
The Yugoslav Destabilization

Behind the Kosovo riots: an international insurgency

by Irene Beaudry and Rachel Douglas

Nearly one year after the death of President-for-Life Marshal Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavia faces an outbreak of localist squabbles that are straining its integrity as a nation. Riots occurred this spring under the flag of Albanian nationalism in the small province of Kosovo, Serbia. Their aftermath can make waves a long way from Yugoslavia's Adriatic Sea coastline.

The communist leadership of neighboring Albania is implicated in the destabilization of Yugoslavia. So are Albanian emigrés based in Italy, a section of the Eastern and Balkan assets of the old Venetian nobility—Yugoslavia, after all, was Venice's territory for centuries. And finally, the radicals of the Praxis organization, a New Left umbrella for terrorists and theoreticians of destabilization spanning Europe and North America, have reconstituted themselves in Yugoslavia.

It is a combination of diverse forces, but a familiar one: the same blend devastatingly exposed in Italy's "Propaganda Due" Masonic scandal, where Socialists, oligarchs, and right-wing military intelligence officers turned up in the same secret organization against the Italian nation.

The echoes of Poland and Iran are also audible in Yugoslavia this year, as "Polish" polemics against heavy industry and "Iranian" pleas for a return to feudal values dominate the upheaval in Islamic Kosovo.

At the very least, the Kosovo affair will serve the organizers of Yugoslavia's latest experiment in social economics: assignment to economically backward areas of so-called appropriate technologies rather than advanced industry. After scrapping its nuclear power program last year, Yugoslavia adopted a code of conduct for relations between its advanced and its backward areas that closely matches the prescriptions of the International Commission on North-South Relations, run by a frequent visitor to Yugoslavia, Willy Brandt of the Socialist International.

The crisis could also turn, with help from armed ethnic Albanian peasants who have already taken to the Kosovo hills, into a hot conflict right at a crucial East-West junction. Yugoslavia sits on the Mediterranean flank of NATO and in the Warsaw Pact's back yard.

Yugoslavia comprises six republics and two autonomous provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina, located within the republic of Serbia. Kosovo, adjacent to Albania, 75 percent ethnic Albanian, and heavily Islamic, is Yugoslavia's poorest, least developed region.

The riots took place in March, mainly in Kosovo's capital, Pristina. They began at the 37,000-student University of Pristina, and by the time they ended, nine people were dead and scores injured. Over 400 members of the Kosovo League of Communists, including its Provincial Committee president, resigned in following weeks. The university was shut down.

Slogans like "Down with Revisionism!" and "Long Live Enver Hoxha!" identified the students with the peculiar Albanian communist regime of Enver Hoxha, which denounces the West as "imperialists" and the Soviet bloc as "social imperialists," and not long ago split with its only friend, Peking. And the Albanians pitched in with overt support for Albanian separatism in Kosovo. The official paper *Zeri I Popullit*, for example, declared on May 17 that Albanians throughout Yugoslavia are part of "one Albanian nation," an incitement of ethnic Albanians in the neighboring republics of Macedonia and Montenegro to join the fray. "We Are Albanians, Not Yugoslavs," and "We Want A Unified Albania!" read the Pristina banners.

Greater Albania existed once before in this century, under the patronage of Italian Socialist-turned-Fascist Benito Mussolini during World War II. Kosovo was attached to Albania then.

Spring 1981 witnessed an eerie replay on both sides of the Adriatic. While the Kosovo Albanians rioted, Italian Socialist Party chief Bettino Craxi convened a party congress—in Palermo, Sicily, where Sicilian Mafia chief Count Gutierrez di Spadafora employs a large Albanian emigré community in assorted drug and gun-running enterprises—as a springboard for his bid to become "the new Mussolini," as it was put by many Italians.

Last month, *EIR* learned from emigré Albanian nobility sources in Italy that the Kosovo affair is viewed in such circles as part of a drive for Albanian unifica-

tion. The bestowal of the Nobel Peace Prize on the Albanian nun Mother Theresa, according to these sources, would enable her to become a rallying point for this campaign—an Albanian Khomeini.

Kosovo and the Yugoslav economy

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) offices in Paris, where Club of Rome and similar strategies for world deindustrialization and genocide are made, recently praised Yugoslavia's economic performance (which features double-digit inflation and double-digit unemployment), provided that more stringent austerity measures and labor-intensive activity were instituted. The Kosovo fracas will help this happen.

In 1947, Kosovo had 55 percent illiteracy and 81 percent of the population was employed in agriculture. Organized around clan chieftains and Muslim leaders, Kosovo carried the legacy of 500 years of Turkish domination, unimproved under Royal Yugoslavia (1918-1941).

Under Tito, Kosovo emerged from the dark ages into the light of the 20th century. The annual rate of population growth shot up to 44 births per 1,000 inhabitants, among the highest rates in the world. By 1971, industry in Kosovo was 82 percent automated and employed a much larger slice of the population, although the workers, only a generation off the farm, retained the village orientation of their peasant upbringing, and that factor remains a powerful lever for reversing progress in Kosovo.

Beset by quarreling over resources, including between the two largest republics, inland Serbia and coastal, industrialized Croatia, Tito's government established a Federal Development Fund in 1965. Each republic and province was taxed a fixed percentage of its social product for central deployment for industrialization. Backward Kosovo got special attention from the beginning, receiving as much as 30 percent of the fund in the form of 15-year loans at 3 percent with a 3-year grace period. The Belgrade government emphasized education of technical and intellectual personnel and the development of basic industries and infrastructure. Pristina University itself was the result of this policy; established in 1970, it has become the third largest university in Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia's nationalities policy, formulated by Tito's adviser, the late Edvard Kardelj, managed to undercut the benefits to the Kosovo population from industrialization and education. Pristina's thousands of graduates, more than the Kosovo economy can absorb, complete their course of study in Albanian, which was not even a written language until this century. They are hard put to find work in the rest of the country, where



Serbo-Croatian and other Slavic languages are spoken.

The solution preferred by Enver Hoxha's agitators and the OECD is a return to the old Albanian low-technology ways so well-preserved in Albania proper. A Radio Free Europe research paper this spring suggested that neglect of "small business, private farming, and the crafts, all based on free enterprise" will have to be remedied. A Yugoslav League of Communists Presidium meeting late last year, held to draft a new Five-Year Plan, moved decisively in that direction and mirrored the Brandt Commission's policy of population control by credit manipulation.

Party leaders from the richer regions—Croatia, Slovenia, and Vojvodina—argued that all parts of the country could not develop equally, due to the realities of the international economic situation. They called for scrapping the Federal Development Fund by reducing the taxation on each republic's social product and permitting up to one-half of the tax amount to be replaced by voluntary investments in development, with no nationally assigned investment priorities. What there was of national coordination will be replaced by cut-throat competition for resources.



The Yugoslav army has been called out in Kosovo.

Disguised by its advocates as “evenhandedness,” the policy means divesting Yugoslavia of the heavy-industry concentrations that had been built up under Tito. Kosovo, for instance, will be exploited through labor-intensive coal projects.

According to one Western observer partial to the Club of Rome and World Bank who had visited Belgrade during the critical Five-Year Plan discussion, this shift makes Yugoslavia ripe for Western investment once again. “Conditions are now right for a concerted effort for labor-intensive investment in Yugoslavia,” he said, “What we need is direct joint ventures in the mining of coal, for example.”

The argument is the same as for Iran and Poland: industry is the source of all difficulties. The *Wall Street Journal* summarized June 2, “Yugoslavia is in such poor economic shape [because of] its injudicious investment policy over the years, financed largely by foreign banks. The country has . . . been on a building orgy while ignoring such basic areas as agriculture. ‘They’ve put far too much money into huge projects,’ says one Western diplomat.”

According to sources recently in Belgrade, the Ko-

sovo riots triggered a resurgence of debate over nationalities policy in the entire country. The weekly paper *Politika* wrote that mistakes dating back to the 1960s were involved and high-level resignations might be in order. A simmering fight between the Croatian League of Communists and the Catholic Church in Croatia bubbled over into open polemics about Church attempts to rehabilitate the late Aloisius Cardinal Stepinac, charged by the League with wartime collaboration with the Nazis. The Croatian Catholic Bishops Conference secretary, Msgr. Nikola Saldo, joined Croatian intellectuals in a petition for the release of political prisoners held in Croatia. Croatian emigrés in West Germany, seized with enthusiasm for Albanian separatism and their own, demonstrated this spring under the banner, “Mercy Death for Yugoslavia.”

In the context of these tensions, one of the most momentous events in Yugoslavia this spring was the resurgence, after seven dormant years, of Praxis International, which held a three-week conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia, shortly after the Kosovo riots. The theme was “Civil Disobedience”; the focus was Poland.

Praxis International was active in the late 1960s and early 1970s, after Western intellectuals from the New Left and the evolving network of academic supporters of radical terrorism picked up on the potential of a group of University of Belgrade professors who called themselves and their publication *Praxis*. Its International Support Committee featured New Left guru Herbert Marcuse; Norman Birnbaum of the Socialist International; Oxford-based charter member of the Workers Defense Committee (KOR), which helped catalyze the destabilization of Poland; Leszek Kolakowski; Oxford’s logical-positivist Professor A. J. Ayer, who helped Kolakowski design courses for Poland’s underground “flying universities”; and an array of leftist professors from Western Europe. The Canadian affiliate of Praxis became a focus of violent anarchists and promoters of drug use.

The Praxis people in Yugoslavia were on the outs since Tito suppressed them in 1974 and they were foiled in an attempt to revive themselves by starting a new magazine, *Javnost*, last year. But Praxis found patrons in the League of Communists, who permitted it to regroup in a newly established Institute for Social Research attached to the University of Belgrade.

According to sources close to Praxis, the institute will specialize in control and containment of nationalist groups in Yugoslavia! This will contribute as much to Yugoslavia’s stability as having Prof. Jan Szczepanski—an affiliate of Britain’s top center for social engineering and destabilization, the Tavistock Institute—in charge of sociology and worker relations programs helped Poland in the years leading to the crisis of 1980.