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## DECENTRALIZATION TENDENCIES IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF YUGOSLAVIA IN THE 1960s

In the mid-1960s the leaders of Yugoslavia with Josip Broz Tito at the head put forward a programme of economic and political reforms. This was a consequence of faction struggle within the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), the growing economic difficulties as well as increasing national tensions and feuds. All this went hand in hand with liberalization, especially after the removal of Aleksandar Ranković, the supervisor of security forces, in July 1966<sup>1</sup>. Its main symptoms were: the emerging possibility of criticism, the possibility to declare one's own views in public and in print as well as to present and defend various interests; the formation of different cultural and social groupings and organizations; the permission for Yugoslav citizens to travel more easily and often abroad as workers, tourists and students. This was accompanied by the increase of diversified economic, cultural and scientific contacts with abroad which resulted in more liberty for creators and greater reception of foreign achievements in many fields<sup>2</sup>. Political persecution subsided, and some ardent opponents of the LCY, e.g. Milovan Djilas, were even allowed to leave the country<sup>3</sup>. Of course, all these processes were

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<sup>1</sup> For details, see: M. J. Zacharias, *Reformy gospodarcze i tzw. sprawa Rankovića w Jugosławii w latach 1964–1967 (Economic Reforms and the So-Called Ranković Affair in Yugoslavia in the Years 1964–1967)*, "Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej", vol. XXXIV, 1999, pp. 127–132.

<sup>2</sup> I. Veјvoda, *Yugoslavia 1945–1991. From Decentralization Without Democracy to Dissolution*, in: *Yugoslavia and After. A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth*, ed. by D. A. Dyker and I. Veјvoda, London and New York 1996, pp. 13–14.

<sup>3</sup> In the years 1968–1969 Djilas stayed in Great Britain, the USA, Austria and Italy. It should only be added that his trips, just as those of many other citizens of Yugoslavia who defied the policy of the LCY, were controlled and frequently held back. After having published abroad *The Unperfect Society. Beyond the New Class*

under strict control, since "the vigilant eyes and ears" of the party were always on the alert<sup>4</sup>.

Another symptom of the liberalization was a possibility to organize protests, among others by the workers. The protests took mainly the form of strikes, ever more frequent; there were about 2,000 strikes in the years 1958–1969. It is characteristic that those who went on strike were above all workers in the most developed republics, i.e. in Slovenia and Croatia, as well as in the autonomous province of Voivodina. The strikes were relatively short: 75% did not surpass one day. The workers put forward, naturally, mainly postulates concerning their pay, but they also pointed out that they had very little influence on the function of self-management institutions, had small access to various party fora, trade union authorities and representative bodies; all this contradicted the official self-management ideology. These claims, however, had very little political significance, considering the fact that the workers did not represent any organized force. The strikes were single, isolated actions; they did not lead to any general strike. It was also characteristic that despite the liberalization the authorities did not agree to grant the workers, on the strength of Constitution, the right to strike<sup>5</sup>. Thus, from the point of view of the law in force, all strikes were illegal.

On the other hand, in the second half of the 1960s, some political force was shown by students, for the first time in the history of Yugoslavia. On June 2–9, 1968, student demonstrations took place in Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana and Sarajevo, as well as in other academic centres. They were part of a wider phenomenon, the so-called contesting movement, i.e. a wave of demonstrations and manifestations organized by young people in all Europe and in the United States. The demands of Yugoslav students partly resembled those put forward in all other countries, and partly were connected with the specific, local situation. Thus, on the one hand the students in Belgrade called for democratization, which to a certain degree resembled e.g. the

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(New York 1969), Djilas was deprived of his passport. From then on he has been an "internal emigré", see S. Clissold, *The Progress of A Revolutionary*. Introduction by H. Seton-Watson, Hounslow, Middlesex 1983, pp. 300 and 302–303.

<sup>4</sup> I. VeJVoda, *Yugoslavia*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> D. Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije. Glavni procesi 1918–1985*, Zagreb 1985, pp. 401–402.

postulates of their Polish colleagues, on the other — they condemned the tendencies that could lead, as they suggested, to the reconstruction in Yugoslavia of the capitalist system. This was similar to the anticapitalist demonstrations of students in the West, although deprived of the Westerners' extreme leftist ideological context. In fact those who demonstrated in Belgrade called above all for the creation of conditions enabling full employment and the liquidation of great social inequalities. Such postulates were included in the letter addressed to President Josip Broz Tito on June 4. In grandiloquent and slightly naive words the students affirmed that they did not have in mind only "their own material interests. We are embittered by great social and economic differences in our society. We are against the fact that only the working class should bear the burden of economic reform. We support social self-management from the bottom to the top, but it can't be realized unless self managing and representative bodies consist of representatives of the direct, self managing workers. We are against those individuals who are getting more and more rich on the account of working class. We are for social property, and against the attempt to establish capitalist joint-stock companies. We are badly hurt by the thousands of workers who are obliged to go away in order to serve and work (as *Gastarbeiter* — M.J.Z.) for world capital"<sup>6</sup>.

This clearly anticapitalistic attitude of the students from Belgrade was interesting also because they avoided any slogans, postulates or demands concerning national problems<sup>7</sup>. One could get the impression that they were adherents of "Yugoslavism" and that for the first time in the history of Yugoslavia, it seems, the ethnic and national considerations did not play an essential role

<sup>6</sup> Cit. from M. Mešić, *External Migration in the Context of the Post-War Development of Yugoslavia*, in: *Yugoslavia in Transition. Choices and Constraints. Essays in Honour of Fred Singleton*, ed. by J. B. Allock, J. J. Horton and M. Miličević, New York/Oxford 1992, pp. 179–180. The students' attitude was also testified by the slogans put forward during their demonstrations: "We do not want the restoration of the capitalist system", "We shall stop the transformation of social property into the property of shareholders", etc., see D. Bilandžić, *Historija*, p. 337. See also D. Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment 1948–1974*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1977, p. 234.

<sup>7</sup> For students' postulates see *Rezolucija studentskih demonstracija, 3 juna 1968; Saopštenje Predsedništva Konferencije Saveza studenata Jugoslavije povodom događaja na Beogradskom Univerzitetu; Saopštenje Predsedništva Saveza studenata Jugoslavije; Zaključci Saveza Beogradskog Univerziteta*, "Praxis", jun–lipanj 1968, *Dokumenti*, pp. 62–63, 114–115, 357–359, 359–360.

in the period of a significant political crisis<sup>8</sup>. This was, in a large measure, a result of the fact that Belgrade students were strongly influenced by the Yugoslav Marxist philosophical journal "Praxis", published in Zagreb. Its editors were critical of the ruling party bureaucracy, but they did not think it necessary to forsake the centralized structure of their state. They thought that the "national forces", ever stronger in particular republics, had a tendency to view any problems in a very narrow, local perspective, contrary to Marxist "universalism", and to "proletarian internationalism". They also declared themselves against market economy, product-money rules. As a result they were perceived as allies of "unitarists" (*unitaristi*) and opponents of the reforms, regardless of the fact that they emphasized the need for respecting freedom, "the liberation of work" and humanization of inter-personal relations, suggesting that all these values were endangered by bureaucracy<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, some critics accused them of wanting to replace the élitist rule of the LCY, not so much with a democratic system, but with the rule of the leftist intellectual élite<sup>10</sup>.

It should be emphasized that the pro-Yugoslav attitude of students in Belgrade did not meet with much appreciation in Croatia. With the exception of the activity of the Zagreb "Praxis" group, more influential there were those intellectuals, representatives of the *intelligenstia* and many members of the Croatian ruling apparatus who emphasized rather the importance of national, i.e. Croatian issues, than social or all-Yugoslav questions. Characteristically, not only persons connected to independent circles, but also party reformers were prone to think that student "upheavals [in Zagreb] would be convenient to the most conservative, Stalinist circles. The latter could declare again that in this country one can introduce the «socialist order» only by force"<sup>11</sup>. Thus it was suggested that the demonstrations of young people in Belgrade were exploited by those politicians and personages in Serbia who, invoking social radicalism and "internationalism"

<sup>8</sup> D. Rusinov, *The Yugoslav Experiment*, p. 234.

<sup>9</sup> M. Tripalo, *Hrvatsko proljeće*, Zagreb 1990, pp. 87, 90–91; G. S. Sher, *Praxis — Marxist Criticism and Dissent in Socialist Yugoslavia*, Bloomington 1977, p. 265 ff.; A. Cuvalo, *The Croatian National Movement 1966–1972*, New York 1990, pp. 144–146.

<sup>10</sup> M. Tripalo, *Hrvatsko proljeće*, p. 90.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87, 89.

(here this term appears as a synonym of "unitarism"), strove for saving and preserving the old centralized system, contrary to the assumptions of the reform and strivings of the Croats<sup>12</sup>. As a result the student actions in Zagreb did not reach the dimensions of those in Belgrade<sup>13</sup>.

Nevertheless the authorities in Belgrade did not make light of the June Student Activism, regardless of whether it took place in the capital city of Zagreb or other academic centres. Assuming that the movement could turn into all-Yugoslav protests, the authorities tried to prevent the cooperation between the students and workers, which took place in France barely a month earlier. Thus the students delegation sent to the factories in Belgrade and its vicinity were turned back; in some cases the so-called "workers' guards" were organized in order to oppose, as they were termed, "instigators" and "subversive elements"; the authorities even thought of making use of the army. Finally they satisfied themselves with the action of the police, the most brutal in Sarajevo, who prevented the students from leaving the university buildings and from street demonstrations. Many students as well as professors who supported the movement, in the future suffered police, administrative and political persecution<sup>14</sup>.

All these actions contrasted with the official attitude of Tito, who on June 9, decided to appear before television cameras. In his speech the Yugoslav leader admitted that student strikes broke out spontaneously and were not organized by any foreign power<sup>15</sup>. He called on the students to solve the difficulties together with the authorities, giving them to understand that their claims were justified<sup>16</sup>. Thus he acted unlike the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) leader Władysław Gomułka, who in his speech on Polish TV on March 19, presented not a conciliatory, but an unyielding attitude. Tito's television speech relieved the

<sup>12</sup> V. Pavletić, *Uvod*, in: *Preporod hrvatskih sveučilišćaraca*, a special edition of the Zagreb journal "Kritika", 1971, p. I.

<sup>13</sup> A. Cuvalo, *The Croatian National Movement*, pp. 146-147.

<sup>14</sup> D. Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment*, p. 235; B. Krivokapić, *Jugoslavija i komunisti. Adresa Jovana Djordjevića*, Beograd 1988, note 34, p. 60.

<sup>15</sup> Only later, as the Yugoslav leader suggested, "with the development of demonstrations which expanded into the streets, to University halls and rooms, a definite infiltration started of various elements foreign to us, who do not take a socialist stand (...) and do not want economic reform".

<sup>16</sup> Tito's speech: "Praxis", № 1-2, 1969, pp. 338-340.

tension and decisively contributed to the close of student protests.

It is worth emphasizing that in June 1968 for the first time in the history of post-war Yugoslavia (apart from the period right after the end of World War II) there appeared an organized force who dared to address some claims to the party. It was also significant that, officially, these claims were not rejected. As a result, regardless of the mentioned persecution, the solution and above all the consequences of the Yugoslav conflict were different from those of the similar conflict in Poland. In contrast to the Polish situation, the conflict in Yugoslavia did not lead to the creation of a gap between the communist authorities and a significant part of the Yugoslav intelligentsia. The reasons for conflicts between them were completely different. Moreover, although the Yugoslav authorities strove to repress student actions, also by force, they clearly avoided an open confrontation of forces, just like their opponents. This was a significant difference from the situation in countries swept by student upheavals and demonstrations — whether in Poland or the Western countries. This was connected with the fact that Yugoslav students, especially those from Belgrade, avoided putting forward postulates and claims that would undermine the principles of the official ideology and the existing socio-political system. On the contrary, they declared their loyalty to those principles and called for a consistent implementation of the main ideological assumptions of their state<sup>17</sup>. This attitude clearly differed from the stand of the students who demonstrated in the West. It was separate and peculiar in character. In fact it was free of subversive, contesting goals. What linked it to the tide of Students Activism in the West was that manifestations and demonstrations were directed against the authorities. In Yugoslavia, however, students mainly wanted to force the state authorities to observe the systemic principles proclaimed by the authorities themselves. Thus the movement of young people in Yugoslavia was connected to its counterpart in the West by the forms of action only, not by its

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<sup>17</sup> The students of Belgrade protested against presenting their activism by "a part of the public opinion and the press" as one directed against the principles of the development of our "self-managemental, socialist society". They emphasized that their activity agreed with the SFRY Constitution, the programmes of the LCY and the assumptions of self-management and economic and social reform, see *Zaključci Saveza Beogradskog Univerziteta*, pp. 359-360.

goals. On the contrary, the Yugoslav movement had nothing to do with the undermining of the official order. It strove for the reform and strengthening of this order, and not for its abolition which was typical of the powerful, extreme leftist actions in Western Europe, mainly in France and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Under the influence of Student Activism the Presidium and the Executive Committee of the LCY already on June 9, i.e. the day of Tito's appearance on television, voted through the most important "guide lines" for the party concerning political, economic, social and national relations in Yugoslavia. The most important was the decision that the break with etatism and the introduction of self-management must be carried out in conformity with the "market economy", independence of "employees' organizations" and the creation of "social relations marked by self-management". The decision was repeating the old "free market" rhetoric, although now rather nebulous in expression, with an addition of some would-be intellectual gabble. It would be hard to understand how the co-operation of "employees' organizations" could be put into practice, as it was declared by party reformers, "with the aid of market forces". In fact market rules rather favour competition than the co-operation of various economic subjects.

In their "guide lines" the leaders of the LCY also spoke of a need for consultations and agreements concluded between "employees' organizations", their associations, trade unions, and "socio-political communities". This tendency will become more concrete in the future, just like the very important statement that "relations between the Federation and Republics" must be developed "on the principle of sovereignty of the [Yugoslav] nations". At the same time the authors of the "guide lines" decidedly rejected the idea of introducing a multi-party system, as it was suggested by some groups of the political opposition arising in the wake of liberalization. The LCY spokesmen classified as opposition "the remnants of class enemies, foreign reactionary centres, bureaucratic opposition, nationalistic elements, adherents of the multi-party bourgeois system and of political clericalism". They suggested that the political opposition, though derived from various, sometimes contradictory, sources, unanimously acts against "the socialist development of our society based on

the principle of independence and full equality of nations and nationalities" in Yugoslavia. Thus the opposition had to be fought by all the party members and party organs<sup>18</sup>.

Regardless of such or other decisions of the party, the fate of the system of power in Yugoslavia depended primarily on the course of events in this state, on the power and significance of various party and extra-party groupings that participated in the political struggle. In the second half of the 1960s it was becoming more and more obvious that the core of this struggle lay national problems, or more strictly speaking — the dissatisfaction of various national groups and influential party circles, especially at the local, non-federal level, with the situation of particular republics and autonomous regions within the Federation. The representatives of those groups and circles most often expressed the conviction that the nations and nationalities they represented were disregarded, discriminated against and even persecuted by the central authorities or representatives of other Yugoslav nations and nationalities. Thus they called for the creation of organs and institutions serving the defence of their own national interests against the centralistic, as they thought, designs of influential political circles connected to the Federal authorities, as well as against the "nationalism" or even "chauvinism" of various political circles and groups of other nations and nationalities in Yugoslavia. This was visible e.g. in Bosnia and Hercegovina, where Muslims put forward a postulate to create a "Muslim Motherland" (*Matica Muslimaska*), capable of opposing the cultural and national expansion of other nations, in the first place the Croatian and Serbian Motherlands (*Matica hrvatska, Matica srpska*)<sup>19</sup>. This tendency appeared regardless of the fact that precisely in those years the influential circles of the Federal authorities more and more frequently and strongly emphasized the presence of the Muslim nation, on a par with others. Such attitude, however, aroused anxiety and criticism among Serbs, reluctant to create an "artificial Bosnian–Hercegovinian cultural tradition". As a result Serbian politicians and public opinion

<sup>18</sup> *Smyjernice o najvažnijim zadacima komunističke Jugoslavije u razvijanju sistema društveno-ekonomskih i političkih odnosa*, Beograd 1968, pp. 3–26.

<sup>19</sup> See *Zwłazek komunistów Jugostawii i opozycja w latach 1948–1975 (The League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Opposition in the Years 1948–1975)*. A translation of a series of F. M u k i ć's articles published in "Borba" in 1975 (17 November – 29 December), Warszawa 1977, pp. 28–30.



suggested clearly the need for Serbs, scattered over various republics and autonomous regions, to settle together in their "own Motherland", which would prevent the disappearance of their native cultural and national traditions, and their absorption by other, hostile, as they declared, national elements. The exponents of those views thought that the threat to the Serbs also resulted from economic relations. They declared that the Serbs, as the most numerous national group, produced the major part of the national income, of which they were "robbed" because of transferring great financial means for various "supranational" purposes, or because of financing the development of economically most backward regions<sup>20</sup>.

However, at the end of the 1960s the above-mentioned views did not have a decisive influence on the political life in Serbia. The opposite tendencies clearly prevailed. They came to light during the sixth session of the Central Committee of the League of Serbian Communists on September 14–15, 1966. The participants in the session decided to reorganize the Serbian Central Committee and to choose new leaders. This was a consequence of criticism directed against the previous leadership connected with Ranković and Serbian security forces. The latter were condemned for "lawlessness and discrimination", especially against the representatives of Albanian nationality. Their actions were called "a drastic symptom of chauvinist practices"<sup>21</sup>.

Such designations and more important — decisions — stimulated the political activity of Albanians. They were not fully convinced that the changes taking place would last long, and expressed their fear of the possible rehabilitation of Ranković and suggested — in vain — the need for imprisoning this politician and his adherents<sup>22</sup>. They more and more frequently expressed

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>21</sup> See *Šesta sednica CK SK Srbije. Izveštaj Izvršnog komiteta Centralnog Komiteta Saveza komunista Srbije za ispitavanje političke odgovornosti pojedinih rukovodilaca vezane za rad službe državne bezbednosti, 14 i 15 septembra 1966; Zaključci šeste sednice CK SK Srbije*, in: *Šesta sednica CK SK Srbije. Aktivnost Saveza komunista Srbije posle četvrte sednice CK SK Jugoslavije*, Beograd 1966; see also *Jugoslavija 1918–1988. Tematska zbirka dokumenata*, ed. by B. Petranović and M. Zečević, Beograd 1988, pp. 1110–1113, 1113–1116 as well as note 2, pp. 1116–1118.

<sup>22</sup> The new Albanian leaders of Kosovo expressed this suggestion at the meeting with Tito in February 1968. The Yugoslav leader told them that Ranković was not arrested because of "political pragmatism", i.e. so that he did not become a "hero",

their national Albanian aspirations. This took place hand in hand with the ousting of the Serbs from the regional authorities in Kosovo and Mitohija. The new Albanian leaders ever more often mentioned the need for changes in relations between their region and the Federation, i.e. for granting Kosovo and Mitohija the status of full-right members of the Federation, i.e. something more than an autonomy within the framework of the Republic of Serbia. They declared that their region should become "a component part of federalism", although they did not specify their demands for creating another, the seventh, republic<sup>23</sup>.

The growing aspirations of the Albanians, just like those of other nations and nationalities, aroused anxiety and opposition of a part of the federal and republican party apparatus in Serbia. Some representatives of party authorities thought these aspirations to be a symptom of the growing tide of nationalism and chauvinism. Such views were declared e.g. by two members of the Central Committee of the League of Serbian Communists: the historian Jovan Marjanović and write Dobrica Ćosić. They presented these views at the 14th session of the Serbian Central Committee on May 28, 1968.

According to Marjanović "nationalist problems" emerged as a result of the market economy. It has its positive and negative aspects. Generally, it favours productivity, but in conditions of the weakly and unevenly developed Yugoslav economy it strengthens the tendencies to "narrow the market", to "hinder integration processes" and even to enclose the economy of particular republics within their own regions. Marjanović suggested that such tendencies, emerging more and more frequently, caused the weakening of economic effectiveness on an all-Yugoslav scale and kindled up various nationalist tendencies. According to Ćosić these tendencies were clearly anti-Serbian in character. He maintained that "in the press and other media, political campaigns are going on for months, screened with the principles of the reform and self-government", about which "no political forum in this

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a "flag" in the hands of adversaries of transformations, a serious problem of the internal and foreign policy of Yugoslavia. Tito also maintained that Ranković was "politically dead", that there was no danger of his "resurrection", see *Jugoslavija 1918-1988*, note 2, p. 1117.

<sup>23</sup> *Jugoslovenski federalizam. Ideje i stvarnost. Tematska zbirka dokumenata*, ed. by B. Petranović and M. Zecević, vol. 2, 1943-1986, Beograd 1987, note 3, p. 554.

country tells the whole truth" or shows "what is really at stake". It is continually maintained that "somebody is exploiting somebody", that "the Serbs are tearing away the biggest part from the renowned "Yugoslav cake", that the Serbs are adherents of state control, unitarism, assimilation, centralization, conservatism, namely — that they want only to subordinate others, to rule and to execute police supervision. Do we really deserve such an opinion in Yugoslavia? And if we don't, why are we perceived in this way? — he asked<sup>24</sup>.

The above-mentioned accusations, Ćosić maintained, were voiced mainly in Croatia and Slovenia, and accompanied the activity of Albanian nationalists in Kosovo and Hungarian nationalists in Voivodina; they were, he thought, a convenient instruments in the hands of local bureaucrats who strove to expand the scope of their power and screened their purposes with declarations of a need for the self-management and autonomy of various regions. Under the pretext of a need for acknowledging "self-management rights and independence of nations", "in the name of state sovereignty as an expression of equal rights, the primacy of the national principle, a concept is developing of a primitive, disintegrated, divided, inevitably bureaucratic and impoverished society". This "bureaucratic particularization", contributing to the creation of "a primitive structure of society and economy", perpetuating "our poverty and backwardness" will also threaten the integrity of Yugoslavia, the more so as the process of shaping national states in the Balkans has not yet been finished. "One cannot but notice", said Ćosić, "that the unity of the working class and Yugoslav nations is undermined at its basis by a strong social and national differentiation, a growing lack of equality or equal economic rights; without a class, national and socialist unity, without really equal social rights the prospects for socialism and any kind of Yugoslavia are dim".

The need for such unity, in Ćosić's opinion "based on Marxist universalism and internationalism", was emphasized also by Marjanović. It would consist primarily in the supra-national character of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Its members would not be "Serbs, Albanians, Hungarians etc., but only communists, active in the Serbian, Albanian and Hungarian

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, note 3, pp. 560–561.

societies”, for “in order to achieve the contemporary socialist goals, the working class and all the progressive forces in Yugoslavia also today require a strong unity of communists and the revolutionary movement”. In this connection Marjanović criticized the “thoughtless” proclamation of a “new Muslim nation”, since this would unavoidably lead to “the lack of toleration and increase of national feuds”. This opinion was connected to the fact that after Ranković’s downfall the Serbs lost their previous domination in the party and administrative organs of Bosnia and Hercegovina in favour of the Muslims, treated now not only as a separate religious group, but also as a separate national community<sup>25</sup>. According to Marjanović the creation of a Muslim nation must be convenient to “bureaucratic nationalism or republicanism” which counteracted “the strengthening of ties between various nations and nationalities”, and which would back up various “centrifugal forces” within the Federation and create conditions for the outbreak of “national controversies and conflicts”<sup>26</sup>.

Ćosić’s and Marjanović’s views were rejected by the participants in the 14th session of the CC of the League of Serbian Communists. They declared these views to be contrary to the party’s policy and “to objectively strengthen the nationalist tendencies, disseminate doubts and lead to the infringement of the unity of the League of Communists”<sup>27</sup>. Those participating in the session perceived in Ćosić’s and Marjanović’s views the influence of unitarism and “Yugoslavism”, directed against the rights of particular nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia, as well as the interests of the Serbs themselves. For precisely the Serbs should be most interested in denying the accusations of their displaying Grand-Serbian tendencies, made against them by the representatives of other nations. The participants in the session suggested also that a denial, modelled on Ćosić and Marjanović, of the national differentiation within the LCY and the communist

<sup>25</sup> See T. Judah, *The Serbs. History, Myth and Destruction of Yugoslavia*, New Haven and London 1997, pp. 153–154; X. Bougarel, *Bosnia and Hercegovina — State and Communitarianism*, in: *Yugoslavia and After*, pp. 93–94.

<sup>26</sup> Ćosić’s and Marjanović’s opinions in: *Jugoslovenski federalizam*, vol. 2, note 3, p. 556 ff.

<sup>27</sup> *Četnaesta sednica CK SK Srbije — Zaključci CK SK Srbije o političkim gledištima Jovana Marjanovića i Dobrice Ćosića*, 1968, in: *Savez komunistu u borbi za nacionalnu ravnopravnost*, Beograd 1968, pp. 314–315.

movement in general could favour "some demands"; in accordance with such demands the Yugoslav communists would have to subordinate themselves to "theses voted at some world council of communists", since "we are all communists and therefore have some internationalist duties". Such attitude, however, would be contrary to the policy, initiated in 1948, of opposing external pressures<sup>28</sup>.

After the decision made at the 6th session, the rejection of Čosić's and Marjanović's views was another proof of the fundamental change of forces within the League of Serbian Communists. The adherents of actions initiated by Ranković and the security forces were increasingly losing ground to politicians who adjusted themselves to the general situation in the country, favouring reforms initiated by Tito, Edvard Kardelj and Vladimir Bakarić as well as a new view on the national questions. In connection with the discussions at the 14th session one should also stress that for the first time in the history of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia/the League of Communists of Yugoslavia the basic problems, in this case national, were considered at a republican party level. This was undoubtedly done with the knowledge, and probably on the initiative of Tito, but also bore witness to the fact that decentralization tendencies, supported by the President, indeed started to embrace the LCY. At the ideological level they were connected with the view expressed by the main party ideologist, Kardelj. He put forward a thesis that national problems ceased to be taboo and as such could be subject to discussion. Kardelj maintained that these problems were only theoretically regulated during the revolution; in practice they continued undergoing various fluctuations connected with the changing ideological, political and economic context, just as in other countries. One should only be on the alert lest they become an instrument of "reactionaries", i.e. various political enemies<sup>29</sup>.

The situation and political atmosphere in Yugoslavia was also affected by the events in the international arena. On August 21, 1968, the army of the Soviet Union as well as military troops of

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<sup>28</sup> *Izlaganje Petra Stambolčića na četrnaestoj sednici CK SK Srbije, 1968*, in: *Četrnaesta sednica*, pp. 304–310.

<sup>29</sup> See *Stenogram o razgovoru delegacije Kosova z maršalom Titom i E. Kardeljem, februara 1967*, cit. from *Jugoslevenski federalizam*, note 2, pp. 399–401.

other states of the Warsaw Pact, excluding Rumania, invaded Czechoslovakia; this was the end of "the Prague Spring". In Yugoslavia the invasion aroused a wave of indignation and condemnation of the policy of Soviet leaders. The Yugoslav leadership, just like public opinion, perceived it as a typical Soviet attitude, aggressive, imperialistic and hegemonic in actions and intentions, and contrary to the principle of independence and sovereignty of individual countries. In accordance with the hitherto Yugoslav views of the Stalinist character of the Soviet system the leaders of Yugoslavia declared that this aggression was a derivative of the bureaucratic political system of the Soviet Union. The vehemence of this criticism subsided with time; nevertheless Yugoslavia, just like Rumania, continued to feel endangered. Tito and his immediate collaborators believed that a concentration of Soviet troops was in progress in Hungary and Bulgaria. Bakarić was of the opinion that these troops could reach Rijeka without any difficulty within 48 hours<sup>30</sup>. Such opinion resulted from the conviction that Yugoslavia was not prepared for war and that under the conditions of that time it would be difficult for her to repeat the tactics of partisan struggle from the period of the German occupation. The sense of danger was so strong that the authorities issued an order to move and hide the most important archival materials, and in the vicinity of Plitvice Lakes a new, "reserve" abode was prepared for the members of the Central Committee of the League of Croatian Communists. "This centre worked for fifteen days, until the situation calmed down and all of them, on the strength of an appropriate decision, came back to Zagreb"<sup>31</sup>. However, although the situation cleared up, the authorities decided to change the previous concept of the country's defence, according to which, despite the 1948 conflict and its consequences, a threat was expected only from the West<sup>32</sup>. The main exponent of this concept, Gen. Ivan Gošnjak, otherwise a close and loyal collaborator of Tito, was dismissed from the post of the Federation's national defence secretary. The Soviet aggression upon Czechoslovakia

<sup>30</sup> M. Tripalo, *Hrvatsko proljeće*, pp. 97-98. See also S. Dabčević Kučar, *Sedamdeseta prva. Hrvatski snovi i stvarnost*, vol. 1, Zagreb 1997, p. 100.

<sup>31</sup> M. Tripalo, *Hrvatsko proljeće*, p. 103; S. Dabčević Kučar, *Sedamdeseta prva*, vol. 1, p. 100.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98 and 416.

also contributed to softening the internal controversies and strengthening the strivings for reform and calls for further liberalization<sup>33</sup>. It cannot be ruled out that the reformers with Tito at the head wanted to win more social support, to satisfy national aspirations in particular republics and in this way strengthen their position in the country, and consequently — also in the international arena<sup>34</sup>.

It should be emphasized that the above-mentioned softening of controversies was short-lived. They arose again in connection with the events which took place in Kosovo and Mitohija as well as Western Macedonia in the autumn of 1968. On November 27 there were violent protests of the Albanian population in Priština, Urosevac, Gnilan, Podujevac and other localities. Thousands of people demonstrated, for the first time since the bloody events in Kosovo at the end of World War II, among others 2,000 students and secondary school pupils assembled in the building of Philosophy Faculty of the University in Priština. The demonstrators raised anti-Yugoslav cries, condemned the "Serbian oppressors", trampled and burned Yugoslav flags, praised Albania and Enver Hoxha, called for granting Kosovo the status of a republic. The federal and republican authorities in Belgrade reacted by using force, in the conviction that the protests of Albanian "separatists" and "chauvinists" were supported by the propaganda from Tirana and could lead to the devolution of the revolted Yugoslav territories. As a result the demonstrations were crushed by militia, army units and security forces. Nor did the authorities allow new protests, planned for November 28, to break out<sup>35</sup>.

The above-mentioned demonstrations and the way they were treated were a clear proof that a considerable part of Albanian population put forward demands surpassing the possible concessions of Belgrade. Yugoslav authorities expressed their readiness to respect the Albanians' national rights, but not at the cost of what seemed to threaten the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. As a result the Albanians gradually obtained a change of Kosovo's status, although not up to their expectations. This, at any rate, was a derivative of a more general process of extending the rights

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108 and 100.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. F. T u d j m a n, *Nationalism in Contemporary Europe*, Boulder 1981, p. 130; A. C u v a l o, *The Croatian National Movement*, p. 74.

<sup>35</sup> *Jugoslavija 1918-1988*, note 2, pp. 1120-1121.

of particular nations. Already on the strength of amendments to the Constitution voted through on April 18, 1967, the competences of the Council of Nationalities were enlarged, regardless of the fact that it was to continue being a part of the Skupština Federal Council<sup>36</sup>. On December 26, 1968, i.e. already after the demonstrations in Kosovo and the western part of Yugoslav Macedonia, further amendments to the Constitution of 1963 were voted through. The Council of Nationalities became an independent chamber in Parliament. The Federal Council was abolished, which was undoubtedly in keeping with the transformations leading to the decentralization of the state along the national "lines", or more strictly speaking — republics. At the same time the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Mitohija changed its name into the Autonomous Region of Kosovo. Just like the Autonomous Region of Voivodina, it was to remain within the framework of the Republic of Serbia. Nevertheless, both these regions obtained the status of equal-right members of the Federation, just like the Yugoslav republics<sup>37</sup>. This was a significant change in the legal situation of those regions, but it did not satisfy that part of Albanian population who continued to claim its right to sovereignty and to granting Kosovo the status of a republic<sup>38</sup>. It was also a move deprived of logical coherence. Kosovo and Voivodina were to be part of a whole and simultaneously a part of a part of the whole, which in time would surely lead to growing controversies over competence in the triangle: Federation — the Republic of Serbia — Autonomous Regions.

<sup>36</sup> See "Službeni list SFRJ", № 18, 1967; B. Petranović, C. Štrbac, *Istorija socijalističke Jugoslavije*, vol. 1, *Opšti pregled* and vol. 3, *Dokumenti II*, Beograd 1977, pp. 187 and 94–95; *Jugoslavenski federalizam*, vol. 2, pp. 405–406 and note 3, p. 406.

<sup>37</sup> Amendment № 7 to the Constitution of 1963, voted through on December 26, 1968, said that the SFRY included, apart from other "socialist republics" also "the Socialist Republic of Serbia with the Socialist Autonomous Region of Voivodina and the Socialist Region of Kosovo, which come within her borders", see B. Petranović, C. Štrbac, *Istorija*, vol. 3, *Dokumenti II*, p. 95; *Jugoslavenski federalizam*, vol. 2, p. 414. This was a significant difference from the content of art. 2 of the 1963 Constitution saying that the SFRY includes the following socialist republics: "Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia", see *Jugoslavenski federalizam*, vol. 2, p. 383. On the amendments to the Constitution introduced on December 26, 1968, in general: "Službeni list SFRJ", № 55, 1968; B. Petranović, C. Štrbac, *Istorija*, vol. 1, *Opšti pregled*, p. 187 and vol. 3, *Dokumenti II*, pp. 95–99; *Jugoslavenski federalizam*, vol. 2, pp. 414–416 and note 3, pp. 406–407.

<sup>38</sup> *Jugoslavenski federalizam*, vol. 2, note 3, pp. 406–407.



The amendments to the 1963 Constitution, voted through in 1967 and 1968, agreed with the general tendency to decentralize the state. This process went hand in hand with a gradual change in the character of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The reformers clearly strove for the "federalization" of the party, i.e. for increasing, in keeping with their general concept, the competences of the republican and regional party authorities in relation to the rights of the central LCY authorities. They expressed a conviction that only such a "federalized", i.e. decentralized party would be able to carry out economic and social reforms in Yugoslavia<sup>39</sup>, and ensure her internal stability. Some of them even undermined the principle of the so-called democratic centralism, contending that it had been applied by Lenin to the party illegally operating in Tsarist Russia. Thus it could not refer to the LCY, since the historical and social conditions of its activity were quite different<sup>40</sup>. A conviction was also expressed that "we cannot have a democratic system of social relations while sustaining at the same time an excessively hierarchical and rigid system of relations within the League of Communists"<sup>41</sup>.

The above-mentioned views prevailed among Slovenian, Croatian and Macedonian communists, i.e. those who generally favoured most expressly the reformist activity. But they gradually started to prevail also in other republics, i.e. Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina as well as Montenegro. At the end of 1968 voices came from there that republican party organizations could not go on being only "conveyor belts" for the policy of the central authorities in the League, that these organizations must also realize specific interests of particular republics which should even be entitled to negate the decisions of the Federal party authorities<sup>42</sup>. As a result in November 1968 republican party congresses took place, preceding the sessions of the successive, 9th Congress of the party. This was a reversal of the hitherto practice of organizing first a party congress at Federation level, and only later republican congresses. This was to testify to the

<sup>39</sup> See P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1963-1983*, Bloomington 1984, pp. 98-99.

<sup>40</sup> Such views appeared e.g. in October 1967 in the party journal "Socijalizam", see A. Carter, *Democratic Reform in Yugoslavia: The Changing Role of the Party*, Princeton 1982, p. 75.

<sup>41</sup> D. Bilandžić, *Istorija*, p. 326.

<sup>42</sup> P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*, p. 99.

break with the principle that republican congresses were convened mainly in order to confirm the policy established by "the headquarters". Now a conviction got the upper hand that the policy of the LCY should be a reflection of the interests and views of all the republics and autonomous regions. Only after their co-ordination, the central party authorities could adopt it as their official policy<sup>43</sup>.

This tendency seemed to augur a successive modification of the power system in Yugoslavia. It was carried out as a result of the decisions of the 9th LCY Congress, debating in Belgrade from March 11 till 15, 1969. In accordance with Tito's views<sup>44</sup> the party statute voted through during the Congress included a statement of the maintenance of the so-called democratic centralism<sup>45</sup>, but the Yugoslav leader spoke of the need to continue the process initiated in the years 1949–1950. What he had in mind was the struggle against state control, i.e. against the domination of the party-state bureaucracy in the political, economic and social life. In his long speech from March 11, he spoke of the need to stop the process of "subordinating society to state control" which threatened "to weaken the rule of the working class" and hindered "the really socialist development of the country".

These euphemistic and stereotype statements of "the rule of the working class" and "the socialist development of the country", which did not diverge from the rhetoric of other communist party leaders in Eastern and Central-Eastern Europe, were interesting because they were accompanied by ideas which could not be found in the statements by the above-mentioned politicians. Tito decidedly condemned the sustenance of state property which had nothing to do, he said, with social property. The former finds its expression in "the relations characteristic of hiring" and cannot "change the conditions of production", which [change] is "one of the competence of the state apparatus". As a result the producers do not care too much "for the requirements of the market and of the clients, since due to the central distribution" they "are

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<sup>43</sup> D. Bilandžić, *Historija*, p. 348.

<sup>44</sup> E.g. he maintained that the LCY could not be transformed, as Bilandžić writes, "into a political organization of a social-democratic type". It also could not do away with its cells at the level of production units, D. Bilandžić, *Historija*, p. 326.

<sup>45</sup> *Statut Saveza komunistia Jugoslavije*, in: *Deveti Kongres SKJ, Beograd, 11–13 mart*, Sten. beleške, vol. VI 1970, pp. 357–362; *Jugoslavija 1918–1988*, p. 1138.

ensured the sale of their produce". Hence "state property should be transformed into social property under the management of direct producers". In Tito's opinion this would be "a new concept of social relations based not on the state and its apparatus, but on the direct producers". Thus "the omnipotent economic monopoly of the state should be gradually transformed into a relatively free type of market economy, so that the enterprises would gain complete independence of their actions and of utilizing the means at their disposal for extended reproduction [i.e. for investments — M.J.Z.]". This would conform with "the Marxist classics" idea of "the atrophy of the state under socialism", and especially with the Marxist analysis "of the Commune of Paris". It would undermine "the centralist system of administering surplus value", i.e. the system which leads to "an exacerbation of the relations between the republics and other socio-political communities, obscuring their real character". This was to be accompanied by "a democratization of the political system", the transformation of the LCY into "an ideologico-political social vanguard". It would be also — said Tito — a consequence of the process started soon after the outbreak of the conflict with Stalin, as well as the endeavour to intensify Yugoslavia's diverse links with the world. Tito pointed out that "instead of the policy of the country's isolation and autarky", "the Yugoslav commonwealth is increasingly opening to the world in an economic, political and cultural, as well as many other respects. Going on the assumption that the integration of the world is today an objective regularity, we have realized that bureaucratic and provincial backwater system would lead to stagnation and crisis". As a result Tito criticized "the conservative and dogmatic forces which attach supreme importance to incidental phenomena", and "scent" everywhere the weakening of the LCY's position, which most frequently meant "a degradation of their own positions"<sup>46</sup>.

The general tone of Tito's speech of March 11 was undoubtedly very specific, especially when we compare it with the public

<sup>46</sup> See *Pięćdziesiąt lat rewolucyjnej walki komunistów jugosłowiańskich. Referat na uroczystym posiedzeniu IX Kongresu ZKJ poświęconym pięćdziesięcioleciu działalności partii, wygłoszony 11 marca 1969 r. (Fifty Years of the Revolutionary Struggle of Yugoslavian Communists. A Paper Delivered on March 11, 1969 at the Solemn Session of the 9th Congress of the LCY Devoted to the Fifty Years of the Party's Activity)*, in: J. Broz Tito, *Artykuły i przemówienia 1969–1975*, Warszawa 1977, pp. 25–29.

statements of the leaders of other ruling communist parties at that time. The leader of the LCY seemed to forsake to a large extent the rigid and dogmatic patterns characteristic of those politician's speeches. He did it regardless of condemning, as if for the sake of counterpoise, "the most diverse petty-bourgeois and would-be democratic views and longings for the return of bourgeois liberalism"<sup>47</sup>. This condemnation undoubtedly reflected Tito's views, but at the given moment his political line was determined by other considerations. Of most importance was the fact that in his speech the leader of the LCY even stronger than before criticized centralization, state control, as well as the omnipotence of the party-state bureaucracy. In none of his earlier speeches did he emphasize so strongly the need for the creation of a socio-political system which would depend on "the management by direct producers". In keeping with the logic of such a system "producers" would be endowed with incomparably greater rights and opportunities than the inhabitants of European and non-European countries of "real socialism".

Such a situation seemed to favour the liquidation of the phenomenon of alienation of labour, the relationships characteristic of hired-labour system. The Yugoslav party theorists with Kardelj at the head associated these relationships with the Stalinist system. Their abolition would be tantamount to the complete uprooting of this system from the territory of Yugoslavia. In his later speech of November 30, 1969, Tito implied that authentic workers' self-managements could do away with "the classical form of alienation of the working class and the working people from the means of production, caused by state control", and characteristic of Stalinism. He expressed his regret at the fact that the development of self-managements was slow, full of obstacles, primarily because "the country has not yet broken with the policy of intensive and mis-aimed investments, decided on not by the workers — producers", but by "bureaucrats and technocrats", "professionals", "businessmen". The latter intend to transform the producer again into a hired worker, whose fate would be "decided on by a narrow group of persons, or a single man". As a result "the workers' councils of some enterprises include a diminishing number of workers engaged in production

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

itself, who are mostly replaced by people in managerial posts, or employed in the administration". Thus "as Marxists and communists who are for the workers' self-management", the members of the LCY cannot agree to this form of alienation of labour, they cannot permit "such an independence of the economy which would in fact serve a narrow group of technocrats and managers for their own emancipation, enabling them to occupy an exceptional position — above the workers and above society". In case of resistance "it might happen — and in some places it already happens — that under the cover of the independence of the economy the actual power in workers' organizations is taken by the stratum of managers, and in the socio-political communities [i.e. in the communes, autonomous regions, republics and at the level of the Federation — M.J.Z.] — by the ruling political apparatus, and that between those two poles a feed-back arises, objectively directed against the workers' and the social self-management". As a result "wherever the relation of forces allows the workers to struggle for their right to develop authentic self-management, it is the duty of communists and the leadership of the LCY to support this struggle with all the political and ideological means at their disposal. At the same time we will not give up making use of the statutory possibilities or political interference by the Commonwealth (...). We have to struggle for the self-management of the economy, the autonomy of enterprises and workers' organizations on the basis of workers' self-management"<sup>48</sup>.

It can be doubted that Tito really believed in this "liberation" of the working classes by the self-management system, due to the role that workers and wide ranks of working people could fulfil in the process of production and management of enterprises. Nothing indicated that employees were vitally interested in it. The idea of self-management arose in the minds of party leaders, but it did not arouse any authentic social movement. At any rate, this would not be possible within the communist monopoly of power, since it would require a consent to the rise of an uncontrolled and independent political force. It would also be difficult to imagine a

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<sup>48</sup> See *Przemówienie z okazji wręczenia dyplomu honorowego członka Akademii Nauk i Sztuki w Bośni i Hercegowinie, wygłoszone 30 listopada 1969 r. w Sarajewie (A Speech Delivered in Sarajevo on November 30, 1969, on the Occasion of the Reception of a Diploma of an Honorary Member of the Academy of Sciences and Art in Bosnia and Hercegovina)*, in: J. Broz Tito, *Artykuły i przemówienia*, pp. 45-51.

situation where, under the Yugoslav conditions, a group different from the criticized specialists, professionals and managers could rival the party bureaucracy in the management of the economy. It was Tito himself who said on November 30 that there was a need for the creation of "a modern economy by applying the most up-to-date technological solutions, an economy based on powerful enterprises and integration systems, in line with the achievements of the world-wide scientific technical revolution"<sup>49</sup>. In such a complex, complicated machinery, which prized above all knowledge, abilities and competence, the workers and ordinary employees were in fact condemned to hold a subordinate position. It can be doubted that Tito and Yugoslav party ideologues did not understand the requirements and conditions of the modern economy, which, as they declared, they wanted to develop in their country. Regardless of the natural resistance of bureaucracy, it was these requirements which had to stop the process of the emancipation and "the liberation of the working classes", so called by the leaders of the LCY, in accordance with Marxist ideology and terminology. In the part of Tito's speech devoted to this issue, only one suggestion seems to be true that there was a possibility of the rise of bureaucratic-technocratic structures. It could not be expected that "businessmen" would deprive bureaucracy completely of its influence on the economy; that the economy could do without the knowledge and experience of specialists; that the representatives of the party apparatus at various levels would of their own free will resign their influence on the economy, while professionals and technocrats, under the conditions of the communists' monopoly of power, would not be derived, in a large measure, from the ranks of the party. Despite appearances, the interests of both these groups were frequently similar, sometimes identical. Moreover, also the boundaries between them were blurred, in practice invisible. Paradoxically, this situation was favourable to the leadership of the LCY, at least in so far as it allowed this organization to appear in the role of the promoter and defender of the self-management system. Regardless of the fact that the realization of this system was impossible, one could always maintain that the development of self-management was slow because of a sabotage by the bureaucracy or technocrats,

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

and sometimes by both of them. It is precisely the task of the party to promote and defend the self-management system and to eliminate bureaucracy.

It seems that the leaders of the LCY saw the "defence" of self-management mainly as a way to legitimize their power, as well as an instrument of propaganda that would affect public opinion, domestic and foreign, while promoting the thesis that "Yugoslav socialism" differs from the "real socialism" of other countries of the Eastern bloc. In practice, towards the end of the 1960s they promoted above all a decentralization along the national, or in fact republican "lines", also a decentralization of their party, which found its expression in the respective resolutions of the 9th Congress. In accordance with the statute voted through by the Congress, all the party organizations at the level of republics, autonomous regions, towns and communes as well as the organization of the League of Communists in the Yugoslav People's Army were granted a right to have their own statutes<sup>50</sup>, which was a novelty in the history of the LCY. At the same time the Congress adopted the assumption that "the League of Communists of Yugoslavia is not a supranational or suprarepublican structure, but an ideological and political association and synthesis of the activity of the republican communist leagues as well as all the members of the LCY. The leagues of republican communists are not, each of them, a transmission or a «branch» of some federal centre of the LCY, but independent organizations within the uniform League of Communists of Yugoslavia. As equal and active subjects they bear collective responsibility for the establishment and realization of the LCY policy"<sup>51</sup>.

The Congress also made some important decisions concerning economic matters. In accordance with Tito's directions the assembly adopted a resolution that "under the present conditions socialist production for the market" is the only form of "rational social reproduction" and the only objective premise of "the development of self-management and direct socialist democracy". While emphasizing the need for developing the principles of market economy, although corrected and modified depending on circumstances, the authors of the resolution declared that they

<sup>50</sup> M. Sndulowicz, *Socjalistyczna Federacyjna Republika Jugosławii (The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)*, Warszawa 1982, pp. 151–152.

<sup>51</sup> *Deveti Kongres SKJ*, pp. 221–222.

“energetically» oppose the tendencies of the state bureaucracy to deny the market economy and — on the other hand — they are against the views that reject the need to socially orientate” the development of this economy. Thus, they only in part supported pro-market views, and expressed a conviction that the profit, the income achieved by the enterprises through their actual production activity was to be the decisive factor of remuneration. The profit, defined as a new category of “socio-economic relations” based on “socialist market economy”, was to become the main “motive of management, the foundation of making economic decisions concerning investments and other things, an economic criterion of the process of production, division and consumption”, “a gauge of the rationality of all forms and kinds of management”. The makers of this resolution suggested, although rather confusedly, that profit, by rationalizing the economy and leading in practice to “the division according to the results of work”, would enable the country “to overcome the remnants of relations typical of the hired-labour system”<sup>52</sup>, i.e. a phenomenon which in keeping with Marxist ideology was one of the factors leading to social “exploitation”. Such an attitude of the Yugoslav communist leadership was undoubtedly original, considering the fact that Marxist theorists have always perceived profit as a category of a capitalist economy, closely connected to the problem of the above-mentioned “exploitation”.

The decisions made by the 9th Congress were of great significance to the further transformations in Yugoslavia. They sanctioned the official views on decentralization, self-management and an originally-conceived market economy, for the first time also emphasizing the significance of profit and income as factors that stimulate the development of particular enterprises and the country as a whole. Nevertheless, the importance of the Congress consisted primarily in the official acceptance of the fact that the old formally uniform LCY, centrally directed, should slowly be transformed into an organization which would be a conglomerate of republican and regional communist parties. During the 9th Congress and on the first years after its closure this was mainly due to the conviction that the stabilization of the multi-national

<sup>52</sup> A resolution of the 9th Congress of the LCY: “*Socijalistički razvoj u Jugoslaviji i zadaci Saveza Komunistata*”, Marta 1969, in: *Deveti Kongres SKJ*, pp. 413–426; *Jugoslavija 1918–1988*, pp. 1134–1135.



Yugoslav state could better be achieved through acknowledging various, often contradictory interests and aspirations of particular nations, as well as the efforts made by local party authorities to co-ordinate them, than by the previous system of decisions made "from above" by the authorities in Belgrade. This view was complemented by the opinion that national antagonism in Yugoslavia could be stopped or considerably limited, if within the framework of the new system the leadership of particular republics could come to an understanding as to the division of their competences, and the division of power among themselves<sup>53</sup>. Nevertheless, as time went on, it turned out that regardless of the above-mentioned view, voiced mainly by the principal reformers with Tito at the head, the representatives of the republican party authorities more and more frequently thought that by caring for the local, republican and regional interests, they would legitimize their power better than if they devoted most attention to the all-Yugoslav interests. The reasons for such an attitude differed, depending on the situation, purposes and interests expressed by the leadership of local party bodies in particular cases. Here I should like to emphasize that this attitude mainly resulted from the opinion that by stressing national interests the leaders would play up to the particular nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia, and thus ensure for themselves greater support from the local communities. For regardless of how they were conceived, the national — Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, Macedonian etc. — interests and aspirations were later preferred by the local authorities not only to all-Yugoslav ones, but also to those dictated by the general communist ideology, or its Yugoslav variant, i.e. the concepts of self-management. The members of the party apparatus in particular republics or regions not without reason believed that the national ideology and purposes, definitely more popular, would become a better support for the communist power than the communist ideas, purposes and principles, contradictory to the requirements of life and real social needs. This "transposition" or rather "substitution", might seem even more necessary, as the citizens of Yugoslavia were to continue living under the commun-

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. D. Bilandžić, *Geneza ideje u Ustavu iz 1974*, in: *Priljepti oko političkog sistema*, Zagreb 1985, pp. 68–72; V. Koštunica, *The Constitution and the Federal States*, in: *Yugoslavia. A Fractured Federalism*, ed. by D. Rusinow, Washington 1988, p. 84.

ist power monopoly. The communists in Yugoslavia agreed to include in their political system the plurality of national and labour interests (this was one of the basic differences between the socio-political system of Yugoslavia and other East-European and Central-Eastern-European states); they did not agree, however, to take into account the plurality of political interests. Under these conditions the "pragmatic nationalism", was not out of place, all the more so because the local power apparatus could not overlook the fact that the reforms, "self-management" and the Yugoslav variant of "socialism" were not able, as the future would promptly show, to prevent the growth of difficulties, just as it was not prevented by "real socialism" in other countries ruled by communists. As a result the stirring of nationalism, or more strictly speaking, various nationalisms, will gradually become a method of "channelling" social dissatisfaction and of retaining the power. In time, this form of state control, which in practice resulted in the un-controlled rule by party-state bureaucracy, will be developed regardless of what was said about that kind of rule by the LCY leader, Josip Broz Tito. After his death this phenomenon will especially gather strength. Nevertheless the roots of "republican state control" lay in the situation leading to the decisions of the 9th Congress. These decisions precisely enabled the gradual "nationalization" of Yugoslav politics.

In keeping with the logic of transformations started during the 9th Congress, the LCY also carried out some changes as regards its organization and staff. The principle was adopted that the policy regarding staff would be determined mainly by the republican and regional party authorities, not as it was until recently by the Central Committee, now replaced by a new body, i.e. LCY Presidium. The personal composition of the latter changed. Now it also included the representatives of the Army, which fact, as Dennison Rusinow suggests, favoured "the military and ideological defence" and "the internal unity" of the country in the situation that emerged after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The basic change was the election of Presidium members by republican parties, on the parity principle, in keeping with the statute adopted by the Congress. The Presidium was to consist of "an equal number of the League of Communists' members" from each republic, elected by the republican congresses, and "an appropriate number" of party members from the autonomous

regions of Kosovo and Voivodina. A condition was also laid down that the leaders of the republican central committees (in contrast to the Federal Central Committee, they were preserved), would be included in the Presidium *ex officio*<sup>54</sup>. As a result the supreme party authorities were transformed into a representation of communists from particular republics and regions. This was in accordance with the resolution made by the Congress that one of the principal purposes of the reforms was "to further strengthen the role, influence and responsibility of the Leagues of Communists of particular republics as independent organizations within the uniform LCY"<sup>55</sup>.

One can suppose that for many politicians who supported the party reform, the definition "uniform LCY", logically contradictory to the "independence" of particular, regional party organizations, in fact was a mere stylistic ornament, without much real meaning. What mattered was above all the growing political influence of six republican and two regional centres of power, which towards the end of the 1960s, together with the federal authorities and soon — the representatives of the Army — were to determine the politics of the Federation. As a result a tendency was evident that the decisions concerning the Federation as a whole should be made only after the consent of all the regional political centres.

The apparent growth of the significance of local authorities in comparison to federal authorities favoured the emphasis on the republican and regional purposes and interests. The reformatory party centre expected the liquidation, or at least the softening of national conflicts in this way. Its members thought that the authorities of particular republics, while emphasizing their interests, would rather strive for a co-ordination of their own stands than a confrontation between themselves and the federal state-party centre. In practice, however, this led to the growth of tensions between the republics and the federal authorities in Belgrade. Moreover, towards the close of the 1960s, some republics started openly to undermine the policy of the

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<sup>54</sup> *Statut Saveza komunista Jugoslavije*, in: *Deveti Kongres SKJ*, pp. 357–362; *Jugoslavija 1918–1988*, pp. 1137–1139; D. Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment*, pp. 255–257.

<sup>55</sup> *Rezolucija: "Idejno-političke osnove daljeg razvoja SKJ"*, Marta 1969, in: *Deveti Kongres SKJ*, pp. 405–407; *Jugoslavija 1918–1988*, p. 1136.

central authorities. This path was first chosen by Slovenia, i.e. the most economically developed Yugoslav republic. Its authorities were very critical of the economic policy of the Federation. This in a large measure resulted from the opinion, increasingly emphasized by the local intellectuals, representatives of the intelligentsia and members of the republican power apparatus, that Slovenian resources were "sucked out" by the less economically developed southern regions of Yugoslavia, to the detriment of the interests of Slovenia. Some journals even published opinions that Slovenia was a sacrifice laid at "the altar of Yugoslavism". Soon Stane Kavčič, one of the leading Slovenian politicians, in the years 1970–1971, chairman of the Slovenian Executive Council, i.e. of the local government, started talking about the need to gain the maximum independence from Belgrade and to construct communication routes rather with the countries of Western Europe than Croatia and Serbia<sup>56</sup>. This undoubtedly resulted from a greater interest in economic relations with those countries, especially Austria, than with other Yugoslav republics. Such attitudes paved the way to suggestions that Slovenia should think of a secession and of transforming itself into a neutral state according to the Swiss model, orientated towards co-operation with the West<sup>57</sup>. Such aspirations at the end of the 1960s were not, naturally, an expression of the official policy of Slovenian authorities, but were certainly not contrary to Kavčič's theses: he affirmed that not a "uniform", but simply a "common" (i.e. in practice less compact) economic market should be built in Yugoslavia. Kavčič also said that "there is no nation without a state" thus hinting that nations had their own, specific characteristics and economic interests; their specificity could not be reduced exclusively to "the problems of culture, education and such like"<sup>58</sup>.

Influenced by the above-mentioned views, the Slovenian authorities emphasized officially their own stand, regardless of the policy of Belgrade. Their attitude came to the surface in the

<sup>56</sup> P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*, p. 123.

<sup>57</sup> They were expressed, e.g. in 1967 and at the beginning of the 1970s, cf. the statement of the TANJUG agency, April 13, 1967; the statement by Alojzij Vindiš, Slovenian party activist, at the 10th Congress of the LCY (February 27–30, 1974), in: *Deseti Kongres Saveza komunističke Jugoslavije*, Sten beleške, vol. 2, Beograd 1975, p. 392; P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*, pp. 123–124.

<sup>58</sup> *Jugoslovenski federalizam*, note 4, p. 419.

connection of the loan for building highways, granted to Yugoslavia by the World Bank at the beginning of June 1969. In July that year the Slovenian authorities were surprised by the decision of the Federal Executive Council, which withdrew from its earlier settlements with the republics and in practice reduced the funds granted to Slovenia. They were to be used for other purposes than those considered by Slovenians, i.e. not for the construction of communication routes between Slovenia and Austria, but between Serbia and Croatia. Politicians and public opinion in Slovenia believed in the Serbo-Croatian plot directed against their Republic. Common Slovenians expressed their dissatisfaction in public, organizing various demonstrations and meetings<sup>59</sup>, while the Slovenian authorities accused the Federation of discriminating against them in the division of the loan. A serious political crisis threatened the downfall of the federal government, although it was headed by a Slovenian, Mitja Ribičič.

The situation aroused much excitement in various milieus and political circles in Yugoslavia. The tension was the greater as for the first time in the history of communist-rule Yugoslavia the republican authorities openly dared to oppose the federal ones. In fact Slovenian authorities expressed the wide-spread opinion of Slovenians that in their republic "the economic, while in others the political investments" dominate and that "the Federation is blocking all the prospects for Slovenia". Suggestions started to appear in the Ljubljana press<sup>60</sup> of a need to revise Slovenia's financial and material obligations to the Federation. This attitude met with the counteraction of the central authorities with Tito at the head, supported by other republics. The leader of Yugoslavia and his adherents thought that the attitude of Slovenia menaced the unity and integrity of the Federation<sup>61</sup>. The so-called "road affair" ended with the defeat of Slovenia's authorities. Local feelings, however, ran so high and were received with so much anxiety in Belgrade that the chairman of the Slovenian League of Communists, Franc Popit, felt obliged to affirm that Slovenia had no intention to withdraw from the Yugoslav Federation<sup>62</sup>. The Slovenian authorities managed to control the situation, but not

<sup>59</sup> *Nationalism and Federalism*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>60</sup> D. Bīlandžić, *Historija*, pp. 360-361.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 361; *Jugoslavija 1918-1988*, note 1, p. 1147.

<sup>62</sup> "Borba", September 3, 1969; P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*, p. 102.

for long. In the years 1971–1972 they had to face the claims of the Croatian League of Communists and the postulates of the representatives of an independent Croatian national movement as well as the new, “liberal” party leadership in Serbia, with Marko Nikezić at the head. These events, connected among other things with generation changes in the League of Communists of Yugoslavia<sup>63</sup>, have led to the most important political crisis in the history of communist Yugoslavia<sup>64</sup>.

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)

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<sup>63</sup> See D. Bilandžić, *Historija*, pp. 411–414.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. M. J. Zacharias, *Josip Broz Tito wobec chorwackiego ruchu narodowego w 1971 r. na tle przemian ustrojowych i politycznych w Jugosławii na początku lat siedemdziesiątych (Josip Broz Tito's Attitude towards the Croatian National Movement in 1971, against the Background of Legal and Political Transformations in Yugoslavia at the Beginning of the 1970s)*, in: “Kwartalnik Historyczny”, № 4, 1999, pp. 89–122; the same author, *Chorwacka “wiosna” i serbski “liberalizm” (The Croatian “Spring” and the Serbian “Liberalism”)*, in: “Dzieje Najnowsze”, № 2, 2000, pp. 99–120.