



# Memorandum 1986 (the Greater Serbian Ideology)

by **Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences**

## **GREATER SERBIA**

from Ideology to Aggression

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A slowdown in society's development, economic difficulties, growing social tensions and open inter-communal clashes have all given cause for deep concern in our country. Not just the political and economic system but the entire public order of the country is undergoing a severe crisis. Laxity and irresponsibility in the workplace, corruption and nepotism, a lack of legal security, bureaucratic high-handedness, flouting of the law, growing distrust among people and crass individual and group egoism are everyday phenomena.

A breakdown in the moral standards and prestige of society's leading institutions and a lack of confidence in the capabilities of those in power are combined with public apathy and dissatisfaction and the alienation of the individual from all the representatives and symbols of the public order. An objective examination of the situation in Yugoslavia suggests that the present crisis might well culminate in social upheavals with unforeseeable consequences, not even precluding such a catastrophic outcome as the break-up of the Yugoslav state. No one has the right to shut his eyes to what is happening and to what might happen. And this particularly holds true for the most venerable institution of scientific and cultural achievement of this nation.

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

## **THE CRISIS IN THE YUGOSLAV ECONOMY AND SOCIETY**

1. The economic crisis has been going on for five years now, and there is no end to it in sight. With a 0.6% growth rate of the GNP in the 1981-1985 period, Yugoslavia joined the ranks of the least economically successful countries in the world. Nor are the other growth indices any more comforting. The figure of over one million unemployed dims prospects for school-leavers of finding a job and earning a living in the foreseeable future. The steps taken to raise employment have been motivated by social welfare considerations. However, the opening of new jobs at a time when output is stagnating has resulted in lowered labour productivity.

Gross fixed capital formation and real personal incomes have declined by one third. A surplus in the balance of payments, finally achieved thanks to the policy of a realistic exchange rate and restrictions on all forms of consumption, is the only positive result of efforts to deal with the crisis. However, the merits of maintaining liquidity in foreign trade

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[Vojislav Kostunica in Kosova \(1998\) \(photo 756 ko\)](#)

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should be weighed against the high level of indebtedness, loss of the country's economic independence in formulating economic and to some extent also development policy, and the increasing disarray in the economy, which despite the best efforts has not yet managed to reach the criteria of efficient business performance. Such a situation has given rise to galloping inflation, which is eroding all economic criteria and incentives, at the same time revealing society's powerlessness to channel rampant economic flows.

As time goes on, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the crisis cannot be overcome unless far-reaching changes are made in the economic and political systems. A particular cause for anxiety is that official political circles are unwilling to acknowledge the true reasons for the economic crisis, making it impossible to take the steps necessary for economic recovery. This unwillingness is all the more baffling as economic studies have accurately pinpointed the causes of the crisis. Contrary to attempts to view these causes solely as the result of inappropriate responses on the part of economic policy-makers in the 1976-1980 period, analyses have shown that the roots of the crisis should be looked for in the decade of the 1960s, when economic growth first began to falter, grinding to a complete halt in 1980.

The economic reform of that time had some good points, such as: freeing the economy of bureaucratic red tape, granting greater scope to market forces, removing price disparities, and integrating the Yugoslav economy into the world economy. Unfortunately, only price disparities were reduced to some extent, but not completely done away with, whereas the other goals were not even partially accomplished. Instead, unfortunate improvisations in development strategy and inefficacious innovations in the economic system not only remained but underwent even more inopportune transformations in the 1970s.

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

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

There were a particularly large number of mistakes made in the choice of basic options for the economic system. In the first place, the system of planning was thoroughly disrupted. A five-year plan was not even adopted for the second half of the 1960s, and the subsequent five-year plans, lacking the necessary backing of resources and measures, remained a dead letter, which no one observed. With the abolition of planning, the coordinating functions of the federal government withered away, while the impeding of market forces stifled economic initiative. In other words, neither was the economy subject to direction nor were self-regulating mechanisms allowed to operate freely.

The attempt to replace economic planning and the market with a system of compacts and agreements proved to be a total fiasco. A system in which everyone was supposed to consult with everyone else on everything had no prospects of functioning properly. As a result, the "guiding forces" of the regime had to be called upon more than was

beneficial, and a political propaganda campaign was needed to regulate economic flows.

Decentralization, originally conceived as a way to free the economy from the fetters of bureaucracy, degenerated into disintegration along territorial lines and branches of the economy. Eight economic areas were created, with the national economies as their ideological base. The unified Yugoslav market was thereby broken up.

The republics and provinces increasingly sought to make their economies autarkic. In addition to the fragmentation of the national Yugoslav economy into separate republican economies, economic enterprises were also split up into smaller units, called "basic organizations of associated labour." This was one of the least expected measures, for small enterprises had been crying out for integration in order to take advantage of economies of scale, but instead what they underwent with the introduction of basic organizations of associated labour was a further fragmentation. Thus two forms of disintegration set the economy running on anti-historical tracks of development. This was the worst thing that could happen to any economy.

The mistakes in development strategy, if we can talk at all of a planned strategy, as well as many shortcomings in the economic system, resulted in a decline not just in the growth rate of production and employment but also in the quality of business performance, on which the success of many of the goals of the economic reform hinged. The growth rate of individual labour productivity in the 1966-1979 period, when attempts were made to introduce intensive production methods, was lower than in the period of extensive growth, from 1953 to 1965. Incentives for workers to increase their labour productivity were not improved, notwithstanding a rapid rise in real personal incomes. This unexpected trend, which came as a surprise to economic planners, points up the untenability of the notion that a growth in personal consumption expenditure is enough to stimulate the growth of the entire economy and reveals the irremediable weaknesses of the officially approved consensus economy, which is devoid of economic inducements to work.

The productivity of social capital met an even worse fate. After 1965, returns on investments began to decline rapidly. The weaknesses in the economic system gave the wrong signals to enterprises and sociopolitical communities in the adoption of investment and other decisions. The autarkic republican and provincial economies were not interested in an optimal structure for the Yugoslav economy, nor did they take into account the dangers of duplicating capacity. Investment credits were put to a variety of badly planned uses, and for the most part repayment was cancelled out by inflation.

The obligation to subsidize general public and collective consumption expenditure from the income of their own economies led communes to enter into new investment projects with little forethought. Either because of a lack of information or because the basic structure of investments was not planned, duplicate productive capacity was built. The fragmented capital accumulation, linked to economic sectors and territories, opened up a wide front of ongoing investment projects, with long completion deadlines, inasmuch as these projects were ever completed. The small-scale capital accumulation in dwarf-sized banks induced investors to achieve the greatest possible earnings and employment with little capital, a situation which resulted in the construction of superfluous capacity in the manufacturing industry and insufficient capacity for the production of raw materials and energy. Superficially analyzed investment projects resulted in serious investment fiascos.

There were no economic or social sanctions for wrong investments; politicians remained in the background, even though they often had a decisive influence on investment decisions. All the above-enumerated factors causing the low efficiency of investments were products of the economic system. Therefore, mistakes in economic development and in the economic system, manifested in the drop in overall productivity of the economy [the productivity of labour and of capital taken together], were the main cause of the crisis in the Yugoslav economy.

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

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

The reasons for these economic ills cannot be fully understood without insight into the economic philosophy underlying the economic system. The setting aside of economic laws and coercion, reliance on people's sense of civic duty rather than on their own interests as an incentive for economic behaviour, the emphasis on living labour as the sole creator of income, insufficient attention to costs and economic categories in their real expression these were all component parts of the official economic philosophy and institutional arrangements which in practice had even worse consequences than they would have had otherwise because they enjoyed ideological support, even when they were obviously at odds with the demands of economically rational behaviour. This, among other things, explains the condoning of economically perverted relations, economic pathology, and social profligacy, all of which has been going on far too long not to have left scars on ways of thinking and the behaviour of the economy.

The enormous losses in the economy show that not even after four decades has the principle of profitability become obligatory, and that there are no economic penalties for poor business performance. Subsidies to the economy in the form of credits, the covering of losses from public funds, low rate of amortization, toleration of shoddy quality, a growth rate of real personal incomes which for years exceeded that of labour productivity, all created very easy terms of production, introducing on a large scale a wide variety of forms of parasitism in the economy and elsewhere. Such conditions were able to persist thanks to growing foreign debts, which will have to be serviced not just by present generations, but by generations to come.

The principle of remuneration according to work performed could not be applied in the economy either because of the unresolved question of primary allocation, or because many firms are earning interest from public funds. The incentive for workers to increase their labour productivity has inevitably been weak because of social distinctions which are not based on labour. The countenancing of idleness and other forms of social demagoguery are a high price to pay for social harmony and maintaining the material privileges of the ruling classes.

In view of all these considerations, it is no wonder that people see the tightening up in the terms of production as an attack on their prerogatives, as can be seen from the resistance to the introduction of economically positive interest rates and the priority given to payment of personal incomes. The economy finds good reasons for its resistance to this tightening up in the large contributions which it has to pay to maintain a top-heavy bureaucracy, whose costs represent an intolerable burden for the economy.

Saturated as it is with economic irrationalities, the economic climate has inevitably affected the behaviour of citizens, who, thanks to the contracting of foreign debts by the country, had enjoyed a rapidly rising standard of living. The sharp increase in personal consumption, bordering on extravagance, is still regarded by people as their birthright. The drop in real personal incomes, which should be seen as a necessary correction to bring them into line with the real level of labour productivity, is seen by the public as an unconscionable act of violence against them and not as an objective necessity.

Things could not be otherwise in a country where for years people have lived beyond their means. Consumer and investment credits, the purchase of imported goods at low prices, allocation of socially-owned flats and low rentals all meant that a large segment of the population was in fact being subsidized by public funds. Economic irrationalities and the topsy-turvy economic relations have lasted for a long time and can be seen at every turn. As a result, the public considers this situation to be normal. Everyone, motivated by his own selfish interests, has his own model of economic behaviour, which for some groups might even have been successful, but for society and the economy as a whole has as a rule been fatal. The painful question must be tackled of how to reaffirm the work ethic as the basis for existence and for the individual's social and economic status.

2. With the outbreak of the all-pervasive crisis in society, responsibility for Yugoslavia's future made it incumbent first to determine the true dimensions and real causes of the crisis and then to set about at once devising measures to remedy this state of recession and uncertainty. This, however, was not done. Three years had to go by before official reports started referring to an "economic crisis," and this acknowledgement was gradual and reluctant. In the first two years of the crisis it was referred to as "minor," "short-term," or "passing" troubles, but most popular of all was the phrase "difficulties of economic growth."

It was de rigeur to say in the same breath that there was no need to change the economic system in any major respect and that all that was necessary was to make sure it was fully observed. When these assertions became untenable, the thesis was launched that the Yugoslav crisis was of greater scope than had originally been thought, but that it was exclusively economic in nature, that its causes lay in foreign trade and an inappropriate economic policy after 1976.

At the same time an attempt was made to exempt the political factor from any blame for the economic crisis, and by insistence on economic policy as the main culprit to spare the economic system from critical scrutiny. Since this line could also not last forever, a concession was made by at long last subjecting the political system to scrutiny. Unfortunately, this scrutiny has not only bypassed the key issues in the political system, but in its section on the economy it negated the concepts put forward in the Stabilization Programme.

The recognition of the crisis in stages, only for it to be denied again, resulting in valuable time being wasted, belies the irresolution and unwillingness of official political circles to carry out the changes which the new situation demands. The reluctance to make an accurate diagnosis and to tackle the crisis with timely measures has undermined public confidence in the statesmanship, political courage and sincere intentions of the individuals who are in charge of public affairs, as well as their preparedness to make a break with the delusions which have brought the country to the brink of disaster.

A disinclination to look the truth in the face and resistance to any substantive changes are reflected in the fact that it was only under pressure from the International Monetary Fund that some economic measures were adopted which would have been less painful and which would have had a greater effect if they had been taken much earlier on our own initiative. But nothing so eloquently speaks of the opposition to efforts to achieve economic efficiency than the fact that the government did not implement its own Stabilization Programme. Those who said that this document could only have been adopted because it was too generalized to put concrete obligations on anyone were right. It was predicted that the implementation of the programme would encounter unsurmountable obstacles in conflicts of interest between republics, provinces, and industry groups.

When these predictions came true, doubt began to grow over whether the Stabilization Programme was really conceived as a plan of action for economic recovery, or whether it had a political propaganda role, calculated to make the public think that something was being done to find a way out of the crisis, whereas in fact the necessary changes were being stymied. The Stabilization Programme, which took a realistic approach to the

economy, received its heaviest blow from the Critical Analysis of the Functioning of the Political System, which rehabilitated the already abandoned ideology of a "consensus economy," which has been most responsible for the woes of the Yugoslav economy. What is more, two documents with fundamentally different economic concepts were both officially adopted. Perhaps that was the most effective way to maintain the status quo, but it could not provide an answer to the crisis in Yugoslav society.

Justification for the economic difficulties and delayed response to the crisis is sometimes sought in the limitations of the science of economics and the failure of economists to agree on key issues. There have always been disagreements between economists in all countries and at all times, but it is up to the government to decide whose opinions to honour and to take responsibility for its choice. The problem is, however, that the opinion of economists was never sought in the proper manner. Economic science was acceptable to the extent to which it provided rational explanations for official policy.

Consequently, those in power did not give due attention to the timely warnings and valuable proposals made by economists on their own initiative. The systematic neglect of professional expertise throughout the entire postwar period is hard to understand, but it is even harder to understand why such a thing could happen in a socialist society, which in principle takes science as the cornerstone of its development.

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

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

In Yugoslavia today we have the situation which Kidric dreaded most.

This situation is the upshot of an evolution which has been going on for almost three full decades. During the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s it seemed as though democratization, the substitution of government with self-management institutions, and the deprofessionalization of politics had gained widespread public support. Prospects that progress in this direction would continue were all the brighter in that, thanks to a better balanced programme of investments and a better link between coordination and initiative, the economy had scored convincing success, both in raising output and creating new jobs and in improving the quality of business performance and increasing exports.

Labour productivity had grown rapidly; investment efficiency was at a high level, and economic relations with foreign countries were virtually on an equal footing. It was as though there was nothing standing in the way of building the political and economic system on principles which were giving palpable results. It is true that in that period there were already clear intimations of separatism and nationalism in the form of the slogans: "to each his own," or "we are splitting up in order to become reunited," or the persistent campaign against an overly exaggerated and imagined unitarism.

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

Admittedly, even before the economic reform of the 1960s politics took precedence over the economy, but economic growth had been the most important political priority. However, when politics became a goal unto itself, in the economy the emphasis shifted from economic growth to the economic system, from the earning of income to its allocation, from production to consumption. All this shows the extent to which economic development was neglected, precisely in the rejection of the knowledge gained by developed societies and suspension of economic science. Such views found fullest expression in the thesis that the demands of self-management and efficient business performance could not be reconciled.

The abortive attempt to reintegrate the railways and other large systems at the federal level is a concrete example of how the most obvious principles of economic efficiency go by the board if they threaten to limit the power wielded by the republican and provincial leaderships. However, we should also take this as indicative of the extent of political voluntarism, which has cleared the field for itself for complete freedom of action. Serious obstacles to it might have been posed by the economic plan, which, once adopted, does not allow for caprice, even for those who have adopted it, or by the market, implying autonomy of decision-making on the part of economic entities.

Precisely because they posed an impediment to voluntarism, the economic plan and market were neutralized, so as to create scope for a brand of economics which is not based on market mechanisms and economic constraints but instead takes all relationships to be arbitrary. In this country the basic task of the economic system is not to promote economic growth and honour the principles of economic efficiency; rather it is designed to serve as a means of strengthening the political factor. We have seen that political voluntarism does not let even the law stand in its way; if laws prove to be constraining, they simply are not enforced. Voluntarism breeds an unholy alliance between ignorance and irresponsibility and abundantly passes on these characteristics to the economy, which it keeps under heel and in a position of dependence. No one needs to be persuaded anymore of the fact that politics takes precedence over economics. This fact is being openly discussed by political leaders, as though they were not the main culprits for such a state of affairs.

The system of self-management did not curb political voluntarism. The reason for this is simple: this system was imposed by the will of the political leaders, who have not the least difficulty in either increasing or restricting the scope of its influence or in controlling it from within. The thesis that self-management is most fully exercised within basic organizations of associated labour in fact is just an excuse not to allow it access to that essential [macroeconomic] field of action in which decisions of vital importance for society are taken.

The political factors jealously keep this domain reserved for themselves. In the 1960s, self-management was pushed into a backseat, and herein lie the roots of many of our present troubles. In fact it is non-existent on a global scale, and it never was even elaborated into a comprehensive democratic system, nor have conclusions been drawn from this fact. Consequently, self-management is mere window dressing and not the pillar of society. The system is totally inconsistent. There is no real plan, no real market, no real government, and no real self-management.

**3.** The disintegration of the Yugoslav economy into separate economic sectors and territories, which is an anachronistic trend, directly stems from an even more widespread and more significant anachronistic trend, which is the transforming of the federal state as constituted in the decisions taken at the Second Session of the Anti-

Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia and during the first decades of postwar development into a kind of confederation, which became institutionalized in the most recent Constitution of 1974. There have been many cases in history of a confederation turning into a federation, but there is not one single example of the opposite occurring.

The changing of a federal state into a federation of states is all the more unacceptable in that after relatively frequent changes in the years after the war, Yugoslavia now has an iron-clad constitution, which for all practical purposes is impossible to change. Eleven years have been more than enough time for the enormous difficulties caused by all the consequences of confederalism in the social order to become clear, as a result of which even the Constitution itself has found itself in the focus of criticism of the political system.

The most important element of confederalism consists of the requirement that the assemblies of all the republics and provinces must first give their consent before even the most minor amendment can be made to the Constitution, as well as the requirement that a decision voted upon in the Chamber of Republics and Provinces may be considered to have been carried only if all the delegations vote in favour of it. In both cases, opposition by just one participant in decision-making has the character of a veto.

If we bear in mind the possibility of behind-the-scenes manoeuvring intended to foist decisions on the minority, it is hard to find fault, either in general or on any other basis, with the principle of consensus in the system of decision-making, provided such decision-making concerns major questions affecting the social order, as is envisaged by the Constitution. The trouble, however, is that the principle of unanimous decision-making has overstepped its constitutional framework and without good reason has found a place both in many statutes and regulations and in decision-making within the economy, cultural life, and sports organizations.

The affirmation of republican and provincial attributes of statehood alongside the simultaneous disappearance of the coordinating functions vested in the federal government have opened the doors wide to the promotion of local interests at the expense of national interests. The Constitution ostensibly tried to forestall such an eventuality by including a declarative provision calling upon the republics and provinces to concern themselves both with their own development and with the development of Yugoslavia as a whole.

But since "charity begins at home," they concentrated on their own development and largely ignored the development of the entire country. A balance between optimal local and optimal national development is a theoretically untenable construct which has never passed the acid test of practice. Such constructs have not passed muster in other cases as well. Ethnic interests have taken precedence over class interests, and the provinces have insisted more on their status as a constituent element of the federation than on the fact that they are an integral part of Serbia. Balances of this sort have served as a means of pacifying those who were concerned about maintaining the state and economic integrity of the country as a whole, but they have also encouraged separatists of all stripes to push through their own agendas in practice.

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

The present-day political system of Yugoslavia is increasingly contradictory, dysfunctional, and expensive. It multiplies the unwieldy machinery of government on three levels, leading to a strong proliferation of red tape and increased public spending. Whether it is a case of political or economic matters, the system can serve as a textbook example of inefficiency. Decision-making at the federal level is so slow that even when appropriate measures are taken, they only have a limited effect because they come late.

As a result of conflicts between the participants in decision-making, there is often a complete impasse, and not just at the federal level. The Republic of Serbia has not managed in ten full years to pass republican laws. The insufficient flexibility of the system is seen when it comes to both new decisions and amendment of earlier decisions. The system does not make provision for timely adjustment to new situations. Its inertness does not permit simple changes to be made quickly if such changes become necessary. We should also mention here the frequent impotence on the part of federal agencies to secure enforcement of federal laws. The social system is obviously in a state of paralysis.

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

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

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

For a better understanding of why the ethnic principle takes precedence in the present-

day practices of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, we must look to the influence of the Comintern on the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the years between the two world wars. The Comintern's strategy in this period was based on its conclusion that in view of the failure of proletarian revolutions to materialize in Western Europe, the communist parties in Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe would have to rely on national movements, even if they were expressly anti-socialist and revolved on the idea of national and not class unity.

Stalin took a hand personally in breaking down all opposition to this strategy [for instance, one of the founders of the Yugoslav Communist Party, Sima Markovic, came to grief because of his objections to this policy]. It was in this spirit that Sperans [Kardelj] formulated and gave the theoretical elaboration to the programme for dealing with the national question in his book *The Evolution of the Slovene National Question*, which largely served as the ideological model for Yugoslavia's evolution in the direction of a confederation of sovereign republics and provinces, culminating in the 1974 Constitution.

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

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

There is no need to say that separatism and nationalism are both at work on the social scene, but there is not enough awareness that such trends were made ideologically possible by the 1974 Constitution. The constant strengthening and synergetic effect of separatism and nationalism have cut the national groups off from one another, to a critical degree. Machinations with language and the caging of academics and cultural personalities in republican and provincial enclosures are depressing signs of the burgeoning strength of particularism.

All the new ethno-genies are not so much the unfortunate fabrications of an academic community shut up within a provincial bell jar and plagued by the incubus of regional ideologies as they are symptoms of growing alienation, not only from a common present and future but even from the common past. It is as though people were in a hurry to get out of a house which is tumbling down around their ears and were trying to run away as fast and as far as possible. The intellectual climate provides a warning that the political crisis has come close to the flash point of complete destabilization of Yugoslavia. Kosovo is the most obvious portent. Incidents such as Slivnitsa leave no one in doubt that those who have aspirations to Yugoslav territory have already defined their interests.

The bureaucratic decentralization which in recent decades has been carried out by the holders of political power in this country has at one and the same time been an impediment to the advancement of democracy. After the Second World War, political life in Yugoslavia adjusted to peacetime conditions, when there was no longer any need for clandestine activities, slowly and not particularly successfully.

The legacy of Stalin and the Comintern is still very much in evidence. The conditions prevailing within the underground communist movement left deep traces: conspiratorial methods, internal hierarchy, the participation of only a handful of individuals in decision-making, insistence on ideological unanimity and unquestioning acceptance and carrying out of assignments, and harsh epithets ["factionalist," or "enemy"] for anyone

who disagreed with or criticized the adopted political line. If we add to this the tendency for power, once gained, to be strenuously defended, both with repression and with encouragement of slavish obedience, then it is understandable why it has been so hard to find ways of arriving at genuine democracy.

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

Such expectations, however, have come to nought. In the mid-1960s, efforts to do away with bureaucracy suddenly flagged and gave way to decentralization, which in essence was bureaucratic. The present-day political system of Yugoslavia does not have a single one of the advantages of contemporary political systems. It is not a liberal democracy, nor a consultative democracy, nor even an enlightened bureaucratic system. It lacks political liberty, the direct participation of citizens in political life, and functioning of the system according to set rules and norms. The entire system has been constructed on the principle of an active role for the top leaders in the political hierarchy and hopeless political passivity of the citizens.

The Federal Chamber of the Assembly of the SFRY is federal in name alone. Here, too, it is the republics and provinces that are represented, and not the citizens of the federal state regardless of what republic or province they belong to. There is no special chamber [a chamber of associated labour] in the Assembly of the SFRY in which the Yugoslav working class would be represented. Direct elections, as one of the great achievements of civilization, have been replaced by indirect elections. The delegate system which was introduced has proved to be unworkable. Political manipulation of citizens is successfully carried out and constant. Citizens are from time to time called upon to vote in a "plebiscite" to put their rubber stamp on elections which have already been carried out by the ruling hierarchy behind the political scene. The undemocratic electoral system puts voters into a situation where they do not know whom they are electing, or rather for whom they are casting their votes, and the delegates have no one to whom they are accountable for their actions.

In fact, the political system of Yugoslavia is a mixed bag, with hold-overs from the old political state and the authoritarian state inherited from the so-called "real socialism" in Eastern Europe. A state with such mixed attributes is incapable of creative action, of making necessary changes, and of adjusting its institutions and goals to a society which is in constant flux. The blocked political organization became an organization to preserve the status quo, to maintain unproductive, unimaginative professional politics and an appointments policy which ensures the selection of loyal but incompetent individuals.

Democratization is a vital prerequisite both for recovery from the deep-seated crisis and for the imperative revitalization of society. Yugoslavia does not need lip service to democracy, which changes nothing; what it needs is democratization of people's minds and relationships in society. The demand for a genuinely democratic system is all the more important in that Yugoslav civic-mindedness is particularized and fragmented. It is hard to imagine genuine democratization without alternative concepts of development.

The sorely needed accountability might be achieved only if it appeared likely that, because of mistaken ideas or inefficacious work, a different conception and its protagonists might win public confidence. Democratic centralism has a rationale if in the process of arriving at decisions the minority is an equal partner in discussions, and if it is defeated by the force of argument and outvoted after a truly democratic debate.

This road was not the one taken. Every dissenting opinion has been proclaimed to be factionalism.

The deep-seated aversion to change is best illustrated by resistance to proposals that two or more candidates should stand for each electoral post, even though, there being no alternative concepts, they could not do any harm to the established political line. However, the repercussions of such an innovation would be enormous from the standpoint of the monopoly on appointments held by the top political leadership, which selects delegates in return for their votes. The situation has reached such a pass that within the republics and provinces informal caucuses are formed to bid for the most influential positions. Similarly, at the federal level, instead of a principled and argued battle of opinions, coalitions are formed to satisfy republican and provincial interests and to assure the autonomous, monopolistic status of the ruling political cliques in them.

There are other ways in which the latitude for political action by citizens is restricted. Attempts to make the vitally needed step in the direction of emancipating thought and speech have to date produced only modest results. There is no denying that the mass media are much freer, even when they deal with certain topics which until recently were taboo. From time to time a voice will be raised in political circles talking about the need for debate, or stating that different points of view should not be regarded as something unusual.

Unfortunately, public statements are not regarded as binding by the holders of power. Public declarations carry no weight and make no impact whatsoever, even when they communicate important insights. Public opinion does not have a corrective function, nor is it included in debate. Not even academic and professional opinion succeeds in making a mark by force of argued assessments and suggestions if they differ from the fixed opinions and attitudes of the political factors.

Just how insignificant the role of public opinion is can best be seen from the imprudent contracting of foreign debts and the large number of failed investment projects. An interesting sidenote is that no one had any idea of how much Yugoslavia owed or to which foreign creditors, so that a foreign firm had to be hired to determine the actual state of affairs. It is another question why the extent of the foreign debt was kept a secret from the public. Today we know how much is owed to foreign creditors, but the public does not know how much in loans has been handed out by Yugoslavia and whether or not they are being repaid on a regular basis. The debate on nuclear power plants has shown that undemocratic practices in investment decisions and the contracting of debts abroad are continuing. However, the problem lies not in individual decisions but rather in the absence of fundamental democracy in resolving the dilemma over whether to retain or change the political and economic system.

There is no doubt that public and professional opinion is strongly in favour of radical changes, but the political factor still takes no heed of it. This is indeed the most convincing proof that democratic channels have not yet been created for the communication of demands to the political leaders. As regards the institution of "verbal crimes" and their arbitrary interpretation, no society aspiring to democracy can be proud of such a compromising means of repression.

It would be a step forward for civilization and not just for democracy if such repression were to disappear forever. Which is not to say that a clamp-down would not be welcome in regard to economic and other crimes. The reasons for excessive repression where it is not needed and too little where it is indispensable should be sought among other things in the fact that for the state, ideological considerations and criteria are paramount. Disorganized to an unreasonable extent, the state has degenerated into an institutional form of republican, provincial, and communal voluntarism.

Many ills are caused by the fact that there is no well organized and democratically controlled state, with a professional and publicly accountable civil service for the implementation of adopted policy. For the moment, there are certain economic functions

which no one but the state can successfully perform. These are above all long-term planning, fiscal and monetary policy, and incomes policy. Society needs this kind of government in order to rid itself of parallel institutions of decision-making. As things stand today, those who in formal terms do not have power in fact take decisions, while those who formally hold power in fact do not decide on anything. Society will never be able to establish accountability unless it eliminates the practice of informal decision-making, which is always closed to public scrutiny and control.

The League of Communists of Yugoslavia forms the backbone of the political system, and its leadership holds an absolute monopoly of power in society. There are reliable reports that it has succumbed to the temptations of this monopoly, that the League of Communists is living off the glory of its revolutionary past, that to a large extent it has become privatized, that it has a hierarchical structure of professional officials who manage to stay in their positions thanks to personal loyalty to their superiors and unquestioning obedience, and that democratic centralism means that the leaders make decisions and the rank and file unquestioningly carry out these decisions.

The LCY has fused with the state. From an ideological leader it has become the ruling party. All aspects of the lack of democracy within the League of Communists are transferred to society as a whole. The League's claim to be the vanguard of society is obviously at variance with the unsettled state within it. Such a state of affairs could have been a direct catalyst for a reassessment of all relationships in society, as was attempted in the USSR and in China after the deaths of Stalin and Mao Tse Tung. However this did not take place.

The need for a thorough-going reassessment was consistently denied, even though there was a glaring need for it as the situation continued to deteriorate. Not even the bulk of the short-term measures with immediate effect was taken. Instead of energetic action, there were long-winded and fruitless discussions which only gave a pretense that something was being done. No one even pays attention any more to the mass of generalized recommendations. If there is a lackadaisical attitude to problems which brook no delay, there is even less interest in the question of Yugoslavia's inclusion in modern trends and its ability to take part in the third technological revolution.

These questions would not even have arisen if the revolutionary movement had not changed into a party of vested interests, if the self-image of the ruling forces in Yugoslav society had not thereby become highly conservative. Ideas about the structure of society and the working class formed long ago in the past and differing radically from modern-day reality die hard. Conservatism, to be sure, is not manifested merely in the emphasis given to the role of production workers who, it should be noted, have not received the attention from society which would be proper and possible in socialism.

It is seen most of all in the deep suspicion with which experts and intellectuals are regarded, who both numerically and in terms of their creative contribution are receiving an ever more important place in the developed countries. The working class cannot stay a genuine vanguard for long if its intellectuals are looked upon as unreliable fellow-travellers of the revolution. The limited confidence placed in the intelligentsia is perhaps most disastrous in that the country is losing step with technical advances. Deliberations on the system of production, the taking of investment decisions, organization and development of production do not go beyond the conceptual framework of the second technological revolution, which is on the way out. The right moment for joining in the third technological revolution has, it appears, been missed.

The shortcomings of the political system are so numerous and of such magnitude that their reverberations are felt throughout Yugoslav society. The tackling of these defects must begin with a thorough reexamination of the Constitution, without any prejudice or ideological bias. Such reassessments are prompted not just by the weaknesses in the political system, but also by the basic economic flaws in the Constitution, such as: an insufficiently clear definition and institutionalization of socially-owned property, topsy-turvy relations between the parts and the whole, inoperability of the self-management mechanism, an income principle which is not scientifically founded, an insufficiently

elaborated concept of planning and the market mechanism, an incorrectly constituted status and responsibility of the basic organization of associated labour, etc.

In jurisprudence there is general agreement that a country's constitution should be concise, with clear enunciation of the basic principles of the social order and with precisely defined rights and obligations, so that they are easily understood and remembered by every citizen. Such a constitution is not merely the product of the experience and knowledge of the science of law; it also derives from the right of citizens in a democratic and civilized country to have this type of constitution.

The Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 did not abide by the aforementioned principles. The desire to be original in organizing society at all times, unless there was a deliberate attempt to create ambiguities, resulted in Yugoslavia having the most lengthy constitution in the world. It deals with such minor issues as housing for military personnel, or appointment of managers of firms, matters which are properly topics for statutes or bylaws. An inappropriate terminology makes the text of the constitution hard to understand for ordinary folk, and indeed not just them. Sentences containing over one hundred words, articles which cover many pages of text, and the inconsistent and incorrect use of various terms are all symptomatic of an impermissibly low level of legal expertise in drawing up a legal document. At the same time it shows that jurists did not have enough say in the drafting of the Constitution.

4. In addition to the economic and political crisis there is a moral crisis, which is seriously eroding Yugoslav society. Its numerous causes have deep historical roots. But in an ideological society such as ours, the moral crisis has essentially been caused by the ideological crisis, by the failures of the ideological programme of the revolution, by deviations from avowed socialist goals and principles, by a discrepancy between word and deed on the part of the political leadership, by an imperfect legal order, by an inferior and dependent judiciary, by bureaucratic high-handedness and privileges, by moral conformism and reward of careerism, by an absence of free and open criticism of trends, ideas, people in official positions, in short, by a lack of democratic public opinion which would act as the effective conscience of society.

Nothing was done to try to stem the massive migration from the countryside or address all the problems it entails with a programme of cultural education, or by establishing a definite code of conduct and morality. The ubiquitous small-minded peasant mentality, made worse by the notion that everything which is not expressly forbidden is permitted and with a penchant for focussing on immediate interests in the here and now, completely neglecting longer-term or more general interests, has been able to survive for a long time, and in times of crisis it emerges as a force which completely wrecks the system of morality, creating wide opportunities for criminality and other phenomena which have little in common with the values of a socialist society.

Everywhere we see attempts to appropriate socially-owned property, and theft, embezzlement and corruption have become such a normal way of supplementing their budgets for so many citizens that income of this provenance has to be taken into account when the amount of personal consumption expenditure is being calculated. The bad example set by the often unpunished infractions of the law by enterprises and sometimes even by administrative agencies also takes its toll. Privileges are clung to, despite unanimous public censure. There is virtually no appreciation in society of what it means to do an honest day's work.

There are few people who ask themselves just what they have done and how hard they have worked to earn their pay checks. Because the terms of production are not uniform, a situation arises in which the principle of remuneration according to work is abandoned. The salaries paid out in enterprises often depend less on performance and more on someone's agility in fighting for higher prices or lower taxes. The systematic practice of covering the losses of some firms with the earnings of others kills incentive for both sides. A relatively large number of people have acquired wealth in a legal manner but not through their own labour. The widening social disparities caused by the chaotic state of affairs in the economy and society are all the more economically

intolerable and morally indefensible as they are appearing in a time of crisis.

Unemployment is also devastatingly demoralizing the masses. Nepotism is universal, and the favouring of relatives when hiring is done has virtually gained the force of customary law. Unemployment is a difficult social problem not just because a large number of young people cannot make an independent living, but also because a large section of the population, younger and with higher qualifications than the employed work force, has remained unproductive, even though the harnessing of their skills would greatly improve the situation.

It is painful to see the demoralization of these people and their families, the hopelessness of students who go through school without any prospects of finding a job when they get out, or the state of mind of those people who, having at last found employment after several years of waiting, regard their job as no more than a means of livelihood, with no ambition to excel, especially since the years of waiting for a job have caused them to lose touch with their profession and forget most of what they have learned. Nor is the fashion of seeking "temporary" employment abroad any less disastrous. It has become accepted wisdom that it is impossible to make a decent living at home by honest work. People are losing faith not just in the merits of doing one's job conscientiously but also in socialism, whose halo has become tarnished in the light of the ill repute this system has in the countries to which Yugoslav citizens have gone as "guest workers."

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

The erosion of the system of values, which has become more and more pervasive with time, goes beyond moral norms. We have come to such a pass that almost nobody knows what values Yugoslav society seeks to uphold. The horizon of needs has never been seriously opened up for democratic debate. Consequently, the scale of priorities of needs is created spontaneously, largely under the influence of the consumer society mentality.

This psychology, linked with an untrammelled primitivism, has greatly strengthened the propensity towards kitsch in literature, music, film, and entertainment of all types. This propensity is even being deliberately and systematically pandered to by the press, radio and television. Under the assault of the aggressive kitsch which reigns supreme on the scene, genuine cultural values have failed to take root on a large scale in society, despite the large number of important accomplishments in Yugoslavia's cultural life. There are few planned efforts to bring these works to a wider public.

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

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

European civilization?

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

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

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

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

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

The economic reform of 1965 essentially marked a change of course in the strategy of social development: the plan for political democratization was supplanted by a plan of economic liberalization. The idea of self-management, which pivots on the disalienization of politics, was replaced with the idea of decentralization, which led to the setting up of regional centres of alienated power. The ethics of mutual aid and the welfare state gave way to a spirit of grasping individualism and promotion of group interests. Political voluntarism, bold and dynamic in the first postwar decades, when it

was able to count on mass support from the citizens, is now becoming hide-bound and tenacious in defending the system, even when it is becoming obvious that this system is incoherent and inefficient.

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

One of the most typical features of Yugoslav society is the historically unprecedented credibility gap between normative proclamations and reality. According to the official ideology, Yugoslav society has already superseded all the attainments of modern civilization, both in the East and in the West: it has achieved the highest level of democracy; by virtue of the system of self-management it has given the working class power; it has achieved the brotherhood and unity of national groups; it has done away with etatism; for the first time in the world it has proven possible the existence of an efficient market economy in socialism.

In actual fact, our society lags behind modern civilization. In Yugoslavia the fundamental civil rights of individuals can still be violated with impunity; elections of officials are a farce; the judiciary depends on the executive branch; freedom of speech, freedom of organization, and public assembly are restricted by bureaucratic arbitrariness and legal prescriptions which make it possible to persecute opinions which differ from the official line. The working class enjoys no legal right of self-organization or strikes, and it does not have any real voice in political decision-making. Relations between national groups are characterized by clashes of conflicting interests, exploitation, and poor cooperation between autarkic national economies.

We can no longer even speak seriously of a Yugoslav development policy or an integral Yugoslav market. Etatism has not been abolished; it has merely been transferred to the republican level, where it is the most inefficient and malignant. When undesirable consequences began to appear as early as 1967/68 in the form of stagflation and unemployment, the poorly conceived "economic reform" was tossed out the window, and we never did achieve a modern market economy regulated by instruments of a comprehensive development policy. In contradistinction to other modern mixed societies, the specific Yugoslav mix of features of a pre-modern authoritarian state, a civil society, and socialism, which received its definitive form in the 1974 Constitution, does not possess even the minimum coherence needed to ensure the further development of society.

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

a) The sovereignty of the people. At the very foundations of modern civilization is the idea that political power is vested in the people, that the sole legitimate political authority is the one which derives from the freely expressed will of the people, and that therefore there are no moral or legal grounds for any elite [by the will of God, by blood, religion, race, class, ideological credentials, historical merit or on any other grounds] to arrogate to itself the right to speak, decide, or use force on behalf of a nation.

A nation can only devolve political power to its representatives for a limited time, with the right to appoint, oversee, and replace them, and if need be remove them by force if they violate the "social contract" and instead of general national interests begin to pursue

their own special interests. The principle of the sovereignty of the people has been affirmed by the democratic political philosophy and practice of the democratic revolutions of the 18th century.

However, socialist theory has taken this principle to extremely radical lengths. If a monopoly of economic power is also one of the means by which elites are formed, which can foist themselves upon society and gain full control over its political life, then all the institutions which make such a monopoly of power possible are incompatible with the principle of the sovereignty of the people, regardless of whether it is big capital or a bureaucratic state. In this sense, full sovereignty of the people could be achieved only in a classless society, in which political, economic, and cultural life would be organized in a democratic manner.

The prerequisite for such a democracy ["consultative democracy" or "integrated self-management"] is the free election and recall of all officials, public oversight of their work, a separation of powers, and the absence of bureaucratic privileges. These prerequisites have long ago been created in modern society. Yugoslavia has still not achieved this level, even though many years have gone by since it proclaimed the ideas of self-management, debureaucratization, and deprofessionalization of politics.

b) Self-determination of nations. In modern, civilized society, any political oppression or discrimination on ethnic grounds is unacceptable. The Yugoslav solution of the national question at first could have been regarded as an exemplary model of a multinational federation, in which the principle of a unified state and state policy was happily married to the principle of the political and cultural autonomy of national groups and ethnic minorities. Over the past two decades, the principle of unity has become weakened and overshadowed by the principle of national autonomy, which in practice has turned into the sovereignty of the federal units [the republics, which as a rule are not ethnically homogeneous].

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

c) Human rights. The modern age began with the affirmation of human rights. These were originally civil rights: the right of freedom of thought, conscience, speech, movement, association with others, organization, public assembly, public demonstrations, and the election of representatives. In our century, social and economic rights have been added to the list of civil rights: the right to work, to a free choice of occupation, to an education, to equal pay for equal work, to social security. The UN General Assembly formulated all these rights in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was adopted on December 10, 1948.

Yugoslavia was one of the member states sponsoring this declaration; Yugoslavia is also a signatory to the Helsinki Final Act and all similar international instruments. There is no doubt that there are quite a few modern-day states which have a lower standard of human rights than our own. But in Yugoslavia "verbal crimes" are still prosecuted; books are still being banned and destroyed, and plays are taken off the repertoire of theatres if they are deemed "ideologically unacceptable." Public expression of opinions is trammled; association, assembly, and public demonstrations are prohibited; exercise of the constitutional right to send petitions of protest to government agencies is branded as a hostile act; the organizers of protest strikes are hounded; elections of officials have turned into a farce of self-nomination. So long as all these things persist, we cannot call

ourselves a civilized and enlightened society.

d) Efficiency. The modern age is the age of efficiency. Public institutions and the manner of organizing the overall life of society must pass the test of rationality. This does not always mean an efficient selection of goals: it is a great shortcoming of our age that the spheres of politics, ethics, and science have become separated. However, instrumental efficiency and the ability to find the proper means to achieve set goals and the effective implementation of a given policy are the *conditio sine qua non* of every modern state. This further means that every modern state is a large system whose individual parts are regulated, coordinated and directed in a uniform manner, that the rules of the game are clear, constant, and can be changed only after serious study and preparation, that state officials are selected primarily according to standards of competence and personal integrity, that the adoption of decisions is based to the greatest possible extent on reliable information and analysis of costs and expected gains.

Not a single one of these prerequisites for a rational, efficient policy has been met in Yugoslavia: the country is made up of eight separate and poorly linked systems; there is no uniform development policy at the national level, and even if such a policy did exist on paper, it could not be put into effect in practice; officials are selected primarily according to the criterion of loyalty, so that in great measure they are incompetent and easily corrupted; decisions are taken without proper deliberation, arbitrarily and with bias, without prior public debate, and on the basis of unreliable, one-sided information, without any consideration of possible alternatives. So long as such an inefficient style of work prevails in Yugoslav political life, we cannot consider ourselves to be a modern state. It follows from this analysis that political democratization and infusion of new blood, genuine self-determination and equality for all members of all the Yugoslav nations, including the Serbs, full exercise of human, civil, and economic and social rights, and consistent streamlining of the Yugoslav political system and development policy are those indispensable prerequisites without which recovery from the present crisis in Yugoslav society could not even be imagined.

## **THE STATUS OF SERBIA AND THE SERBIAN NATION**

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

Not much knowledge or statistical data were needed to ascertain that Serbia's economy has been lagging behind for many years. Nevertheless, this fact was only officially recognized in the Plan for 1981-1985, which stated that measures would be taken in this period to halt this trend. This undertaking was soon forgotten. The five-year period was spent making new studies to see whether Serbia was indeed falling behind in its development. The findings convincingly showed what everyone already knew, viz., that according to all relevant indices Serbia's economy was consistently below the Yugoslav average, and the gap was widening. The slowed rate of growth did not produce enough momentum to overcome economic underdevelopment in a section of its territory with 1.5 million inhabitants and a per capita national income more than 30% below the corresponding income in the three underdeveloped republics.

Studies have left not the shadow of a doubt that the relative lagging behind of Serbia was primarily the result of lower investment expenditure per head of population and not of poorer investment efficiency. According to official statistics, the rate of return on investments in Serbia for the entire postwar period was only lower than that in Slovenia or Vojvodina, while in the last decade [the period 1976-1983] it was the highest in

Yugoslavia. Greater investment efficiency could only partially compensate for the loss in social product because of lower investment, but it was not able to prevent the formation of a per capita value of fixed assets at a level of just 80.5% of the Yugoslav average, which is even lower than the level achieved by Montenegro or Bosnia and Hercegovina, two republics which have the status of underdeveloped republics.

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

Consistent discrimination against Serbia's economy in the postwar period cannot be fully explained without insight into the relations among the Yugoslav nations between the two world wars, as seen and assessed by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Its views were decisively influenced by the authoritative Comintern, which, in its efforts to achieve its own strategical and tactical goals at the international level, sought to break up Yugoslavia. Finding its ideological justification in drawing a distinction between the "oppressor" nation of Serbs and the other "oppressed" nations, such a policy is a drastic example of how Marxist teachings about the class divisions in each nation were eclipsed by pragmatic considerations which, in an effort to take advantage of inter-communal friction, pushed class internationalism onto the sidelines.

This fact explains to some extent why the CPY did not make an effort to carry out its own research in order to arrive at the real truth about the economic nature of relations between the Yugoslav nations. The assessment of these relations, which amounted to the theory that the political hegemony of the Serbian bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding economic domination by Serbia, was in fact taken over wholesale from the separatist-minded bourgeois political parties. Neither before nor after the war was the CPY willing to determine for itself the actual state of affairs, nor was it willing to enter into any kind of debate which might call into question the assessments and policies made in the past, which are still being insisted upon to this day. This consistent line was all the more remarkable in that even without special studies, with only a cursory look at the basic indicators of the level of development in the census year of 1948, it could be seen that Serbia could not have had an economically privileged position in the years between the two world wars.

The strongly pronounced agrarian character of Serbia's economy clearly showed that it was lagging behind in industrialization. The share of agriculture in the social product was greater and the share of industry smaller than the Yugoslav average. The CPY did not revise its assessment in the light of these facts, and what is more it did not pay even the slightest attention to the studies made by research institutes which as early as the beginning of the 1950s documented quite a different picture of Serbia's economic position between the two world wars. The constant repetition of the prewar assessment over the course of four decades gives an idea of the exceptionally large political and economic stake held in maintaining such a distorted view. The purpose was to inculcate in the Serbian people a feeling of historical guilt in the hope of weakening their opposition to the political and economic subordination to which they were consistently subjected.

The postwar policy towards Serbia's economy, which was quite clearly mapped out in the report on the First Five-Year Plan, was based on the prewar assessment. In this plan Serbia was unjustifiably assigned the slowest rate of industrialization, after Slovenia. In practice this policy was inaugurated with the relocation to other republics of industrial plants for the manufacture of airplanes, lorries, and armaments, and it was carried on with compulsory purchases of agricultural produce, price scissors to the

detriment of raw materials and agricultural products, lower investment rates per head of population than the Yugoslav average, and levies for the development of underdeveloped regions. But nothing so eloquently speaks of Serbia's subordinated position than the fact as it did not have the initiative in a single key issue having to do with the political and economic system. Therefore, Serbia's status should be studied in the context of the political and economic dominance of Slovenia and Croatia, which have initiated changes in all the systems to date.

Slovenia and Croatia started at the highest level of development, and they have enjoyed the fastest rates of growth. As their relative status has improved, the gap between them and the rest of Yugoslavia has become much wider. Such a course of events, which flies in the face of the declared policy of balanced development, would not be possible if the economic system were not biased, if these two republics had not been in a position to impose plans which furthered their own economic interests. Manufacturing industries, which have a relatively larger share in their economies, throughout the entire postwar period have enjoyed more favourable terms of production, strongly influenced by price disparities and the price regime, as well as protective tariffs. The greater scope given to the market in the 1960s worked more to the advantage of the developed parts of the country.

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

Serbia's economic subordination cannot be fully understood without mention of its politically inferior status, from which all other relationships flowed. As far as the CPY was concerned, the economic hegemony of the Serbian nation between the two world wars was beyond dispute, regardless of the fact that Serbia's rate of industrialization was lower than the Yugoslav average. This ideological platform gave rise to opinions and behaviour which were to have a crucial influence on subsequent political events and inter-communal relations. Before the Second World War, the Slovenes and Croats set up their own national communist parties, and they gained a decisive voice in the CPY's Central Committee. Their political leaders became arbiters on all political issues both during and after the war.

These two neighbouring republics shared a similar history; they had the same religion and aspirations for greater independence, and as the most highly developed, they also had common economic interests, all of which provided sufficient grounds for a permanent coalition in the endeavour to achieve political dominance. This coalition was cemented by the long years of collaboration between Tito and Kardelj, the two most eminent political figures in postwar Yugoslavia, who enjoyed inviolable authority in the centres of power. A monopoly on appointment of officials gave them the deciding voice on the composition of the top political leaderships of Yugoslavia and of all the republics and provinces.

Everyone knows about the exceptionally large contribution made by Edvard Kardelj in the drafting and adoption of the decisions by the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia and all postwar constitutions. He was in a position to build his own personal ideas into the foundations of the social order, and in practice no one could challenge them. The doggedness with which Slovenia and Croatia are today opposing any constitutional change shows how well the 1974 Constitution suits them. Ideas about the social order had no prospects whatsoever of being accepted if they differed from the views taken by these two aforementioned political authorities, and even after their deaths nothing could be done, since the Constitution, with its provisions for a veto, was insured against any changes. In view of all this, there can be no doubt that Slovenia and Croatia entrenched their political and economic domination, thanks to which they are achieving their national agendas and economic aspirations.

In such circumstances, and subjected to a constant barrage of accusations of being "oppressors," "unitarists," "centralists," or "policemen," the Serbian people could not achieve equality in Yugoslavia, for whose creation they had borne the greatest sacrifices. The vindictive policy against the Serbs began before the Second World War, in the sense that a communist party was deemed unnecessary for a "nation of oppressors." There were relatively few Serbs in the CPY's Central Committee, and some of them, probably in order to maintain their positions, declared themselves to be members of other ethnic groups.

During the war Serbia was not in a position to take an equal part in adopting decisions which set the course for future relations between the Yugoslav nations and determined Yugoslavia's social order. The Anti-Fascist Council of Serbia was set up in the second half of 1944, later than in the other republics, while there was no Communist Party of Serbia until the war was over. Delegates to the Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia were elected from the Serbian military units and members of the Supreme Headquarters who happened to be in the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina at the time, unlike the delegates from some other republics, who travelled to the session from their own territories and who had the backing of national political organizations with elaborated positions and programmes.

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

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

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

Serbia could have requested exemption from paying in contributions to the Federal Development Fund with a clear conscience, secure in the knowledge that it has more than fulfilled its obligations of providing mutual aid. Only Serbia made genuine sacrifices for the sake of the development of the three underdeveloped republics and

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

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

In view of everything that has occurred in the postwar period, such pressure is nothing new. What would be new would be for Serbia to put up determined resistance to this pressure. Unfortunately, this did not materialize. The Serbian leaders did not even avail themselves of all the legal remedies at their disposal, such as the veto power, which is their only recourse in a situation when they stand alone with their justified demands, and it seems that they did not even consider making an appropriate response, up to and including the forcing of a political crisis if there was no alternative.

Serbia's politicians proved to be unprepared for the historical task which was posed for them by the extremely adverse internal relationships within the Yugoslav state. The historical moment behooved them to put their foot down and state in no uncertain terms that there would be no more of the postwar practice of ousting politicians who broach the issue of equal rights for Serbia, the practice of discriminating against economists, sociologists, philosophers and writers from Serbia who give timely warnings about socially harmful phenomena and the consequences of wrong decisions, as well as the practice of getting rid of able businessmen, thereby crippling Serbia's economy in the stepped-up competition in the market.

7. The attitude taken to Serbia's economic stagnation shows that the vindictive policy towards this republic has not lost any of its edge with the passing of time. On the contrary, encouraged by its own success, it has grown ever stronger, to the point of genocide. The discrimination against citizens of Serbia who, because of the representation of the republics on the principle of parity, have fewer federal posts open to them than others and fewer of their own delegates in the Federal Assembly is politically untenable, and the vote of citizens from Serbia carries less weight than the vote of citizens from any of the other republics or any of the provinces.

Seen in this light, Yugoslavia appears not as a community of equal citizens or equal nations and nationalities but rather as a community of eight equal territories. And yet not even here is Serbia equal, because of its special legal and political status, which reflects the desire to keep the Serbian people constantly under control. The watchword of this policy has been "a weak Serbia ensures a strong Yugoslavia," and this idea has been taken a step further in the concept that if the Serbs as the largest national group are allowed rapid economic expansion, they would pose a threat to the other national groups. It is for this reason that all possible means have been used to hamstring Serbia's economic progress and political consolidation by imposing more and more restrictions on it. One such restriction, which is very acute, is the present undefined and

contradictory constitutional status of Serbia.

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

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

The widening of autonomy was rationalized by assurances that it would bring about a higher degree of equality between the national groups and expedite the conduct of public affairs. The events in Kosovo at the end of the 1960s were forewarning of what could happen if autonomy were to be extended. There was even less reason for giving Vojvodina more autonomy. The greater prerogatives it received have encouraged the creation of an autonomous bureaucracy and have resulted in serious instances of separatist behaviour which had never occurred in the past, in growing autarky of the economy, and in political voluntarism. The influence has grown of those outside the provinces and in Vojvodina itself who are spreading misinformation designed to divide the Serbian people into "Serbs from Serbia" and "Serbs from Vojvodina."

With wholehearted assistance from outside, the Serbian provinces have become transformed into "constituent elements of the Federation," a status which has given them cause to feel and behave like federal units, ignoring the fact that they are an integral part of the Republic of Serbia. Once again the attempt to achieve a balance through dualism could not succeed. The way the provinces are behaving today shows that in practice the separatist forces and those seeking greater autonomy have totally prevailed. The Republic of Serbia has had its hands tied and in issues of vital importance is prevented from taking concerted action to protect the interests of the national group to whom it belongs.

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

Those individuals who did everything they could to plant the seeds of internal conflicts in the constitutions are today coming forward as arbiters and peace-makers, who, in the time-honoured practice of apportioning blame equally to all concerned, are slapping the wrists of both Serbia proper and its provinces and suggesting to them that a way out should be sought in the strict application of these selfsame constitutions. The problem will never be resolved in this fashion, and Serbia will continue to dissipate its energies coping with conflicts without any prospect of achieving complete success in the enterprise. This no doubt was the idea when the provinces were given wider autonomy, especially since the perpetuation of strife in Serbia gives others an excuse to interfere in its internal affairs and in this way prolong their domination over it. After the federalization of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, such interference in the internal affairs of a republic has only remained possible in the case of Serbia.

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

8. The expulsion of the Serbian people from Kosovo bears dramatic testimony to their historical defeat. In the spring of 1981, open and total war was declared on the Serbian people, which had been carefully prepared for in advance in the various stages of administrative, political and constitutional reform. This open war has been going on for almost five years. It is being waged with a skilful and carefully orchestrated use of a variety of methods and tactics, with the active and not just tacit support of various political centres in Yugoslavia, which they are taking no pains to conceal and which is more ruinous than the encouragement given by our neighbours. Moreover, we are still not looking this war in the face, nor are we calling it by its proper name. It has been going on now longer than the entire national liberation war fought in this country from April 6, 1941, to May 9, 1945.

The Ballists' rebellion in Kosovo and Metohija at the very end of the war, which was organized with the collaboration of Nazi units, was militarily put down in 1944-1945, but as we now see, it was not politically quelled. In its present-day physiognomy, disguised with new content, it is being pursued with greater success and is getting close to final victory. There has been no real showdown with neofascist aggression; all the measures taken to date have merely removed manifestations of this aggression from the streets, while in fact steeling resolve to achieve its uncompromising, racially motivated goals at any cost and using all possible means. Even the deliberately draconian sentences handed down against young offenders have been designed to incite and spread ethnic hatred.

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

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

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

nation whom they lead.

It was the Albanian nationalists in the political leadership of Kosovo who began to turn the principle of equal national rights, for whose sake in Kosovo and Metohija as well as elsewhere it was Serbian soldiers who had shed the most blood, into their opposite by pursuing a very well defined policy in planned stages, according to a set plan of action, with a clear goal. At a suitable moment the autonomous region acquired the status of an autonomous province, and then the status of a "constituent part of the Federation," with greater prerogatives than the remaining sections of the Republic, to which it only de jure belongs. Thus the preparations for the next step, in the form of the Albanianization of Kosovo and Metohija, were carried out in full legality. Similarly, unification of the literary language, the national name, flag, and school textbooks, following instructions from Tirana, was carried out quite openly, and the frontier between the two state territories was completely open.

Conspiracies, which are usually hatched in secret, were planned in Kosovo not just openly but even demonstratively. Accordingly, the large-scale popular demonstrations in 1981 appeared more as an instance of exhibitionism and bravado than as a new phenomenon posing a threat to the entire country, just as subsequently each new revelation of the persecution of Serbs in Kosovo was regarded as "nit-picking," and news items appearing in the "Belgrade press" were virtually considered to be a greater crime than the acts of arson, murder, rape, or vandalism which were reported, acts committed by persons many of whom to this day have not been politically identified or brought to justice.

The attitude taken by those in power and the authorities in Kosovo towards the violence directed at the Serbian people is particularly significant. The hushing up or glossing over of these crimes, the practice of suppressing the whole truth, and dilatory tactics in enquiries and prosecution all encourage large and small acts of terror, and at the same time a false, "sanitized" picture of conditions in Kosovo is created. Moreover, there is a persistent tendency to find a political excuse for the violence perpetrated against Serbs in the alleged existence of hatred on both sides, intolerance, and vindictiveness, while of late more and more is being heard of the imaginary activities of an "external" enemy from outside the Province, viz, Serbian nationalism emanating from "Belgrade."

The Martinovic case is noteworthy not only because of the particular type of unprecedented violence involved, which is reminiscent of the darkest days of the Turkish practice of impalement, but also because of the stubborn refusal to let a court of law determine and acknowledge the truth. Instead of providing an opportunity for reaffirming the rule of law and human rights as the highest values, this case was regarded in Kosovo as an opportunity to insist on the province's sovereignty, which it does not have in terms of the Constitution, and to impose on the Socialist Republic of Serbia the principle of "non-interference" in the internal affairs of the province, as though two international personalities were involved.

The Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija not only have their past, embodied in cultural and historical monuments of priceless value, but also their own spiritual, cultural, and moral values now in the present, for they are living in the cradle of the Serbs' historical existence. The acts of violence which down through the centuries have decimated the Serbian population of Kosovo and Metohija are here and now, in our own era, reaching their highest pitch.

The exodus of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija in Socialist Yugoslavia exceeds in scope and character all earlier stages of this great persecution of the Serbian people. In his day, Jovan Cvijic estimated that in all the population migrations, from the mass exodus led by Arsenije Cernojevic in 1690 to the early years of the present century, more than 500,000 Serbs were uprooted; of this number, between 1876 and 1912, some 150,000 Serbs were driven from hearth and home by the savage terror of the local privileged Albanian bashi-bazouks.

During World War II, more than 60,000 Serbs were expelled from Kosovo and Metohija, but it was after the war that this exodus reached its highest proportions: in the last

twenty-odd years, upwards of 200,000 Serbs have been forced to leave. It is not just that the last of the remnants of the Serbian nation are leaving their homes at an unabated rate, but according to all evidence, faced with a physical, moral and psychological reign of terror, they seem to be preparing for their final exodus. Unless things change radically, in less than ten years' time there will no longer be any Serbs left in Kosovo, and an "ethnically pure" Kosovo, that unambiguously stated goal of the Greater Albanian racists, already outlined in the programmes and actions of the Prizren League of 1878-1881, will be achieved.

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

The present-day situation in Kosovo can no longer be fobbed off with empty words, convoluted, unreadable resolutions, or vague political platforms; it has become a matter of Yugoslav concern. Between provincial segregation, which is becoming increasingly exclusive, and federal arbitration, which merely paralyzes every appropriate and often urgent action, the unresolved situation is turning into a vicious circle of unresolvable issues.

Kosovo's fate remains a vital question for the entire Serbian nation. If it is not resolved with the sole correct outcome of the imposed war; if genuine security and unambiguous equality for all the peoples living in Kosovo and Metohija are not established; if objective and permanent conditions for the return of the expelled nation are not created, then this part of the Republic of Serbia and Yugoslavia will become a European issue, with the gravest possible unforeseeable consequences. Kosovo represents one of the most important points in the central Balkans. The ethnic mixture in many Balkan lands reflects the ethnic profile of the Balkan Peninsula, and a demand for an ethnically pure Kosovo, which is being actively pursued, is not only a direct and serious threat to all the peoples who live there as minorities but, if it is achieved, will spark off a wave of expansionism which will pose a real and daily threat to all the national groups living in Yugoslavia.

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

Lika, Kordun, and Banija have remained the least developed parts of Croatia, a fact which has given strong impetus to the emigration of Serbs to Serbia, as well as migration to other parts of Croatia, where the Serbs, as newcomers, members of a minority and second-class citizens, have been very susceptible to assimilation. Indeed, the Serbian population in Croatia has been subjected to a subtle but effective policy of assimilation. A component part of this policy is prohibition of all Serbian associations and cultural institutions in Croatia, of which there used to be many in the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or Yugoslavia between the two world wars. Then there is the insistence on the official language, which bears the name of another national group [Croatian], as a personification of national inequality.

Under an article of the constitution this language has been made compulsory for the Serbs living in Croatia, and the nationalistic Croatian grammarians have carried out a

systematic and well organized campaign to make it as different as possible from the standard language spoken in the other republics of the Serbo-Croatian language area, resulting in a weakening of the bonds between the Serbs in Croatia and the other Serbs.

Such an outcome is willingly paid for with a break in linguistic continuity for the Croats themselves and the expunging of international words highly useful for communication with other cultures, especially in the sphere of science and technology. However, the Serbian population in Croatia is not just culturally cut off from their conationals in Serbia; Serbia has much fewer opportunities for receiving information about their fate and their economic and cultural status than is the case with some other national groups in Yugoslavia as regards their conationals living in other countries. The integrity of the Serbian nation and its culture throughout Yugoslavia presents itself as the most crucial question of its survival and progress.

The fate of Serbian institutions which were established in the course of the Second World War and in its immediate aftermath also fits into this general picture. In the national liberation war and in the early years after its conclusion, the national life of Serbs in Croatia was very intensive in their own political, cultural, and educational institutions. A general decision adopted by the Executive Board of the National Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Croatia [ZAVNOH], dated November 10, 1943, called for the setting up of a Serbian group of delegates to ZAVNOH to act as a national and political leadership of the Serbian population in Croatia. This group was established on January 12, 1944, in liberated Otocac.

At the end of the war, on the initiative of the Serbian Group, the First Congress of Serbs in Croatia was held in Zagreb on September 30, 1945, where the more than 30,000 participants formed an Executive Committee of Serbs in Croatia to serve as a "broad-based political organization of the unified Serbian people in Croatia," within the National Front. With the direct participation of these political bodies, the Serbs subsequently founded their own cultural institutions and began organizing national education. On October 22, 1944, the Obilic Serbian Choral Society was set up on the ruins of the Glina Orthodox church, the scene of horrific ustasa massacres, and less than a month later, on November 18th, again in Glina, the Prosvjeta Serbian Cultural and Educational Society was founded.

On January 4, 1948, in Zagreb, a Central Serbian Library and Museum of the Serbs in Croatia were established under the auspices of Prosvjeta, which also sponsored publishing activities and had its own printing works. What is more, starting from September 10, 1943, the national liberation movement published a special newspaper for the Serbian population in Croatia printed in the Cyrillic script and called Srpska rijec. In the postwar years, Srpska rijec changed its name to Prosvjeta. The national liberation movement distributed Cyrillic readers to the Serbian children in Croatia in the school year 1944/45, and in a decision taken on July 18, 1944, the Presidency of ZAVNOH guaranteed full equality of the Cyrillic script with the Latin script, and in schools in the territory of Croatia where the majority of the pupils were Serbian children, Cyrillic was allowed to have precedence.

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

Such a situation prevailed during the war years and just after the war, but then gradually everything changed. It is not recorded anywhere that the Serbs had themselves ever decided that one of these institutions was not needed, that it should be done away with or replaced with another one which would be more in keeping with the spirit of the times. And yet, all these institutions, one after the other, were done away with in the course of the 1950s, pursuant to decisions handed down by the competent republican authorities of Croatia.

The last to be forced to close its doors was the Prosvjeta Serbian cultural society, under a decision of the Croatian Republican Secretariat for Internal Affairs of May 23, 1980. The help of the Republican Conference of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Croatia was enlisted to justify this fait accompli. The resolutions adopted at a meeting held on October 2, 1980, explain that the situation had radically changed from that which prevailed in the war years and just after the war.

These resolutions in effect leave no scope for any demands for the setting up of special institutions for the Serbian people in Croatia: "concern for the questions of culture, history, life and creativity of the Croatian or Serbian nations in the Socialist Republic of Croatia cannot be relinquished to any separate national societies or organizations."

This position was explained as follows: "While it is right for our national minorities to have their own cultural institutions and clubs, it is not right for members of the nations to found such institutions, and this holds true everywhere in Yugoslavia, but it is particularly not right for Serbs in Croatia or Croats in Croatia to do so." At the end of the document we also find these words: "Everything should be done so that the Serbs in Croatia are not ignored as a nation, so that, as is the case in some school textbooks, they are not referred to virtually as newcomers. We have a common history, culture and language, but individual features should be respected." At the consultation opinions were also voiced to the effect that the Cyrillic script should be taught more widely in Croatia.

Thanks to the position taken by the Republican Conference of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Croatia, against which not one political instance in Croatia, or outside it, protested, all the forms of national life of the Serbian people in Croatia which they had established in the course of their long history and in the national liberation war publicly and definitively ceased to exist.

The policies on inter-communal relations which had been laid down by the national liberation movement were radically revised, and even the constitutional guarantees of national rights and freedoms, not to mention civil rights, came under a cloud. The practical meaning of such statements as: "everything should be done," etc., or "the Cyrillic script should be taught more widely in Croatia" can be assessed only in the light of the actual policy on language which is being pursued in the Socialist Republic of Croatia. The fanatic zeal to create a separate Croatian language countervailing any idea of a common language of the Croats and Serbs in the long run does not leave much hope that the Serbian people in Croatia will be able to preserve their national identity.

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

The status of the Serbian nation is rendered particularly acute by the fact that a very large number of Serbs live outside Serbia, and particularly outside Serbia proper; in fact this number is larger than the total number of members of some other national groups. According to the 1981 census, 24% of all Serbs, or 1,958,000, lived outside the territory of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, a number much larger than the number of Slovenes, Albanians, or Macedonians in Yugoslavia taken individually, and almost the same number as the Muslims.

There are 3,285,000 Serbs who live outside Serbia proper, accounting for 40.3% of their total number. In the general process of disintegration which is taking place in Yugoslavia, the Serbs are the most sorely affected. The present course being taken by

Yugoslav society is completely at odds with the one followed for decades and even centuries until the common state was formed. This process is aimed at completely breaking up the national unity of the Serbian nation. The case of present-day Vojvodina and its autonomy is the best illustration of how everything has been subordinated to such goals.

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

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

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

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

Whereas the Slovenian, Croatian, Macedonian, and Montenegrin cultures and literatures are today becoming consolidated, the Serbian culture alone is becoming systematically disintegrated. It is considered ideologically legitimate and consonant with self-management to subdivide Serbian literature and differentiate Serbian writers as Vojvodina, Montenegrin, or Bosnian and Hercegovinian writers.

Serbian literature is being stripped of its best authors and most important works for the sake of artificially establishing new regional literatures. The usurpation and fragmentation of the Serbian cultural heritage has gone so far that in school the children are taught that Njegos is not a Serbian writer, that Laza Kostic and Veljko Petrovic are writers from Vojvodina, while Petar Kocic and Jovan Ducic are classified as writers from

Bosnia and Hercegovina. Until just recently Mesa Selimovic was not allowed to call himself a Serbian writer, and even now his last wish to be included in the opus of Serbian literature is not being honoured. Serbian culture has more writers and intellectuals who are out of favour, proscribed, ignored, or deemed undesirable than any other national culture in Yugoslavia; to make matters worse, many of them have been completely wiped out of literary memory.

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

The impressive and truly revolutionary cultural advances made in the first decades after the Second World War, as seen among other things in the creation of a far-flung network of educational institutions, from elementary schools to universities, began to lose momentum towards the end of the 1960s. Stagnation set in, followed by marked deterioration, so that today our system of education and schools are very primitive and lag far behind the needs and goals of the modern society and civilization in which we live.

The school system based on so-called "career-oriented" education and characterized by inferior quality of instruction has proven to be completely bankrupt. Several generations of school-leavers have been intellectually crippled and impoverished; we are turning out a surplus of uncultured, half-baked professionals, unequipped to take an effective role in the economy and social services and unprepared for creative and intellectual efforts. There is no country on earth which has encumbered its educational system with more legal regulations than Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia has a total of one hundred and ten federal, republican, and provincial statutes on the books regulating various and sundry aspects of the school system, many of which have been amended a number of times, so that considerable research is sometimes needed to arrive at the definitive text of a given law.

Despite all this, education in Yugoslavia has never been so superficial, fragmented and mediocre as it is today. Law-makers have de jure created eight educational systems, which are growing farther and farther apart from one another, and no amount of consultation about core curricula can reverse the course of development which has been mapped out in the legal statutes.

The practice of holding meetings and consultations about common principles, which has become popular of late, after fifteen years of systematic dismantlement of the Yugoslav state community, would appear to be a utopian dream. What first must be done is to eliminate those laws which have a centrifugal effect so as to continue along the line of togetherness and unity which has been followed in these parts for more than one hundred and fifty years. Otherwise, we shall produce, and we are producing, generations who will be less and less Yugoslavs and more and more dissatisfied national romantics and self-seeking nationalists. A country which does not have a uniform system of education cannot hope to stay united in the future.

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

personality. The channeling of boys and girls towards specific vocations from the age of 14 is the epitome of a fundamental lack of freedom.

The ideological cudgels taken up against "elitism" have had an unfortunate sequel: for at least two decades we have been fostering mediocrity at all levels of society, including education. There is no society in the world that wants to destroy its elite in the areas of scholarship and expertise, science and innovation. By declaring war on such an elite, we have created an elite of well-heeled individuals who are able to give their less than gifted children the kind of education which is no longer provided by the elementary and high schools.

The financial straits in which the schools find themselves have vitiated their social standing, and the insistence on "moral and political correctness," especially at the universities, has spawned moral and political conformism and careerism, so that the universities, especially the liberal arts colleges, have been deprived of intellectuals of the present generation. In no other European country has education been brought into such a plight of financial and social stagnation.

Precisely at a time when public funds are being lavishly squandered, a policy of restricted spending has been introduced for the universities, which have been receiving less and less money. For a decade and a half the university faculties have not been able to employ new teaching assistants, so that the oldest Yugoslav universities, especially the Belgrade University, have never before in their history had such a high average age of their professors and researchers. Higher education and scientific research, which in all countries are the basic engine of development in the computer age, have been completely neglected.

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

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

In this hour of crisis, we must today begin to think about tomorrow, about the 21st century; even though socioeconomic conditions are not favourable, we must create a vision of tomorrow's world in which civilization will be based on microelectronics, artificial intelligence, robotization, computer information, artificial insemination, and genetic engineering.

For all these reasons, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts proposes that a carefully planned and thorough-going reorganization of the public, institutional basis of our scientific research effort be undertaken immediately and without dogmatic, ideological bias or "self-management" sluggishness. Such a reorganization must be in the spirit of modernization and efficiency, with larger financial investments, greater attention to young scientists, a freer hand and greater independence for creative personalities in designing academic and scientific research programmes. In short, it is vital that we integrate all our scientific potential into the mainstream of world science as soon as possible.

10. After the dramatic inter-communal strife in the course of the Second World War, it seemed as though nationalism had run its course and was well on the way to disappearing completely. Such an impression has proven to be deceptive. Not much time passed before nationalism began to rear its ugly head again, and each successive constitutional change has created more of the institutional prerequisites needed for it to become full blown. Nationalism has been generated from the top, its prime initiators being the politicians. The basic cause of this manifold crisis is the ideological defeat which nationalism has inflicted on socialism. The disintegrational processes of all descriptions which have brought the Yugoslav state to the verge of ruin, coupled with a breakdown in the system of values, are the consequences of this defeat.

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

The establishment of the Serbian people's complete national and cultural integrity, regardless of which republic or province they might be living in, is their historical and democratic right. The acquisition of equal rights and an independent development for the Serbian nation have a more profound historical significance. In less than fifty years, for two successive generations, the Serbs were twice subjected to physical annihilation, forced assimilation, conversion to a different religion, cultural genocide, ideological indoctrination, denigration and compulsion to renounce their own traditions because of an imposed guilt complex.

Intellectually and political unmanned, the Serbian nation has had to bear trials and tribulations that are too severe not to leave deep scars in their psyche, and at the close of this century of great technological feats of the human mind, this fact must not be ignored. If they want to have a future in the family of cultured and civilized nations of the world, the Serbian people must be allowed to find themselves again and become an historical personality in their own right, to regain a sense of their historical and spiritual being, to make a clear assessment of their economic and cultural interests, to devise a modern social and national programme which will inspire present generations and generations to come.

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

The fact that citizens as a whole and the working class are not represented in the Federal Assembly in their own chambers cannot be blamed solely on the tendency to give precedence to national attributes; it also reflects a desire to put Serbia into an inferior position and in this manner weaken its political influence. But the worst misfortune of all is the fact that the Serbian people do not have their own state, as do all the other nations.

Admittedly, the first article of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Serbia contains a clause declaring that Serbia is a state, but the question must be asked what kind of a state is denied jurisdiction over its own territory or does not have the means at its disposal to establish law and order in one of its sections, or ensure the personal safety and security of property of its citizens, or put a stop to the genocide in Kosovo and halt the exodus of Serbs from their ancestral homes. Such a status is evidence of political discrimination against Serbia, especially in the light of the fact that the Constitution of the SFRY has imposed upon it internal federalization as a permanent source of conflict between Serbia proper and its provinces. The aggressive Albanian nationalism in Kosovo cannot be brought to heel unless Serbia ceases to be the only republic whose internal affairs are ordered by others.

The formally proclaimed equality of all the republics in the Constitution of the SFRY has been negated by the fact that the Republic of Serbia has been forced to hand over a large portion of its rights and prerogatives to the autonomous provinces, whose status has been regulated in detail by the federal constitution. Serbia must state openly that this arrangement was forced upon it, especially as regards the status of the provinces, in effect raised to that of republics, which regard themselves much more as a constituent unit of the federation than a part of the Republic of Serbia.

On top of its failure to provide for a state for the Serbian nation, the Constitution of the SFRY also put insurmountable difficulties in the way of constituting such a state. It is imperative that this constitution be amended so as to satisfy Serbia's legitimate interests. The autonomous provinces should become genuinely integral parts of the Republic of Serbia, while receiving that degree of autonomy which does not disrupt the integrity of the Republic and which will be able to satisfy the general interests of the community at large.

The unresolved issue of Serbia's statehood is not the only flaw which should be remedied through amendment of the Constitution. Under the 1974 Constitution, Yugoslavia became a loose state community, in which there are those who are considering other possibilities and not just the Yugoslav option, as can be seen from recent statements made by public figures in Slovenia and the earlier positions taken by the Macedonian politicians.

Such trends and the thorough job made of disintegration of the country make one think that Yugoslavia is in danger of further dissolution. The Serbian people cannot stand idly by and wait for the future in such a state of uncertainty. All the nations in Yugoslavia must therefore be given the opportunity to state their desires and intentions. In this event Serbia would be able to make its own options and define its own national interests. Such a discussion and consultation would have to precede a review of the Constitution. Naturally, Serbia must not be passive and wait to see what the others will say, as it has done so many times in the past.

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

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

into question.

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

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

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



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