratization, and deprofessionalization of politics.

b) *Self-determination of nations* In modern, civilized society, any political oppression or discrimination on ethnic grounds is unacceptable. The Yugoslav solution of the national question at first could have been regarded as an exemplary model of a multinational federation, in which the principle of a unified state and state policy was happily married to the principle of the political and cultural autonomy of national groups and ethnic minorities. Over the past two decades, the principle of unity has become weakened and overshadowed by the principle

of national autonomy, which in practice has turned into the *sovereignty* of the federal units (the republics, which as a rule are not ethnically homogeneous). The flaws which from the very beginning were present in this model have become increasingly evident. Not all the national groups were equal: the Serbian nation, for instance, was not given the right to have its own state. The large sections of the Serbian people who live in other republics, unlike the national minorities, do not have the right to use their own language and script; they do not have the right to set up their own political or cultural organizations or to foster the common cultural traditions of their nation together with their conationals. The unremitting persecution and expulsion of Serbs from Kosovo is a drastic example showing that those principles which protect the autonomy of a minority (the ethnic Albanians) are not applied to a minority within a minority (the Serbs, Montenegrins, Turks, and Roms in Kosovo). In view of the existing forms of national discrimination, present-day Yugoslavia cannot be regarded as a modern or democratic state.

c) *Human rights* The modern age began with the affirmation of human rights. These were originally civil rights: the right of freedom of thought, conscience, speech, movement, association with others, organization, public assembly, public demonstrations, and the election of representatives. In our century, social and economic rights have been added to the list of civil rights: the right to work, to a free choice of occupation, to an education, to equal pay for equal work, to social security. The UN General Assembly formulated all these rights in its *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* which was adopted on December 10, 1948. Yugoslavia was one of the member states sponsoring this declaration; Yugoslavia is also a signatory to the Helsinki Final Act and all similar international instruments. There is no doubt that there are quite a few modern-day states which have a lower standard of human rights than our own. But in Yugoslavia "verbal crimes" are still prosecuted; books are still being banned and destroyed, and plays are taken off the repertoire of theatres if they are deemed "ideologically unacceptable." Public expression of opinions is trammled; association, assembly, and public demonstrations are prohibited; exercise of the constitutional right to send petitions of protest to government agencies is branded as a hostile act; the organizers of protest strikes are hounded; elections of officials have turned into a farce of self-nomination. So long as all these things persist, we cannot call ourselves a civilized and enlightened society.

d) *Efficiency*. The modern age is the age of efficiency. Public institutions and the manner of organizing the overall life of society must pass the test of rationality. This does not always mean an efficient selection of goals: it is a great shortcoming of our age that the spheres of politics, ethics, and science have become separated. However, instrumental efficiency and the ability to find the proper means to achieve set goals and the effective implementation of a given policy are the *conditio sine qua non* of every modern state. This further means that

every modern state is a large system whose individual parts are regulated, coordinated and directed in a uniform manner, that the rules of the game are clear, constant, and can be changed only after serious study and preparation, that state officials are selected primarily according to standards of competence and personal integrity, that the adoption of decisions is based to the greatest possible extent on reliable information and analysis of costs and expected gains. Not a single one of these prerequisites for a rational, efficient policy has been met in Yugoslavia: the country is made up of eight separate and poorly linked systems; there is no uniform development policy at the national level, and even if such a policy did exist on paper, it could not be put into effect in practice; officials are selected primarily according to the criterion of loyalty, so that in great measure they are incompetent and easily corrupted; decisions are taken without proper deliberation, arbitrarily and with bias, without prior public debate, and on the basis of unreliable, one-sided information, without any consideration of possible alternatives. So long as such an inefficient style of work prevails in Yugoslav political life, we cannot consider ourselves to be a modern state.

It follows from this analysis that political democratization and infusion of new blood, genuine self-determination and equality for all members of all the Yugoslav nations, including the Serbs, full exercise of human, civil, and economic and social rights, and consistent streamlining of the Yugoslav political system and development policy are those indispensable prerequisites without which recovery from the present crisis in Yugoslav society could not even be imagined.

THE STATUS OF SERBIA AND THE SERBIAN NATION

6. Many of the troubles bedeviling the Serbian nation stem from conditions which are common to all the Yugoslav nations. However, the Serbian people are being beset by yet other afflictions. The long-term lagging behind of Serbia's economic development, unregulated legal relations with Yugoslavia and the provinces, as well as the genocide in Kosovo have all appeared on the political scene with a combined force that is making the situation tense if not explosive. These three painful questions, which arise from the long-term policy taken towards Serbia, are so dramatic that they are threatening not just the Serbian people but the stability of the entire country. For this reason they must be given due attention.

Not much knowledge or statistical data were needed to ascertain that Serbia's economy has been lagging behind for many years. Nevertheless, this fact was only officially recognized in the Plan for 1981-1985, which stated that measures would be taken in this period to halt this trend. This undertaking was soon forgotten. The five-year period was spent making new studies to see whether Serbia was indeed falling behind in its development. The findings convincingly showed what everyone already knew, viz., that according to all relevant indices Serbia's economy was consistently below the Yugoslav average, and the gap was

widening. The slowed rate of growth did not produce enough momentum to overcome economic underdevelopment in a section of its territory with 1.5 million inhabitants and a per capita national income more than 30% below the corresponding income in the three underdeveloped republics.

Studies have left not the shadow of a doubt that the relative lagging behind of Serbia was primarily the result of lower investment expenditure per head of population and not of poorer investment efficiency. According to official statistics, the rate of return on investments in Serbia for the entire postwar period was only lower than that in Slovenia or Vojvodina, while in the last decade (the period 1976-1983) it was the highest in Yugoslavia. Greater investment efficiency could only partially compensate for the loss in social product because of lower investment, but it was not able to prevent the formation of a per capita value of fixed assets at a level of just 80.5% of the Yugoslav average, which is even lower than the level achieved by Montenegro or Bosnia and Hercegovina, two republics which have the status of underdeveloped republics.

Throughout the entire postwar period, Serbia's economy has been subjected to unfair terms of trade. A current example of such exchange is the low cost of electric power which is distributed to the other republics in large quantities. Instruments and measures of current economic and credit and monetary policy, and especially the contribution levied for the Federal Fund for the Development of Economically Underdeveloped Areas, have most recently been the most important factors accounting for Serbia's lagging behind. If we add to this the fact that the most developed republics, because of Serbia's lack of capital, are investing their capital in its economy (in agriculture, the food processing industry, retail trade, and banking), we gain a picture of a subordinated and neglected economy within the territory of Yugoslavia.

Consistent discrimination against Serbia's economy in the postwar period cannot be fully explained without insight into the relations among the Yugoslav nations between the two world wars, as seen and assessed by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Its views were decisively influenced by the authoritative Comintern, which, in its efforts to achieve its own strategical and tactical goals at the international level, sought to break up Yugoslavia. Finding its ideological justification in drawing a distinction between the "oppressor" nation of Serbs and the other "oppressed" nations, such a policy is a drastic example of how Marxist teachings about the class divisions in each nation were eclipsed by pragmatic considerations which, in an effort to take advantage of inter-communal friction, pushed class internationalism onto the sidelines. This fact explains to some extent why the CPY did not make an effort to carry out its own research in order to arrive at the real truth about the economic nature of relations between the Yugoslav nations. The assessment of these relations, which amounted to the theory that the political hegemony of the Serbian bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding economic domination by Serbia, was in fact taken over wholesale from the separatist-minded bourgeois political parties. Neither before nor after

the war was the CPY willing to determine for itself the actual state of affairs, nor was it willing to enter into any kind of debate which might call into question the assessments and policies made in the past, which are still being insisted upon to this day. This consistent line was all the more remarkable in that even without special studies, with only a cursory look at the basic indicators of the level of development in the census year of 1948, it could be seen that Serbia could not have had an economically privileged position in the years between the two world wars. The strongly pronounced agrarian character of Serbia's economy clearly showed that it was lagging behind in industrialization. The share of agriculture in the social product was greater and the share of industry smaller than the Yugoslav average. The CPY did not revise its assessment in the light of these facts, and what is more it did not pay even the slightest attention to the studies made by research institutes which as early as the beginning of the 1950s documented quite a different picture of Serbia's economic position between the two world wars. The constant repetition of the prewar assessment over the course of four decades gives an idea of the exceptionally large political and economic stake held in maintaining such a distorted view. The purpose was to inculcate in the Serbian people a feeling of historical guilt in the hope of weakening their opposition to the political and economic subordination to which they were consistently subjected.

The postwar policy towards Serbia's economy, which was quite clearly mapped out in the report on the First Five-Year Plan, was based on the prewar assessment. In this plan Serbia was unjustifiably assigned the slowest rate of industrialization, after Slovenia. In practice this policy was inaugurated with the relocation to other republics of industrial plants for the manufacture of airplanes, lorries, and armaments, and it was carried on with compulsory purchases of agricultural produce, price scissors to the detriment of raw materials and agricultural products, lower investment rates per head of population than the Yugoslav average, and levies for the development of underdeveloped regions. But nothing so eloquently speaks of Serbia's subordinated position than the fact as it did not have the initiative in a single key issue having to do with the political and economic system. Therefore, Serbia's status should be studied in the context of the political and economic dominance of Slovenia and Croatia, which have initiated changes in all the systems to date.

Slovenia and Croatia started at the highest level of development, and they have enjoyed the fastest rates of growth. As their relative status has improved, the gap between them and the rest of Yugoslavia has become much wider. Such a course of events, which flies in the face of the declared policy of balanced development, would not be possible if the economic system were not biased, if these two republics had not been in a position to impose plans which furthered their own economic interests. Manufacturing industries, which have a relatively larger share in their economies, throughout the entire postwar period have enjoyed more favourable terms of production, strongly influenced by price disparities and the price regime, as well as protective tariffs. The greater scope given

to the market in the 1960s worked more to the advantage of the developed parts of the country. The suspension of the 1961-1965 Five-Year Plan, which placed emphasis on expanding production of raw materials and energy, should be seen as a reluctance on the part of the republics to invest in underdeveloped regions which are relatively rich in natural resources. Yugoslavia's growth rate from this period was based more on the factors of production of the two developed republics than on the situation in the rest of the country. Consequently, the work force did not receive a commensurate place in the development plan, a fact which particularly affected Serbia and the underdeveloped regions.

Serbia's economic subordination cannot be fully understood without mention of its politically inferior status, from which all other relationships flowed. As far as the CPY was concerned, the economic hegemony of the Serbian nation between the two world wars was beyond dispute, regardless of the fact that Serbia's rate of industrialization was lower than the Yugoslav average. This ideological platform gave rise to opinions and behaviour which were to have a crucial influence on subsequent political events and inter-communal relations. Before the Second World War, the Slovenes and Croats set up their own national communist parties, and they gained a decisive voice in the CPY's Central Committee. Their political leaders became arbiters on all political issues both during and after the war. These two neighbouring republics shared a similar history; they had the same religion and aspirations for greater independence, and as the most highly developed, they also had common economic interests, all of which provided sufficient grounds for a permanent coalition in the endeavour to achieve political dominance. This coalition was cemented by the long years of collaboration between Tito and Kardelj, the two most eminent political figures in postwar Yugoslavia, who enjoyed inviolable authority in the centres of power. A monopoly on appointment of officials gave them the deciding voice on the composition of the top political leaderships of Yugoslavia and of all the republics and provinces. Everyone knows about the exceptionally large contribution made by Edvard Kardelj in the drafting and adoption of the decisions by the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia and all postwar constitutions. He was in a position to build his own personal ideas into the foundations of the social order, and in practice no one could challenge them. The doggedness with which Slovenia and Croatia are today opposing any constitutional change shows how well the 1974 Constitution suits them. Ideas about the social order had no prospects whatsoever of being accepted if they differed from the views taken by these two aforementioned political authorities, and even after their deaths nothing could be done, since the Constitution, with its provisions for a veto, was insured against any changes. In view of all this, there can be no doubt that Slovenia and Croatia entrenched their political and economic domination, thanks to which they are achieving their national agendas and economic aspirations.

In such circumstances, and subjected to a constant barrage of accusations of being "oppressors," "unitarists," "centralists," or "policemen," the Serbian

people could not achieve equality in Yugoslavia, for whose creation they had borne the greatest sacrifices. The vindictive policy against the Serbs began before the Second World War, in the sense that a communist party was deemed unnecessary for a “nation of oppressors.” There were relatively few Serbs in the CPY’s Central Committee, and some of them, probably in order to maintain their positions, declared themselves to be members of other ethnic groups. During the war Serbia was not in a position to take an equal part in adopting decisions which set the course for future relations between the Yugoslav nations and determined Yugoslavia’s social order. The Anti-Fascist Council of Serbia was set up in the second half of 1944, later than in the other republics, while there was no Communist Party of Serbia until the war was over. Delegates to the Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia were elected from the Serbian military units and members of the Supreme Headquarters who happened to be in the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina at the time, unlike the delegates from some other republics, who travelled to the session from their own territories and who had the backing of national political organizations with elaborated positions and programmes.

These historical facts show that during the war Serbia was not even formally and certainly not genuinely in an equal position when decisions of far-reaching importance for the future ordering of the state were taken. This is not to say that the Serbs would not have opted of their own free will for federalism as the most appropriate system for a multinational community; however, they were compelled, in wartime and without prior preparation and support from their political organizations back home, to give their consent to arrangements which set the stage for their own fragmentation in the future. The status of the Serbs should have been thoroughly studied beforehand and regulated so as to ensure their national integrity and untrammled cultural development, instead of which this exceptionally important question was left open for solutions which impaired the vital interests of the Serbian nation.

The gravity of the social and economic repercussions following from these solutions in the postwar period makes it imperative that we put a stop to the loose use of the theory of oppressor and oppressed nations which has been responsible for Serbia’s unenviable economic position. Exemption of Serbia from the requirement of paying in contributions to the Federal Development Fund, so as to strengthen its capital reserves and accelerate economic growth, would have provided an opportunity for heralding an end to such a policy. It was expected that the political representatives of Serbia would come forward with such a logical and justified request and that they would insist that it be met. Our surprise was all the greater when they agreed to pay in contributions at the full rate, in return for vague reassurances that the contributions would be financially compensated in some other sphere.

This outcome is at odds with the findings concerning Serbia’s flagging economy, and at the same time it is in historical terms an irresponsible act against

one's own people. The capitulation of Serbia's political spokesmen makes one wonder, especially about their right to take such a step. We might well ask who is authorized to acquiesce to a decision which condemns Serbia's economy to long-term stagnation in the future, with inevitable political consequences. At stake are enormous amounts of money, badly needed to get Serbia's economic growth moving again and to provide a livelihood for the large number of young people without jobs, many more than in any other republic. Without a referendum for the Serbian people, who alone have the right to determine their fate, no one can usurp the right to negotiate behind closed doors, take decisions and consent to the setting of heavy restraints on that nation's economic progress.

Serbia could have requested exemption from paying in contributions to the Federal Development Fund with a clear conscience, secure in the knowledge that it has more than fulfilled its obligations of providing mutual aid. Only Serbia made genuine sacrifices for the sake of the development of the three underdeveloped republics and the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, helping others at the price of its own economic stagnation. This has not been the case as far as the three developed regions are concerned. Application of a rate of contributions proportional to the social product did not observe the basic rule that taxes should be levied according to ability to pay. The proportional rate of contributions spared Slovenia, Croatia, and Vojvodina from progressive rates of taxation, a fact which enabled them not only to grow at a normal rate but also to improve their own relative position in relation to the Yugoslav average. However, such rates of taxation have been an enormous burden for Serbia proper. Its economy has been setting aside about half its net capital savings for the underdeveloped regions, as a result of which it has itself been dragged down to the level of the economies of the underdeveloped republics.

Despite the fact that its contributions have aided the development of the underdeveloped regions and relieved some of the burden from the developed parts of the country, Serbia has not met with sympathy for its own economic plight either from the former or from the latter. Both these categories of regions have a vested interest in forming a coalition to maintain the *status quo*, in which they are promoting their own interests at Serbia's expense. In the case of the rate of contributions to the Development Fund, the anti-Serbian coalition has shown its hand more openly and with less political tact than ever before in the past. Blatant pressure has been brought to bear on Serbia to make it accept the rate of contributions as a whole. This pressure is also significant as a sign that the traditional discrimination against Serbia has not lessened and perhaps has even increased.

In view of everything that has occurred in the postwar period, such pressure is nothing new. What would be new would be for Serbia to put up determined resistance to this pressure. Unfortunately, this did not materialize. The Serbian leaders did not even avail themselves of all the legal remedies at their disposal, such as the veto power, which is their only recourse in a situation when they stand

alone with their justified demands, and it seems that they did not even consider making an appropriate response, up to and including the forcing of a political crisis if there was no alternative. Serbia's politicians proved to be unprepared for the historical task which was posed for them by the extremely adverse internal relationships within the Yugoslav state. The historical moment behooved them to put their foot down and state in no uncertain terms that there would be no more of the postwar practice of ousting politicians who broach the issue of equal rights for Serbia, the practice of discriminating against economists, sociologists, philosophers and writers from Serbia who give timely warnings about socially harmful phenomena and the consequences of wrong decisions, as well as the practice of getting rid of able businessmen, thereby crippling Serbia's economy in the stepped-up competition in the market.

7. The attitude taken to Serbia's economic stagnation shows that the vindictive policy towards this republic has not lost any of its edge with the passing of time. On the contrary, encouraged by its own success, it has grown ever stronger, to the point of genocide. The discrimination against citizens of Serbia who, because of the representation of the republics on the principle of parity, have fewer federal posts open to them than others and fewer of their own delegates in the Federal Assembly is politically untenable, and the vote of citizens from Serbia carries less weight than the vote of citizens from any of the other republics or any of the provinces. Seen in this light, Yugoslavia appears not as a community of equal citizens or equal nations and nationalities but rather as a community of eight equal territories. And yet not even here is Serbia equal, because of its special legal and political status, which reflects the desire to keep the Serbian people constantly under control. The watchword of this policy has been "a weak Serbia ensures a strong Yugoslavia," and this idea has been taken a step further in the concept that if the Serbs as the largest national group are allowed rapid economic expansion, they would pose a threat to the other national groups. It is for this reason that all possible means have been used to hamstring Serbia's economic progress and political consolidation by imposing more and more restrictions on it. One such restriction, which is very acute, is the present undefined and contradictory constitutional status of Serbia.

The Constitution of 1974 in effect split up Serbia into three parts. The autonomous provinces were put on an equal footing with the republics in all respects, the only difference being that they were not defined as states and they do not have the same number of representatives in various organs of the federal government. They make up for this shortcoming in that they can intervene in the internal affairs of Serbia proper through the common republican assembly, whereas their own assemblies are completely autonomous. The political and legal status of Serbia proper is quite ambiguous: it is neither fish nor fowl, neither a republic nor a province. The system of government within the Republic of Serbia is confused. The Executive Council, an arm of the republican assembly, in fact

serves as the executive government of Serbia proper alone. This is not the only example of an absence of logic in the definition of jurisdictions. The sweeping and institutionally deeply entrenched autonomy of Serbia's provinces has opened up two new fissures splitting the Serbian people. Admittedly, the separatist and autonomy-seeking forces were the ones to insist on having this autonomy widened even further, but they would have had great difficulty in achieving their aim if they had not received moral and political support from republics where separatist tendencies have been kept alive.

The widening of autonomy was rationalized by assurances that it would bring about a higher degree of equality between the national groups and expedite the conduct of public affairs. The events in Kosovo at the end of the 1960s were forewarning of what could happen if autonomy were to be extended. There was even less reason for giving Vojvodina more autonomy. The greater prerogatives it received have encouraged the creation of an autonomous bureaucracy and have resulted in serious instances of separatist behaviour which had never occurred in the past, in growing autarky of the economy, and in political voluntarism. The influence has grown of those outside the provinces and in Vojvodina itself who are spreading misinformation designed to divide the Serbian people into "Serbs from Serbia" and "Serbs from Vojvodina." With wholehearted assistance from outside, the Serbian provinces have become transformed into "constituent elements of the Federation," a status which has given them cause to feel and behave like federal units, ignoring the fact that they are an integral part of the Republic of Serbia. Once again the attempt to achieve a balance through dualism could not succeed. The way the provinces are behaving today shows that in practice the separatist forces and those seeking greater autonomy have totally prevailed. The Republic of Serbia has had its hands tied and in issues of vital importance is prevented from taking concerted action to protect the interests of the national group to whom it belongs.

The unclear relationships within the Republic of Serbia are a logical outcome of its constitutional status and the appointment of separatist and autonomy-minded officials, who precisely thanks to their policies enjoy the patronage of those individuals who have held a monopoly on government appointments in Yugoslavia. In the absence of a commensurate counterbalance in coordination, as a rule the practice of regionalization turns into provincial narrow-mindedness and blindness to broader national interests.

Those individuals who did everything they could to plant the seeds of internal conflicts in the constitutions are today coming forward as arbiters and peace-makers, who, in the time-honoured practice of apportioning blame equally to all concerned, are slapping the wrists of both Serbia proper and its provinces and suggesting to them that a way out should be sought in the strict application of these selfsame constitutions. The problem will never be resolved in this fashion, and Serbia will continue to dissipate its energies coping with conflicts without any prospect of achieving complete success in the enterprise. This no

doubt was the idea when the provinces were given wider autonomy, especially since the perpetuation of strife in Serbia gives others an excuse to interfere in its internal affairs and in this way prolong their domination over it. After the federalization of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, such interference in the internal affairs of a republic has only remained possible in the case of Serbia.

The relationships between Serbia and its provinces cannot be seen solely or even predominantly in terms of an interpretation of the two constitutions from a formal legal standpoint. The question concerns the Serbian nation and its state. A nation which after a long and bloody struggle regained its own state, which fought for and achieved a civil democracy, and which in the last two wars lost 2.5 million of its members, has lived to see the day when a Party committee of apparatchiks decrees that after four decades in the new Yugoslavia it alone is not allowed to have its own state. A worse historical defeat in peacetime cannot be imagined.

8. The expulsion of the Serbian people from Kosovo bears dramatic testimony to their historical defeat. In the spring of 1981, open and total war was declared on the Serbian people, which had been carefully prepared for in advance in the various stages of administrative, political and constitutional reform. This open war has been going on for almost five years. It is being waged with a skilful and carefully orchestrated use of a variety of methods and tactics, with the active and not just tacit support of various political centres in Yugoslavia, which they are taking no pains to conceal and which is more ruinous than the encouragement given by our neighbours. Moreover, we are still not looking this war in the face, nor are we calling it by its proper name. It has been going on now longer than the entire national liberation war fought in this country from April 6, 1941, to May 9, 1945. The Ballists' rebellion in Kosovo and Metohija at the very end of the war, which was organized with the collaboration of Nazi units, was militarily put down in 1944-1945, but as we now see, it was not politically quelled. In its present-day physiognomy, disguised with new content, it is being pursued with greater success and is getting close to final victory. There has been no real showdown with neofascist aggression; all the measures taken to date have merely removed manifestations of this aggression from the streets, while in fact steeling resolve to achieve its uncompromising, racially motivated goals at any cost and using all possible means. Even the deliberately draconian sentences handed down against young offenders have been designed to incite and spread ethnic hatred.

The five years of the ethnic Albanians' war in Kosovo have convinced its organizers and protagonists that they are stronger than they even dared dream and that they enjoy support from various power centres in the country which is incomparably greater than that which the Kosovo Serbs receive from the Republic of Serbia, or this Republic from the other republics in Yugoslavia. Aggression has been encouraged to such an extent that the highest officials of the Province as well as its academics are behaving not just with arrogance but also with

cynicism, proclaiming the truth to be a lie and their extortionate demands to be a legitimate claim to rights allegedly denied them. The organized political forces in Yugoslavia, which carried out a revolution in virtually impossible circumstances, triumphing over a superior enemy in this entire century, have now all of a sudden proven to be not just ineffective and incompetent but almost uninterested in the only proper response to a declared war: a resolute defence of their nation and their territory. And once the aggression is put down, to settle political scores not by arrests, attempts to “separate the sheep from the goats,” or false loyalties, but by a genuine revolutionary struggle and open confrontations, with the right to free expression and even propagation of opposing viewpoints.

The physical, political, legal, and cultural genocide of the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija is a worse defeat than any experienced in the liberation wars waged by Serbia from the First Serbian Uprising in 1804 to the uprising of 1941. The reasons for this defeat can primarily be laid at the door of the legacy of the Comintern which is still alive in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia’s national policy and the Serbian communists’ adherence to this policy, but they also lie in costly ideological and political delusions, ignorance, immaturity, or the inveterate opportunism of generations of Serbian politicians since the Second World War, who are always on the defensive and always worried more about what others think of them and their timid overtures at raising the issue of Serbia’s status than about the objective facts affecting the future of the nation whom they lead.

It was the Albanian nationalists in the political leadership of Kosovo who began to turn the principle of equal national rights, for whose sake in Kosovo and Metohija as well as elsewhere it was Serbian soldiers who had shed the most blood, into their opposite by pursuing a very well defined policy in planned stages, according to a set plan of action, with a clear goal. At a suitable moment the autonomous region acquired the status of an autonomous province, and then the status of a “constituent part of the Federation,” with greater prerogatives than the remaining sections of the Republic, to which it only *de jure* belongs. Thus the preparations for the next step, in the form of the Albanianization of Kosovo and Metohija, were carried out in full legality. Similarly, unification of the literary language, the national name, flag, and school textbooks, following instructions from Tirana, was carried out quite openly, and the frontier between the two state territories was completely open. Conspiracies, which are usually hatched in secret, were planned in Kosovo not just openly but even demonstratively. Accordingly, the large-scale popular demonstrations in 1981 appeared more as an instance of exhibitionism and bravado than as a new phenomenon posing a threat to the entire country, just as subsequently each new revelation of the persecution of Serbs in Kosovo was regarded as “nit-picking,” and news items appearing in the “Belgrade press” were virtually considered to be a greater crime than the acts of arson, murder, rape, or vandalism which were reported, acts committed by

persons many of whom to this day have not been politically identified or brought to justice.

The attitude taken by those in power and the authorities in Kosovo towards the violence directed at the Serbian people is particularly significant. The hushing up or glossing over of these crimes, the practice of suppressing the whole truth, and dilatory tactics in enquiries and prosecution all encourage large and small acts of terror, and at the same time a false, "sanitized" picture of conditions in Kosovo is created. Moreover, there is a persistent tendency to find a political excuse for the violence perpetrated against Serbs in the alleged existence of hatred on both sides, intolerance, and vindictiveness, while of late more and more is being heard of the imaginary activities of an "external" enemy from outside the Province, viz., Serbian nationalism emanating from "Belgrade." The Martinovic case is noteworthy not only because of the particular type of unprecedented violence involved, which is reminiscent of the darkest days of the Turkish practice of impalement, but also because of the stubborn refusal to let a court of law determine and acknowledge the truth. Instead of providing an opportunity for reaffirming the rule of law and human rights as the highest values, this case was regarded in Kosovo as an opportunity to insist on the province's sovereignty, which it does not have in terms of the Constitution, and to impose on the Socialist Republic of Serbia the principle of "non-interference" in the internal affairs of the province, as though two international personalities were involved.

The Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija not only have their past, embodied in cultural and historical monuments of priceless value, but also their own spiritual, cultural, and moral values now in the present, for they are living in the cradle of the Serbs' historical existence. The acts of violence which down through the centuries have decimated the Serbian population of Kosovo and Metohija are here and now, in our own era, reaching their highest pitch. The exodus of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija in Socialist Yugoslavia exceeds in scope and character all earlier stages of this great persecution of the Serbian people. In his day, Jovan Cvijic estimated that in all the population migrations, from the mass exodus led by Arsenije Carnojevic in 1690 to the early years of the present century, more than 500,000 Serbs were uprooted; of this number, between 1876 and 1912, some 150,000 Serbs were driven from hearth and home by the savage terror of the local privileged Albanian bashi-bazouks. During World War II, more than 60,000 Serbs were expelled from Kosovo and Metohija, but it was after the war that this exodus reached its highest proportions: in the last twenty-odd years, upwards of 200,000 Serbs have been forced to leave. It is not just that the last of the remnants of the Serbian nation are leaving their homes at an unabated rate, but according to all evidence, faced with a physical, moral and psychological reign of terror, they seem to be preparing for their final exodus. Unless things change radically, in less than ten years' time there will no longer be any Serbs left in Kosovo, and an "ethnically pure" Kosovo, that unambiguously stated goal of the Greater Albanian

racists, already outlined in the programmes and actions of the Prizren League of 1878-1881, will be achieved.

The petition signed by 2,016 Serbs from Kosovo Polje, which was sent to the Federal Assembly and other authorities in the country, is the inevitable consequence of this state of affairs. No party caucuses can deny the Serbian people the right to protect themselves against violence and annihilation with all the legitimate means at their disposal. If this protection cannot be offered in the Province, the people can and must seek recourse at the level of the republican and federal government. The fact that citizens from the Province came to the Federal Assembly shows their civic sense of this right. The action taken by these citizens could be condemned as unacceptable and regarded as a hostile act only if viewed through a separatist and chauvinistic prism.

The present-day situation in Kosovo can no longer be fobbed off with empty words, convoluted, unreadable resolutions, or vague political platforms; it has become a matter of Yugoslav concern. Between provincial segregation, which is becoming increasingly exclusive, and federal arbitration, which merely paralyzes every appropriate and often urgent action, the unresolved situation is turning into a vicious circle of unresolvable issues. Kosovo's fate remains a vital question for the entire Serbian nation. If it is not resolved with the sole correct outcome of the imposed war; if genuine security and unambiguous equality for all the peoples living in Kosovo and Metohija are not established; if objective and permanent conditions for the return of the expelled nation are not created, then this part of the Republic of Serbia and Yugoslavia will become a European issue, with the gravest possible unforeseeable consequences. Kosovo represents one of the most important points in the central Balkans. The ethnic mixture in many Balkan lands reflects the ethnic profile of the Balkan Peninsula, and a demand for an ethnically pure Kosovo, which is being actively pursued, is not only a direct and serious threat to all the peoples who live there as minorities but, if it is achieved, will spark off a wave of expansionism which will pose a real and daily threat to all the national groups living in Yugoslavia.

Kosovo is not the only area in which the Serbian people are feeling the pressure of discrimination. In absolute and not just relative terms, the decline in the number of Serbs in Croatia provides ample proof to back this statement. According to the 1948 census, there were 543,795 Serbs in Croatia, who made up 14.8% of the population. The census of 1981 shows their number as having fallen to 531,502, or 11.5% of the total number of inhabitants of Croatia. In thirty-three years of peacetime the number of Serbs in Croatia has dropped even in comparison with the years immediately after the war, when the first census was carried out and when, as is known, the number of Serbian inhabitants had been greatly decreased by the ravages of the war.

Lika, Kordun, and Banija have remained the least developed parts of Croatia, a fact which has given strong impetus to the emigration of Serbs to Serbia, as well as migration to other parts of Croatia, where the Serbs, as newcomers,

members of a minority and second-class citizens, have been very susceptible to assimilation. Indeed, the Serbian population in Croatia has been subjected to a subtle but effective policy of assimilation. A component part of this policy is prohibition of all Serbian associations and cultural institutions in Croatia, of which there used to be many in the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or Yugoslavia between the two world wars. Then there is the insistence on the official language, which bears the name of another national group (Croatian), as a personification of national inequality. Under an article of the constitution this language has been made compulsory for the Serbs living in Croatia, and the nationalistic Croatian grammarians have carried out a systematic and well organized campaign to make it as different as possible from the standard language spoken in the other republics of the Serbo-Croatian language area, resulting in a weakening of the bonds between the Serbs in Croatia and the other Serbs. Such an outcome is willingly paid for with a break in linguistic continuity for the Croats themselves and the expunging of international words highly useful for communication with other cultures, especially in the sphere of science and technology. However, the Serbian population in Croatia is not just culturally cut off from their conationals in Serbia; Serbia has much fewer opportunities for receiving information about their fate and their economic and cultural status than is the case with some other national groups in Yugoslavia as regards their conationals living in other countries. The integrity of the Serbian nation and its culture throughout Yugoslavia presents itself as the most crucial question of its survival and progress.

The fate of Serbian institutions which were established in the course of the Second World War and in its immediate aftermath also fits into this general picture. In the national liberation war and in the early years after its conclusion, the national life of Serbs in Croatia was very intensive in their own political, cultural, and educational institutions. A general decision adopted by the Executive Board of the National Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Croatia (ZAVNOH), dated November 10, 1943, called for the setting up of a Serbian group of delegates to ZAVNOH to act as a national and political leadership of the Serbian population in Croatia. This group was established on January 12, 1944, in liberated Otocac. At the end of the war, on the initiative of the Serbian Group, the First Congress of Serbs in Croatia was held in Zagreb on September 30, 1945, where the more than 30,000 participants formed an Executive Committee of Serbs in Croatia to serve as a "broad-based political organization of the unified Serbian people in Croatia," within the National Front. With the direct participation of these political bodies, the Serbs subsequently founded their own cultural institutions and began organizing national education. On October 22, 1944, the Obilic Serbian Choral Society was set up on the ruins of the Glina Orthodox church, the scene of horrific ustasa massacres, and less than a month later, on November 18th, again in Glina, the *Prosvjeta* Serbian Cultural and Educational Society was founded. On January 4, 1948, in Zagreb, a Central Serbian Library and Museum of the Serbs in Croatia were established under the auspices of *Prosvjeta*, which also

sponsored publishing activities and had its own printing works. What is more, starting from September 10, 1943, the national liberation movement published a special newspaper for the Serbian population in Croatia printed in the Cyrillic script and called *Srpska rijec*. In the postwar years, *Srpska rijec* changed its name to *Prosvjeta*. The national liberation movement distributed Cyrillic readers to the Serbian children in Croatia in the school year 1944/45, and in a decision taken on July 18, 1944, the Presidency of ZAVNOH guaranteed full equality of the Cyrillic script with the Latin script, and in schools in the territory of Croatia where the majority of the pupils were Serbian children, Cyrillic was allowed to have precedence.

All these prerogatives had much deeper significance for the Serbian population in Croatia than merely as a token of the services they rendered in the national liberation war. In a special proclamation issued to the "Serbian people in Croatia," on January 12, 1944, the Serbian Group of Delegates to ZAVNOH explained its existence as a "sign of equality between Serbs and Croats" and a "guarantee that the interests of the Serbian people will be fairly represented in free Croatia." When it was being formed, the Executive Committee of Serbs in Croatia was described as a "political organization of the unified Serbian people in Croatia," whose task was to promote "free thinking" and to be a "sufficient guarantee that the Serbs in Croatia will continue to enjoy the benefits of an equal nation." The Serbs themselves regarded these prerogatives, which they had earned for themselves by shedding blood, as "outward and visible signs of the equality of the Serbian and Croatian nations in Croatia."

Such a situation prevailed during the war years and just after the war, but then gradually everything changed. It is not recorded anywhere that the Serbs had themselves ever decided that one of these institutions was not needed, that it should be done away with or replaced with another one which would be more in keeping with the spirit of the times. And yet, all these institutions, one after the other, were done away with in the course of the 1950s, pursuant to decisions handed down by the competent republican authorities of Croatia. The last to be forced to close its doors was the *Prosvjeta* Serbian cultural society, under a decision of the Croatian Republican Secretariat for Internal Affairs of May 23, 1980. The help of the Republican Conference of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Croatia was enlisted to justify this *fait accompli*. The resolutions adopted at a meeting held on October 2, 1980, explain that the situation had radically changed from that which prevailed in the war years and just after the war.

These resolutions in effect leave no scope for any demands for the setting up of special institutions for the Serbian people in Croatia: "concern for the questions of culture, history, life and creativity of the Croatian or Serbian nations in the Socialist Republic of Croatia cannot be relinquished to any separate national societies or organizations." This position was explained as follows: "While it is right for our national minorities to have their own cultural institutions and clubs, it is not right for members of the nations to found such institutions, and this holds

true everywhere in Yugoslavia, but it is particularly not right for Serbs in Croatia or Croats in Croatia to do so." At the end of the document we also find these words: "Everything should be done so that the Serbs in Croatia are not ignored as a nation, so that, as is the case in some school textbooks, they are not referred to virtually as newcomers. We have a common history, culture and language, but individual features should be respected." At the consultation opinions were also voiced to the effect that the Cyrillic script should be taught more widely in Croatia.

Thanks to the position taken by the Republican Conference of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Croatia, against which not one political instance in Croatia, or outside it, protested, all the forms of national life of the Serbian people in Croatia which they had established in the course of their long history and in the national liberation war publicly and definitively ceased to exist. The policies on inter-communal relations which had been laid down by the national liberation movement were radically revised, and even the constitutional guarantees of national rights and freedoms, not to mention civil rights, came under a cloud. The practical meaning of such statements as: "everything should be done," etc., or "the Cyrillic script should be taught more widely in Croatia" can be assessed only in the light of the actual policy on language which is being pursued in the Socialist Republic of Croatia. The fanatic zeal to create a separate Croatian language countervailing any idea of a common language of the Croats and Serbs in the long run does not leave much hope that the Serbian people in Croatia will be able to preserve their national identity.

Except for the time under the Independent State of Croatia, the Serbs in Croatia have never before been as jeopardized as they are today. Solution of their national status is a question of overriding political importance. If solutions are not found, the consequences might well be disastrous, not only for Croatia, but for the whole of Yugoslavia.

The status of the Serbian nation is rendered particularly acute by the fact that a very large number of Serbs live outside Serbia, and particularly outside Serbia proper; in fact this number is larger than the total number of members of some other national groups. According to the 1981 census, 24% of all Serbs, or 1,958,000, lived outside the territory of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, a number much larger than the number of Slovenes, Albanians, or Macedonians in Yugoslavia taken individually, and almost the same number as the Muslims. There are 3,285,000 Serbs who live outside Serbia proper, accounting for 40.3% of their total number. In the general process of disintegration which is taking place in Yugoslavia, the Serbs are the most sorely affected. The present course being taken by Yugoslav society is completely at odds with the one followed for decades and even centuries until the common state was formed. This process is aimed at completely breaking up the national unity of the Serbian nation. The case of present-day Vojvodina and its autonomy is the best illustration of how everything has been subordinated to such goals.

Vojvodina was given autonomy, among other things, because the Serbian people living within the Habsburg monarchy had aspired to autonomy since the end of the 17th century. The Serbs in Austria and later in Austria-Hungary sought the creation of an autonomous region (a *despotovina* or *vojvodina*, which they, however, called Serbia), so that, surrounded as they were by the more numerous and more powerful Hungarians and Germans, they would be able to preserve their national individuality and their Orthodox religion. The creation of a separate autonomous region in alien state territory was designed to weaken this state so that, at a given moment, the Serbs could all the more easily separate from it and unite with their brethren south of the Sava and Danube rivers.

This is the history of the Serbian Vojvodina, for whose creation Serbs from Serbia also shed their blood in the revolution of 1848/49. Today everything is just the opposite. The political leaders of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina are not trying to promote togetherness; instead they are seeking greater independence and secession from the Republic of Serbia. However unnatural this process might be, however much it flies in the face of historical logic, nevertheless it is achieving palpable results and is accelerating the disintegration of the Serbian nation.

9. For more than half a century stigmatized as an oppressor of the other Yugoslav peoples, the Serbian nation was not able to return to its own historical roots. In many of its aspects, this history itself was brought into question. The democratic tradition of a civil society, which Serbia strove for and achieved in the 19th century, has until just recently been completely overshadowed by the Serbian socialist and workers' movement, thanks to the narrow-mindedness and lack of objectivity on the part of official historiography. As a result the historical picture of the actual legal, cultural and constitutional contributions made by Serbia's civil society has been so blurred and distorted that it could not serve anyone as a spiritual and moral paradigm or a basis for preserving and reviving the nation's historical self-image. The honest and brave liberation efforts of the Serbs from Bosnia and Hercegovina and the entire Yugoslav youth, of which the Young Bosnia organization was a part, have suffered a similar fate, having been eclipsed in the history books by class ideology, whose founding fathers were Austrian Marxists, avowed enemies of national liberation movements.

In the climate created by the ruling ideology, the cultural achievements of the Serbian nation have become alienated, usurped or denigrated, ignored and left to decay; the language is being suppressed, and the Cyrillic script is progressively disappearing. The literary community in this respect is serving as the main bastion of arbitrary power and lawlessness. No other Yugoslav nation has had its cultural and spiritual integrity so brutally trampled upon as the Serbian nation. No one else's literary and artistic heritage has been so despoiled and ravaged as the Serbian heritage. The political values of the ruling ideology are being foisted upon Serbian culture as being more worthwhile and more relevant than academic or historical criteria. Whereas the Slovenian, Croatian, Macedonian, and Montenegrin cultures and literatures are today becoming consolidated, the Serbian

culture alone is becoming systematically disintegrated. It is considered ideologically legitimate and consonant with self-management to subdivide Serbian literature and differentiate Serbian writers as Vojvodina, Montenegrin, or Bosnian and Hercegovinian writers. Serbian literature is being stripped of its best authors and most important works for the sake of artificially establishing new regional literatures. The usurpation and fragmentation of the Serbian cultural heritage has gone so far that in school the children are taught that Njegos is not a Serbian writer, that Laza Kostic and Veljko Petrovic are writers from Vojvodina, while Petar Kocic and Jovan Ducic are classified as writers from Bosnia and Hercegovina. Until just recently Mesa Selimovic was not allowed to call himself a Serbian writer, and even now his last wish to be included in the opus of Serbian literature is not being honoured. Serbian culture has more writers and intellectuals who are out of favour, proscribed, ignored, or deemed undesirable than any other national culture in Yugoslavia; to make matters worse, many of them have been completely wiped out of literary memory.

Prominent Serbian writers are the only ones featuring on the black lists of all the Yugoslav mass media. The presentation of Serbian literature in compulsory school readers has been seriously impaired by being forced into the Procrustean bed of republican and provincial reciprocity rather than selections being made according to the criteria of importance or merit. In the school curricula of some republics and provinces, not only has the history of the Serbian people been taught in a version greatly watered-down for ideological reasons, but it has also been subjected to chauvinistic interpretations. The Serbian cultural and spiritual heritage is made out to be less than it really is, and the Serbian people are thus denied access to an important fountainhead of their moral and historical identity.

The impressive and truly revolutionary cultural advances made in the first decades after the Second World War, as seen among other things in the creation of a far-flung network of educational institutions, from elementary schools to universities, began to lose momentum towards the end of the 1960s. Stagnation set in, followed by marked deterioration, so that today our system of education and schools are very primitive and lag far behind the needs and goals of the modern society and civilization in which we live. The school system based on so-called "career-oriented" education and characterized by inferior quality of instruction has proven to be completely bankrupt. Several generations of school-leavers have been intellectually crippled and impoverished; we are turning out a surplus of uncultured, half-baked professionals, unequipped to take an effective role in the economy and social services and unprepared for creative and intellectual efforts. There is no country on earth which has encumbered its educational system with more legal regulations than Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia has a total of one hundred and ten federal, republican, and provincial statutes on the books regulating various and sundry aspects of the school system, many of which have been amended a number of times, so that considerable research is sometimes needed to arrive at the definitive text of a given law.

Despite all this, education in Yugoslavia has never been so superficial, fragmented and mediocre as it is today. Law-makers have *de jure* created eight educational systems, which are growing farther and farther apart from one another, and no amount of *consultation* about core curricula can reverse the course of development which has been mapped out in the legal statutes. The practice of holding meetings and consultations about *common principles* which has become popular of late, after fifteen years of systematic dismantlement of the Yugoslav state community, would appear to be a utopian dream. What first must be done is to eliminate those laws which have a centrifugal effect so as to continue along the line of togetherness and unity which has been followed in these parts for more than one hundred and fifty years. Otherwise, we shall produce, and we are producing, generations who will be less and less Yugoslavs and more and more dissatisfied national romantics and self-seeking nationalists. A country which does not have a uniform system of education cannot hope to stay united in the future.

Ever since the age of humanism, since the 15th and 16th centuries, we have held the ideal that schools are meant to help each individual realize his full potential and make the most of the spiritual and intellectual powers that every child is born with. There is nothing more ruinous than the notion that schools should be strictly in the service of the labour market and professions and that they should be designed solely for this purpose. Such a notion comes down to us from an unreconstructed glorification of the proletariat, which, in the last analysis, leads to the formation of a slavish and primitive personality. The channeling of boys and girls towards specific vocations from the age of 14 is the epitome of a fundamental lack of freedom.

The ideological cudgels taken up against "elitism" have had an unfortunate sequel: for at least two decades we have been fostering mediocrity at all levels of society, including education. There is no society in the world that wants to destroy its *elite* in the areas of scholarship and expertise, science and innovation. By declaring war on such an elite, we have created an elite of well-heeled individuals who are able to give their less than gifted children the kind of education which is no longer provided by the elementary and high schools. The financial straits in which the schools find themselves have vitiated their social standing, and the insistence on "moral and political correctness," especially at the universities, has spawned moral and political conformism and careerism, so that the universities, especially the liberal arts colleges, have been deprived of intellectuals of the present generation. In no other European country has education been brought into such a plight of financial and social stagnation.

Precisely at a time when public funds are being lavishly squandered, a policy of restricted spending has been introduced for the universities, which have been receiving less and less money. For a decade and a half the university faculties have not been able to employ new teaching assistants, so that the oldest Yugoslav universities, especially the Belgrade University, have never before in their history

had such a high average age of their professors and researchers. Higher education and scientific research, which in all countries are the basic engine of development in the computer age, have been completely neglected. University "reforms," most often carried out under political duress and not for academic reasons (as witnessed by the introduction of vocational diplomas in higher education, the compartmentalization of university faculties on the model of basic organizations of associated labour in the economy, etc.), have all been wide of the mark. Particular harm was done by the removal of the scientific research effort from university auspices, the creation of barriers, systemic and administrative, between research done in institutes and research done in universities. As a result the universities lost access to many laboratories; parallel programmes were created; research personnel in the field of science lost contact with one another, and the normal flow of scientists from universities to research institutes and from institutes to the universities was interrupted.

What must be done is to change the school system and laws on education, modernize curricula, giving greater emphasis to the humanities, set up specialized schools, make special programmes for gifted children, improve the adverse material position of education, devote greater attention to the intellectual rather than just ideological profile of teachers, attract to the universities the best academic and intellectual minds, and pass laws which will ensure a uniform system of education in the Socialist Republic of Serbia.

In this hour of crisis, we must today begin to think about tomorrow, about the 21st century; even though socioeconomic conditions are not favourable, we must create a vision of tomorrow's world in which civilization will be based on microelectronics, artificial intelligence, robotization, computer information, artificial insemination, and genetic engineering. For all these reasons, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts proposes that a carefully planned and thoroughgoing reorganization of the public, institutional basis of our scientific research effort be undertaken immediately and without dogmatic, ideological bias or "self-management" sluggishness. Such a reorganization must be in the spirit of modernization and efficiency, with larger financial investments, greater attention to young scientists, a freer hand and greater independence for creative personalities in designing academic and scientific research programmes. In short, it is vital that we integrate all our scientific potential into the mainstream of world science as soon as possible.

10. After the dramatic inter-communal strife in the course of the Second World War, it seemed as though nationalism had run its course and was well on the way to disappearing completely. Such an impression has proven to be deceptive. Not much time passed before nationalism began to rear its ugly head again, and each successive constitutional change has created more of the institutional prerequisites needed for it to become full blown. Nationalism has been generated from the top, its prime initiators being the politicians. The basic cause

of this manifold crisis is the ideological defeat which nationalism has inflicted on socialism. The disintegrational processes of all descriptions which have brought the Yugoslav state to the verge of ruin, coupled with a breakdown in the system of values, are the consequences of this defeat.

Its roots lie in the ideology propagated by the Comintern and in the CPY's national policy before the Second World War. This policy incorporated elements of retribution against the Serbian people, as an "oppressor" nation, and it had far-reaching repercussions on inter-communal relations, the social order, the economic system, and the fate of moral and cultural values after the war. The Serbian people were made to feel historical guilt, and they alone did not resolve their national question or gain a state of their own, as did the other national groups. Consequently, it is above all necessary to remove the stigma of historical guilt from the Serbian nation; the charge that the Serbs had a privileged economic status between the two world wars must be officially retracted, and their history of liberation wars and contribution to the formation of Yugoslavia must no longer be denied.

The establishment of the Serbian people's complete national and cultural integrity, regardless of which republic or province they might be living in, is their historical and democratic right. The acquisition of equal rights and an independent development for the Serbian nation have a more profound historical significance. In less than fifty years, for two successive generations, the Serbs were twice subjected to physical annihilation, forced assimilation, conversion to a different religion, cultural genocide, ideological indoctrination, denigration and compulsion to renounce their own traditions because of an imposed guilt complex. Intellectually and political unmanned, the Serbian nation has had to bear trials and tribulations that are too severe not to leave deep scars in their psyche, and at the close of this century of great technological feats of the human mind, this fact must not be ignored. If they want to have a future in the family of cultured and civilized nations of the world, the Serbian people must be allowed to find themselves again and become an historical personality in their own right, to regain a sense of their historical and spiritual being, to make a clear assessment of their economic and cultural interests, to devise a modern social and national programme which will inspire present generations and generations to come.

The present state of depression of the Serbian people, against a background of chauvinism and Serbophobia which are gaining in intensity in some milieux, provides fertile soil for an ever more drastic manifestation of the national sensibilities of the Serbian nation and reactions which might be inflammatory and dangerous. It is incumbent upon us not to overlook or underestimate these dangers for a single moment. But at the same time, while calling for a struggle against Serbian nationalism as a matter of principle, we cannot condone the ideological and political symmetry which has been established in apportioning historical blame. This equal apportionment of historical guilt, so corrosive to the spirit and morale, with its time-worn injustices and falsehoods, must be

abandoned if we wish to see a democratic, Yugoslav, humanistic climate prevail in contemporary Serbian culture.

The fact that citizens as a whole and the working class are not represented in the Federal Assembly in their own chambers cannot be blamed solely on the tendency to give precedence to national attributes; it also reflects a desire to put Serbia into an inferior position and in this manner weaken its political influence. But the worst misfortune of all is the fact that the Serbian people do not have their own state, as do all the other nations. Admittedly, the first article of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Serbia contains a clause declaring that Serbia is a state, but the question must be asked what kind of a state is denied jurisdiction over its own territory or does not have the means at its disposal to establish law and order in one of its sections, or ensure the personal safety and security of property of its citizens, or put a stop to the genocide in Kosovo and halt the exodus of Serbs from their ancestral homes. Such a status is evidence of political discrimination against Serbia, especially in the light of the fact that the Constitution of the SFRY has imposed upon it internal federalization as a permanent source of conflict between Serbia proper and its provinces. The aggressive Albanian nationalism in Kosovo cannot be brought to heel unless Serbia ceases to be the only republic whose internal affairs are ordered by others.

The formally proclaimed equality of all the republics in the Constitution of the SFRY has been negated by the fact that the Republic of Serbia has been forced to hand over a large portion of its rights and prerogatives to the autonomous provinces, whose status has been regulated in detail by the federal constitution. Serbia must state openly that this arrangement was forced upon it, especially as regards the status of the provinces, in effect raised to that of republics, which regard themselves much more as a constituent unit of the federation than a part of the Republic of Serbia. On top of its failure to provide for a state for the Serbian nation, the Constitution of the SFRY also put insurmountable difficulties in the way of constituting such a state. It is imperative that this constitution be amended so as to satisfy Serbia's legitimate interests. The autonomous provinces should become genuinely integral parts of the Republic of Serbia, while receiving that degree of autonomy which does not disrupt the integrity of the Republic and which will be able to satisfy the general interests of the community at large.

The unresolved issue of Serbia's statehood is not the only flaw which should be remedied through amendment of the Constitution. Under the 1974 Constitution, Yugoslavia became a loose state community, in which there are those who are considering other possibilities and not just the Yugoslav option, as can be seen from recent statements made by public figures in Slovenia and the earlier positions taken by the Macedonian politicians. Such trends and the thorough job made of disintegration of the country make one think that Yugoslavia is in danger of further dissolution. The Serbian people cannot stand idly by and wait for the future in such a state of uncertainty. All the nations in Yugoslavia must therefore be given the opportunity to state their desires and intentions. In this event Serbia

would be able to make its own options and define its own national interests. Such a discussion and consultation would have to precede a review of the Constitution. Naturally, Serbia must not be passive and wait to see what the others will say, as it has done so many times in the past.

While supporting the arrangements first outlined by the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation during the war, Serbia will have to bear in mind that the final decision does not rest with it, and that the others might prefer some other alternatives. Consequently, Serbia has the task of clearly assessing its own economic and national interests, lest it be taken unawares by events. By insisting on the federal system, Serbia would not only be furthering the equality of all the national groups in Yugoslavia but also facilitating resolution of the political and economic crisis.

If Serbia is to champion equal rights, then it must take the initiative in tackling the key political and economic issues to the same extent as the others have the right to take such an initiative. The four decades of passivity on the part of Serbia have proven to be detrimental to the whole of Yugoslavia, which has been deprived of ideas and criticism of a community with a long tradition of statehood, with a keen sense of national independence, and rich experience in combatting local usurpers of political liberties. Without participation by the Serbian nation and Serbia on an equal footing in the entire process of adopting and implementing all its vital decisions, Yugoslavia cannot be strong; indeed, its very survival as a democratic and socialist society would be called into question.

An era in the evolution of Yugoslav society and Serbia is obviously coming to an end with an historically exhausted ideology, general stagnation, and a deepening recession in the economic, moral and cultural spheres. Such a state of affairs makes it imperative to carry out radical, well-studied, scientifically based and resolutely implemented reforms of the entire state order and organization of the Yugoslav community of nations, and also in the sphere of democratic socialism, for a faster and more effective participation in contemporary civilization. Social reforms should to the greatest possible extent harness the natural and human resources of the entire country so that we might become a productive, enlightened, and democratic society, capable of living from our own labour and creativity and able to make a contribution to the world community.

The first requirement for our transformation and renaissance is a democratic mobilization of all the intellectual and moral forces of the nation, not just in order to carry out the decisions handed down by political leaderships, but rather to devise programmes and map out the future in a democratic way. For the first time in recent history, expertise and experience, conscientiousness and boldness, imagination and responsibility would all come together to carry out a task of importance for the entire society, on the principles of a long-term programme.

The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts once again expresses its willingness to do everything it can, to the best of its abilities, to assist efforts to deal with these crucial tasks and the historical duties incumbent upon our generation.

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