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The Political Economy of the Yugoslav Revolution

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1. INTRODUCTION

Industrialisation, agrarian structures, nationalism, dependency and the role of the state have all been important themes in development studies during the post-war period. The focus has, of course, been mainly on peripheral capitalist economies in Africa, Asia and Latin America, reflecting the rapid internationalisation of capital in different forms during this period. This paper, in contrast, brings these themes much closer to home by examining them in the context of the European periphery during the interwar period, in a country which was a creation of the European powers, namely, Yugoslavia.

More important, though, Yugoslavia was to prove another exception to the Marxist unilinear vision of development which associated the triumph of socialism with a high level of development of the forces of production and a numerous, powerful and dominant working class. In Yugoslavia, the interplay between industrialisation, agrarian structures, nationalism, dependency and the role of the state produced a potent mixture and another marriage between socialism and underdevelopment. It allowed a small and relatively impotent Communist Party, which had only 8,000 full members in 1941, in a country with a small working class, to transform itself within three years into the vanguard of a victorious, 800,000 strong National Liberation Army. This paper explores how this came about.

In order to simplify what turns out to be a complex and fascinating story, with some threads stretching far back into history, the exposition is somewhat schematic, dividing the material into manageable chunks, while simultaneously establishing the analytical framework and focus. Thus, Sections 2 and 3 set the scene by introducing the two main contradictions which were ultimately responsible for creating the possibility of revolution, namely, the contradiction between industrialisation and the specific process of class formation in the countryside and, secondly, the contradiction represented by conflicts over the national question. Section 4 is more strictly chronological as it details the consequences of the interplay between these two contradictions and introduces the dimensions of external dependency and the role of the state. In Section 5 the agent of revolution, the Yugoslav Communist Party, is inserted into this scenario. Section 6 deals with the concluding drama of war and revolution and highlights an important and perhaps novel sub-theme, that of the role of war

itself, its geopolitics and its contribution to the eventual outcome. The latter is a particular blind spot in much political analysis, which tends to overlook the fact that most socialist revolutions have emerged out of international conjunctures of generalised war and thus fails to assess the contribution of the war process itself.

Finally, the Yugoslav revolution has of course achieved significance far beyond its own borders, particularly in the 'Third World' and particularly because of the emergence of its own distinctive brand of 'self-management' socialism and its international stance of 'non-alignment'. Thus, the conclusion, Section 7, also takes up the question of the ways in which the political economy of the revolution as described in this paper left its imprint upon the post-war development of socialist Yugoslavia.

2. INDUSTRIALISATION AND AGRARIAN CLASS FORMATION

Industrial Development between 1918 and 1941

When the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established on 1 December 1918, it was only in the early stages of industrialisation. Industry had taken root in the areas which went to make up the Kingdom during the latter half of the nineteenth century, but had only begun to prosper during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In 1918, however, there were only 2,064 factories employing 155,000 workers, and the great majority were concentrated in just three branches: food, wood and electricity generation. Moreover, factory industry in 1918 was also regionally concentrated, with 30% and 24% of plants in Croatia and Slovenia respectively and only 14% in Serbia.¹ According to the 1921 population census about 80% of the Yugoslav population depended on agriculture for a livelihood.²

It might perhaps have been expected that the newly established Kingdom would make considerable progress towards becoming an industrial nation during the interwar period. A small industrial base already existed; the country was reasonably well endowed with natural resources, particularly with non-ferrous minerals, and climatic topographical conditions made a whole variety of agricultural activity possible. This, however, was not to be. While by 1938 an additional 2,193 factories had been established, the industrial structure had not diversified a great deal; Croatia and Slovenia had retained their predominant positions (although

this was counterbalanced by Serbian political power and state intervention, see Section 4 below); and the proportion of the population dependent on agriculture had declined only slightly to 75%.³ Between 1926 and 1939 the average rate of industrial output growth was 3.7% per annum, not a great deal faster than the growth of agricultural output which was 2.2%.⁴ According to the 1938 industrial census there were still only 197,000 workers employed in factory industry at that time, and an additional 157,309 employed in small workshop handicraft production.⁵ Moreover, the productivity of those who were employed in industry lagged far behind the norm in advanced industrial countries: in the Yugoslavia of 1938, for example, it took 16 man-hours to produce a ton of cement; in France it took 3.7 man-hours.⁶

For a while during the early 1920s Yugoslav industry had prospered, with textiles, leather and other mass consumption goods showing the most dynamic growth of production. 1922 saw the establishment of 170 new factories, the largest number in any one year of the interwar period.⁷ One of the stimuli was the introduction and continual fortification of high tariff barriers. Different industrial branches enjoyed different degrees of protection, but the average rate was 23% up until 1925, rising to 32% by 1927 and to 46% in 1931.⁸ More important, however, was the booming agricultural export market: this proved to be an important source of surplus for industrial investment and at the same time a considerable boost to domestic purchasing power, and thus to the growth of the domestic market. Immediately after the First World War the European grain market had been thrown into disarray by the discontinuation of supplies from Russia, while grain from the important suppliers of the future like the USA, Canada, Argentina and Australia was not yet reaching it. This combination of circumstances was very favourable for producers in central and south-eastern Europe, Yugoslavia included. The grain markets of advanced industrial countries had been opened up to them and, given the shortfall in supplies, the price of Yugoslav wheat had risen to a peak of 417 dinars per 100 kg by 1924-25.⁹ The 'kulak' among the Yugoslav peasantry got richer; the state creamed off export taxes; industry and banking made large profits; and speculation was rife. Fortuitous external circumstances underpinned the prosperity of the immediate post-war years.

The situation was quickly reversed when large supplies of grain started to arrive in Europe from the USA, Canada, Australia and Argentina during the mid-1920s. Production in these countries had increased very

rapidly and productivity was far higher than in central and southeastern Europe because of mechanisation. In 1926 the price of Yugoslav wheat fell to 281 dinars per 100 kg, and by 1931 Hungary and Rumania were selling at prices between 50 and 60 dinars per 100 kg. Taken together with the onset of the Great Depression, the consequences for the Yugoslav economy were catastrophic.

The unexpected fall in the prices of agricultural produce gave rise to the loss of the main source of accumulation, provoking a multiplier effect with severe consequences. Landowners were no longer able to meet their debt obligations to banks and peasants lost the greater part of their purchasing power because they had to hand over two or three times more produce in order to pay off the same nominal debt, and to buy the same industrial produce. Trade slumped, industrial profits declined and the sources of extended reproduction either diminished or disappeared. Industry and handicrafts were unable to repay their debts to the banks which were being stormed by depositors who were withdrawing their deposits. The banks became illiquid — soon, in 1929, came the wave of the great world economic crisis — the collapse was total.¹⁰

The extensive impact of falling grain prices on the Yugoslav economy exposed the major difficulty facing industrialisation, a difficulty which had been momentarily held in abeyance during the early 1920s. The problem was that the economy was unable to generate an internal source of surplus which could be made available to industry. This problem was rooted in the structure of the agricultural sector and the changes which it underwent during the interwar period.

The Agrarian Structure before 1918

The agrarian structures of the lands which went to make up Yugoslavia in 1918 differed widely, reflecting the differences between the foreign occupation regimes which they had suffered for centuries. In Serbia a class of free peasant smallholders had already been in existence for close to one hundred years. Shortly after Serbia won autonomy from the Turks in 1833, the peasantry were freed from all forms of feudal servitude. Even before that the Serbian peasantry had not experienced tight feudal bondage since the collapse of the Serbian medieval state during the fourteenth century. During the Turkish conquest most of the Serbian feudal lords had been annihilated and Ottoman feudalism vested all ownership rights to conquered land in the Sultan, who then exacted tribute from his vassals, largely in the form of taxation, through the medium of military appointees

known as 'spahis'. While the Serbian peasantry could not aspire to ownership of their land because few of them converted to Islam, they were largely left to themselves as long as they paid their taxes, undertook occasional public works and continued to work their land. They also enjoyed the right to transmit land between generations. The peculiarity of Serbia was therefore that the peasantry had a long tradition of relative freedom and had become owner-occupiers long before one could speak of a Serbian bourgeois revolution. The result was that the Serbian agrarian structure was dominated by smallholdings: in 1897, 52.8% of landholdings were less than five hectares in size and 96% were less than 20 hectares in size (see Table 1).¹¹

In Montenegro the peasantry had a heritage of freedom which was even more extensive than in Serbia. The medieval Montenegrin state of Duklja, which for a time had been joined with old Serbia under the Serbian Nemanid dynasty, was officially conquered by the Turks in 1499, but never subdued. The Turks controlled the main towns and lines of communication, while the peasantry lived on in the more inhospitable mountain areas, grouped together in tribal/clan associations.¹² The Montenegrins resisted the Turks for more than five hundred years, and their *de facto* freedom was finally recognised by the Ottoman Empire at the Berlin Congress in 1878. In pre-1878 Montenegro there had never been any feudal forms of land tenure, and this situation only changed after 1878 because a decision of the Berlin Congress increased the size of Montenegro by 70%.

The other lands which went to make up Yugoslavia had been caught up in a more orthodox feudal social structure, reflected in the fact that a very large proportion of landholdings in these areas were less than two hectares in size at the turn of the nineteenth century (see Table 1). Slovenia, Croatia-Slavonia and the Vojvodina bore the imprint of Austro-Hungarian feudal systems, vestiges of which lived on into the twentieth century because, even though serfdom had been abolished in Austro-Hungarian land in 1848, no redistribution of land had occurred. In Dalmatia, which was directly under Austrian jurisdiction, serfdom had not been abolished in 1848 and so survived there until the interwar period. Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Macedonia stood in sharp contrast to Serbia because the Ottoman feudal system, which had been established in these areas over centuries, did not disintegrate with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, but rather turned into something more oppressive. In Bosnia and Herzegovina a large part of the population had converted to Islam and

Table 1. Pre-1914 Farm-Size Structure Compared with 1931 (in %)

Size in hectares	Historical Provinces								
	Yugoslavia	Serbia ^a 1897	Croatia-Slavonia ^b 1895	Bosnia and Herzegovina 1906	Dalmatia ^c 1902	Slovenia ^d 1902	Macedonia ^e	Montenegro ^a	Vojvodina ^f
				<i>Pre-1914 Censuses</i>					
Up to 2		18.5	44.3	40.7	61.5	31.6			
2 to 5		34.3	27.2	26.4	25.8	19.4			
5 to 20		43.1	27.6	} 32.9	11.4	39.1			
20 to 50		3.8	0.7		0.9	8.5			
50 to 100		0.3	0.1		0.2	1.0			
Above 100		0.0	0.1		0.2	0.4			
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0			
				<i>1931 Census</i>					
Up to 2	33.8	24.4	36.5	34.0	64.2	33.1	40.7	48.2	33.8
2 to 5	34.1	37.7	37.9	34.6	25.4	24.4	33.6	27.7	27.2
5 to 20	29.2	35.6	24.4	29.2	9.6	34.4	24.0	19.9	32.4
20 to 50	2.5	2.2	1.0	2.0	0.7	7.0	1.5	3.4	5.6
50 to 100	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.1	0.7	0.8
Above 100	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Territory prior to the annexation of areas acquired during the Balkan Wars.

^b In 1895 Croatia-Slavonia used cadastral yokes (1 c.y. = 0.5755 hectares) instead of hectares. Thus the first category 0 to 2 hectares actually represents farms from 0 to 2.88 hectares, followed by categories 2.88 to 5.76, 5.76 to 28.77, 28.77 to 57.55, 57.55 to 115.1, and finally, above 115.1 hectares. This has to be kept in mind when comparing relative figures for 1895 and 1931. Lest the same relative figures for properties of 50 to 100 hectares and above 100 hectares, in both cases 0.1% for 1895 and 1931, give a false impression, it should be stated that this resulted from the need of rounding these figures to one decimal. The respective figures in 1895 were 0.135 and 0.144%, and 0.105 and 0.076% in 1931.

^c In 1931 Dalmatia was without the small area annexed by Italy.

^d In 1902 Carniola was taken as representative of the territory of post-1918 Slovenia.

^e Territory of the People's Republic of Macedonia.

^f Without Srijem.

Source: Taken from J. Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change*, Stanford University Press, 1955, p. 389.

received the corresponding privilege of owning a family farm (*čiflik*). The remaining Christian population occupied the very bottom rung in the social structure and was unable to mount an effective popular revolt against the Turks as the Ottoman Empire lost its grip on the area.¹³ Instead, local Moslem landlords gradually usurped the landownership rights which the Sultan exercised through his local military representatives, and emerged as a new feudal class during the nineteenth century. When Austria occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, serfdom was not abolished because the Austrians found it expedient to rule through the Moslem feudatories. In Macedonia a similar development occurred, with the difference that there had been no mass conversion of the population, a large number of whom were Serbs who had lived there since medieval times when Macedonia or part of Macedonia was part of Old Serbia. The large Moslem population in Macedonia had its origins in the settlement there of Turkish peasants who had migrated from Asia Minor.

Feudalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in Macedonia survived until the interwar period, even in the areas of Macedonia which Serbia claimed during the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913: the outbreak of the First World War had allowed the Serbian government no time to legislate the abolition of serfdom in these areas.

Whether feudal servitude still existed or not, agriculture in all the lands which went to make up Yugoslavia in 1918 was very backward and the agrarian structure highly atomised. In addition, the country had just suffered the ravages of war. Two developments in the interwar period contributed further to the inability of the agricultural sector to provide an internal source of investible surplus for industrialisation.

Agricultural Over-population

First of all, an already unfavourable ratio of population to land in the agricultural sector worsened, largely due to rapid population increase. Already during the nineteenth century, population growth had caused problems, particularly in Serbia where natural population growth had been supplemented by an influx of migrants from the south and south-west during the later part of the century.¹⁴ This had resulted in a shift from pastoral to arable cultivation, and 'the population started to push at, and go over, the limits of the land resources to support it on the basis of existing agricultural technology'.¹⁵

Assuming that 1.25 hectares of cultivated land per person was the necessary requirement to provide a decent living standard at the time, Yugoslavia had a surplus agricultural population of almost 3.9 million in 1921.¹⁶ This compared unfavourably with two neighbouring countries which had similar agricultural structures and levels of development (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Agricultural Over-Population in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania, 1921, 1931 and 1938*

Country	'Surplus' population (000s)			% of agricultural population		
	1921	1931	1938	1921	1931	1938
Yugoslavia	3,892	4,663	5,011	41	43	43
Bulgaria	970	1,388	1,158	27	31	25
Rumania	2,912	1,969	2,952	25	15	21

Source: Taken from Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p.316.

Moreover, by the end of the interwar period another one million people had been added to the category of surplus population in the countryside. Between January 1921 and the end of 1939, the population of Yugoslavia had increased from 11,984,911 to 15,703,000: this was an increase of 31% and was the highest in Europe over this period. Although the proportion of the population dependent on agriculture had declined, the absolute number of people had increased by more than two million from 9,456,000 in 1921 to 11,586,000 in 1938.¹⁷

Agricultural over-population tends to severely restrict the ability of both the agricultural sector and the industrial sector to accumulate. Consumption in the agricultural sector tends to approach the level of total agricultural output, leaving little left over either for investment and innovation in the agricultural sector itself, or to be creamed off for industrial expansion. On the demand side, the size of the domestic market for industrial goods becomes restricted because the peasantry will be forced to use most of their output for feeding themselves. In turn this means that any concerted effort to squeeze a surplus for industrialisation out of the agricultural sector, either through the market, taxation or usury, is likely to be counterproductive because it will cause severe hardship and be fiercely resisted by the peasantry. Agricultural over-population thus generates a

vicious circle: the creation of industrial employment is the most effective way of reducing pressure on the land, and yet industrialisation is itself hampered by this problem. As we have seen, agricultural over-population in Yugoslavia became steadily worse during the interwar period. At one and the same time this was partly a product of the vicious circle and a factor which aggravated it.

Nevertheless, the extent to which agricultural over-population impeded industrialisation depends a great deal on the agrarian structure of the country in question. If a large proportion of the cultivated area is in large ownership units, while the mass of the peasantry can barely reach subsistence on very small plots, the emergence of a dynamic agricultural sector is possible. The rapid proletarianisation of the peasantry provides a supply of cheap wage labour to large estates which may then be able to increase output sufficiently to generate a surplus for agricultural and industrial accumulation. In Yugoslavia, however, this was not the case. At the end of the First World War, the agrarian structure was already atomised and the severity of the over-population problem put great pressure on the government to introduce a land reform. Indeed, when it was clear that the end of the First World War was going to see the collapse of Austria-Hungary, an estimated 200,000 deserters from the Austro-Hungarian army, largely Croatian peasants, took to the forests and started to invade large estates in the former Austro-Hungarian areas of Yugoslavia. These deserters became known as the *Zeleni Kadar* (the Green Army).¹⁸ They were reacting to the extremely inequitable agrarian structure of their homelands (see Table 1); they were inspired by the ideals of the October Revolution, and the message to the first government of the new country was clear.

The Agrarian Reform of 1919

Thus it was that the first major policy in Yugoslavia was the introduction of an agrarian reform. The principles of the reform were laid down in an interim decree of 25 February 1919, even before the country's first constitution was ratified by a Constituent Assembly. The basic philosophy of the reform was to abolish any remaining feudal relationships, giving the land to those who worked it, and to reproduce the Serbian agrarian structure of free peasant smallholdings all over Yugoslavia. More specifically, large estates would be subject to expropriation if they comprised more than 50-

300 hectares of arable land or more than 100-500 hectares of other kinds of land. A range was established in each of these categories because of the large differences in the fertility and productivity of land in different areas of the country. A moderate level of compensation would be paid to the owners of expropriated land.

Slowly during the 1920s, an impressive 637,328 holdings, altogether 2,484,481 hectares, were distributed among 3,186,640 persons.¹⁹ The recipients were of two main kinds. Most of the redistributed land went to local peasants who were either freed from feudal servitude to become the owners of the plots which they worked, and/or received enlarged plots. The other recipients were landless peasants who benefitted from various colonisation programmes. For example, many soldiers from the Serbian and Montenegrin armies who had joined up before November 1918, were allowed to colonise areas of Macedonia, the Vojvodina and Slavonia, as well as Kosovo and Metohija.²⁰

The impact of the reform was inevitably limited to particular areas of Yugoslavia. Serbia proper and Montenegro, for example, were already lands of free peasant smallholdings and they were, therefore, not affected by the provisions of the reform. Just over half of the land distributed was in Bosnia and Herzegovina and another quarter in South Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija as well as Macedonia).²¹ This indicates that the retitling of land held under feudal obligations, rather than outright expropriation and sub-division, was a substantial element of the reform. Most of the remaining quarter of the land distributed was in the northern regions of Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Slavonia and the Vojvodina). There a large amount of land belonging to churches and the public domain was distributed, and 71.1% of the land expropriated from private owners belonged to foreigners (Austrians and Hungarians), many of whom had abandoned their estates during the First World War.²²

While the achievements of the reform were more modest than the original grand design to turn Yugoslavia into a land of smallholdings, it did result in an agrarian structure dominated by them (Table 3). By 1931, 55% of the land area being productively utilised was in holdings of less than ten hectares in size, and only 9.7% was in holdings of more than 50 hectares in size.²³ The average farm size was 5.36 hectares.

Without doubt the reform staved off some of the hardships created by agricultural over-population, but it did not remove them altogether. For a while at least, it guaranteed a minimum standard of living for a large part

Table 3. The Distribution of Farms by Size According to the Census of 31 March 1931

Size of farm (in ha.)	Farms		Land area	
	No.	% of total	Ha.	% of total
Up to 0.5	158,904	8.0	43,410	0.4
0.5 to 1	175,532	8.8	135,760	1.3
1 to 2	337,429	17.0	514,372	4.8
2 to 5	676,284	34.0	2,287,570	21.5
5 to 10	407,237	20.5	2,873,155	27.0
10 to 20	174,068	8.8	2,380,826	22.3
20 to 50	49,314	2.5	1,388,570	13.0
50 to 100	5,156	0.3	338,076	3.2
100 to 200	1,099	0.1	147,868	1.4
200 to 500	494	0.0	146,549	1.4
Over 500	208	0.0	389,824	3.7
Total	1,985,725	100.0	10,645,980	100.0

Source: Taken from Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p.384.

of the peasantry and it precluded massive proletarianisation: in 1931 only 489,018 persons, or 9.6% of those employed in agriculture, were wage labourers, and 40% of them were concentrated in the Vojvodina.²⁴ The problem, however, of the 'dwarf' smallholding still remained: in 1931 33.8% of the landholdings were less than two hectares in size, and they were fairly evenly distributed throughout all the regions of Yugoslavia (see Table 1). A smallholding in this size range was insufficient to provide for the minimum consumption needs of a peasant family, even in a year of bumper crops. Moreover, they had been proliferating all over Yugoslavia, and particularly in Serbia, between the end of the nineteenth century and 1931 (see Table 1). The agrarian reform did not and could not arrest this trend, which reflected the growing discrepancy between the agricultural population and the amount of land available on the one hand, plus, on the other hand, the trend towards individual farm ownership as the co-operative form of ownership, known as the *zadruga*, went through its final stages of disintegration.²⁵ Furthermore, it was this excessive sub-division of the land, rather than an increase in area under cultivation, which provided the bulk of the 250,450 new jobs generated in the agricultural sector between 1921 and 1931.²⁶

The great problem with the agrarian reform was, however, that it

helped to translate the problem of agricultural over-population into an agrarian structure which effectively precluded a longer-term capitalist solution, namely, the rapid industrialisation of the country. An agrarian structure dominated by smallholdings, together with a peasantry which was only equipped with backward techniques of production, could provide neither a source of investible surplus for industry nor a growing domestic market for industrial products. The legacies of history, the increase in population and the changes in the agrarian structure presented severe difficulties for the capitalist industrialisation of Yugoslavia during the interwar period.

3. THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Introduction

The establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 1 December 1918 brought together the territories of Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia-Slavonia, Slovenia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Vojvodina and Yugoslav Macedonia. Since 1878 Serbia and Montenegro had formally been independent Kingdoms. Before that they had both been part of the Ottoman Empire since the end of the Middle Ages, although Serbia had effectively been an independent state since 1833 and Montenegro likewise since the turn of the nineteenth century. Croatia and Slavonia had formed an autonomous unit in the Austro-Hungary Empire since the establishment of the dual monarchy in 1868. Originally, the Hungarian King had acquired Croatia and Slavonia in 1102 and then, in 1526, after the defeat of Hungary by the Turks at the battle of Mohacs, Croatia became part of the Austrian Empire, as did the remnants of Hungary. Part of Croatia and the whole of Slavonia, however, were conquered by the Turks in the 1520s and 1530s, becoming part of Austria-Hungary after the Peace of Karlovci in 1699 and the Peace of Pozarevac in 1718. Thereafter, these areas came directly under Austrian jurisdiction (rather than indirectly via Hungary), because they were joined with the Military Frontier territory which had been constituted in 1578 by the Austrians along the borders with the Ottoman Empire. Before 1918 there had been no territorial unit known as Slovenia, only a number of Austrian Crown-lands inhabited by Slovenes. Indeed, Slovenes had never had their

own medieval state, for these Crown-lands had been under various Germanic rulers since the eighth century. The Crown-lands of Carniola and parts of the Crown-lands of Styria, Carinthia and Prekomurje went to make up the new territorial unit of Slovenia (which, incidentally, did not include all the areas inhabited by Slovenes). Similarly, Dalmatia had been an Austrian Crown-land, but only since 1814; before that it had known a whole series of masters (including Venice, the Republic of Dubrovnik and France). Bosnia and Herzegovina had been finally conquered by the Turks in 1463 and had remained under Turkish rule until it was occupied by Austria-Hungary in 1878 and later formally annexed in 1908. Apart from a period under the Turks in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Vojvodna had been part of Hungary since the ninth century. Between 1849 and 1860 it had briefly enjoyed the status of a province — the Serbian Vojvodina — within the Austrian Empire. Yugoslav Macedonia had originally been the centre of medieval Serbia, but since medieval days had been part of the Ottoman Empire until Serbia reclaimed it in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913.

Clearly, until 1918 the only thing which the peoples of these territories had in common was their ancestry in the South Slav migrations to the Balkans during the sixth and seventh centuries and their subjugation to various foreign powers. Moreover, they were also divided by language and religion. Serbs and Croats spoke different dialects of the same language and used different alphabets: Cyrillic and Latin respectively. Slovenes and Macedonians spoke different but related languages. Croats and Slovenes were strongly Catholic. Serbs, both inside and outside Serbia, belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church, as did Montenegrins. Large segments of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Macedonia still adhered to Islam. Taking all these factors into consideration, it was perhaps not surprising that the national question and different forms of nationalism should prove to be a source of conflict in Yugoslavia.

Nationalism before 1918

Before the formation of Yugoslavia, however, nationalism had been a rather weak political force among most of the South Slav peoples. Those peoples who had been under Austria or Hungary for a long period of time had become accustomed to foreign tutelage and had generally reached satisfactory arrangements with their masters, at least as far as ruling circles

were concerned. Their aspirations largely revolved around improving their status within the Austrian Empire, rather than involving a struggle for independent statehood. In the case of Croatia, independence had never really been highly valued or sought after: Hungary had never had to conquer Croatia in the first place, because a section of the Croatian nobility had offered the Croatian crown to the Hungarian King as a result of an internal crisis caused by the assassination of the Croatian King Zvonimir at the end of the eleventh century. Thereafter, the Hungarian King and later the Austrian Emperor ruled Croatia through a Croatian *ban* (chief executive) and from the thirteenth century onwards Croatia had a separate diet (*Sabor*). The Croatian nobility gradually disappeared, and their lands were taken over by Hungarian and German nobles. Apart from a fleeting instance which provoked the Austrians to execute the heads of two leading Croatian families (Counts Zrinski and Frankopan) in 1671 for preaching secession, Croatian nationalism was practically non-existent. The celebrated peasant rebellion led by Matija Gubec in 1573 had no nationalist overtones. Indeed, the peasants sought the protection of the Austrian emperor against local feudatories. After 1868, when Austria-Hungary became a dual monarchy, Croatia came under the jurisdiction of the Hungarian King and was able to negotiate representation in the elected Hungarian parliament and to achieve considerable autonomy with respect to internal affairs.²⁷ At the time of the First World War the Croatian people enjoyed the status of, and recognition as a, 'political people' within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Similarly, in Slovenia nationalism was not a potent political force. The development of a national identity and consciousness among the Slovene people was inhibited by their dispersion throughout several Austrian provinces. Furthermore, the Slovene lands were almost completely Germanised: Germans made up the ruling circles, and the German language – as well as Latin – were used in the education system above elementary school level.

Nevertheless, Croatia and the Slovene provinces knew a limited national renaissance during the nineteenth century which was inspired by intellectuals, notably Franz Presern (1800-49) in the Slovene provinces and Ljudevit Gaj (1809-72) in Croatia. The vehicle of this national renaissance was language and culture, as both Slovene and Croatian intellectuals strove to forge a literary language for their respective peoples and to promote the dissemination of literary publications in these languages.

In Croatia particularly, the language issue then became linked with the genesis of a wider political ideal, that of the unity of all South Slav peoples. It was recognised that the languages spoken by South Slav peoples had major features in common, and this gave birth to the 'Illyrian' movement which was the first expression of an all Yugoslav nationalism.²⁸ The geographical concept of Illyria did not, however, encompass all South Slav peoples, but only those living in the northern regions of what is today Yugoslavia, as well as the Bulgarians. Apparently, the movement received the backing of the fragile Croatian capitalist class but was opposed by the large Croatian landowners who were generally pro-Hungarian.²⁹ Croatian nationalism was not yet on the historical agenda, but the incipient capitalist class was seeking liberation from Austria-Hungary by way of joining an alternative political unit.

Illyrism also had an echo in Slavonia, Bosnia (see p. 16 below) and Dalmatia. In Dalmatia the language issue was particularly important: Italian was the language of administration and trade, and yet very few people spoke it outside of the towns. However, it was the collapse of Austria-Hungary during the First World War rather than the strength of the Illyrian movement which eventually gave Illyrian ideas a practical channel.

There had been no manifestation of a nationalism associated with the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the Middle Ages. At that time its expression was religious in character through the independent Bosnian church which embraced a heretical sect of Gnostic and Neo-Manichaean character. This church emerged as an expression of protest by the Bosnian people against the competition of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches for their allegiance, a competition which resulted in persecution and a great deal of outside interference in its affairs.

This church was, therefore, what in modern times would be characterised as a nationalist and democratic movement which found many adherents in a country in which Christianity and the two great churches were not yet fully consolidated.³⁰

After the final conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, by the Turks in 1481, this church disappeared altogether: the anti-Catholic and anti-Orthodox stance of its adherents meant that they were open to conversion to Islam, particularly when this brought a series of material privileges with it. Thereafter, the division of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina into three camps – Moslem, Orthodox and Catholic – precluded the emergence of any all-Bosnian nationalist creed.³¹

The Catholic population tended to look towards Croatia for a lead and the Illyrian movement found fertile ground among them. The Orthodox population were ethnically Serbian and looked towards Serbia, and the Moslem population, from which a Bosnian feudal class emerged during the nineteenth century, expressed their common political aspirations through religious rather than national identification: during the interwar period the political vehicle for the Moslem population all over Yugoslavia was the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation (*Jugoslovenska Muslimanska Organizacija*).³²

In Macedonia there were also a series of historical factors which impeded the development of a Macedonian national consciousness. Macedonia was firmly in the grip of the Ottoman Empire until the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, and as has already been mentioned, a large segment of the population was ethnically Turkish. Furthermore, Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria all laid claim to Macedonia, and this had an additional divisive effect because the population also contained Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians. In consequence, a national awakening only occurred in Macedonia towards the end of the nineteenth century and assumed a particular form. In 1893 an organisation which later became known as the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (*Vnatrešnata Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacija* – generally known by its English acronym IMRO) was established to strive for an autonomous Macedonia within the framework of a Balkan Federation. It had to be a well organised and highly secret organisation because of the oppression which the Turks readily meted out. Branches were established throughout the country, and after 1896 the IMRO also had a military apparatus. It was, however, never more than sporadically effective because its ideas on Macedonian nationhood were vulnerable to pressure from Turks and Greeks and because it failed to foster the Macedonian language which only fully developed during the twentieth century.

Of all the South Slav peoples, the Serbian people were the exception in that from their midst a powerful nationalist movement emerged which was capable of challenging the Ottoman Empire. The reasons for this stretch far back into history, and some aspects have not yet been fully researched.

Before the Serbian people were conquered by the Turks at the battle of Maritsa River in 1371 and at the battle of Kosovo Field in 1389, they had had a proud history. Under the Nemanid dynasty, medieval Serbia had expanded to include present-day Montenegro, present-day Albania,

Macedonia, more than half of Greece, a chunk of Bulgaria and present-day Serbia up to a line just south of Belgrade. Originally, the peasantry had lived in freedom, grouped together in primitive communes, but as the Serbian state grew in size, centrifugal tendencies developed and powerful local leaders were able to enserf the peasantry and convert themselves into feudal landlords. The Turkish conquest tore up the feudal social structure, most of the feudal landlords were eliminated, and the imposition of the Ottoman feudal system gave the peasantry scope to revert to their traditional communal way of life.³³

It was this communal way of life, the centrepiece of which was an agricultural co-operative known as a *zadruga*, which enabled the Serbian people to survive as a people under Turkish rule and to create the basic foundations for the emergence of a modern nation state. The *zadruga* was

a household composed of two or more biological or small families closely related by blood or adoption, owning its means of production communally, producing and consuming its means of livelihood jointly, and regulating the control of its property, labor and livelihood communally.³⁴

Some *zadruga* (pl.) did, however, consist of two or more rather separate families, and some property was often individually owned. In all South Slav lands with the exception of Slovenia and the Vojvodina, the *zadruga* was the prevailing type of rural family, but for the Serbian people it assumed special significance because the Ottoman feudal system allowed it to survive and to develop into the basis for a system of Serb self-government which gained legitimacy within the Turkish state. As was mentioned above, the Ottoman feudal system made 'tax payers' rather than serfs out of its peasant subjects; in addition to this, the highly centralised Turkish state was underdeveloped and employed relatively few functionaries, such that effective Turkish control did not extend beyond the towns and the main arteries of communication.

Over the centuries of Turkish rule, a process of class differentiation beset Serbian society. This never progressed very far because the Turks were quick to eliminate or tax away those who became too wealthy. Nevertheless, a class of small traders did emerge, particularly as the urban economy expanded and money-based exchange became more widespread. A conjunction of circumstances ultimately forged leaders of a Serbian nationalist movement out of this class, and the result was the first Serbian uprising in 1804. Firstly, the Ottoman Empire was slowly decaying during the eighteenth century. Secondly, the efforts of Sultan Selim III (1789-

1807) to reverse the situation only aggravated it further: he imposed new levies on the peasants which made them willing to answer a call to revolt. Finally, the Serbian trading class had been developing lucrative trading ties with the Austrian Empire and began to resent the way in which Turkish rule was preventing them from further exploiting the advantages of contact with the outside world.

The first Serbian uprising was led by a small trader called Karadjordje (Black George) Petrović (1768-1817). It failed but was followed in 1815 by a second uprising this time led by Miloš Obrenović (1780-1860), a rival to Karadjordje whose many business activities included that of pig trading. Through the second uprising the Serbs won some important concessions from the Sultan, but it was not until 1833 that Russian pressure forced him to grant self-government to the Serbs over an area stretching from the Sava and the Danube southwards to a line just north of Niš. Serbia still continued to pay tribute to the Sultan until after the Berlin Congress in 1878, when formal independence was achieved.

The kind of Serbian nationalism which won liberation from the Turks had emerged from the grassroots of the Serbian people, but by the end of the nineteenth century it had been transformed into the creed of the Serbian ruling class. After the second uprising, the gap between the leaders and the led widened as the leaders of the revolution converted themselves into landowners and self-appointed administrators. Prince Miloš (Obrenović) himself became extremely wealthy. The trading class, as an incipient capitalist class, was too weak to promote the democratic freedoms which the peasantry had hoped for from the revolution. It had to consolidate its power through the establishment of a centralised bureaucratic state, and the system of local self-government which had existed under the Turks became an arm of central government. Indeed, the *zadruga* co-operatives gradually disintegrated during the nineteenth century as a result of a series of developments. These included the penetration of the market economy, which lured the peasantry into debt and forced the break-up of farms to make repayments; changes in the tax system from one based on the household to one based on the individual; land shortages arising from population increase; and the impact of an individualist mentality spreading from the west.

With the rise of the bureaucratic state came the elaboration of a 'Greater Serbia' ideology. This was fostered by a Serbian minister for internal affairs, Ilija Garašanin (1812-74), who developed a plan for the

creation of a large state around Serbia intended to include Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as northern Albania and to have some connection with liberated Bulgaria. The plan was designed to protect Serbia from Russian and Austrian territorial ambitions, but later became the basis for Serbian chauvinism and expansionist aspirations: the goal of uniting all Serbs within a common state.

Nevertheless, the old democratic tradition of local self-government did live on, although in a somewhat altered form. Economic development in Serbia had quickly widened property differences and class differentials. New social layers emerged in the towns: a liberal wing of the capitalist class, intellectuals, artisans and other workers. These social layers subscribed to a democratic platform of local self-government and struggled against the centralised bureaucratic state. Their most prominent representative was the intellectual, Svetozar Marković (1848-75), who became known as the first Balkan socialist. Marković fought for the reform of the state structure along the lines of elected councils right down to a local level. He was inspired by the example of the Paris commune, but under the influence of the ideas of the Russians Chernishevski and Heren, he came to believe that a peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism was a possible one along which Serbia would be able to 'by-pass' capitalism. His conception of socialism was that of democratic local self-government based on peasant and artisan co-operatives, and the political obstacle to its achievement was the presence of a bureaucracy above the people, which stifled their initiative. Because he thought the bureaucratic capitalist state could be reformed away, Yugoslav communist writers often dub him a 'utopian socialist'.³⁵

The founding members of the Serbian Radical Party, such as Adam Bogosavljević (1844-80), drew upon the ideas of Svetozar Marković but their emphasis was different. They were not in general opposed to the bureaucracy *per se*, but rather to bureaucratic corruption and mistreatment of the peasantry. By the turn of the century the Radicals had been transformed from opposition fighters into pillars of the establishment. Their base among the urban petty bourgeoisie meant that they came to fear the people, particularly after a popular uprising in 1883, known as the Timok Revolt.

Finally, it should be mentioned that nationalism in Montenegro and the Vojvodina was always subordinate to Serb nationalism. In spite of their own success in resisting the Turks and in building the rudiments of a nation state during the nineteenth century under the bishop princes (and espe-

cially under Petar Petrović Njegoš between 1830 and 1851), the Montenegrins still generally considered themselves to be Serbs and hoped for union with Serbia. Similarly, the majority of the population in the Vojvodina were Serbs and their national aspiration was to become part of Serbia.

The Vidovdanski Constitution

At the beginning of the First World War Serbia could not reckon on the collapse of Austria-Hungary, and it therefore did not even consider the possibility of a new Yugoslav political unit. Serbia's wartime objectives were more limited: to secure the existing borders of Serbia and, if things went well, to create a 'Greater Serbia' which would include all the areas of the Balkan where Serbs lived. On the other hand, politicians from the Slav areas of Austria-Hungary were divided. In May 1917, a group of Slav politicians in the Vienna parliament (known as the 'Yugoslav Club') issued a declaration calling for the unification of Croatia and Slovenia to form an autonomous state on a par with Hungary under the Hapsburgs. The initiative had come from a number of Catholic Slovene politicians led by Anton Korošec who later became head of the Slovene People's Party (*Slovenska Ljudska Stranka*). They were concerned about Italian designs on Slovene territory and were not keen on the Serbian government being in a position to decide the fate of Croatia and Slovenia. A different perspective was held by the Yugoslav Committee which was formed in London in May 1915 and made up of emigré politicians. This Committee called for a united Yugoslavia, a perspective which reflected the strategic interests of the Croatian and Slovenian capitalist classes who saw themselves dominating the economic life of a new Yugoslavia, whereas under Austro-Hungarian rule they could only hope to continue playing a subordinate role. In July 1917 the Yugoslav Committee met with the Serbian government on the Island of Corfu, and a joint declaration was issued – known as the Corfu Declaration – proclaiming that the new Yugoslavia would be a free, independent and democratic state under the Serbian (Karadjordje) monarchy. The constitutional form of the new state was not, as yet, specified.

The collapse of Austria-Hungary forced events in Croatia and Slovenia as far as those who would have wished to continue the union with Austria and Hungary were concerned. A National Council of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed to administer the South Slav areas of Austria-

Hungary. This council met in Zagreb on 29 October 1918, announced the severance of ties with the Hapsburg empire, and subsequently entered negotiations with the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian government over the establishment of Yugoslavia.

It was then that the problems started as the ideal of South Slav unity had to be put into a constitutional form. A conference of all the parties was held in Geneva in November 1918, but its proposals for an interim government never saw the light of day because Serb ruling circles, led by King Alexander, refused to ratify any government structure until this had been decided by a Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage. The scales were very much balanced in their favour: Serbia was already an independent state with a strong and victorious army at its command, whereas the National Council was only a fragile political structure in desperate need of Serbian military strength to quell peasant unrest and, in particular, the activities of the 'Green Army' (see p. 9 above). In addition, the hand of Serbian ruling circles was strengthened by the unilateral decisions of assemblies in the Vojvodina and Montenegro to join a united Yugoslavia under the Karadjordje dynasty. Ultimately, therefore, the National Council sent a delegation to Belgrade and agreed on a structure for an interim government which placed effective power in the hands of the King. This enabled the latter to proclaim the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 1 December 1918: Montenegrins were treated as Serbs, and the Macedonian people already were being denied all recognition. Elections for a Constituent Assembly were to be held on 28 November 1920.

In the run-up to the elections, no less than eight different proposals emerged for the constitution.³⁶ They fell into two distinct camps: those which outlined a highly centralised state structure and those which outlined federal structures with varying degrees of decentralised power. No less than 40 political parties formed to run in the elections, but the most important were the Radical Party (*Narodna Radikalna Stranka*), the Democratic Party (*Demokratska Stranka*), the Croatian Republican Peasant Party (*Hrvatska Republikanska Seljačka Stranka, HRSS*), the Slovene Peoples Party, the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije*).

The Radical Party and the Democratic Party were both Serb-based parties which favoured a highly centralised, unitaristic state structure. The difference between the two was that while the Radical Party was

formed in the nineteenth century and was based exclusively in Serbia, the Democratic Party was new and more all-Yugoslav in character in so far as it was formed in 1919 from a number of small urban parties, largely representing Serbs from all over Yugoslavia. The Radical Party was the main vehicle for Greater Serbia chauvinism. The Croatian Republican Peasant Party was formed in 1903 by the Radić brothers, Antun and Stjepan, and was led by Stjepan Radić after the death of his brother in 1919.

At the beginning of the interwar period the backbone of this party was the middle Croatian peasantry, and it proved to be the most powerful political force favouring a federal state structure which would allow Croatia to exercise wide autonomous powers. Both the Slovene Peoples Party and the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation vacillated between a unitarist and federalist constitutional form. The Slovene Peoples Party was a right-wing populist clericist party and a vehicle for the Slovenian capitalist class. The Yugoslav Moslem Organisation was a vehicle for Moslem landowners. The position of the Communist Party will be examined separately in Section 5.

King Alexander used his power in the provisional government to predjudice the form of the constitutional proposal which would eventually go before the Constituent Assembly, so that the main issues were really settled before it met. His activities so angered the Croatian Republican Peasant Party that it refused to participate either in the provisional government or in the Constituent Assembly. Very quickly the representatives of Serb and Croat national aspirations were on a collision course.

In the elections – in which women, soldiers and certain professions were not allowed to vote – the Democratic Party won 92 seats, the Radical Party 91 seats, the Communist Party 59 seats and the Croatian Republican Peasant Party 50 seats.³⁷ The total number of seats contested was 419. Seven months later, on 28 June 1921, the Constituent Assembly passed the *Vidovdanski* (St Vitus's Day) Constitution by 223 votes for and 196 votes against or absent. Only a deal with the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation over the level of compensation to former landowners under the Agrarian Reform pushed it through. Under this Constitution, political power was highly centralised: the King received enormous powers and the country was to be divided into 33 regions (*oblasti*), each with a population of at least 800,000 and each chaired by an appointee of the King (a *župan*). The demarcation of these regions did not recognise any historical precedents, and they were only to be granted limited jurisdiction over local affairs.

So it was that the Vidovdanski Constitution set the scene for severe conflict over the national question during the interwar period. It was not a constitution which could unite all the South Slav peoples: it was an instrument for the parliamentary consolidation of Serbian hegemony in the new state and thus a means of preserving the position of the Serbian capitalist class which was historically centred around the state apparatus. Because Serbs formed the largest united group in the population, the representatives of this class hoped to be able to count on an institutionalised parliamentary majority.³⁸ In turn this aroused fierce nationalist aspirations from the other South Slav peoples, aspirations which had only been weakly formulated and poorly developed in the past. The main opponent of Serbian hegemony turned out to be the Croatian capitalist class, initially in alliance with the Croatian peasantry. Originally, the Croatian capitalist class had looked favourably on the formation of Yugoslavia: Croatia was the most industrially developed territory and could hope to dominate the economy of the new country. The Vidovdanski Constitution, however, held out the prospect of an unappetising political dependence on Serbia. The main contradiction which was to prove a source of conflict over the national question ran, therefore, along the following lines:

In the new economic unit Zagreb was the most powerful financial, industrial and trading centre. Belgrade attracted a concentration of political authority and became the centre of political power while Zagreb became the centre of economic power, namely, the centre of the greatest concentration of capital in Yugoslavia.³⁹

4. THE CONTRADICTIONS UNFOLD

From Parliamentary Democracy to Dictatorship

During the immediate post-war years, when the economy was expanding rapidly, Yugoslav society became increasingly polarised along national lines. Croats were systematically denied access to political power: during the period of 121 months between December 1918 and January 1929 Serbs held the office of Prime Minister for 117 months, Ministry of the Army and Navy for 121 months, Ministry of the Interior (controlling the police) for 111 months, Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 100 months, Ministry of Finance for 118 months, Ministry of Education for 110 months, and Ministry of Justice for 105 months.⁴⁰ Elections were to be held every two

years and a measure of the political temperature was provided by those in 1923, when the Democratic Party lost 41 seats while the Radicals and the Croatian Republican Peasant Party gained 17 seats and 20 seats respectively. The Radicals did not win one seat in Slovenia but only 50 out of their total of 108 seats came from Serbia proper, indicating that Serbs outside Serbia were turning away from the Democratic Party and towards the harder-line Radicals. Indeed, a desire for compromise between Serbs and Croats within the Democratic Party provoked Svetozar Pribičević, a fierce monarchist unitarist, to split away from this party to form the Independent Democratic Party (*Samostalna Demokratska Stranka*), which subsequently became the main representative of Serbs outside Serbia. The Croatian Republican Peasant Party did not win any seats at all in Serbia proper, Macedonia, Montenegro and the Vojvodina: 59 out of its total of 70 seats came from Croatia, nine from Bosnia and Herzegovina and two from Slovenia. The divisions in Yugoslav society as a whole were reflected in miniature in the election results for Bosnia and Herzegovina: the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation won 18 seats, the Radicals 13, and the Croatian Republican Peasant Party nine.⁴¹ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it will be recalled, the population was a mixture of Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats and Moslems.

Fired by the electoral success of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party, Stjepan Radić refused to recognise the Constitution, stirred up the Croatian peasantry in a vigorous campaign against it, refused to participate in parliament and went abroad to seek international support for the Croatian cause. On his travels he visited Moscow and affiliated his party to the Comintern's peasant international. These activities resulted in the banning of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party for a while, and Radić spent a brief spell in prison upon his return to Zagreb in 1925.

The only issue which united Yugoslav ruling circles during the immediate post-war years was the threat of mass discontent. The response in this area had been a combination of concession and repression: the introduction of the Agrarian Reform had temporarily pacified rural areas, while the banning of the Communist Party in 1920 had removed a dangerous focus for radical opposition to the regime (the Communist Party had won the third largest number of seats in the 1920 elections). Again it was the potential threat of uncontrollable mass discontent which established a need to compromise: there was a point at which further pressure over the national question could prove to be counterproductive

for the Croatian capitalist class if it resulted in the paralysis of the régime at a time when impending economic disaster required decisive action. This point came after the 1925 elections in which a parliamentary block consisting of the Democratic Party, the Croatian Republican Peasant Party, the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation and the Slovene Peoples Party had won enough seats to be able to topple the incumbent, Serb-dominated government. The growing hegemony of the Croatian capitalist class within the Croatian Republican Peasant Party was, however, suddenly manifest in a change in its tactics. Stjepan Radić abandoned his allies, recognised the constitution and entered into a coalition with the Radical Party, and the immediate threat to the political system receded. Thereafter, the Croatian Republican Peasant Party changed its name to simply the Croatian Peasant Party.

As it turned out, however, this course of action also proved counter-productive for the Croatian capitalist class. In the 1927 elections support for both the Croatian Peasant Party and the Radical Party dwindled and the latter began to disintegrate into factions. The electorate had previously been stirred up with nationalist sentiment and was then clearly disillusioned by the compromising attitude of the two main protagonists. The political system entered a protracted crisis and the Croatian Peasant Party entered an opposition coalition with the Independent Democratic Party (the Democratic Peasant Coalition – *Seljačko demokratska Koalicija*) in order to renew the fight against Serbian hegemony. Another twist was, therefore, added to events as the Independent Democratic Party, led by Svetozar Pribičević, dropped its fiercely unitarist stance and threw its weight behind the struggle for a federal state structure: Serbs outside Serbia had clearly begun to perceive that supporting Serb hegemony made them vulnerable to nationalist backlash in the areas of mixed population where they lived.

The crisis came to a head on 20 June 1928, when Puniša Račić, a Serb nationalist of an extremist bent, shot five members of the Croatian Peasant Party in Parliament. The Democratic Peasant Coalition immediately called for Croatian autonomy, but the King seized the opportunity to intervene and set up a royal dictatorship on 6 January 1929, in an effort to impose unity from the top. Parliament was closed, all political parties were banned and the state apparatus was purged from top to bottom. A series of acts followed which established a legal framework for the dictatorship. On 3 October 1929, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes became

the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and the country was redivided into nine *banovine* – each under the jurisdiction of a *ban* (chief executive) appointed by the King. The King's ideas on resolving the national question involved a refusal to recognise it in any way whatsoever.

External Dependency and the Role of the State.

Generally taken, the scant supply of private savings and entrepreneurial talent in Yugoslavia was responsible not only for the large-scale foreign investment and the importation of entrepreneurs and highly skilled labour, but also for the role of the state as investor and manager in many sectors of the economy that were left to private initiative in advanced capitalist countries. Only the state, with its taxing capacity, could supply as a debtor the necessary collateral and safety for large-scale, long-term loans to finance railroad construction, shipping, and the development of telegraph and telephone service; only the central or local governments could use tax revenues to finance schools, public utilities, and local transportation. Moreover, the necessity of pledging certain relatively safe and ample government tax sources to foreign creditors led to government ownership and monopolies in the production and sale of several mass-consumption items, notably tobacco, cigarette paper, matches and salt.⁴²

These perceptive observations by Jožo Tomasevich establish the links between the incapacity of the Yugoslav economy to generate an internal source of investible surplus for industrialisation, the penetration of the economy by foreign capital and the role of the state. In the first place the nature of the dependency relationship between the Yugoslav economy and advanced capitalist economies during the interwar period was not simply externally determined. At one remove this was a product of agricultural over-population and the Yugoslav agrarian structures and partly of a specific process of class formation in the countryside during the interwar period. The latter limited the capacity of the economy to generate a surplus for industrialisation and left a vacuum to be filled by foreign capital. At the same time the role of the state was enhanced.

By 1937, 44.1% of total share capital in Yugoslavia was foreign owned, including 69.2% of share capital in the mining industry, 37.0% in cement, bauxite and glass, 83.0% in electricity generation, 28.8% in the timber industry, 32.7% in metallurgy, 69.9% in chemicals and oils and 22.7% in the textile industry. The top foreign investors in the Yugoslav economy were: France with 25.0% of the total; Britain with 17.38%; the United States with 14.95%; and Germany with 11.13%.⁴³ In addition to the foreign capital which flowed into the industrial sector, the government borrowed heavily

abroad to finance currency stabilization, military reconstruction and the repair and extension of the railway system. By 1931, the accumulated foreign debt had reached a total of US\$572.9 million which, with the exception of Rumania, gave Yugoslavia the highest foreign debt *per capita* of any of the southern and eastern European countries.⁴⁴

Another important aspect of external dependency was the change in the geographical pattern of foreign trade during the 1930s, which ultimately proved to be an awkward constraint on foreign policy. This change is described in Table 4.

Table 4. *The Reorientation of Yugoslav Trade, 1933-37 (000's of dinars)*

Country	Average 1933-35		1936		1937	
	Exports <i>to</i>	Imports <i>from</i>	Exports <i>to</i>	Imports <i>from</i>	Exports <i>to</i>	Imports <i>from</i>
Italy	731.8	461.5	137.2	101.7	587.1	429.8
France	62.8	153.1	86.2	101.3	393.3	90.8
Great Britain	161.1	328.4	431.7	346.9	464.6	409.1
Germany	606.6	491.5	1039.1	1087.6	1361.3	1694.4

Source: Taken from John B. Allock in *A Historical Geography of the Balkans*, F. Carter (ed.) (1977), p. 561.

Yugoslavia's main trading partners during the interwar period were Italy, France, Great Britain, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany. Its main diplomatic ties were with France, Czechoslovakia and Rumania (the Little Entente) and then with Turkey, Greece and Rumania (the Balkan Entente). The change in the geographical pattern of trade between 1933 and 1937 played, therefore, into the hands of Yugoslavia's fiercest diplomatic rival, Nazi Germany, and indeed this was Germany's intention. Between 1933 and 1937 Germany became Yugoslavia's largest single trading partner and, moreover, Yugoslavia's trading surplus with Germany rapidly became a large deficit. Given that Italy remained a large trading partner, when Austria and Czechoslovakia were absorbed into the Third Reich in 1938 Yugoslavia's trading ties were almost exclusively with Tripartite Pact countries.

As Tomasevich notes, the state became involved in a wide range of activities during the interwar period because the structure of the economy prevented the private sector from mobilising enough resources to finance large investment projects. In addition, the state needed to tap as many

sources of revenue as possible to finance its own activities and the repayment of foreign loans.

Direct state intervention in the economy assumed four principal forms: the operation of state-owned enterprises, the control of monopolies, the provision of state marketing agencies and the control of certain banks. After the railways the most important state-owned enterprises were in forestry, in mining and metallurgy and in armaments production. State control of monopolies covered salt, tobacco, kerosene and matches. The main state marketing agency was PRIZAD, which was established as a monopoly trader in the grain market at the beginning of the Great Depression. State involvement in banking came through the control which the government exercised over the National Bank (*Narodna Banka Kraljevine Jugoslavije*), the Chartered Agrarian Bank (*Privilegovna Agrarna Banka*), the State Mortgage Bank (*Državna Hipotekarna Banka*) and the Postal Savings Bank (*Poštanska Štedionica*).

During the Great Depression the role of the state in the economy increased substantially. As we have seen, PRIZAD was formed at this time, and the state also intervened to buy up or to attempt to bail out bankrupt enterprises and banks. With respect to the latter, although the general moratorium on debts of 1932 was largely introduced to save large numbers of peasants from foreclosure, it also gave the state a great deal of leverage over the banking sector. By 1937 the state owned more than 15% of industrial establishments and accounted for 20% of industrial investment and 25% of industrial production.⁴⁵

While the role of the state in the interwar period was related to the particular difficulties confronting industrialisation in Yugoslavia, it was also of considerable import for the development of conflict over the national question. The expansion of state activities allowed the Serbian ruling class to translate political power into economic power and so to undermine the Croatian capitalist class further. For example, the four large state controlled banking institutions were always headed by Serbs and they served to challenge the traditional predominance of Zagreb in this domain.⁴⁶ Moreover, the state managed to break the First Croatian Savings Bank, which was the most powerful bank in Yugoslavia, by repeatedly refusing its applications for a debt moratorium (under the general moratorium on debts) in the early 1930s.⁴⁷ Part and parcel of Serbian domination over state intervention in the economy was also widespread corruption and self-enrichment by officials employed in the state apparatus.

A Régime without Foundations

In order to be able to create the conditions for its own survival the interwar régime in Yugoslavia had to satisfy two basic requirements. It had to stem the tide of social unrest by resolving the economic problems facing the country. It had to make progress towards a solution of the national question so that an all-Yugoslav nation state could come into being. Both of these requirements were interrelated because, as well as reflecting a real grievance in itself, nationalism had become an important focus for social unrest generated by economic problems.

By the time of the dictatorship the satisfaction of these requirements was far beyond the reach of the régime. On the economic front the contradictions generated by the agrarian structure, plus the impact of the Great Depression, had created social problems which the régime was incapable of solving. The real incomes of the main groups in the labour force had been falling steadily (see Table 5). Very large numbers of peasants were experiencing extreme hardship and were falling more deeply into debt, with the result that 'dwarf' farms were proliferating and foreclosure for debt repayment was becoming widespread. In response, the régime could only offer legal palliatives rather than long-term solutions. The general moratorium on peasant debts of 1932, for example, only brought

Table 5. Indices of Real Incomes in 1930 and 1938 Compared with 1914

	1914	1930	1938
Agricultural workers	100	68.6	68.1
Other workers	100	91.0	83.8
Self-employed	100	85.0	79.1
Public employees	100	55.4	54.7

Source: Adapted from Rudolf Bičanić, *Prilozi Za Ekonomsku Povijest Hrvatske*, Zagreb (1967), Table 5, p. 94.

temporary relief to the peasantry because it also prevented them from obtaining further credit. The economy was in the grip of a complex contradiction from which the régime could not extricate it: the nature of the external dependency relationship left little room for manoeuvre, particularly because the state itself was having to milk the economy in order

to repay foreign loans; industry could not create jobs fast enough to solve the problem of agricultural over-population, and the state could only waste the resources which it was able to mobilise on the state apparatus itself, and particularly on the armed forces.⁴⁸

With respect to the resolution of conflict over the national question, the Serbian and Croatian capitalist classes were divided by self-interest and united (under Serbian leadership) by the threat of mass discontent. The Slovenes and Moslems continued to play the role of opportunistic brokers between the two sides. There was no real, permanent basis for compromise, and the political quagmire of the 1920s continued into the 1930s.

In a move to legitimise the dictatorship, King Alexander took steps to introduce a new constitution in 1931. Elections were held in that year but political parties were still banned. The newly elected parliament ratified the new constitution which made Yugoslavia into a hereditary constitutional monarchy and provided for a two-house legislative system. The dictatorship and the banning of open political activity had, however, fuelled an extreme Croatian separatist organisation known as the *Ustaše* (the 'insurgents' or 'rebels'). The *Ustaše* followed in the footsteps of Dr. Josip Frank, a Zagreb lawyer of German Jewish ancestry who, at the turn of the century, had laid the foundations for an extreme anti-Serbian, anti-Yugoslav Croatian nationalism. In 1934 the *Ustaše* assassinated King Alexander in Marseilles.

Because the heir to the throne was still under age, a regency was established under Prince Paul to replace the King. This did not signal any fundamental change in the régime, although the political atmosphere did relax a little. In May 1935, elections were held again which were contested by two main groupings: the Yugoslav National Party (*Jugoslovenska Nacionalna Stranka*), which was a régime party originally formed by King Alexander, and the United Opposition (*Udružena Opozicija*), led by Vladimir Maček, who had succeeded Stjepan Radić as leader of the Croatian Peasant Party.⁴⁹ The régime party triumphed by a large margin because of the unjust electoral law of 1931: it won 1,746,982 votes and received 303 seats in the lower house of parliament, while the United Opposition won 1,076,345 votes but only received 67 seats.⁵⁰ The opposition, however, boycotted parliament and the new government, and with it the Yugoslav National Party soon collapsed.

It was followed by a government formed under Milan Stojadinović and supported by a new political formation, the Yugoslav Radical Union

(*Jugoslovenska Radikalna Zajednica*), composed of a section of the Radical Party, the Slovene Peoples Party and the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation. In other words, an attempt to incorporate rather than destroy the pre-dictatorship parties was made and, in opportunistic fashion, the Slovenes and the Moslems were willing accomplices.

Stojadinović recognised that some compromise was necessary over the national question: the United Opposition had grouped together significant political forces, including what remained of the Democratic Party, a section of the Radical Party and the Democratic Peasant Coalition (the Croatian Peasant Party and the Independent Democratic Party). In October 1937 a meeting was held between the Yugoslav Radical Union and the United Opposition to discuss ideas for a new constitution and the procedure for introducing it. Stojadinović, however, was unwilling to sanction a change in the constitution until the King had come of age – any compromising agreement had to come into effect within the limits of the 1931 constitution.

In the 1938 elections the United Opposition increased its share of the votes from 37% to 45%. Nevertheless, Stojadinović continued in office and still refused to come to an agreement outside the confines of the 1931 Constitution. This prompted the Croatian Peasant Party and the Independent Democratic Party to boycott the parliament. By this time, however, the threat from Nazi Germany and Italy was becoming more and more pronounced, and Prince Paul therefore forced the resignation of Stojadinović in order to promote a sense of national unity.⁵¹ He was replaced by a little known Radical politician, Dragiša Cvetković, who was charged with coming to an agreement with Maček. Thus it was that the agreement between Cvetković and Maček was signed on 26 August 1939, under which Croatia became a separate *banovina* with limited autonomous rights.

The Second World War broke out a few days later, and the agreement was too limited and came too late to be able to generate the kind of national unity necessary to resist foreign aggression. Moreover, the régime had its hands tied by the trading links which had developed with Nazi Germany during the 1930s. After repeated delays, Prince Paul finally acceded to the Tripartite Pact by signing the Vienna protocol on 25 March 1941. This provoked a military coup during the night of 26 March, led by air force generals Dušan Simović and Bora Mirković who were pro-British and had been encouraged in their enterprise by the British secret service. Hitler did

not delay: on 6 April 1941, the Luftwaffe bombed Belgrade and Yugoslavia was simultaneously invaded by German, Italian, Hungarian and Bulgarian troops. Yugoslavia's hurriedly marshalled defences collapsed within five days, and an unconditional surrender was signed on 17 April 1941.

5. THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF YUGOSLAVIA

With the formation of a united Yugoslav state a united Yugoslav workers' party also came into being. In Belgrade between 20-23 April 1919, Social Democratic parties from all over Yugoslavia (in some cases only their Left wings) gathered together and founded the Socialist Workers Party of Yugoslavia [Communist] (*Socijalistička Radnička Partija Jugoslavije* [*Komunisti*]).⁵² It immediately affiliated to the Third International. Later, in June 1920, a congress was held at Vukovar where the name of the Socialist Workers' Party was changed to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY). As of July 1920, this new party had 60,649 members, of whom 33.8% were from Serbia and Yugoslav Macedonia, 12.3% from Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro, 5.5% from the Vojvodina, 3.4% from Dalmatia, 25.6% from Croatia and 19.4% from Slovenia.⁵³

At the Vukovar congress the delegates also debated strategy and tactics, and various reformist ideas, which were a legacy from the Second International, were rejected: a Left majority led by Filip Filipović, Sima Marković, Živko Jovanović, Moša Pijade and Djura Cvijić defeated a centrist minority led by Dragiša Lapčević and Živko Topalović. The political line which emerged reflected the revolutionary optimism generated by the October Revolution: the task of the party was to consolidate the democratic rights won under bourgeois democracy and to prepare the ground for an imminent Soviet-style proletarian revolution. Indeed this revolutionary fervour prevented well thought-out positions on the national question and on the peasantry being adopted. In fact, *vis-à-vis* the national question the Communist Party appeared to be just as unitaristic as the Serbian ruling class: the unity and equality of all nationalities in Yugoslavia was unconditionally welcomed. Perhaps this reflected the fact that the leadership of the new party was dominated by Serbs (the rank and file was not – see above) – most of whom, incidentally, were intellectuals. In any case the general attitude was that detailed problems were subordinate to the prime objective of preparing the revolution.

In spite of seeing itself cast in the role of leader of an imminent revolution, the Communist Party was not a cadre organisation at this stage. Moreover, it participated openly in the 1920 elections for a Constituent Assembly and, with 198,463 votes and 59 seats, it emerged from them as the third largest parliamentary force in the country. Its electoral base was strongest in urban centres and in the more underdeveloped regions of Yugoslavia. In Montenegro and Macedonia, for example, it won respectively 38% and 27% of the vote. Its showing was poorest in Bosnia and Herzegovina (5%) and in Croatia (7%).⁵⁴

Then came a bitter and unexpected blow which the Communist Party was ill prepared to weather. On 29 December 1920, it was banned as an anti-state organisation, persecuted by the police and forced underground. Because, however, this change in circumstances was unexpected and because the Communist Party was not a cadre organisation, it was ill prepared for a rapid move into illegal, underground activity and the consequences were disastrous. Membership declined to around 1,000, and some young Communists took to terrorist activities as a method of fighting the regime.⁵⁵ In July 1921 they succeeded in assassinating the Minister of the Interior, Milorad Drašković, and this simply gave the government even greater pretext for persecuting Communists. An attempt to continue open activity through a front organisation called the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia (*Nezavisna Radnička Partija Jugoslavije*) was also subsequently banned.

The CPY then went into the doldrums and did not begin to re-emerge until the 1930s. In addition to not being able to engage in open political activity, circumstances were not exactly favourable. The Agrarian Reform had separated the peasantry from the working class, which itself had been pacified by an increase in wages and the introduction of a shorter working day. Moreover, the Croatian Republican Peasant Party and the Radical Party had a firm grip on the Croatian and Serbian peasantry by having become the most effective vehicles for nationalist aspirations and, in an attempt to secure a base in the working class, the government had welcomed the founding of the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia in December 1921. The Comintern's encouragement of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party was another blow to morale. Any hope of leading a straightforward Soviet-style revolution was now a thing of the past, and consequently the CPY had to develop a new political line which corresponded to Yugoslav reality.

In order to be able to accomplish this task, the CPY had to develop appropriate positions *vis-à-vis* the national question and the peasantry. This process was hindered by three factors: the relative inexperience of the CPY with respect to theoretical work, the fact that the official leadership had gone into exile and the twists and turns of Comintern policy. The first two factors meant that there was overmuch reliance on the Comintern, which in turn meant that the CPY was very vulnerable when the Comintern evaluated situations incorrectly.

Very rapidly the internal life of the CPY became wracked by factional struggles over the national question. A Right wing formed around Sima Marković, who wrote a pamphlet entitled *Nacionalno Pitanje u Svetlosti Marksizma; Ustavno Pitanje i Radnička Klasa Jugoslavija* [The National Question in the Light of Marxism; the Constitutional Question and the Working Class of Yugoslavia]. In it he claimed that the working class should defend the unity of Yugoslavia against the divisive nationalisms of the Serbian and Croatian capitalist classes. The kind of unity which he envisaged would involve some regional autonomy to achieve an atmosphere of national peace in which the class war could again come to the fore. A Left wing opposed this position with the view that it was necessary to fight for the self-determination of the peoples being oppressed by Serbian hegemony. At the third conference of the CPY held in Belgrade in January 1924, the dispute was formally resolved by the adoption of the Comintern's position calling for the break-up of Yugoslavia into separate states because no real basis existed for a united Yugoslav state. The factional struggle, however, continued after the conference.

A turning-point came after the eighth conference of the Zagreb party organisation, held in Zagreb during the night between 25 and 26 February 1928, at which Josip Broz made a determined plea for an end to factional struggle. This position won the day, and an anti-faction group dominated the new local committee. Josip Broz was elected to the post of political secretary.

A determination to put an end to damaging factional struggles then also became a feature of the fourth congress of the CPY, held in Dresden at the beginning of November 1928. Meanwhile, however, the Comintern had adopted a left turn at its sixth congress, and at its fourth congress the CPY had to bring its strategy and tactics into line. The basic perspective was that the developing world economic crisis had put revolution on the historical agenda again, and therefore Communist parties should prepare for insurrections.

The consequences of this change in strategy were disastrous for the CPY. Again it prepared for an uprising, this time to destroy Yugoslavia and to create the independent states of Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia and Montenegro. (This was still the political line on the national question). It actually called for an uprising when King Alexander established the dictatorship and found itself isolated with only 3,500 members and as many youth members. The régime responded with a witch-hunt, and around 400 CPY members lost their lives and many more were imprisoned. (Josip Broz was sentenced to five years' imprisonment around this time.) The CPY virtually collapsed. Once again it had paid the price for not developing a strategy and tactics which were consummate with Yugoslav reality.

It was not until 1932 and 1933 that the CPY began to recover. Around that time a number of former leading members started to return from prison, and the ranks were also becoming swelled by an influx of young people. By the beginning of 1934, membership figures had reached 2,081. Moreover, a political terrain of struggle was beginning to open up for the CPY, a terrain which had both national and class dimensions. The class dimension was provided by the popular antipathy generated by the dictatorship and by the severe hardships being experienced by both workers and peasants as a result of the Great Depression and the problem of agricultural overpopulation. The national dimension was provided by the continuing deadlock over the national question and by the declining credibility and influence of the main parties involved in the deadlock. An indication of how these two dimensions combined to produce a change of consciousness among one section of the population had been provided by the switch from a unitarist to a federalist position by the Independent Democratic Party (the main representative of Serbs outside of Serbia, see p. 24 above).

Gradually the CPY rose to the challenge. At its fourth national conference, held in Ljubljana on the 24 and 25 December 1934, the CPY recognised the threat of fascism to the workers' movement and launched the idea of developing a national anti-fascist front. In the words of Dušan Bilandžić this represented the 'beginning of a turn in the politics of the CPY away from the path of class v. class towards a mass democratic and revolutionary movement'.⁵⁶ Moreover, this turn preceded the decision of the seventh congress of the Comintern (held in August 1935) to promote the formation of 'popular fronts' as a counter to the fascist threat.

Nevertheless, the fourth conference still stuck to the break-up of

Yugoslavia as a solution to the national question, although it did sanction plans for providing Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia with national party structures under the umbrella of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. After the Split Plenum (Split being a town on the Adriatic coast) of 1935, however, the break-up solution was abandoned and replaced with the notion of self-determination for all oppressed peoples within a Yugoslav context.

By the mid-1930s, therefore, the CPY was equipped with new politics, seemingly more appropriate to Yugoslav reality, and in 1937 it acquired a new leadership, based in Yugoslavia, when the Comintern appointed Josip Broz 'Tito' as general secretary.⁵⁷ Tito proceeded to tighten up the party apparatus and appoint a new, younger generation of leaders. At the beginning of 1938 the provisional Central Committee of the CPY was made up of Edvard Kardelj, Aleksandar Ranković, Miha Marinko, Franc Leskošek, Milovan Djilas and Ivan Milutinović, all of whom were important names of the future.

The next step was to attempt to make the 'popular front' tactic effective by building a mass anti-fascist movement. To employ this tactic, however, the CPY had to build an anti-fascist movement which was supported by the more progressive bourgeois political parties, and in Yugoslavia this was not possible. All the overtures which the CPY had made to the parties of the United Opposition (through a front organisation called the United Workers' Party [*Jedinstvena Radnička Partija*]) had come to nothing. 'In the circles of the Yugoslav bourgeoisie there was a complete absence of forces wishing to co-operate with a workers' party behind which stood the CPY'.⁵⁸ In fact this was the final political outcome of the contradiction between the Serbian and Croatian capitalist classes and of the more general contradiction between industry and agriculture. The resulting configuration of bourgeois political parties could not unite against the threat of fascist aggression and mobilise the workers and peasants under the banner of an all-Yugoslav nationalism. It could only unite against the workers and peasants while the deadlock over the national question continued. This left the growing political terrain of an all Yugoslav anti-fascist struggle entirely to the CPY. As a result:

In contrast to many other European countries, the process of creating a Popular Front in Yugoslavia did not develop within a framework of either narrow or broad or temporary or longer term coalitions between the Communist Party and particular bourgeois and other parties. The CPY managed to rally ever broader layers of the people around its own political platform.⁵⁹

By default, therefore, the CPY was building a united front of people with similar class interests, rather than a popular front which involved alliances with bourgeois parties. Moreover, it was this which prevented the CPY from suffering any serious set-backs as a result of the agreement between Cvetković and Maček and the pact between Stalin and Hitler.

When Yugoslavia acceded to the Tripartite Pact, the CPY had been able to mount massive protest demonstrations all round the country creating an atmosphere which was conducive for the coup. In October 1940, the fifth conference of the CPY was held in Zagreb and future perspectives were clearly formulated: the second imperialist war had put socialism on the historical agenda again all over the world, and the main task of the CPY was, therefore, to win over the masses against fascism and to carry out a revolutionary democratic transformation of Yugoslav society. By 1941 CPY membership had risen to around 8,000, and membership of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia (*Savěz Komunističke Omladine Jugoslavije*) had risen to around 30,000. When the invasion came and the interwar regime collapsed, the CPY alone held the key to the creation of a new Yugoslavia. It was launched on a path along which it would be able to participate in a revolutionary reckoning without having to share power with any other political formation.

6. WAR AND LIBERATION

Introduction

In this section the main objective is to explore the socio-political aspects of the liberation war which finally brought the CPY to power at the head of a national liberation army which, by 1945, was 800,000 strong. The military aspects of the struggle will only be depicted briefly in broad outline, as follows:⁶⁰

After Germany had invaded the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, the CPY called for an armed uprising against the occupying powers. Detachments of Partisans were formed all over Yugoslavia, and the uprising started in Serbia on 7 July. It quickly spread all over the country, and large areas of territory were liberated. This provoked enemy counter-offensives in which most of the liberated territory was lost by the end of 1941. Thereafter, several geographically separate loci of struggle developed

in Slovenia, Slavonia, the Srijem and Macedonia. The most important, however, was in the western mountainous regions of the country, where Tito and the Supreme Command had retreated after the Germans had recaptured the liberated territory around Užice (now Titovo Užice) in south-west Serbia. With the Supreme Command went the bulk of Partisan fighting forces, from which 'proletarian brigades' were formed to constitute the embryo of mobile regular units of the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (*Narodnooslobodilačka Vojska Jugoslavije*). Between the end of 1941 and the end of 1943, the numbers of these forces fluctuated between about 7,000 and 25,000 men and women.

After the retreat from Užice, the Supreme Command had settled in Foča, a small town in an area known as the Sandjak (eastern Bosnia). In May 1942 enemy pressure (the so-called Third Enemy Offensive) forced the Supreme Command to move, and Tito took the decision to head north into western Bosnia.⁶¹ By November 1942, the Supreme Command had reached Bihać, which at that stage was in the heart of a large area of liberated territory in western Bosnia.

There then followed the most heroic episodes of the liberation war when combined German, Italian and quisling forces twice attempted to encircle and destroy the main Partisan forces. During the Fourth Enemy Offensive, between mid-January and early March 1943, the Partisans were forced southwards and, after fierce fighting, only just managed to break through the enemy cordon across the canyons of the Neretva River, slightly south of Jablanica. This heroic retreat was notable for the large numbers of wounded Partisans who were safely evacuated across the river. The Fifth Enemy Offensive came soon thereafter in May-June 1943. This time the main Partisan forces were surrounded on Mt. Durmitor, between the Piva and Tara Rivers in Montenegro. The ensuing battle was the most decisive of the war as the Partisans attempted to break out of the cordon near Tjentiste on the Sutjeska River. At the Sutjeska about 6,000 Partisans, comprising about half the main fighting force, lost their lives. Nevertheless, Tito and the Supreme Command broke through and the Partisans were by no means completely annihilated as the Germans had hoped.

After surviving the Fifth Enemy Offensive, the tide began to turn for the Partisans. When Italy capitulated in September 1943, they were able to capture large amounts of Italian arms and equipment which greatly speeded up the process of forming a regular army. New recruits flocked to join up: by the end of 1943 the Partisan units had become the National

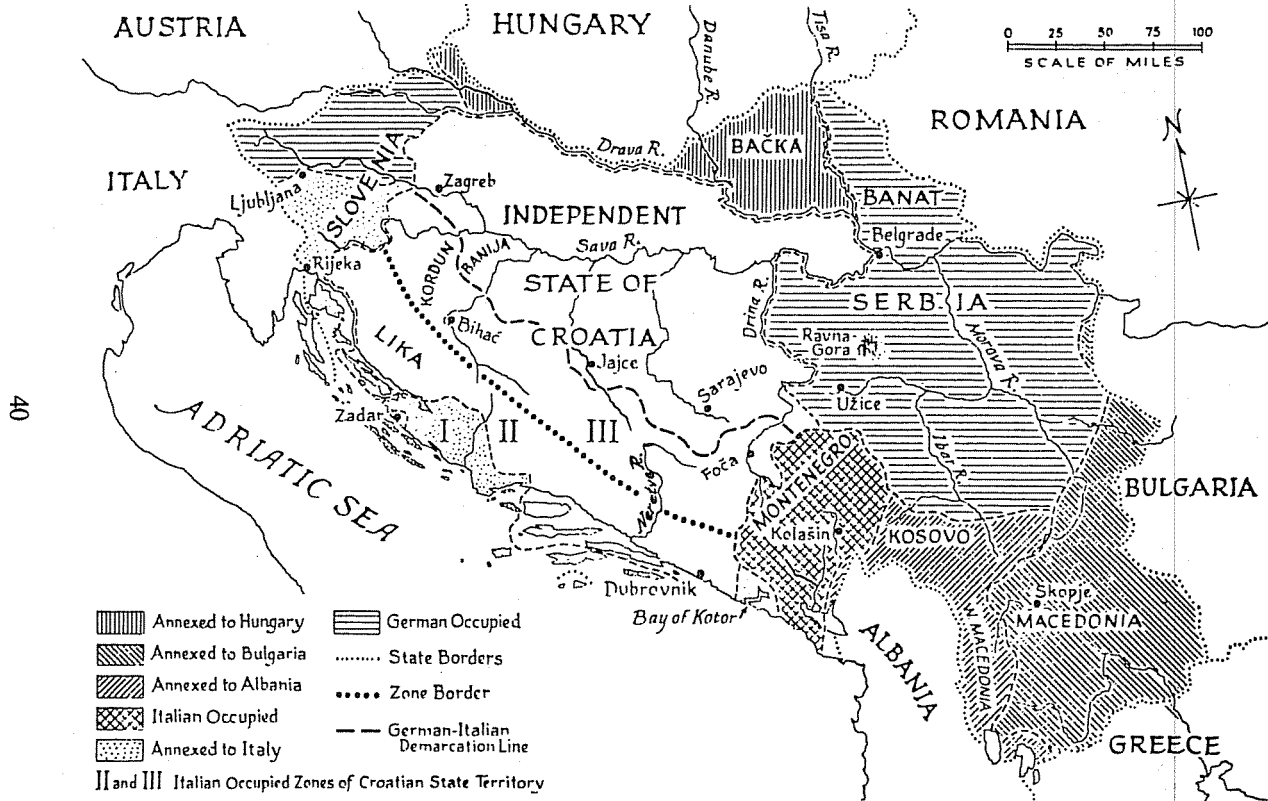
Liberation Army and were ready for frontal warfare. The key to victory lay in the liberation of Serbia and the capture of Belgrade, and operations designed to achieve this objective began in the spring of 1944. In September 1944, units of the Red Army entered Yugoslavia from Rumania and Bulgaria and assisted the National Liberation Army to capture Belgrade, an operation which began on 11 October and was complete by 20 October. Thereafter and until the end of the war, the National Liberation Army was largely involved in fighting the retreating German troops across the north of Yugoslavia and in cutting off those German troops who were attempting to retreat through Yugoslavia from Greece.

The Occupation Régimes

After the invasion and collapse, the disunity of Yugoslavia was quickly translated into a geographical dismemberment which was propelled by the territorial ambitions of the different invaders and fuelled by pro-Axis separatist forces inside Yugoslavia (see Map 1). Italy annexed part of Dalmatia, part of Slovenia and a small part of Montenegro (around the bay of Kotor); Hungary annexed a large part of the Vojvodina (Bačka) and a small part of Slovenia; Bulgaria annexed virtually the whole of Yugoslav Macedonia and a part of southern Serbia as well as Kosovo, and the western parts of Yugoslav Macedonia were annexed to Albania. The rest of Yugoslav territory was occupied by German and Italian troops and ruled with the help of local collaborators.

Just before German troops had entered Zagreb the *Ustaše* had executed a mini-coup and proclaimed the establishment of the 'Independent State of Croatia', with Ante Pavelić at its head. It was in fact just a puppet state which Hitler subsequently tolerated because of the pro-fascist, racialist politics of the *Ustaše* and the attractiveness of a divide-and-rule policy. The Independent State of Croatia came to comprise Croatia proper, Bosnia and Herzegovina and part of Dalmatia. Its population was 6.3 million of whom 37% were Moslems, 30% Serbs and 27% Croatian Catholics. Military matters were the preserve of the Germans and Italians, who divided the territory roughly 50-50 between them with the Italians occupying the western zone and the Germans the eastern one. (see Map 1). At least in the German zone, however, the *Ustaše* regime had a free hand to pursue its racialist pogroms amongst the Serbian population. For this purpose the regime used the sadistic and fanatical *Ustaše* militia, although

Map 1. The Partitioning of Yugoslavia



Source: Based on J. Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .*, Vol. 1: *The Chetniks*, p. 90.

it was also allowed to constitute a regular army (known as the *domobrani*) whose troops were to act as auxiliaries to the occupying troops.

The Ustaše plan for the two million Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia was to deport one third of them to Serbia, convert one third to Catholicism and exterminate the remaining third. During the first six months of Ustaše rule, 120,000 Serbs were officially deported to Serbia and many more fled there. Almost a quarter of a million Serbs were converted, and several hundred thousand were massacred or died in concentration camps.⁶²

Germans alone occupied Serbia, which was put under the direct control of a military commander. The uprising of July 1941, however, caught the Germans rather unprepared because they had withdrawn their operational units to be deployed on the Eastern Front and had left behind only rather insubstantial garrison units. This prompted them to set up a puppet regime under General Milan Nedić for the purpose of mobilising forces locally to quell the uprising. Nedić was a former Minister of the Army and Navy who had been relieved of this post in November 1940 for urging that Yugoslavia join the Tripartite Pact. He was never, however, trusted by the Germans because of Hitler's racial policy towards the Serbs and because it was felt that any Serbian puppet government would quickly fall in with the Allies, should there be a landing in the Balkans. The forces at his disposal were, therefore, much inferior to those at the disposal of the Ustaše and consisted of a State Guard, together with some volunteer detachments organised by the Serbian Fascist, Dimitrije Ljotić. Later, when the volunteer detachments were supplemented by a section of the *Četnici* (see the next sub-section below) who had gone over to the Germans, they were reorganised as the Serbian Volunteer Corps and put directly under German command.

In Montenegro, the Italians were willing to adopt a very liberal occupation policy and, with the support of a group of Montenegrin politicians who wished to see an independent Montenegro, they were about to proclaim Montenegro an independent Kingdom under Italian protection. This project was nipped in the bud, however, by the massive Montenegrin uprising of 13 July 1941, in which the whole of Montenegro was liberated apart from a few towns. Thereafter, the Italian occupation of Montenegro assumed more of a military posture.

The Civil War Dimension of the Liberation Struggle

Part and parcel of the CPY's liberation struggle against the foreign enemy was a bitter civil war against the various quisling forces and against rival pretenders to predominance in a post-war Yugoslavia. While the various quisling forces, and particularly the Ustaše, represented a military threat to the Partisans, they did not represent a political threat because they were so closely identified with the occupying powers that they could not hope to retain any political credibility if the occupying powers were defeated. This was not the case with the Serbian Četnici, who became the armed representatives of the Yugoslav government-in-exile and vied with the Partisans for the privilege of deciding the fate of Yugoslavia after the War.

The Četnici (meaning 'guerrillas') followed a long tradition of Serbian prowess at guerrilla warfare stretching back to the time of Turkish rule and the First Serbian Uprising. Officially, however, the Četnici came into being at the beginning of the twentieth century as units of the Serbian army which were sent into Macedonia to harass the Turks and strengthen the pro-Serbian elements among the Macedonian population. They were used again during the First World War. During the interwar period not a great deal of attention was paid to the development of Četnici military units, but a number Četnici associations formed. The largest of these was the Četnici Association, presided over by Kosta Pećanac from 1932 onwards. The membership of these associations was largely from the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry and they stood for the defence of Serbdom against both domestic and foreign enemies. Indeed, Puniša Račić, who shot the five representatives of the Croatian Peasant Party in parliament, was the leader of a Četnici association.

Nevertheless, the wartime Četnici movement did not have its origins in the Četnici associations of the interwar period. It was started by Colonel Draža Mihailović, who had been Deputy Chief of Staff of the Yugoslav Second Army and was located in northern Bosnia at the time of the collapse of Yugoslavia. Instead of surrendering with the majority of Yugoslav Army Officers, he and a few men made their way to Ravna Gora in Serbia (see Map 1) and proceeded to establish it as a gathering point for Četnici resistance to the foreign enemy. In southern Serbia, Kosta Pećanac had already organised an armed band with funds provided by the Yugoslav Army to establish official Četnici units. Pećanac and these Četnici, however, soon capitulated to the Germans and became part of the Serbian

Volunteer Corps, so that Mihailović was left as undisputed head of the wartime Četnici movement.

Initially, Mihailović enjoyed some important advantages over his rivals, the Partisans: the government in exile was quick to legitimise his position by appointing him Minister of the Army, Navy and Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command. In addition the Allies, principally the British, gave him important political support by appointing various military missions to his headquarters and sending occasional supplies. In the longer run, however, there were four basic reasons why the Partisans were always more likely to emerge on the winning side.

First of all, the Četnici military strategy was one of 'wait and see'. Mihailović expected that the Allies would eventually make a landing in the Balkans, and in the meantime Četnici policy was to offer only token resistance to the occupying powers so that Serbian lives would not be sacrificed unnecessarily. This strategy stood in sharp contrast to that of the Partisans, who were prepared to use every means and opportunity to harass the enemy no matter what the cost in lives. Moreover, the Četnici could not stand by and watch the Partisans take the initiative; after a short initial period of tentative negotiations over joint operations against the enemy – which the CPY was willing to contemplate because it was consonant with its desire to create a broad anti-fascist resistance movement – the Partisans became enemy number one. This launched the Četnici down a slippery path leading from *de facto* to open collaboration with the enemy and to an unhealthy dependence on them for arms and ammunition. The supreme irony came when the Četnici even started to collaborate with the Ustaše against the Partisans. While Mihailović himself generally avoided open collaboration with the enemy, a large number of his commanders negotiated written agreements with the Germans, the Italians and the Ustaše state.⁶³ As the wait for the Allied landing became longer and longer, so the Četnici appeared more and more to be just another quisling force in the eyes of both the people and the British. For the Partisans, Četnici collaboration meant that the civil war in which they were engaged merged imperceptibly into the struggle against the foreign enemy, and they grew in stature in the eyes of both the people and the British. In the summer of 1943 the British adopted a policy of equal assistance to both the Partisans and the Četnici. In December 1943 they stopped all supplies to the Četnici and by May 1944 the last member of the last British mission to Četnici headquarters had left.

Secondly, being an exclusively Serb-based (including Montenegrins) movement, the Četnici really could not hope for much popular support from the non-Serbian sections of the population. This was made even more remote by the professed Četnici political designs for Yugoslavia after the Second World War. Their Yugoslavism was merely token, for their main objective was the creation of a Greater Serbia which would encompass all the areas of Yugoslavia not inhabited by Serbs. Ideologically, therefore, the Četnici were trapped by extreme Serb nationalism, and this left the popular appeal of an all-Yugoslav nationalism entirely to the CPY. At the same time, however, it would be wrong to conclude that the Četnici were fighting for a return to the kind of regime which existed in the interwar period. Their other objectives were similar to those of lower-ranking army officers who have executed nationalist coups in many peripheral capitalist countries since the Second World War: they wished to introduce radical social reforms and envisaged an extensive role for the state in economic life. Moreover, their social base was similar: the Četnici relied on a section of the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, and Mihailović himself was of lower middle-class origins (his father was a country clerk in a small town in southern Serbia and he had chosen an army career as one of the few channels open to him for social advancement).

The third reason why the Četnici were at a disadvantage compared with the Partisans was that they were badly organised and undisciplined. In particular, an effective centralised command structure was lacking. The Četnici units were essentially territorial rather than mobile, and many of them had sprung up under self-appointed leaders whom Mihailović found it difficult to bring under control. This was particularly the case with units among the Serb population outside Serbia – i.e. in Montenegro and in the Independent State of Croatia. Mihailović did not really begin to form mobile units until it was already too late. In contrast, the main Partisan fighting force was mobile, extremely well disciplined and firmly under the control of a centralised leadership with clearly understood what it was fighting for and how to do it.

Finally, Mihailović continually underestimated and misread the political and military abilities of the Partisans:

The units are very poorly led and commanded owing to the lack of trained commanding cadres; Actions of various groups are not co-ordinated, either to tasks or time and amount, essentially to speedy and sudden attacks particularly during the night; In defence, and sometimes even in offence, they avoid decisive battles, and in cases when they meet a superior

enemy, they avoid decisive battles and they try to get away from every difficult situation; Killing of our officers (for the purposes of wrecking our system of organisation and command) and the operation of trojkas (for spreading panic in our ranks) are the main features of their actions.

Partisan units are composed of a motley of rascals, such as Ustashas, the most blood-thirsty enemies of the Serbian people, Jews, Croats, Dalmatians, Bulgarians, Turks (Moslems), Hungarians and all other nations of the world . . . Because of this mixture, the fighting value of the Partisan units is low, a fact partly due to their poor armament;

The Partisans are masters of propaganda, which they mostly base on their fight against the occupier, as if the occupier did not arm them for the struggle against the Serbian people. In misleading the masses their chief argument is bluff, which they use very successfully, both in counteracting our propaganda and in spreading their own [sic].⁶⁴

Although Mihailović claimed to have an army of around a quarter of a million in 1941, a lot of these troops were only on paper: on call or on mobilisation registers in areas under Četnici control. Effective Četnici fighting strength probably never exceeded 50,000 men. During the Fourth Enemy Offensive the Četnici were charged with holding the south bank of the Neretva, and the Partisans inflicted a decisive defeat on them when they broke through. Between the Fourth and Fifth Offensives the Partisans went on to rout the remainder of the Četnici forces in western Yugoslavia south of the Neretva River. The final reckoning for the Četnici came when the National Liberation Army moved into Serbia in 1944. Mihailović himself was finally captured alive as late as 12 March 1946, in the area of Višegrad in eastern Bosnia.⁶⁵ He was later executed after a lengthy trial.

The Social Base of the CPY and the National Liberation Army.

In a largely agrarian country it was only natural that the bulk of an 800,000 strong National Liberation Army would consist of peasants. The same was also true of the 141,000 members of the CPY at the end of the War (50,000 CPY members died during the War).⁶⁶ It would, however, be wrong to conclude that it was the peasantry who made up the most important qualitative element in the social base of the CPY and the National Liberation Army. This role was played by social groups from urban areas who provided the leadership of the struggle and carried it through its most critical stages.

Evidence to support this assertion comes first of all from a sample of 638 CPY members in 1940: 251 of them were intellectuals, 212 manual workers, 44 salaried employees and only 31 were peasants.⁶⁷ Moreover, of

the 29 members of the Central Committee elected in that year, half of them were workers and only one of them was a peasant. At a micro-level, Bette Denich has carried out a study of the sources of revolutionary leadership in the Užice region of south-western Serbia, and her results conform with the above pattern.⁶⁸ Of the main post-war leaders in local government, in the CPY and in youth organisations in the Užice region, 40% had been secondary school students before the War, 11% university students, 16% teachers, 26% craftsmen or manual workers, 4% white-collar workers and only 3% peasants.

This aspect of the social base of the leadership of the Partisans and the National Liberation Army is not surprising if one recalls the election results which showed the greatest support for the CPY to be in small towns and in the more underdeveloped regions of Yugoslavia (see p. 33 above). Furthermore, it was the Partisans who came from urban social groups who carried the struggle through its most critical movements during the Fourth and Fifth Enemy Offensives: for example, 57% of the leaders in the Užice region had joined the Partisans in 1941. Moreover, it was the 'Proletarian Brigades' which proved to be the Partisans' most effective fighting forces in difficult times. The Proletarian Brigades were not strictly 'proletarian', as Djilas indicates in his comments about the setting-up of the First Proletarian Brigade on 21 December 1941 (Stalin's birthday):

The brigade was proletarian not in a literal but in an ideological sense: the workers in the brigade were a minority; the majority was made up of party members and Communist Youth. But the designation 'proletarian' was a recognition of the ultimate goal.⁶⁹

One can assume, however, that a large part of their complements were recruited from among urban social layers.

In addition to providing leadership, urban recruits also brought some military expertise to the Partisan struggle. This had been acquired by members of the CPY and others through their participation in the Spanish Civil War. A total of around 1,300 Yugoslavs had participated in the Spanish Civil War, and 700 of them had gone there directly from Yugoslavia.⁷⁰ Those who survived and returned to Yugoslavia became the Partisans' first military strategists and played a particularly important role in the 1941 uprising in Serbia.

The study by Denich also reveals other important information about the social base of the CPY and the National Liberation Army. For example, 71% of the leaders from the Užice region were less than 27 years of age in

1945 and 25% were less than 21. This is again in conformity with the national picture: 75% of the National Liberation Army was made up of young people.⁷¹ The politics of the CPY had a strong appeal amongst young people and most of its leaders were young.

It is also notable that 16% of the leaders from the Užice region were women. Nationally, more than 100,000 women took part in the fighting units of the National Liberation Army (12.5% of its total complement in 1945), and over a quarter of them lost their lives. The Partisans, unlike the Četnici, encouraged women to play an active role in the struggle, and this was probably an important factor in winning over the peasantry to their side in many areas.⁷²

Whether the Partisans relied relatively more on some nationalities than on others is difficult to say. At the end of the War the National Liberation Army was most certainly multi-national in character. However, there is reason to say that Serbs and Montenegrins played a critical role in the revolution: briefly, it was Serb units from Serbia who formed the initial backbone of the main Partisan fighting force in the mountainous regions of western Yugoslavia. These units were then supplemented by Montenegrin units and units formed from among the Serb population of the Independent State of Croatia. Croats only began to join the Partisans *en masse* after the capitulation of Italy in September 1943.⁷³ Curiously, therefore, at a critical juncture in the War Serbs fought against Serbs (Četnici fought against Partisans) to decide the future of Yugoslavia. These points will become clearer in the next section.

Summarising the points made in this sub-section it would appear that the Yugoslav revolution was made by young peasants who were spear-headed and led by young Serbs (and Montenegrins) from urban social groups.

The Crucial Geopolitical Terrain

Without a doubt the CPY and the Partisans virtually won their war between the end of 1941 and the end of 1943. For the most part the drama was enacted on or close to the territory of the Independent State of Croatia (Croatia proper, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as part of Dalmatia). This area of Yugoslavia was important to Partisan success not only because of its rugged terrain, but also because located within it was a political jigsaw puzzle which the Partisans managed to resolve in their favour.

The Independent State of Croatia was inhabited by 6.3 million people, which gave it the greatest concentration of population in Yugoslavia. (Wartime Serbia only had a population of 3.8 million.) It will be recalled (see p. 39 above) that 37% of this population were Moslem Croats, 30% were Serbs, and 23% were Croatian Catholics. The Moslems were the descendants of members of the medieval Bosnian church who had converted to Islam and received family farms under the Turks. Some of them had become members of the Bosnian feudal class during the nineteenth century. The Moslems, therefore, generally occupied higher positions in the social hierarchy: they were the landowners and wealthier peasants and monopolised the commercial activities of the towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Serbs were the descendants of the poor peasants who had borne the brunt of Turkish rule. They were still poor peasants in spite of the Agrarian Reform; they numbered two million and were spread over 65-75% of the territory of the Independent State of Croatia.⁷⁴ The Croat Catholic population largely lived in Croatia proper.

Perhaps as a temporary measure the Ustaše proclaimed the Moslem population to be 'pure Croat' – indeed, many Moslems subsequently joined the Ustaše ranks – and then concentrated their attention on exterminating the Serb population. The response from the younger element in the Serb population to the Ustaše pogroms was to take to the mountains and forests and organise spontaneous armed resistance. It was precisely this which created a crucial political 'market' for the Partisans: a large potential reservoir of recruits for the struggle against both foreign and domestic enemies. Their arch rivals, the Četnici, however, were also in the same market because the Serbian population turned instinctively to the Četnici for protection against the Ustaše. The most important battle of the War was, therefore, for the hearts and minds of the Serbian population of the Independent State of Croatia, and thus one of the most important moves which the Partisans made in the War was to go northwards from Foča into western Bosnia (part of the independent state of Croatia – see p. 39 above.)

The Partisans ultimately won this battle, and some of their finest units were to come from the Serb areas of the Independent State of Croatia: from the Lika, from the Kordun, from the Bosnian Krajina and from eastern Herzegovina. This was not achieved, however, without a hard struggle in which the Četnici infiltrated many Partisan units, disarmed them and shot their CPY officers.

Some of the reasons why the Partisans prevailed have already been touched upon. Their all-Yugoslav revolutionary nationalism always seemed more likely to have a better reception than another dose of Greater Serbia chauvinism among poor Serbian peasants who had already expressed their desire for a federated Yugoslavia during the interwar period through the Independent Democratic Party (see p. 25 above). In addition, the Partisans always behaved impeccably towards the local population and proved their worth in the fight against the foreign enemy and the Ustaše, while the Četnici slipped into collaboration, ceased fighting the Ustaše and often behaved in a dissolute manner.

Nevertheless, it is also true that the Partisans were given some assistance in their task by the friction between their enemies in the Independent State of Croatia. As was described above (see p. 39), the Independent State of Croatia was divided into German and Italian occupied zones (see Map 1). Although the German commanding officers on the spot probably recognised that the Ustaše reign of terror was counter-productive, they could not put a stop to it because it was in line with Hitler's racist designs. In contrast the Italians tended to favour the Serbian population in their zone, which meant that they did their best to discourage the Ustaše by expelling them to the German zone, and they also used Četnici as auxiliary troops. These policies brought the Italians into conflict with the Ustaše régime, and with the Germans who had to deal with Ustaše complaints. None of this was conducive to effective joint action against the Partisans. Moreover, the Italians effectively gave the Partisans a free hand in western Bosnia, when they decided to withdraw their troops into zone I from zones II and III early in 1942 (as shown in Map 1).

When Italy capitulated in September 1943, the fortunes of the Partisans were on the rise and their enemies could only pretend to show a united front. The Partisans collected large amounts of Italian arms and equipment, while the Četnici lost an important source of supply. The Partisans benefitted from an influx of Croats, particularly of deserters from the *domobrani* (see p. 39 above), while in order to obtain arms and ammunition, the Četnici were forced into an uneasy alliance with the Ustaše, who were their sworn enemies, and with the Germans, who were always suspicious of their motives. The Croatian Peasant Party could not hope to capture any middle ground because it had isolated itself by passively accepting German and Italian occupation and the Ustaše régime. At this

point the crucial struggle over the terrain of the Independent State of Croatia, for the support of its inhabitants, had been decided in favour of the Partisans.

Laying the Foundations for a New Yugoslavia

During the early stages of the uprising in 1941, the CPY had been content with destroying the remains of the existing state apparatus which had been taken over by the occupying powers and their quisling puppets. In particular, the Partisans burned records and police files in any town which they captured. Very soon, however, it became clear to the leadership of the CPY that future political and military success depended in part upon the establishment of the embryo of a new state structure in the liberated areas. This would facilitate the war effort and have the effect of broadening the Partisans' popular base. Thus it was that at the Stolice consultation (Stolice being a small town in western Serbia) between national and provincial leaderships of the uprising on 26 September 1941, a decision was taken to set up national liberation committees (*narodnooslobodilački odbori*). These committees would be elected by the local inhabitants and constitute organs of government for their particular areas. Furthermore, a hierarchy of local, district and regional committees quickly developed. At Užice in November 1941, for example, a national liberation committee for the whole of Serbia was formed.

Later, in February 1942 at Foča, the success of the initial experiments with the national liberation committees caused the Supreme Command to issue a directive governing the role and tasks of national liberation committees and the electoral procedure for their establishment. Clearly, the role of these committees was subordinate to the war effort: they were responsible for food supplies, billeting, medical facilities, workshops etc. Nevertheless, they did fulfil the important function of distancing the CPY from direct government to some degree, allowing non-CPY members and those not able to fight to play some role in the war effort. In other words, they provided a broader popular base for the Partisans.

Once the Supreme Command had arrived in Bihać in western Bosnia towards the end of 1942, it was felt that the time was ripe for further moves to consolidate the political legitimacy of the Partisans. Bihać lay in a wide corridor of liberated territory, where there was no immediate threat from enemy forces. At Bihać, therefore, the first session of the Anti-Fascist

Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Antifašistička Veća Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije*, AVNOJ) took place on 26 and 27 November 1942. It was attended by delegates from all over Yugoslavia, including some individual members of former urban parties and some prominent artists and literary figures (Vladimir Nazor, the celebrated Croatian poet, was one of the VIPs). The objective of the AVNOJ was to create as broad a popular anti-fascist front as possible, in order to attract people to the national liberation struggle without them necessarily having to subscribe to CPY politics. To this end an anti-fascist women's council and an anti-fascist youth council were also formed. The AVNOJ delegates elected a national committee which the CPY was keen should declare itself as the legitimate government of Yugoslavia, unilaterally replacing the King and the government in exile. The German armies, however, were very close to Stalingrad, and Stalin put a stop to this initiative because he did not wish to antagonise Britain and the United States at this difficult point in time.

After emerging intact from the Fourth and Fifth Enemy Offensives, the CPY and the national committee of the AVNOJ set about preparations for a second session of the AVNOJ. 146 delegates attended this session from the regional anti-fascist councils of most of Yugoslavia. It was held on 29 November 1943 in the town of Jajce in western Bosnia, and the decision was taken to press ahead with the formation of a new Yugoslavia. A National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia was elected and proclaimed as the new government of a federal Yugoslavia. The government in exile was formally divested of its powers and the King forbidden to return to the country. Stalin tried to prevent the publishing of these decisions which he again saw as poisoning his relations with Britain and the United States. (The Teheran Conference had just taken place.) This time, however, he was presented with a *fait accompli*, and all that he could do was urge the CPY to tone down the presentation of any socialist measures which the new government envisaged. In this the CPY complied.

After this second session of the AVNOJ, another important political event occurred as a new political organisation came into being: the United National Liberation Front (*Jedinstveni Narodnooslobodilački Front*). This was to group together all anti-fascist political forces in a broad alliance and was less ideologically restrictive than the CPY, although, of course, the CPY was the leading political force within it. The idea was that while the AVNOJ was the executive embryo of a new structure of state power, this Front was to be the main political organisation, with the CPY eschewing

direct control over the levers of power in order to broaden the appeal of the struggle.

Subsequently, the Allies started to jostle over post-war spheres of influence, and the new Yugoslav government of the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia was caught in the middle. Churchill put pressure on Tito to enter a coalition with the government in exile and take the King back as the price for international recognition. Later he persuaded Stalin to agree to a 50-50 division of Yugoslavia into British and Soviet spheres of influence. Tito recognised, however, that the political cards were stacked in his favour – a large army was under his command and his government enjoyed far greater political legitimacy than the government in exile – and he was, therefore, able to thwart the plans of the Great Powers. He met twice with a representative of the government in exile, Ivan Šubašić, on the island of Vis in mid-1944. There it was agreed that a coalition government would be formed but that Tito would immediately assume exclusive command of all Yugoslav armed forces on Yugoslav territory, which meant that the government in exile formally dropped all support for Mihailović. Later, in Belgrade, Tito and Šubašić agreed that the issue of the King would be left for the people to decide. On 7 March 1945, the Provisional People's Government of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia was formed, including representatives of the government in exile, and it immediately acquired international recognition by the Great Powers. Thereafter, the people elected for a republic; the representatives of the government in exile were politically isolated and forced to resign, and all the formal levers of power passed into the hands of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND THE LINKS WITH THE FUTURE

Clearly the fundamental cause of the Yugoslav revolution was the contradictions in and collapse of the interwar regime. The combination of economic stalemate, falling living standards, a particular pattern of external dependency and the asymmetry between economic and political power experienced by Croatia, both fomented crisis and prevented ruling groups from presenting a united front. The regime was paralysed and finally split asunder under the impact of the Second World War. Internecine conflict then spilled over into the War, and this produced the extreme polarisation

represented by the Ustaše on the one hand and the Četnici on the other. All these factors compensated for the intrinsic weakness of the labour movement and allowed a small Communist Party to challenge for power. Thus the Yugoslav revolution like most revolutions – Cuba and Nicaragua being notable and more recent examples – was as much made by the illegitimacy, disunity, opportunism and excesses of the Opposition as by the ideological appeals and tactical manoeuvres of the revolutionary organisation itself. Indeed, with respect to the latter it is interesting to note that the Yugoslav Communist Party was successful partly because its popular front tactic did not (and could not) work, rather than because it did.

Nevertheless, two other factors also stand out. One of these is the crucial move northwards into western Bosnia made by the Supreme Command and the main mobile force of Partisans in the middle of 1942. This allowed them to capitalise on the dire situation being faced by Serbs outside of Serbia, counter-posing a non-exclusive all-Yugoslav ideology to the Greater Serbia chauvinism of the Četnici. The other is the somewhat fortuitous capitulation of Italy in 1943 which both allowed the Partisans to seize on a sizeable and necessary source of armaments and deprived the Četnici of an important source of material support.

While the specific mix of factors which made the Yugoslav revolution possible was obviously unique, and although it is also risky to generalise, it is worthwhile noting certain similarities between the circumstances which have fomented socialist transformations during the twentieth century and which were also present in the Yugoslav case.

1. All of the countries concerned were integrated into the world division of labour as primary commodity exporting economies, and they all had become so during the stage of the expansion of Western capitalism when the search for food and raw materials began in earnest on a world scale and the periphery was being increasingly spatially reorganised for capitalist purposes.
2. These countries have all had largely agrarian economies with low absolute levels of development of the productive forces, and they have exhibited a combination of different forms of production and surplus extraction.
3. In correspondence with their importance as suppliers of food and raw materials to Western capitalist countries, the strategic sectors of their economies were under the control of foreign capital.

4. Significant indigenous initiatives in the direction of industrialisation, if there were any, were generally being carried out under the auspices of the state or foreign capital, rather than by a 'domestic bourgeoisie'.

On the other hand, since the War, anti-colonialism has obviously played a greater role; generalised 'hot' war has been absent – being replaced by generalised 'cold' war – and the nature of dependency relationships has become more complex and progressed to a new stage. This stage has involved a greater degree of industrialisation in the periphery, along with extensive participation by multinational companies often in close collaboration with local states, and has been associated with authoritarian and/or populist military intervention in the political sphere. The countries which have exhibited the characteristics listed above, and which have experienced revolution, have thus been much more marginal to the nerve centres of capital accumulation, left behind in a rapidly changing international division of labour.

With respect to the ways in which the political economy of the Yugoslav revolution left its imprint upon the post-war development of socialist Yugoslavia itself, two areas stand out. First of all, and perhaps contrary to expectations, upon achieving power the Communist Party did not use the wartime legacy of chaos as an opportunity to unleash full-scale socialisation on the agricultural sector. Rather, a much longer-term gradualist approach was adopted. The links between this approach to agricultural policy and the legacy of the revolution are clearly expressed by Petranović and Strbac:

The peasantry in Yugoslavia had long been individual owner-occupiers, and on the other hand had participated in the national liberation struggle on a very large scale. Thus, to deprive every man of his right to own land would have been an act which would not have been understood and would undoubtedly have provoked political ferment, particularly among the ranks of the middle peasantry who had played an active role in the war and occupied key positions in the structure of the national liberation movement. Moreover, the technical base of Yugoslav agriculture was not sufficiently developed to contemplate an overnight transition to large-scale agricultural production.⁷⁵

While the Communist Party had taken large strides in terms of raising socialist consciousness among the partisans during the War, national liberation had been the overriding issue.

Thus the Agrarian Reform of 1945 was pragmatic, concentrating on redistribution to achieve specific objectives rather than on socialisation.⁷⁶ This approach was reiterated, both when the First Five Year Plan was

launched in 1947 and again in response to Cominform attacks at the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party, where Kardelj in particular warned against forcing the pace of socialisation in the agricultural sector.⁷⁷ The short-lived collectivisation drive between 1949 and 1953 was thus an aberration prompted by the turmoil surrounding expulsion from the Cominform and by food shortages in the towns. It was gradually reversed (starting in December 1949), however, because of a lack of whole-hearted political commitment, organisational difficulties and unrest among the peasantry caused by the combination of drought, a harsh requisitioning policy, the taxation system, unfavourable movements in the internal terms of trade and shortages of industrial goods in the countryside.⁷⁸

Thus it was that the policy towards the agricultural sector returned to form, and the original strategy of voluntarism preserved peasant agriculture alongside a relatively small state sector. This dovetailed with the level of consciousness among the peasantry, and it provided the Yugoslav population with a better and more varied diet than its Soviet counterpart. The problems with this strategy have only recently begun to emerge as the country, in need of increased food output to generate foreign exchange (directly as well as indirectly through provision for the tourist trade), finds itself with a relatively backward peasant agriculture and a rural labour force denuded of younger people.

Secondly, on different levels two major links can be established with some degree of certainty between the political economy of the revolution and self-management itself. First of all and most concretely, there is a direct link which runs from the establishment of the People's Liberation Committees during the war, through the immediate post-war legislation concerning these committees, to the beginning of an experiment with workers' councils in December 1949 and the subsequent passing of the 'Basic Law On The Management Of State Economic Enterprises And Higher Economic Combines By Work Collectives' in June 1950, which inaugurated the initial stages of self-management.⁷⁹ In May 1949, a new law increasing the powers and responsibilities of local People's Committees went through parliament, and it was introduced by the Communist Party's most creative and practical theoretician, Edward Kardelj. Kardelj used the occasion to make a major political statement, referring to the wartime experience and the specificity of the Yugoslav revolution and making a detailed critique of the Eastern European concept of 'people's democracy' as the bridge between capitalism and socialism, as well as a critique of

Soviet 'bureaucratic centralism' itself and of 'bourgeois democracy'. Most importantly, though, he firmly indicated that this law was only a first step along a path which would involve increased democratic participation at all levels of society:

Self-management would be an empty phrase without a constant, ever widening drawing in of the mass of the people as managers at all levels of their state. For us, to be sure, it isn't sufficient that the mass of the people participate only in people's committees and in parliaments via their elected representatives. If we were to remain at this stage we would be more of a parliamentary, than a people's socialist democracy. The workers can and must participate in the management of the state in other ways, such as occurs through various commissions and councils etc, through people's committees, through village activities, through people's inspectorates and many other like forms. All this activity must constantly develop and gain in popularity.

In many of our factories, for example, where there is an innovative and intelligent director, it can be seen that his success depends upon the commitment and initiative of the workers, who are beginning to develop yet another new form of self-management by the people. This is the constant consultations between the director and groups of the best workers about all questions concerning the management of the enterprise. Without compromising the principle of the personal accountability of the director, workers and functionaries are able to participate, alongside the director, in the running of the factory. They are able to elaborate their own critical observations and to put forward concrete proposals. This underdeveloped and spontaneous form must be developed still further and turned into an established form of direct co-operation with the workers in the running of our enterprises. Such and similar forms of participation by the workers in the running of the state are great steps forward in the development of our socialist democracy, and really put into practice the principle of direct participation by producers in the management of the economy which Marx and Engels stood for. In our country such forms remain possible because of the high level of consciousness of our working class and its very close links with the Communist Party. These aspects of our people's democracy must develop not only horizontally but also vertically and thus ever higher organs of economic management will be drawn into the sphere of direct collaboration with worker-producers.⁸⁰

This is a lengthy but worthwhile quotation because it clearly establishes the links between this piece of legislation and the self-managing enterprise, and it also demonstrates the clear strategic vision which Kardelj possessed even at this early stage. It also reveals that Djilas's anecdotal claim that he, Kardelj and Kidrič (the planning minister) invented self-management while sitting together in a car in the spring of 1950 is in fact unfounded.⁸¹

Moreover, at a more abstract level the inauguration of self-management, while being a defiant challenge to Stalin, was also perhaps the only course which the leadership of the Communist Party could have charted without running a serious risk of destabilising the regime. The period

between expulsion from the Cominform in June 1948 and the beginnings of self-management was turbulent indeed. Not only did isolation from the Soviet bloc make itself felt directly in economic terms through the blockade, the Five Year Plan was also encountering difficulties on its own account, particularly in the industrial sector. At this juncture, which required vigorous and decisive action, the leadership of the Communist Party had, broadly speaking, two options. On the one hand, it could have tightened its grip on the economy and encouraged a centralised, coercive mould of government – this option being dictated by circumstance, quite apart from any question of imitating the Soviet model more closely. On the other hand, it could liberalise and decentralise, allowing anonymous market forces, and the workers themselves, to apply the necessary measures of austerity.

In the event, after initially attempting to pursue both options at once, the leadership took the second option and inaugurated self-management, abandoned the collectivisation drive and began to remodel the whole economic system. This was the option which was in tune with the character of the revolution that, more than many others, enjoyed mass popular support in both the towns and the countryside. Any prolonged attempts at the centralised coercive option would have been severely debilitating. In this sense, therefore, it can be said that at a critical moment, history nudged the Yugoslavs along the path of decentralisation, self-management and non-alignment.

NOTES

This paper is one of the products of an Institute of Social Studies research project, on 'The Transition to Socialism from Peripheral Capitalism', initiated by Ken Post and myself. Another product will be a forthcoming general theoretical book, entitled 'Socialism and Underdevelopment', on which we are working together.

1. See Dimitrije Mišić, *Ekonomika Industrije FNJR* [The Economics of Yugoslav Industry] (Naučna Knjiga, Belgrade, 1957), p. 270, and Rudolph Bićanić, 'Ekonomске Promjene u Hrvatskoj Izazvene Stvaranjem Jugoslavije 1918' [Economic Changes in Croatia Arising Out of the Creation of Yugoslavia in 1918], *Prilozi za Ekonomsku Povijest Hrvatske* (Institut za Historija Radničkog Pokreta Hrvatske, Zagreb, 1967), Table 3, p. 90. Apparently the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture used no less than 18 definitions of a factory, but the most usual one was 15 or more workers when operating at full capacity. See J. Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1955), p. 171, footnote 14.

2. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p. 303. In fact the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes only became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on 3 October 1929. For convenience, however, Yugoslav or Yugoslavia will be used when referring to the whole of the interwar period.

3. See Bićanić, 'Ekonomске Promjene . . .', Table 3, p. 90, and Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, Table 22, p. 317. It should be noted that only 1,831 of the original 2,064 factories in 1918 survived the interwar period: the net increase in the number of factories (which survived until 1938) is, therefore, 1,960 rather than 2,193. The proportion of the population dependent on agriculture is an estimate by Tomasevich: the Second World War came in the way of a 1941 census.

4. See Stevan Stajčić, 'Realni Nacionalni Dohodak Jugoslavije u Periodima 1926-1939; 1947-1956 [Real National Income in Yugoslavia during the Periods 1926-1939 and 1947-1956], *Ekonomске Problemi: Zbornik Radova* (Ekonomске Institut FNJR, Belgrade, 1957), pp. 7-52. The growth rates are based on 1938 prices, and according to Stajčić insufficient consistent data is available to enable the construction of an output series covering the whole of the interwar period.

5. See Dušan Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije: Glavni Procesi* [The History of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Principle Processes] (Školska Knjiga, Zagreb, 1978) p.16.

6. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p. 16.

7. See Bićanić, 'Ekonomске Promjene . . .', p. 91.

8. See Bićanić, 'Ekonomске Promjene . . .', p. 91.

9. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p.14.

10. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p. 15 (author's translation).

11. Unfortunately there is no pre-1914 data on the land area occupied by different sizes of landholdings.

12. This way of life owed much to the influence of the original nomadic inhabitants of the Balkans, the Vlaxhs, who had retreated to the mountainous areas during the Slav migrations to the Balkans in the sixth and seventh centuries.
13. The Christian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina consisted of both Orthodox and Roman Catholics, although Orthodox Serbs were in the majority: in 1865 the official population estimate for Bosnia and Herzegovina was 1,278,850, of which 593,548 were Orthodox, 257,920 Roman Catholic and 419,628 Muslim. Numerically Muslims were decreasing. See Vladimir Dedijer, Ivan Božić, Sima Ćirković and Milorad Ekmečić, *History of Yugoslavia* (McGraw Hill, New York, 1974), p. 365. Originally the Bosnian medieval state had its own Christian church of a Gnostic and Neo-Manichaean character. Its members were known as 'Bogomils' and treated as heretics by both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches. Most of the members of this church converted to Islam after the Turkish invasion.
14. An estimated 400,000 people immigrated into Serbia between 1876 and 1912. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p. 153.
15. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p. 158.
16. 1.25 hectares of cultivated land per person or 80 persons per 100 hectares is the norm used by Tomasevich to gauge the degree of agricultural over-population in Yugoslavia. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, Chapter 16.
17. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, pp. 288 and 289, and p. 317 and Table 22. Note that the total population figure for 1939 and the agricultural population figure for 1938 are projected estimates for the reason stated in footnote 3.
18. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p. 10; and Branko Petranović and Vojislav Simović, *Istorija Narodne Vlasti u Jugoslavije* [The History of Peoples' Power] (Savremena Administracija, Belgrade, 1979), p. 8.
19. See Ranko M. Brashich, *Land Reform and Ownership in Yugoslavia 1919-1953* (Mid-European Studies Center, New York, 1954), p. 35.
20. Political motives partly determined the areas which were to be colonised: the intention was to strengthen the Serbian element in the population of the border areas adjoining Albania, Hungary and Bulgaria. See Petranović and Simović, *Istorija Narodne . . .*, p.19.
21. See Brashich, *Land Reform . . .*, Table 12, p. 33. Kosovo and Metohija as well as Macedonia were officially part of Serbia during the interwar period.
22. See Brashich, *Land Reform . . .*, p. 29.
23. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, pp. 383 and 384, claims that the 1931 census understated the amount of agricultural land in productive use.
24. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, pp. 393.
25. More will be said about the *zadruga* later in the paper (see pp: 21-23).
26. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, pp. 305 and 306.

27. See Ružica Guzina, 'Opština u Srbiji XIX i XX Veka i Lokalna Uprava i Lokalna Samouprava u Jugoslavije od 1918 do 1941 Godine' [The Commune in Serbia in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries and Local Government and Local Autonomy in Yugoslavia] (mimeograph, Visoka Škola Političkih Nauka, Belgrade, 1962), pp. 27-47.
28. The South Slavs were not of course descended from the classical Illyrians, although some tried to prove that they were. Illyria, however, was an inspiring label under which to embrace a heterogeneous assortment of peoples.
29. See Ružica Guzina, 'Opština u Srbiji . . .', and Dedijer, Božić, Ćirković and Ekmečić, *History of...*
30. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p. 94.
31. See footnote 13 above for the precise religious composition of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1865.
32. In fact, the Moslems sought recognition as a nationality rather than just as a religious group.
33. See Ružica Guzina, 'Značaj Lokalnih Samouprava pod Turcima za Formiranje Srpskog Društva i Srpske Buržoaske Države' [The Importance of Local Autonomy under the Turks for the Formation of Serbian Society and the Serbian Bourgeois State], *Arhiv za Pravne i Društvene Nauka*, Knjiga LXIX (1954), pp. 41-58.
34. See Philip E. Mosely, 'The Peasant Family: The Zadruga or Communal Joint-Family in the Balkans', in C.F. Ware, ed., *The Cultural Approach to History* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1940), pp. 95-108.
35. For descriptions and interpretations of the ideas of Svetozar Marković see Dragoslav Janković, 'O Programima i Borbama za Lokalne Samouprave u Srbiji XIX Veka' [Programmes and Struggles for Local Autonomy in Serbia during the Nineteenth Century], *Nova Misao*, Knjiga 3 (1953), pp. 403-419, and W.D. McClellan, *Svetozar Marković and the Origins of Balkan Socialism* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1964).
36. See Guzina, 'Opština u Srbiji . . .', for details.
37. See Petranović and Simović, *Istorija Narodne . . .*, p.14.
38. Data on the proportion of Serbs in the Yugoslav population is not available for the interwar period because the government counted both Macedonians and Montenegrins as Serbs. A rough indication, however, can be given with 1948 data, which shows 41.5% of the population to be of Serb nationality. See *Jugoslavija 1945-1964: Statistički Pregled* [Yugoslavia 1945-64: Statistical Survey] (Savezni Zavod za Statistiku, Belgrade, 1965), Table 3-13, p. 45.
39. See Bičanić, 'Ekonomске Promjene . . .', p. 83 (author's translation).
40. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, pp. 241 and 242.
41. For election results see Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p. 21.

42. See J. Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-45*, Vol. 1: *The Chetniks* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1975) pp. 19 and 20.
43. See John B. Allcock, 'Aspects of the Development of Capitalism in Yugoslavia: The Role of the State in the Formation of a "Satellite" Economy', in F. Carter (ed.), *A Historical Geography of the Balkans* (Academic Press, New York, 1977) Table 1, pp. 550 and 551. The German share includes those of Austria and Czechoslovakia.
44. See Allcock, 'Aspects of the Development . . .', p. 549.
45. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p. 15.
46. The Postal Savings Bank was headed by a Croat between September 1939 and April 1941. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p. 242.
47. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, footnote 8, p. 15.
48. On average the military budget absorbed 30% of government expenditure during the interwar period years. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .*, p. 20.
49. The United Opposition came into being because the 1931 Constitution required 60 signatures from more than half of the counties in at least two thirds of the *banovine* (provinces under the jurisdiction of a *ban* – see p. 26) for a party to be able to fight the elections.
50. See Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics . . .*, p. 245.
51. In fact Maček had indicated to Prince Paul that he was willing to accept Italian help to take Croatia out of Yugoslavia and set up an independent republic.
52. Social Democratic Parties had formed all over Yugoslavia at the turn of the nineteenth century.
53. This is calculated from data in Ivan Avakumović, *History of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia*, Vol. 1 (Aberdeen University Press, Aberdeen, 1964), p. 41.
54. Source for regional voting patterns, Avakumović, *History of the Communist Party . . .*, p. 45.
55. The source for membership data is *Pregled Istorije Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije* [Survey of the History of the Yugoslav League of Communists] (Institut za Izučavanje Radničkog Pokreta, Belgrade, 1963), p. 113.
56. See Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke . . .*, p. 35.
57. Tito went to Moscow fearful for his life because a number of Yugoslav Communists, including the previous general secretary, Milan Gorkić, had disappeared during the purges. He also thought that the Comintern was going to dissolve the CPY. Apparently it was only due to pressure from George Dimitrov, the Bulgarian Communist, that the CPY was given another chance under Tito's leadership. See Vladimir Dedijer, *Tito* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1953). By this time Josip Broz was known by the nickname of 'Tito' because of his well developed capacity for ordering people about – *tito* means 'you this' or 'you that' in Serbo-Croat.

58. See *Pregled Istorije . . .* , p. 202 (author's translation).

59. See *Pregled Istorije . . .* , p. 212 (author's translation).

60. Detailed descriptions of the military aspects of the struggle are readily available in numerous English-language publications. See, for example, Rodoljub Čolaković, *Winning Freedom* (Lincolns-Prager, London, 1977); Vladimir Dedijer, *With Tito Through the War 1941-1942 (Partisan Diary 1941-1944)* (Alexander Hamilton, London, 1951); Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .* ; Dedijer, Božić, Ćirković and Ekmečić, *History of . . .* , pp. 566-648; Federal Statistical Office, *Yugoslavia Thirty Years After Liberation and the Victory over Fascism* (Belgrade, 1976), pp. 9-39; Milovan Djilas, *Wartime* (Secker and Warburg, London, 1977); Basil Davidson, *Partisan Picture* (Bedford Books, Bedford, 1946); Stephen Clissold, *Whirlwind: An Account of Marshal Tito's Rise to Power* (Cresset Press, London, 1949); Fred Deakin, *The Embattled Mountain* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1971). Two useful studies in Serbo-Croatian are Jovan Marjanović, *Narodnooslobodilački Rat i Socijalistička Revolucija* [National Liberation War and Socialist Revolution 1941-1945] (Radnička Štampa, Belgrade, 1975), and Pero Morača, *Narodnooslobodilačka Borba Jugoslavije 1941-1945* [The Yugoslav National Liberation Struggle 1941-1945] (Radnička Štampa, Belgrade, 1975).

61. Yugoslav historians categorise enemy activity against the main Partisan forces between September 1941 and May 1944 into 'offensives'. There were seven enemy 'offensives' during this period.

62. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .* , Chapter 4.

63. These agreements are extremely well documented in Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, Chapter 7. It should be noted that the Germans were always suspicious of the Četnici and unwilling to provide them with large amounts of ammunition.

64. See 'The Tactics of the Enemy' by the Četnici Supreme Command (i.e. Mihailević) cited in Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .* , p. 194.

65. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .* , Chapter 12, for an account of the fascinating way in which the security services finally managed to capture Mihailević alive.

66. The source for CPY membership data is *Pregled Istorije . . .* , p. 422. A detailed occupational breakdown of CPY membership is not provided, so it is not possible to provide a precise indication of the proportion of CPY members who were peasants.

67. See Avakumović, *History of the Communist Party . . .* , p. 151.

68. See Bette S. Denich, 'Sources of Leadership in the Yugoslav Revolution: A Local-level Study', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 18 (1976), pp. 64-84.

69. See Djilas, *Wartime . . .* , p. 120.

70. See *Pregled Istorije . . .* , p. 235. Avakumović, in *History of the Communist Party . . .* , pp. 120 and 121, claims that a total of 1,192 Yugoslavs participated in the Spanish Civil War: 330 had gone to Spain direct from Yugoslavia, 561 were CPY members and more than half of the total were workers.

71. See *Yugoslavia Thirty Years After Liberation . . .*, p. 38.
72. The Četnici did not use women at all in their fighting units and referred to Partisan women as prostitutes. One Četnici leaflet asserted that the Partisans killed all Serbs who married in churches and that in Montenegro, the Partisans fathered 4,000 illegitimate children and many of the girls who had been so dishonoured drowned themselves. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .*, p. 189.
73. On 21 October 1942, Dedijer complained in his diary that 'The partisan movement is spreading widely but the Croat influx till latterly was unsatisfactory – 80% of the partisans are still Serbs, only latterly have the Croats come in groups.' See Dedijer, *With Tito Through The War . . .*, p. 203.
74. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution . . .*, p. 93.
75. See B. Petranović and C. Strbac, *Istorija Socijalističke Jugoslavije* [History of Socialist Yugoslavia] (Radnička Štampa, Belgrade, 1977), Vol. 1, p. 57 (author's translation),
76. See Brashich, *Land Reform . . .*, for a detailed analysis of the 1945 Agrarian Reform.
77. See E. Kardelj's speech in *Peti Kongres Komunističke Partije Jugoslavije Stenografske Bilješke* [Stenographic Record of the Fifth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party] (Kultura, Belgrade, 1949) pp. 535-537. Cominform attacks had included the charge that the Yugoslav Communist Party was allowing capitalist elements to prosper in the countryside. Prior to being incarnated in the Cominform Resolution expelling Yugoslavia, this charge had first been raised in a letter from Stalin and Molotov dated 4 May 1948 (the text is reproduced in Petranović and Strbac, *Istorija . . .*, Vol. 2, pp. 252-260).
78. For a detailed examination of this question see P. Wright, 'The State and the Peasantry in Yugoslavia during the First Five Year Plan' (mimeograph, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, England, 1984).
79. The prelude to the Basic Law was a decree issued in December 1949 which established trial workers' councils in 215 enterprises.
80. Text of speech as reproduced in *Rad* [Work – the Trade Union daily newspaper], on 30 May 1949 (author's translation).
81. See M. Djilas, *The Unperfect Society: Beyond the New Class* (Methuen & Co., London, 1969), p. 157.

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