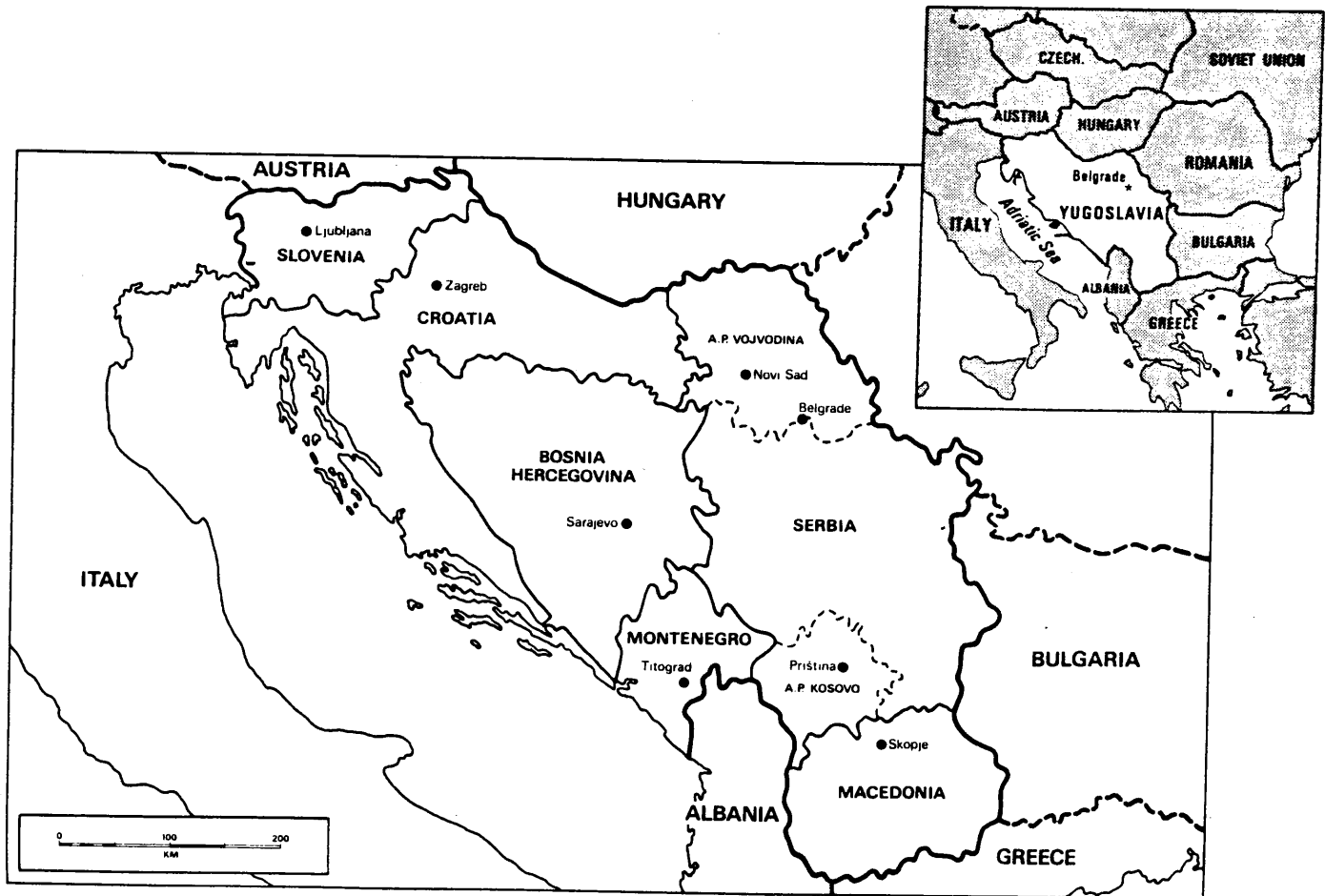


**REPORT ON THE APRIL AND MAY 1990 ELECTIONS
IN
THE YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS OF SLOVENIA AND CROATIA**



May 31, 1990

This report is based on the findings of two Helsinki Commission delegations to Yugoslavia. First, Commission Chairman Dennis DeConcini led a congressional delegation to Ljubljana, Slovenia, from April 7-8, 1990. The delegation observed the voting at polling stations in Ljubljana as well as in nearby villages on April 8 and met with the President of the Presidency of Slovenia, the President of the Slovenian Assembly, the Slovenian Republic Election Commission, and representatives of the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal, DEMOS-United Opposition, and the Progressive People's Party of the Center. Second, a staff delegation traveled to Zagreb, Croatia, from April 20-23, 1990. It observed the voting and some counting of ballots at polling stations in Zagreb and surrounding towns and villages on April 22, as well as voting in Krsko, Slovenia, for the run-off elections in that republic. The delegation also observed voting and the counting of ballots at work places on April 23, and met with the Croatian Republic Election Commission, the Committee for Information, and representatives of the Croatian Democratic Union and the Democratic Union of Albanians in Croatia. During the course of both visits, the delegations also had numerous informal meetings with Communist, opposition and independent candidates. Other sources include the Croatian and Slovenian press, Tanjug news agency and Radio Free Europe reports. The U.S. Consulate in Zagreb and U.S. Embassy in Belgrade both provided considerable assistance in arranging the congressional and staff delegation visits, which was greatly appreciated.

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SUMMARY

- In April and May 1990, the republics of Slovenia and Croatia in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia held the first genuinely free elections in that country since World War II. In both cases, a large number of alternative parties fielded candidates, and the local Communist Parties lost control of both republic governments.
- The Slovenian and Croatian elections took place during a time of major political and economic problems within Yugoslavia, as well as ethnic strife. Beyond the creation of multi-party, democratic political systems in Slovenia and Croatia, the election debate in these two northern republics focused on their respective futures in the Yugoslav federation, with consideration being given to the formation of a confederation and, sometime in the future, perhaps even independence.
- The elections also took place after the apparent collapse of the ruling Communist Party -- the League of Communists of Yugoslavia -- as a country-wide political organization.
- In Slovenia, political liberalization has been taking place for a number of years. This, along with the cohesiveness of its small population, has made the transition to a multi-party democracy relatively easy. Communist leaders were willing to share -- and even lose -- power without people first having to take to the streets in protest.
- Overall, the election process in Slovenia was conducted fairly and appeared to respect the secrecy of the ballot box. Flexible rules at polling stations created the potential for some inconsistencies, but there were also safeguards, such as observation by contending parties, and no apparent desire to manipulate the outcome.
- The primary opposition to the Slovenian Communists, who were the first to break away from the federal party structure, was a coalition of alternative parties known as DEMOS. While the Communists were not totally rejected, with former party leader Milan Kucan winning the Presidential race, the DEMOS coalition won a majority of seats in the Slovene Assembly and formed a new government, under Christian Democrat Lojze Peterle by mid-May.
- In Croatia, the transition to a multi-party system was more rapid but also more difficult to achieve, the result of a larger and more diverse population as well as memories of a crackdown on liberalization efforts in 1971. For the most part, the Croats followed the Slovenian lead.
- The election process in Croatia was generally conducted in a fair and open manner, although a number of problems were encountered at polling stations on the first election day. These problems, however, seemed to be more the result of inexperience, the short

time in which preparations for the voting were made, and the complexity of the elections themselves, rather than of any serious intention to manipulate the outcome.

- The Communists of Croatia, who also broke away from the federal party structure, faced a strong Croatian Democratic Union (CDU), which offered a well-defined program of nationalism and sovereignty, as well as a Coalition for National Understanding, which took a more moderate position. The CDU won resoundingly, although the Communists fared much better than the Coalition. With close to a 60 percent majority in the new Assembly, the CDU moved quickly to name its leader, Franjo Tudjman, President of Croatia and to form a new government under Stjepan Mesic by the end of May.

- As the new, non-Communist governments take office in both Slovenia and Croatia, attention will now turn to the rest of Yugoslavia, where elections will likely be held at the federal level and in all republics, including the two provinces, within the next year. The outcome of these future elections will be critical in determining the courses to be taken by Slovenia and Croatia, as well as the future of Yugoslavia itself.

- In the meantime, Slovenia and Croatia will be taking measures to establish a much greater degree of autonomy than they now have. Even if the rest of Yugoslavia goes the same democratic route, the willingness of these two northern republics to remain in a Yugoslav state other than a new, looser confederation is questionable.

INTRODUCTION: YUGOSLAVIA AT THE TIME OF THE ELECTIONS

OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL SITUATION

From April 8 to May 20-21, the first genuinely free and contested elections in postwar Yugoslavia were held in the Yugoslav republics of Slovenia and Croatia. While the Communist Parties in these two northern republics were not totally discredited, in both cases they lost the political power which they had held for nearly half a century to opposition parties and coalitions.

This significant development takes place in the context of the enormously complicated political and economic situation which exists in Yugoslavia as a whole. At the heart of this situation -- and the central issue in both the Slovenian and Croatian elections -- are questions regarding the very basis for the continued existence of Yugoslavia as a single political entity. Unlike most other East European states, which are essentially defined by one national group despite sizable minorities, Yugoslavia represents a collection of many national and ethnic groups -- none representing a majority of the population -- that joined together only since 1918, after the World War I settlement which dismembered the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. From that time to the present, Yugoslavia has struggled to preserve a balance among its myriad of different peoples, which include many non-Slavic groups, an extremely difficult task considering their large historical, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity as well as, in some instances, their deep-rooted hostility toward each other.

Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Partisans that liberated Yugoslavia in World War II and who subsequently ruled the country until his death in May 1980, was able to maintain the country's unity through a combination of genuine popularity, centralized power and repressive measures. Following his death 10 years ago, Tito's political power did not go to any particular individual but was divided among the six republics and two provinces in such a way that none of them would be able to dominate the others in the Yugoslav federation. Historical mistrust and growing economic difficulties, however, ultimately led to disagreement and disputes among the republics and provinces over the future political course of the country, with a parallel resurgence in nationalism, ethnic strife and separatist sentiment.

The crisis in Kosovo, one of two autonomous provinces within the Serbian republic, symbolizes the clash between national and ethnic groups in Yugoslavia today. Serbs live there; it was the center of their medieval kingdom and the cradle of their culture. Ethnic Albanians have made up a majority of the population for decades, however, and the percentage has increased to about 90 percent as a result of the Albanian birth rate, the highest in Europe, and Serbian outmigration, claimed to be caused by Albanian harassment but due also to economic conditions. Kosovo, the poorest region in Yugoslavia despite massive government investment, was given considerable autonomy as a result of the 1974

Constitution. Increased educational opportunities for Albanians combined with few employment or other economic opportunities, however, to turn an Albanian cultural revival into public protest in the 1980's as large numbers of Albanians demanded that Kosovo be separated from Serbia and upgraded to a full republic, with smaller groups calling for separation from Yugoslavia altogether. Demonstrations and violence caused a major crackdown in 1981, with further arrests throughout the remainder of the decade. By the end of the 1980's, a resurgence in Serbian nationalism caused the republic, led by the charismatic Slobodan Milosevic, to assert greater control over the affairs of its two provinces by amending the Serbian Constitution. Ensuing unrest led to further violence and a state of emergency in 1989 and early 1990, which, in turn, led to many reports of human rights abuses.

The Serb-Albanian dispute over Kosovo has affected the entire country. Some Serbian complaints have been viewed as legitimate, but the heavy-handed tactics employed by the Serbian government in dealing with the situation in Kosovo have nevertheless been greatly criticized. Moreover, the rise in Serbian nationalism, which Milosevic has merged with a defense of the Communist system, has aroused fears that Serbian assertion of control of its two provinces will eventually turn into Serbian attempts to dominate the whole of Yugoslavia, despite arguments by Serbian officials that they are not seeking domination but simply a fairer share of power than was accorded them in the 1974 Constitution.

Fears of Serbian domination, whether justified or not, have been particularly strong in the northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia, where they mix with fears of a Yugoslav federation that limits republican autonomy. Popular sentiment in the two republics leans not toward centralization and Belgrade, the capital both of Serbia and of the Yugoslav federation, but toward decentralization and West-Central Europe, with which both republics have had a longer history of association.

This split dividing Yugoslavia essentially into northwest and southeast has led to an endless array of verbal attacks by each side on the other. When Slovenian authorities banned a demonstration in Ljubljana supporting the Serbian republic's line in December 1989, the response went beyond words as Serbia imposed an economic boycott on Slovene products. Slovenia also adopted controversial amendments to its Constitution in September 1989 -- including one stating its right of self-determination, secession, and association with others and another stating its right to ignore decisions of the federation considered contrary to its interests -- an act which was subjected to considerable criticism by Serbia and its allies, along with federal authorities. In the last year, tensions between Serbs and Croats, the two largest nationalities, have increased as well and occasionally erupted into violence in Croatia, where approximately 11 percent of the population is ethnically Serb. Views on Serbia's potential to dominate the Yugoslav federation and hence control affairs in Slovenia and Croatia figured prominently in the campaigns in both of these republics.

In the meantime, the East European countries which belong to the Warsaw Pact were

the scene of revolutionary developments in 1988 and 1989. As elsewhere, the establishment of a representative, multi-party democracy was viewed not only as now possible in Yugoslavia but also as a potential solution to growing domestic problems. However, the independence and reform-mindedness of Yugoslavia's Communists in the past -- symbolized by liberation of the country in World War II by the Partisans without the assist of Soviet tanks; the break from Stalin and the Soviet bloc in 1948; and the pursuit of a new path of Communist development based on workers' self-management -- have made their monopoly on political power less vulnerable to popular pressures for change than those of the neighboring East European Communists who clearly owed their power to strict controls on the population and support from the Soviet Union. Furthermore, given the increasingly divided polity in Yugoslavia, many argued that democracy would certainly lead to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, as the public in almost every republic and at least in one of Serbia's two provinces would vote for partial if not complete separation.

As a result of the mix of the Communists' reformist traditions on the one hand and a certain sense of legitimacy on the other, Yugoslavia today finds itself in the awkward state of being both in front of and behind the wave of political liberalization sweeping Eastern Europe, with political division and ethnic strife hindering movement one way or the other. Some of Yugoslavia's six republics have been moving steadily toward politically pluralistic societies for some time, often with reform-minded Communist officials and not public demonstrations leading the way. Others have not been as receptive to political pluralism and the toleration of dissenting views. For the most part, it is in the former republics where the most vocal advocates of further decentralization if not the actual breakup of Yugoslavia are to be found, while in the latter officials will usually argue for some degree of centralization of the country's political system as the best course to follow. Slovenia and Croatia have traditionally led the former, Serbia increasingly the latter, the other republics at various stages in between, and the federal government seeking to balance political liberalization with centralization of authority.

The politically more liberal republics to the north are also the best off economically, with the per capita income several times that of the poorest southern regions. Taken as a whole, however, Yugoslavia's economic performance in recent years -- marked by severe hyperinflation, a large foreign debt, unemployment, and declining living standards -- has been poor and has exacerbated political and national/ethnic divisions even further. The inflation problem, reaching an annual rate of over 2,000 percent in the latter months of 1989, caused a large number of labor strikes as workers demanded higher and higher wages to match the higher prices. Austerity measures also caused massive demonstrations in Belgrade in 1988, including two occasions when the Federal Assembly building was occupied by protesters.

In response to this situation, in late 1989 Ante Markovic, President of the Federal Executive Council (Prime Minister), announced new economic measures designed to reverse the country's worsening economic situation. Brought into force in the beginning

of 1990, these measures include: making the Yugoslav currency convertible at a rate of 7 dinars to 1 deutsche mark, freezing wages, fuel and transport prices, creating capital markets in Belgrade and Ljubljana, and taking other steps to further marketize the Yugoslav economy. Thus far, the measures seem to be having a positive effect, reportedly bringing inflation down from a 60 percent monthly rate to nearly zero in April. While advocating pluralism politically, however, Markovic is arguing for greater centralization economically, a position which has met with considerable debate in both Slovenia and Croatia, which, as the two richest republics, feel they have the most to lose from centralization.

CRISIS IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

These developments set the stage for the 14th Extraordinary Congress of Yugoslavia's Communist Party, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), in January 1990, convened to decide the fate of the Party in light of increasing calls from the public and from within its own ranks for a greater degree of political pluralism. Two essential points were at issue: (1) the legally recognized leading role of the LCY in Yugoslavia, and (2) the bases upon which the LCY and its republic and provincial branches operate internally. On the first point, there was considerable agreement among the participants in the Congress to abolish the LCY's monopoly of power. In fact, the Slovenian, Croatian and other republic Leagues had already paved the way -- again, to varying degrees -- for free and contested elections in their respective republics.

Serbian delegates, however, hesitated before joining the consensus on this point. They maintained that, as a result of what is considered excessive decentralization, only the party and the military serve to unify Yugoslavia as a single political entity and that virtually all fledgling alternative political parties are republic-based, with no country-wide organization.

It was over this same point that Serbia opposed outright amendments proposed by the Slovenes at the Congress, which would decentralize power within the League from the national to the republic and provincial Leagues. As a result of the opposition to their proposal to create a "League of Leagues," the Slovenian delegation walked out of the Congress, putting it in a state of suspension. The next day, the Belgrade daily *Borba* ran the headline: "The League of Communists No Longer Exists". Then, in early February, a special congress of the Slovenian League decided to sever ties to the LCY, to change its name to the Party for Democratic Renewal, and to adopt a party platform that is essentially Social Democratic. Croatia later followed suit.

THE NORTHERN REPUBLICS

The two northern republics, Slovenia and Croatia, share many similarities within the diverse Yugoslav federation. Both have been ahead of the others in political liberalization and both are better off economically. Both have long histories of association with peoples

other than their current compatriots, specifically with Italy, Austria and Hungary during the time of Habsburg rule. Neither Slovenes nor most Croats look at themselves as inhabitants of the Balkans but of Central Europe, as evident in their membership in the regional organization of provinces, counties and republics, Adria-Alpe. In both republics, the gaining of sovereignty if not independence from the rest of Yugoslavia is frequently couched in terms of integration into Europe as a whole.

Still, there are notable differences between the two republics. Slovenia has clearly been the trend-setter, including by being the first to hold genuinely free elections. Croatia has generally -- and cautiously -- followed its northern neighbor's lead. This is a result of the fact that Slovenia's population is small, fairly uniform and cohesive, making a political consensus more likely. Croatia, consisting of the central region around Zagreb plus the eastern region of Slavonia, the Istrian peninsula and the Dalmatian coastline, has a much larger and more diverse population, with corresponding variations in interests and sympathies. Moreover, in the most recent liberalization effort of the past, the "Croatian Spring" of 1971, the reformers ultimately lost, and the memories of that loss two decades ago have instilled a greater sense of caution.

Another significant difference between the two republics is that, with Croatia, there is much more at stake than there is with Slovenia. While it would be a loss for the country, one can conceive of a Yugoslavia without a Slovenian constituent republic, the population and area of which represent only about 8 percent of the total population and area of Yugoslavia. The same cannot be said about Croatia, with an area and a population more than twice that of Slovenia and in which many other Yugoslav nationalities and ethnic groups reside.

Finally, Slovenian nationalism has generally been more defensive in nature, with its primary goal being the preservation of Slovenian language and culture in a land surrounded by more widely used languages and much larger cultures. Croatian nationalism is viewed more ominously, given the tradition of mutual animosity between Croats and Serbs and the tragic events which transpired in the World War II years when Croatia was set up as an independent, fascist state.

Whereas the elections in Slovenia and Croatia are important for their respective populations, the Slovenian elections are also important for the political precedence and direction they provide for the rest of the country, and for Croatia in particular, while the elections in Croatia are more important for what they will mean for the continued existence of the Yugoslav federation.

THE ELECTIONS IN SLOVENIA

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Contested Seats

Contested in the Sunday, April 8 elections in Slovenia were the 80 seats each in two of the three chambers of the Republic Assembly -- the Socio-Political Chamber and the Chamber of Municipalities (or Communes) -- four seats in the collective Presidency of Slovenia and the seat of President of the Presidency. Elections for the 80 seats in the third Assembly chamber -- the Chamber of Associated Labor -- were set for Thursday, April 12, since the actual voting, based on employment and not residency, was done at the workplace. In case none of the candidates won a majority of the votes on April 8, run-off elections for the President of the Presidency and for the seats in the Chamber of Municipalities were scheduled for April 22, at which time local elections would also take place for municipal assemblies.

The Players

By the time of the April elections, a total of 15 political parties and three "civil lists" (or "charters") had formed, including the existing Communist Party in Slovenia. In comparison to the situation which was to develop later in neighboring Croatia or in the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe, the total number of parties was rather small. Of these parties, none were labelled as "Yugoslav" parties, i.e., parties which have a country-wide base or focus. According to their names, about one-half of the parties were "Slovenian," although in all cases this seemed to mean that they were based in Slovenia as opposed to representing only ethnic Slovenes. One party was created to represent the interests of the Italian minority in Slovenia, and one party was a branch of the Kosovo Democratic Alliance, which, based in Pristina (the capital of Kosovo), has a membership that is mixed but primarily ethnic Albanian.

Similar to those dominant in West European countries, a number of the parties maintained broad programs based on their general orientation, such as the Social Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic Party and the former Communist Party. Others were more focused, such as the Greens, which concentrated on environmental issues, or the Grey Panthers, who stressed issues of concern to the elderly. As already mentioned, one party sought to represent the interests of ethnic Italians living in Slovenia, while another had as its focus the situation in Kosovo.

The programs of practically all of these parties stressed similar themes regarding the overall direction in which they wanted to lead the Slovenian republic. Respect for human rights, the development of representative democracy and the establishment of the rule of law in Slovenia were all common themes. Regarding economic questions, they all seemed to support further decentralization and marketization of the economic system, although some stressed the maintenance of social welfare networks while others stressed the

development of private enterprise. On the question of Slovenia's future in Yugoslavia, they all went in the direction of greater autonomy for the republic, but they did so to varying degrees. It was on this last issue -- and the conditions on which Slovenia should secede from Yugoslavia -- that most of the debate during the election focused.

The commonalities of the parties and their focus on what might amount to marginal differences on Slovenia's relations with the rest of Yugoslavia reflected, along with the relatively small number of parties, a cohesiveness among the population. From the reformed Communists to the strongest advocates of private entrepreneurship, the politically active population seemed to feel that Slovenia, a relatively small entity, exists politically and ethnically only to the degree that Slovenes stick together, and that major divisions should be avoided particularly at this critical period when Slovenia is being subjected to harsh criticism in other parts of Yugoslavia.

The smaller range of Slovenia's political spectrum also reflected the gradual, evolutionary nature of liberalization in Slovenia. Unlike the situation in most of the Warsaw Pact states of Eastern Europe, where change was resisted by the Communist leaderships until they were forced out in a dramatic display of popular protest, in Slovenia political liberalization has been on a steady pace for about 4 years. This contrasts even with the situation in neighboring Croatia, politically as well as geographically the closest to Slovenia within Yugoslavia, where a larger population with a considerably greater ethnic mix and diversity of views had essentially 4 months to prepare for its first free, contested elections.

The political parties competing in the elections can be roughly divided into four groups:

- The republic branch of the Communist Party, formerly called the League of Communists of Slovenia (LCS) but renamed the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal when it broke away from the country-wide League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY).
- The Democratic United Opposition of Slovenia, or "DEMOS," a coalition consisting of some of the major alternative political parties that were created within the last year.
- The Alliance of Socialists of Slovenia and the ZSMS-Liberal Party, both of which, running independently of each other and of the Communist Party, were originally formed as front organizations for the Communist Party in the early 1940's but have, in recent years, essentially become independent organizations.
- Other recently formed opposition or alternative political parties which did not join or form any coalition.

The League of Communists of Slovenia-Party of Democratic Renewal

The League of Communists of Slovenia (LCS)-Party of Democratic Renewal was the Slovenian branch of the LCY which has ruled Yugoslavia since World War II. At its first Party Congress in early February 1990, however, it effectively ended its affiliation with the LCY and declared itself an independent Communist Party. This act followed the suspension of the 14th Extraordinary Congress of the LCY in January, when the LCS walked out protesting opposition to its amendments which would have "democratized" the LCY party program. The Party also adopted a new platform entitled: "For the European Quality of Life", which has been described as similar to those of Social Democratic parties in Western Europe.

The Slovenian walkout of the 14th LCY Congress was only the latest demonstration of the independent, liberal trends evident within the LCS in the last few years. Rather than cracking down, harassing or even heavily criticizing opposition movements in Slovenia, the republic's Communist leaders have been increasingly tolerant of independent activities and have, in fact, tended to express sympathy with the views of many independent groups, such as during the "Ljubljana Four" trial in July 1988. Slovenian Communist leaders, and former LCS chief Milan Kucan in particular, were increasingly viewed as the vanguards of democratic trends and the defenders of Slovenian interests within the Yugoslav federation. They gained popularity as they criticized the crackdown in Kosovo, took on the Serbian leadership and others arguing for greater centralization of authority in Yugoslavia and, finally, walked out of the LCY Congress in January rather than compromise on their amendments to the Party program.

Milan Kucan, the popular LCS president, was succeeded by Ciril Ribicic at the LCS's 11th Party Congress in December 1989. The son of a founder of the original Slovenian Communist Party, Ribicic has said that the new party has done away with the undemocratic methods of the past but that it does not hesitate to express its willingness to work to keep Yugoslavia together, although the Party's position calls for the association of the "nations" of Yugoslavia on the basis of equal footing, free will, and respect for the right to self-determination and secession and the sovereignty that comes from these rights.

Despite its new name and success in gaining genuine popular support, the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal nevertheless had to carry with it, into the April elections, the burden of being the Communist Party which had held a monopoly on political power for decades and in the past had been responsible for denials of human rights. As an article in the quarterly *Slovenija* remarked: " 'They are nice chaps, they have a good programme, but 40 years is more than enough,' is how the reasoning goes, and many Slovenes think that democracy will come true only after the Communist Party has lost the elections and is forced to step down." In describing itself, the revamped party is quick to note that its activities were spurring the "Slovenian Spring." Much of the credit for the Party's efforts in recent years to liberalize the political system in Slovenia and protect Slovenian interests within the federation, however, went not to itself but to its past leader and candidate for

the position of President of the Presidency, Milan Kucan. At the same time, its current leader, Ciril Ribicic, was pictured in posters of the Social Democratic Alliance standing with Stalin, Ceausescu, Honecker and Kim Il-sung.

Going into the elections, the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal was, not unexpectedly, the largest of the contending parties, with a claimed membership of about 96,000 people. In total, it ran 78 candidates in the Socio-Political Chamber, one of which was party chief Ribicic, 80 candidates in the Chamber of Municipalities, and 73 candidates for the Chamber of Associated Labor.

DEMOS

The principal alternative to the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal, DEMOS was founded in December 1989 by the Slovene Democratic Alliance, the Social Democratic Alliance of Slovenia and the Slovene Christian Democrats, with the Slovene Farmers' Alliance and the Greens of Slovenia joining in January 1990. Later, other parties, including the Grey Panthers Party and the Slovene Tradesmen's Party became affiliate members. The head of the Social Democratic Alliance of Slovenia and a candidate for the President of the Presidency, Joze Pucnik (who spent 7 years in prison in the 1950's and 1960's for his political views), was chosen to head the coalition. It was agreed, however, that in the event DEMOS won a majority and was empowered to create a government, the party belonging to DEMOS which gained the largest number of seats would select the President of the Executive Council, or Premier, of Slovenia.

The direction of the programs of the DEMOS coalition parties did not differ significantly from that of the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal. Differences lie more in the degree to which change is being sought, with the DEMOS parties generally the more radical. On the issue of the republic status within Yugoslavia, for example, DEMOS takes a harder line, being willing to support the creation of a confederation but only under terms that give Slovenia sovereign powers all but equivalent to that of a totally independent state. For example, it would have its own armed forces and currency, and Slovenes would not have to pay any taxes to the central authorities in Belgrade. DEMOS representatives also seemed more than ready to go the independence route if their proposals for confederation were not accepted in full by the other republics. Although the rhetoric is basically the same, some DEMOS parties would likely take bolder steps in reforming the economy.

In addition to having more radical positions, the DEMOS parties had the advantage of being the opposition in what was still a Communist-ruled land. Despite the fact that they only recently could form themselves, DEMOS parties, combined, had an estimated membership of more than 50,000, with the Farmers' Alliance (30,000), Christian Democrats (12,000) and the Social Democratic Alliance (5,000) making up the overwhelming majority. In total, DEMOS parties fielded approximately 470 candidates for seats in the Socio-Political Chamber, with smaller numbers for the other two chambers.

The Alliance of Socialists of Slovenia and the ZSMS-Liberal Party

The Alliance of Socialists of Slovenia was formerly the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Slovenia, the mass front organization of the Communist Party, which put forth its own program and declared its independence from the LCS in February 1990. On April 18, after the first round but before the second round of the elections, the Slovenian Alliance formerly broke its ties with the country-wide Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia.

Similarly, the ZSMS-Liberal Party was formerly the official Socialist Youth League of Slovenia, originally created by the Communist Party as an ideological transmission belt to the republic's youth. During the 1980's, both of these organizations, while not actually alternatives to the existing order, nevertheless became increasingly independent from the LCS and took ever bolder stands, along with Slovenian opposition groups, on various issues. Both claim to have been "born-again," basing their new programs on West European political principles, and running in the April elections independently of the LCS as well as of each other.

While the two parties did not have to bear the same burden of responsibility as did the LCS for the more than four decades of Communist rule, neither did they have the appeal of being true alternatives, or opposition, to the existing system. This position, between the Communists and the opposition, resulted in their receiving less coverage than either DEMOS or the LCS. They were major contenders, nonetheless. The Alliance of Socialists claimed 39,000 members, second only to the LCS, and fielded 78 candidates for the Socio-Political Chamber, 84 candidates for the Chamber of Municipalities and 105 candidates for the Chamber of Associated Labor. With about 8,000 members, the Liberal Party fielded 80 candidates in the Socio-Political Chamber, more than any other party, 56 candidates for the Chamber of Municipalities and 63 candidates for the Chamber of Associated Labor. Thus, while they might not have anticipated winning a majority of seats, they likely saw a possibility of winning enough of them to have some say in the formation of the new Slovenian government.

Other Parties and the Charters

Almost one-half of the parties founded and recognized before the April elections were independent, alternative parties not running in any opposition coalition. They were, for the most part, smaller parties representing specific interests, such as the Democratic Alliance of Kosovo, which focused its attention on the plight of the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo Province. The Italian Community fielded candidates only in the region inhabited by the Italian minority, and the Maribor Alliance of the Retired only fielded candidates for the Socio-Political Chamber in the electoral district of Maribor. The Alliance for Maintaining Equal Rights of Citizens, one of the larger of the non-DEMOS alternative parties (and larger than some DEMOS members), focused its program on seeking the equality in rights and responsibilities regardless of nationality, race, sex, language, religion, education or social status, and the Slovene Tradesmen and Entrepreneurs' Party focused

on developing private enterprise and tax reform in Slovenia.

In addition to these parties, there were three Charters which ran candidates for the Socio-Political Chamber. The Civil Green Charter focused on environmental concerns, and the Independent Charter on equal rights for women. The Independent Charter of New Social Movements claimed to represent punk, peace, feminist, gay and lesbian, ecological and spiritual movements in Slovenia, and called for a Slovenia without an army, nuclear plants, military industry, sexual discrimination or lunatic asylums.

Boycotts

Unlike the situation in other Communist-ruled lands, including other republics in Yugoslavia, the government in existence prior to free elections may not have been popular, but it was generally trusted to be fair in setting up and administering the April elections. As a result, there was virtually no discussion of boycotting the elections. Only one small group, belonging to the Progressive People's Party of the Center, was known to have called for a boycott of the elections.

THE ELECTION LAW AND CAMPAIGNING

Movement toward free elections in Slovenia formally began in the latter part of 1989. This was made possible by the adoption of the amendments to the Slovenian Constitution in late September. Soon thereafter, a task force with representatives of the Assembly's three chambers and public groups, then only existing under the auspices of the Socialist Alliance, drafted five laws: (1) on election to assemblies; (2) on electing and recalling the President and Members of the Presidency; (3) on electoral districts; (4) on changes to the law on electoral records; and (5) on political association. The latter freed public organizations from having to be under the umbrella of the Socialist Alliance in order to enjoy a legal existence. All five laws were passed by the Slovenian Assembly in December 1989. Then, on January 8, 1990, the President of the Assembly, Miran Potrc, called for the general election. The elections were supervised by the Republic Election Commission, chaired by Emil Tomc.

Candidates

The first step was the proposal of candidates, who, according to the new election law, could then be nominated in one of three ways. First, in early March, the presidents of local assemblies -- as opposed to the Socialist Alliance under the old law -- called voters' meetings where candidates were nominated by secret ballot. For the Chamber of Associated Labor, the meetings were held at places of employment by the presidents of workers' councils. To be nominated, candidates for the Chambers of Municipalities and of Associated Labor needed 100 votes; for the Socio-Political Chamber, 200 votes. Proposed candidates for the President needed 5,000 votes throughout Slovenia to be nominated, Members of the Presidency 2,500 votes. Lower numbers were used for proposed candidates for local positions.

Second, candidates could be nominated by recognized political parties. If they had a membership of 500 or more, parties could propose candidates to the Socio-Political Chamber, in addition to candidates for local positions. Parties, or a coalition thereof in the case of DEMOS candidates, with 2,500 members could nominate a candidate for a seat on the Presidency, while parties with 5,000 members could nominate a candidate for President. The third way for a proposed candidate to be nominated was to have a certain number of signatures to a petition. The number of signatures varied according to the position but roughly corresponded to the number of votes at a voters' meeting.

By mid-March, the nomination of candidates was completed. For the position of President, four candidates were placed on the ballot, for the four positions of the Presidency, 12 candidates were placed on the ballot. For the Republic Assembly, where each of the three chambers has 80 seats, 945 candidates were running for the Socio-Political Chamber, 355 for the Chamber of Municipalities, and 816 for the Chamber of Associated Labor.

Districting

For the purpose of elections, Slovenia was divided into 14 regular districts, plus two special districts for the Italian and Hungarian minorities, for the Socio-Political Chamber. In each district, voters would choose a minimum of three and a maximum of seven candidates, depending on the size of the district's population. For the Chamber of Municipalities, the republic was divided into 76 communes, with the city of Ljubljana, the community of littoral communes, and the Italian and Hungarian minority groups each getting one of the four remaining seats. The seats of the Chamber of Associated Labor were determined not by districts of municipalities but according to the branches of the economy and social activities, of which there are 59, including the Yugoslav People's Army.

Seats for the Socio-Political Chamber were decided on the proportional principle in which seats would be allocated on the basis of party results. Alternatively, for the Chamber of Associated Labor, candidates with the most votes, even if only a plurality, were elected to their respective seats. For the Chamber of Municipalities, a candidate needed a majority of the total votes, making run-off elections a possibility. The same majority-rule applied to the Presidential race, although, for the Presidency, the four candidates with the most votes won the four seats.

Campaigning, Funding, Access to the Media

The new Slovenian laws relevant to the elections did not elaborate very much on the actual conduct of the campaign, only banning campaign activity 24 hours before the opening of the polls.

The elections, including the actual campaigns, received extensive coverage in the republic's media, including interviews with candidates and the leaders of parties. The

candidates themselves could not purchase space in newspapers, most of which were still under "social control," nor time on radio or television. However, the candidates could, and did, contribute to those parts of newspapers reserved for public comments as well as produce campaign materials on their own.

In terms of funding, each party with 500 or more members did obtain some funding from the government budget.

Harassment, Intimidations, Complaints

No real harassment of candidates was reported prior to the elections. All activities seemed to take place in accordance with Slovenian law. To the extent that any candidate felt verbally harassed, it was through the efforts of opponents, such as the campaign posters picturing LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal President Ciril Ribicic standing alongside Stalin and other infamous Communist leaders. Dmitrij Rupel, member of the Slovenian Democratic Alliance and DEMOS candidate for a seat on the Presidency, was repeatedly accused of working for the CIA, including by his opponent from the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal, Bostjan Zupancic, during a debate of the 12 contenders which was broadcast on the radio. Such attacks were within the law, however, and were, in fact, rare.

For the most part, the entire campaign process within Slovenia was rather restrained, likely reflecting a feeling that differences between Slovenian candidates should not be exacerbated in light of the heavy criticisms the entire republic was receiving from elsewhere in Yugoslavia. In fact, the lack of any visible attempt to harass or otherwise intimidate candidates or their supporters was used by the Progressive People's Party of the Center to argue that the contending parties, many of whom had former Communist Party members among their ranks, had already rigged the elections with the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal, although no evidence was provided to substantiate this allegation.

Between the first and second rounds of the elections, on April 8 and 22 respectively, there was a complaint of interference in the electoral process on the part of the Roman Catholic Church. Jozef Skolc, head of the Liberal Party, sent a letter to Ljubljana Archbishop Alojzij Sustar accusing the Church of "direct political and direct election campaigning for certain parties and candidates... ." The likely parties were the Christian Democrats and the Farmers' Alliance. Skolc's only action, however, was to warn the Church that youth organizations, whose members included believers, would have "to rethink their attitude toward the church and its activity."

Perhaps a larger instance of harassment came from outside the republic, also between the two rounds, when the Yugoslav People's Army filed criminal charges against Joze Pucnik, the head of DEMOS and a candidate for run-off Presidential elections on April 22, for a DEMOS poster which asserted that the Army could not defend the country against external enemies and that it killed children and threatened people's freedom. The charges, violation of Article 157 of the federal Criminal Code, were dated April 5 but were

not received by the public prosecutor of Maribor until April 9. The charges were rejected by the prosecutor on April 11. This action taken by the Army was heavily criticized in Slovenia, including by Pucnik's opponent in the Presidential race, Milan Kucan. Given previous tensions between the Yugoslav Army and Slovenian officials, the charges, if anything, would have improved Pucnik's standing in the polls.

THE BALLOTING AND RESULTS

Voting

According to the election law, all inhabitants of the Slovenian republic 18 years of age or older and permanent residents of the republic at least 3 days before the election were eligible to vote. For the Chamber of Associated Labor, any person 15 years of age or older and employed were entitled to vote, as were foreign nationals with shares in joint ventures in Slovenia.

As a result, a total of 1,480,000 individuals were registered to vote in the Slovenian elections. Each was to have received a paper from the local election commission informing them of the location of the polling station at which they were to vote. Throughout the republic, 4,135 polling stations were set up.

The polls opened on April 8 at 7 a.m. and were scheduled to close at 7 p.m., although some remained open later because of lines of people still waiting to vote. Each polling station was run by a committee consisting of about six people from various parties. The persons chairing the committees of the polling stations visited were very often members of the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal. If this reflected the situation at stations throughout the republic, there nevertheless were no known problems expressed by other parties on this matter.

Upon arrival at the polling station, the voter was to show the paper received from the election commission proving his or her residency, usually presenting an identification card as well. For the most part, the voters lists which the polling committees were given by the election commission were complete, with few instances where a voter had to go to the local authorities and obtain proof of residence.

There were no guidelines providing for absentee voting, nor for the voting of those sick or impaired. Unlike previous Slovenian elections, neither was there any surrogate or proxy voting. Those unable to come to the polling station on election day, therefore, could not vote.

After establishing their eligibility, voters were given separate ballots for each of the races. They were instructed to circle the name, or up to the requisite number of names, for each ballot. Any other type of marking or the writing-in of a new candidate would invalidate the ballot. The ballots did not have control numbers.

Overall, the guidelines and procedures given the polling stations were followed fairly loosely, with considerable discretion given to the person chairing the polling committee. Measures taken to protect the ballot boxes seemed to vary somewhat, and some polling stations used one box for all races while others used a separate box for each race. Hardly any of the polling stations visited had the pictures of Tito commonly found on the walls of public buildings in Yugoslavia, although several were decorated with flags of Yugoslavia and Slovenia. Despite variances, there seemed to be no real desire on the part of the chairpersons or members of the polling committee, who came from different parties, to intimidate the voters or in any way manipulate the voting. In addition to foreign observers -- which included the congressional delegation and delegations from Carinthia and Styria in Austria and from Veneto in Italy -- representatives of the contending parties were permitted to visit the polling stations, observe the proceedings and address questions to the polling committee members.

As a whole, the voters themselves exuded a certain feeling of excitement over taking part in the first free elections since 1938. Elections for all but the Chamber of Associated Labor took place on Sundays, and many came well-dressed and with their families. Despite cold, rainy weather, the turnout on April 8 was good, with an estimated 83.5 percent of eligible voters casting their ballots.

Counting

After the closing of the polls, the ballots were to be counted by the polling committee. This process was open to observation by accredited foreign visitors and representatives of the parties, but the Helsinki Commission delegation's schedule precluded the observation of the counting process.

Based on questions to polling committee chairpersons, the polling committees seemed to have considerable discretion over how to conduct the exercise. While some intended to count the ballots for each race as a group, others said they would divide the races among themselves. When completed, the results were forwarded to the municipal and district election commissions and then to the republic commission for final tabulations.

Results

Although more slowly than officially expected, the results of the elections became clear fairly soon after the elections took place.

• President

For the position of President, none of the four contenders won a majority of the vote, forcing an April 22 run-off between the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal candidate, Milan Kucan, and DEMOS candidate Joze Pucnik. Kucan obtained 44.4 percent of the vote in the first round on April 8, followed by Pucnik with 26.6 per cent, the independent candidate Ivan Kramberger with 18.5 percent and Liberal Party candidate Marko Demsar

with 10.5 percent. In the April 22 run-off, Kucan won by receiving 58.59 percent of the vote versus 41.41 percent for Pucnik.

- **The Presidency**

Of the 12 candidates for the 4 regular seats on the Presidency, the winners were: Ciril Zlobec of the Alliance of Socialists with 52.2 percent; Ivan Oman of DEMOS and the Slovenian Farmers' Alliance with 46.2 percent; Matjaz Kmecl of the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal with 38.2 percent; and Dusan Plut of DEMOS and the Greens of Slovenia with 38.1 percent.

- **Socio-Policial Chamber**

Of the parties running for seats in the Socio-Political Chamber, the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal won the highest percentage of the vote, with 17.3 percent, followed by the Liberal Party with 14.5 percent; the Slovene Christian Democrats with 13 percent; the Slovene Farmers' Alliance with 12.6 percent; the Slovene Democratic Alliance with 9.5 percent; the Slovene Greens with 8.8 percent; the Social Democrats of Slovenia with 7.4 percent; the Alliance of Socialists with 5.4 percent; and the Slovene Tradesmen's Party with 3.5 percent. The remaining eight parties received less than 2.5 percent of the vote each.

Translated into the 80 seats in the Chamber, the breakdown was as follows:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats Won</u>
LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal	14
Liberal Party	12
Slovene Christian Democrats (DEMOS)	11
Slovene Farmers' Alliance (DEMOS)	11
Slovene Democratic Alliance (DEMOS)	8
Slovene Greens (DEMOS)	8
Social Democrats of Slovenia (DEMOS)	6
Alliance of Socialists	5
Slovene Tradesmen's Party (DEMOS)	3
Total	78

The remaining two seats were taken by a representative of the Italian Community, who supported DEMOS, and a representative of the Hungarian Community, who supported the Alliance of Socialists. Those parties receiving less than 2.5 percent of the vote were not eligible to receive a seat in the Chamber.

While the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal won the highest percentage of the vote and, hence, more seats than any other party, when the DEMOS-member parties were combined they came out the winners with a majority of 55 percent of the vote and 47

seats. One DEMOS party, the Grey Panthers received less than 2.5 percent of the vote and therefore did not get a seat in the Socio-Political Chamber.

- **Chamber of Municipalities**

In the first round of the elections, on April 8, only 15 of the 80 seats were decided by a majority of votes for the winner, the remainder being subjected to run-off elections on April 22. Of the first 15 seats, 12 went to DEMOS-party candidates, one to a Liberal Party candidate, one to the Italian Community candidate and one to an independent candidate. Reenforcing this DEMOS lead was the fact that of the 130 top-two candidates facing each other in the April 22 run-offs, 67 were DEMOS-party candidates compared to 31 for the Liberal Party, 12 for the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal, and 10 for the Alliance of Socialists. Thus, a DEMOS majority was virtually assured, even if the second round went badly for the coalition.

Following the April 22 run-offs, the seats were distributed as follows:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats Won</u>
DEMOS-United Opposition	50
Liberal Party	16
LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal	5
Alliance of Socialists	5
Italian Community	1
Hungarian Community	1
Independent candidates	2
Total	80

- **Chamber of Associated Labor**

In the April 12 elections for the Chamber of Associated Labor, the DEMOS coalition also won the largest number of seats, although, in this case, it was a plurality and not a majority.

The breakdown was as follows:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats Won</u>
DEMOS-United Opposition	26
Liberal Party	9
LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal	6
Alliance of Socialists	3
Total	44

The remaining seats have gone to independent candidates and to the Free Slovene Trade Unions and the Chambers of Economy. The voting for one seat in the Chamber of Associated Labor was repeated later in April, because confusion over voting procedures and their implementation in one voting district led to the invalidation of the results.

The final results in the elections reflected a clear preference on the part of the Slovenian population for DEMOS parties and programs. While this outcome reflected a rejection of the Communist system in Slovenia, however, it did not reflect a clear rejection of the Communist Party itself, candidates of which did win the republic's Presidential contest (although this was considered more a vote for Kucan than the party), a seat on the Presidency, and a fair number of seats in the Assembly, especially in the Socio-Political Chamber (the largest number of any single party). Similarly, the Liberal Party did relatively well in the elections. The immediate reaction was that the Slovenian voters took a "middle-of-the-road" approach, favoring a new government that would implement some real changes but would also have individuals with previous political experience that could ensure that this was done with sufficient caution and sense of responsibility.

Fraud, Other Complaints

Overall, the contending parties in the elections, winners and losers alike, seemed content with the manner in which the elections were conducted. There were only three known complaints about the conduct of the election process, two of which came from relatively small, non-DEMOS alternative parties that sought the annulment of the election results, and one from a journal which said the elections were conducted legally but perhaps not fully democratically. None of these complaints led to changes in the final results.

The first complaint came from a non-DEMOS alternative party, the Alliance for Maintaining Equal Rights of Citizens, headed by Dragisa Marojevic. The Alliance received no seats in the newly elected Assembly, winning 2.46 percent of the vote when 2.5 percent was necessary to win a seat in the Socio-Political Chamber (short by 422 votes). It complained to the Election Commission that it had obtained sufficient information to suspect that some of the ballots signifying votes for the Alliance were declared invalid. It also argued that, due to a "policy of exclusivity and nationalism" on the part of the Slovenian authorities, it was not able to participate in the elections on an equal basis with other parties. In light of these allegations, the Alliance called for a recount or the elections to be annulled. In response, the Election Commission referred the specific complaints of irregularities to the respective electoral districts and concluded that the larger issue of equal treatment in the election process was beyond its competence. The complaint was subsequently rejected.

The second complaint came from the Progressive People's Party of the Center, which had earlier called for a boycott of the election. In a joint statement with the Slovene Alliance for World Democracy, the Commission for Human Rights, the Ecological Council

of Slovenia and the Independent Trade Unions, the Progressive People's Party alleged that the voters were misled in the elections by candidates who imposed their own views on the population. As a result, the joint statement called for the elections to be annulled.

The third complaint did not question the legality of the result but the appropriateness of it being characterized as fully democratic. This complaint was made in an issue of the journal *Mladina* in late April, which alleged that, as a result of the proportional method of selecting candidates for the Socio-Political Chamber, those individuals chosen for seats were not the same as those who were chosen by the voters in the second round, since all parties except the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal submitted national lists ranking party members from which the new delegates were chosen. *Mladina* found 15 cases in which those who were selected were not those who, according to the number of votes, should have been elected. While this result nevertheless seemed to be in accordance with the election laws, *Mladina* concluded that those who were not elected to the Assembly should not be in the Assembly.

Formation of a New Government

With the elections out of the way, the next critical step in Slovenia was the jockeying for positions in the Assembly leadership as well as in the formation of a new government. Given the fact that this would be the first assembly and government in postwar Slovenia (and in Yugoslavia) to be selected as a result of genuinely free elections, none of the previous rules applied. Adding to the confusion was the fact that a sizable number of those elected had never held public office before. As a result, the process of convening the Assembly and forming a government got off to a slow start.

The first obstacle was the selection of Assembly leaders, with DEMOS, the LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal, the Liberal Party and the Alliance of Socialists disagreeing on how the nine most responsible posts were to be divided. As the Ljubljana daily *Delo* noted in reporting on the Assembly's opening session on May 7, "it was probably the first time that there were innumerable technical hitches, and the lack of knowledge of the rules of the game in the Assembly was evident." After overcoming an objection by the Alliance for Maintaining Equal Rights of Citizens to the convening of the Socio-Political Chamber because, it was alleged, its members were not elected democratically, the three chambers, all chaired by DEMOS members, set up commissions which determined that all members had, in fact, been elected properly. The chambers then recessed as informal negotiations on appointments and rules of procedure continued.

Eventually, agreements were worked out, and the Assembly was able to begin its work, electing France Bucar, from DEMOS and the Slovene Democratic Alliance, President of the Assembly with two other DEMOS members serving as Vice-Presidents. Among some of its first actions were the passing of a resolution concerning the independence of the Baltic States and the adoption of a statement criticizing the inaugural speech of the President of the Presidency of Yugoslavia, Borisav Jovic, as "opposed to democratic

processes and to Slovenia's sovereignty."

In the meantime, informal efforts were underway to select a new President of the Executive Council, or Premier, who would lead the new government. According to an earlier agreement of DEMOS, in the event the coalition would win a majority and be in the position to form a government, the head of the party within DEMOS that received the largest share of seats would be selected as Premier. This turned out to be the Slovene Christian Democrats, headed by Lojze Peterle, a 42 year-old geography teacher. After some deliberations, it was decided to keep to this agreement, and the Slovenian Presidency subsequently proposed Peterle to the Assembly. Three Vice-Premiers -- Jozse Mencinger (Social Democratic Alliance) for economic affairs, Matija Malesic (Independent candidate) for social affairs, and Leo Seserko (Slovene Greens) for environmental affairs and regional development -- and 23 members of the government were also announced on May 16.

The make-up of the government is as follows:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Members</u>
Slovene Christian Democrats	5
Slovene Democratic Alliance	4
Slovene Greens	3
Social Democrats of Slovenia	2
Slovene Farmers' Alliance	2
Slovene Tradesmen's Party	2
Total DEMOS	18
LCS-Party of Democratic Renewal	3
Liberal Party	1
Independents	5
Total Non-DEMOS	9
Total	27

In presenting his selection of government members, Peterle noted that nine members did not belong to DEMOS parties. He said that this did not represent a coalition between the governing DEMOS coalition and the new opposition. Instead, he maintained, these individuals were selected as individuals, not as representatives of their respective parties. The Assembly then approved, in three separate votes, Peterle as Premier, the three Vice-Premiers, and the remaining 23 government members as proposed by Peterle.

THE ELECTIONS IN CROATIA

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The Players

A total of 34 political parties were officially registered to participate in the elections in Croatia -- more than twice the number taking part in the Slovenian elections. Fourteen parties included a national reference in their names (ten Croatian, one Serbian, one Bosnian, one Muslim and one Albanian). Most were small parties with little political clout, and many will probably disappear after the elections. The major opposition parties were grouped together in three officially registered coalitions or blocs: the Croatian Democratic Bloc, the Coalition for National Understanding, and the smaller European Green List. The exact composition of both the Bloc and the Coalition remained somewhat fluid right up to election day, as some of the smaller parties dropped out or joined, and some, like the Peasant Party, split into two factions joining both the Bloc and the Coalition. The two parties of the embattled establishment -- the renamed League of Communists of Croatia-Party of Democratic Changes and the Socialist Alliance -- formed an unofficial, so-called "Left Bloc". Ten other parties or associations either were not registered or did not take part in the elections.

Many election themes were common to all parties of left and right: support for a multi-party democracy, a state based on the rule of law, human rights, a market economy, and closer ties to Europe. The one major issue where the left and right differed was sovereignty -- whether Croatia should remain part of a federal Yugoslav state or become an independent republic in a new Yugoslav confederation. In the end, however, the choice for most Croats narrowed down to one of three distinct political alternatives:

- the "Left Bloc" of reform Communists and their allied Socialists, representing the established bureaucracy and maintenance of the Socialist Republic of Croatia within a federal Yugoslavia; the Communists and Socialists ran for the most part as two separate parties, but occasionally fielded a joint candidate.
- the Croatian Democratic Union (CDU), the largest political party in Croatia and the dominant nationalist party in the Croatian Democratic Bloc, appealing to nationalist sentiment for a largely independent Croatia within a looser Yugoslav confederation and possibly outright secession; the CDU ran as a separate party, as did the other smaller parties in the Bloc.
- the more moderate Coalition for National Understanding, representing a middle-ground grouping of opposition parties wanting to break with the Communist past but fearful of the more extreme nationalist positions of the CDU; unlike the Bloc, the Coalition fielded its own candidates, representing the combined membership of the group.

The League of Communists of Croatia-Party of Democratic Changes

Attempting to signal a break with the past and a commitment to a platform of reform and progress, the Communist Party, known officially as the League of Communists of Croatia, added "Party of Democratic Changes" to its original title and embarked on the election campaign under the slogan "We are Serious". The Party's campaign literature spoke glowingly of a "new profile and identity," and claimed that the Communists were now "freed from bureaucratic and dogmatic restraints." Following up on the decisions taken at the 11th Party Congress in December 1989 to embrace political pluralism, the Party now proclaimed that it rejected the constitutional guarantee for the leading role of the League of Communists as "illegitimate" and as an "ideological alibi for the monopoly of authoritarian political power." The Party further stated that it had now completely abandoned the principle of democratic centralism, which it acknowledged had served as an "instrument of repression over party membership, of hierarchical subordination, ideological exclusivity, negative selection of cadres, and unprincipled purges and differentiations." To overcome the admitted mistakes of the past, the Communists claimed that they were now embarked on the democratic transformation of the Party.

By continuing to call for a "socialist" Republic of Croatia, however, and by campaigning on a platform of maintaining Yugoslavia as a federation, aligning themselves with the program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, and fully supporting the Program of Reforms of the federal government in Belgrade, the Communists were clearly hindered in their efforts to convince voters that they were really serious about change and the formation of a democratic government. Their cause did not appear to be especially helped by their Party leader, Ivica Racan, 47, a longtime but little-known professional Party functionary, with a limited public following. Party membership, which had once peaked at 300,000, had dropped to less than half that number by election time, and appeared to be headed down to as little as 50,000. Beyond the ranks of the hardcore membership itself, who undoubtedly identified their own personal fortunes with the continuation of the Communist apparatus in power, the only groups to which the Party seemed able to generate any significant appeal were those in Croatia who feared the consequences of the opposition's calls for confederation or possible separation. One such group was clearly the Serbian minority, representing more than 11 percent of the population and wary of any resurgent Croatian nationalism unfettered by central control from Belgrade. The appeal for federation rather than confederation based on national fears was addressed directly by one Communist candidate, Dravko Tomac, professor of political science at Zagreb University. Tomac was quoted in the press as saying: "Yugoslavia has to be a federation because 2.2 million Serbs live outside Serbia in other Yugoslav republics. About 1.1 million Croats live outside Croatia. This means that the national question cannot be settled within a single republic, but within Yugoslavia as a federation." Tomac also warned bluntly that confederation would lead to civil war.

Despite these appeals to minority fears of Croatian nationalism and efforts to project

a new image of change and reform, the Communists appeared to have done little to bolster their tarnished image by the eve of the elections. Probably capturing the feeling of most voters was the comment made by one local citizen the day before the election. "They may have changed their name," he confided knowingly, "but they're still Communists."

Croatian Democratic Union

In the less than 6 months since its founding, the ranks of the center-right Croatian Democratic Union (CDU) swelled to an estimated 600,000 members, by far the largest political party in Croatia as well as the best organized and most heavily financed. Under the skillful leadership of Franjo Tudjman, the former Communist general who was twice imprisoned for his nationalist views and hostile activities against the state, the CDU launched a broad appeal to Croatian nationalism and independence at the very least within a new Yugoslav confederation and possibly as a separate state. Capitalizing on growing economic difficulties and increasing resentment of the federal government and a military controlled by Belgrade, the CDU was effective in building up a solid base of support within the republic's middle and lower class population, especially in rural towns and the countryside.

The party's remarkable success was directly attributable to the strong, commanding figure of Tudjman, who dominated the Croatian political scene in the weeks leading up to the election. Tudjman alone of all the many political party leaders and candidates generated a broad, popular following and a high degree of visibility as he campaigned relentlessly for the CDU's program of nationalism and confederation. Once the Yugoslav Army's youngest general, Tudjman had fought with Tito's Partisans during World War II and later studied for a doctorate in history at Zagreb University. In 1972, however, he was stripped of his military honors and imprisoned for his "anti-Yugoslav" activities in the first postwar outbreak of Croatian nationalism. He was jailed again in 1981 for criticizing Yugoslavia's one-party regime. When the decision was made in late 1989 to permit free political association, Tudjman lost no time in founding the CDU, organizing an extensive political network throughout the republic, and establishing close ties with Croatian emigres abroad. Such emigres, in Europe, North America and even Australia, made a uniquely valuable contribution to the CDU not only through generous financial contributions but by providing much needed experience in political organization and free elections.

The CDU's political objectives were viewed with alarm by many in Yugoslavia, especially the Serbs, as blatant calls to nationalism and territorial aspirations which could lead to conflict, and to both a separate Croatia and an enlarged "greater" Croatia drawing on the Croatian population in neighboring republics and Croatian emigres returning from abroad. In setting forth its main goal of establishing a sovereign and independent state of Croatia, the CDU's party manifesto refers to the right of the Croatian people to self-determination "within their historic and natural boundaries," up to and including secession. The manifesto also calls for the "economic, spiritual and cultural union of Croatia and

Bosnia-Herzegovina, which form a natural, indivisible political unit and are historically destined to be together." Tudjman himself asserted that many of Bosnia's Muslim Slavs were in fact ethnic Croats, or at least "feel themselves as Croats." He indicated that if Yugoslavia was ever dissolved he would seek a referendum in Bosnia-Herzegovina on the republic's affiliation with Croatia, while ruling out any unilateral action to change the borders. But it has been against the Serbs that Tudjman was most outspoken, professing a long-seated concern about "Great Serbian hegemonistic desires." Within Croatia itself, Tudjman vowed to reverse what he felt was over-representation by Serbs in the government, the police and the media. In an interview with the staff delegation, Tudjman noted that while Serbs represent only 11 percent of Croatia's population, they account for 45 percent of the people actually "running things" in the republic. To accomplish his goals, Tudjman saw confederation as essential. "The only way to establish normal relations between Yugoslavia's republics is along confederative lines," he stated. But the CDU's Vice President, Vladimir Seks, went even further: "I don't believe in the future of Yugoslavia," Seks is quoted as saying, "and I'm skeptical about the agreement on a confederation. If we come to power, we'll start working on the creation of an independent Croatian state."

In addition to concerns about its appeal to nationalism and independence, there were also worries that the CDU might rekindle the ultra-nationalist sentiments which led to the creation of the wartime Ustashe Party and the fascist "Independent State of Croatia." Tudjman, who fought the Ustashe in the war, has been quick to disavow any such possibility. "We want to build on the legitimate right of Croats to have their own sovereign state," he is quoted as saying. "We want no recreation of the Ustashe's independent state. We don't want ties to the pro-fascist tradition. We are building an anti-Ustashe movement." But Tudjman's campaign speeches also praised the Ustashe government as "the expression of the historical aspirations of the Croatian nation for its independent state."

Going into the election, the CDU appeared to have captured the most support among Croatia's population, overriding fears about the consequences of its program of nationalism and independence by the promise of breaking free from the Communist past and from control by the federal government in Belgrade. Perhaps the basic appeal of the CDU was best summed up by one of Tudjman's favorite campaign slogans: "Our manifesto is the most Croatian and the most Democratic."

Coalition for National Understanding

Unlike the two other major contenders in the elections -- the reform Communists and the nationalist CDU -- the Coalition for National Understanding (CNU) ran as a loosely-knit umbrella organization without a unifying, well-defined campaign theme or strong personal leadership. The CNU grouped together 11 small- to medium-sized parties ranging from Liberals to Christian Democrats, and including the Albanian and Muslim Democratic Parties. It also included several non-party figures, such as Mika Tripalo and Savka

Dapcevic-Kucar, both former high-ranking Communist officials removed by Tito because of their nationalist leanings in 1971. No single party had a membership larger than 5,000, and the entire Coalition was estimated to have no more than 50,000 members.

While often seen as occupying the political center between the Communists and the CDU, the parties of the Coalition were in fact much closer to Tadjman and his CDU on the basic issue of Croatian sovereignty within a new Yugoslav confederation than to the Communists on the left. However, unlike the five small nationalist parties which held almost identical views with the CDU within the Croatian Democratic Bloc, the parties of the Coalition were a widely diverse group with differing political agendas and constituencies. Even on the issue of sovereignty, while none of the parties supported a federation, they held differing views on what a confederation should look like and how to achieve it. What united the parties of the Coalition was the recognition that none of them were strong enough to go it alone in challenging the Communists on the left and the CDU on the right. The single largest party in the CNU -- and its most nationalist -- was the Croatian Democratic Party, headed by Vladimir Veselica, which was actually a splinter party of the CDU and shared most of the latter's political views. The Croatian Peasant Party, which had been a sizable and influential party in the 1930's, was weakened by internal strife since its resurrection in late 1989, splitting into two factions shortly before the elections, the larger remaining in the Coalition and the smaller shifting to the Bloc.

In general, the Coalition presented a moderate program, seeking to break with the Communist past but in a more peaceful way than the CDU. In the words of the CNU's leader, Mika Tripalo: "The Coalition promises radical changes in the social, economic and political system, but by a democratic and peaceful path, without extremism or revanchism." In calling for a sovereign and democratic state, the CNU's platform spelled out the right of self-determination, including secession. But Tripalo took a sharply different position than Tadjman on the question of territorial expansion. "Unlike some of our election rivals," said Tripalo, "we are against changing the borders between the republics or Yugoslavia's borders. From this stems our stand on the inviolability of Bosnia-Herzegovina's sovereignty and the national identity of Muslims." Along with its generally moderate platform, the Coalition also came out strongly for a free market economy and closer ties to Western Europe, projecting a more cultured, humanistic image than its two rivals. For this reason, the Coalition's largest base of support appeared to be in Zagreb itself, rather than in the rural towns and countryside. Despite this narrow support base and its limited membership, the Coalition was expected to put up a strong showing in the elections, clearly trailing the CDU, but at least running even with the Communists.

Other Parties: The five small nationalist parties belonging to the Croatian Democratic Bloc, but, like the dominant CDU, running as separate parties, were not expected to capture any significant percentage of the vote. The Croatian Party of Rights, with Dobroslav Paraga selected as its head, found itself to the right of the CDU by advocating an immediate referendum on secession, rather than first seeking confederation. Two

parties in the Bloc, the Croatian Peasant Party and the Demo-Christian Party, were actually smaller splinter parties of the larger Peasant Party and Christian Democratic Party remaining in the Coalition. Elsewhere, the Serbian Democratic Party, led by Jovan Raskovic, developed a respectable base of support in those parts of Croatia heavily populated by Serbs, as to a lesser extent did the Social Democratic Alliance of Yugoslavia, still in a developing stage. Perhaps the most promising small contender was the European Green List, a coalition of four regional, ecology-oriented parties with strong West European views and a heavy focus on the environment. The Green List's leadership was young and inexperienced, but the group was expected to capture a few seats in the elections and showed every indication of a movement whose time had yet to come.

Boycotts

There was some discussion of boycotting early on in the campaign, but no outright boycott by any of the registered parties took place. Those parties which did not participate in the elections failed to do so primarily because they were unable to field candidates. Boycotting was not an issue in the Croatian elections.

THE ELECTION LAW AND CAMPAIGNING

Regulations, Procedures

Moving rapidly to implement the December 1989 decision of the 11th Party Congress to hold multi-party elections in the spring of 1990, the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia promulgated a new "Law on Elections and Recall of Representatives and Deputies," which entered into effect on February 18, 1990. The law regulated the organization, administration and oversight of elections to tricameral assemblies at the three levels of government in the republic. The three bodies in each assembly were: the "socio-political chamber," representing the population as a whole; the "chamber of municipalities" ("communes" at the local level), representing the constituent electoral districts; and the "chamber of associated labor," representing all those employed in the state and private economy. This involved:

- at the local level, the election of representatives to 116 municipality assemblies located in towns and villages throughout the republic, including 15 municipalities in the city of Zagreb;
- at the city level, the election of representatives to the city assembly of Zagreb; and
- at the republic level, the election of 356 deputies to the Assembly of the republic, broken down as follows:

Socio-Political Chamber	80 seats
Chamber of Municipalities	116 seats
Chamber of Associated Labor . . .	0 seats

All of the above representative bodies to be elected were those already in existence; the election law did not create any new bodies nor change the size or configuration of existing ones.

The elections held in Croatia were only for the republic's parliamentary bodies. Unlike the elections in Slovenia, in which the President of the Republic was directly elected by the voters at the same time that they voted for their representative bodies, the new Croatian President was not to be chosen by direct, popular ballot but instead by a vote of the 356 deputies to the newly elected Republic Assembly once it had been seated.

The election law provided that all Yugoslav citizens 18 years of age or over had the universal right to vote, with the exception that there was no age requirement for those citizens voting for chambers of associated labor. The law stated that "freedom of choice and secrecy of voting is guaranteed." Under provisions of the law, no one had to answer to the authorities for how they voted or if they did not vote, and no one had the right to ask voters for whom they voted. Citizens voting for socio-political chambers and chambers of municipalities (communes) had to be resident in the electoral district where they voted. Citizens voting for chambers of associated labor had to work in the district where they voted. Voting had to be done in person, at the voter's local polling station. There was no provision for absentee ballots or absentee voting, with one exception: crew members of commercial ocean or river fleets could vote at special polling stations set up on their ships. Otherwise, all citizens living, working, or traveling abroad or otherwise absent from their home could not vote unless they returned home to vote in person on election day. The many Croatian "guest workers" living abroad were therefore able to vote only if they returned home to do so, and only if they maintained a legal residence in Croatia.

According to official statistics, of the total population of 4,678,273 inhabitants, there were 3,556,563 eligible voters, entitled to vote for elections to the socio-political chambers and the chambers of municipalities (communes). However, for elections to the chambers of associated labor, only 1,624,000 eligible voters were officially listed. This figure attracted the attention of some observers. Since it supposedly comprised the republic's entire labor force of those working in the state and private sectors, including the self-employed, individual farmers, the army and even students, the figure meant that more than 1.9 million Croats 18 years of age or older were not working. After allowing for housewives, pensioners and the elderly, the figure suggested a high rate of unemployment and/or a large number of Croats working abroad.

To qualify to run in the elections, a candidate had to be nominated by a prescribed number of signatures on special petition forms. The nomination of candidates could be initiated by political, civic or labor organizations, or by citizens or workers acting individually, and could be carried out in public meetings. In the case of nominations to socio-political chambers and chambers of municipalities (communes), those signing had to

be eligible voters domiciled in the same electoral district where the candidate was running; in the case of nominations to chambers of associated labor, signers had to be Yugoslav citizens employed in the same district where the candidate was running. For local-level assemblies, at least 50 signatures or a minimum of 5 percent of the voters in the electoral district were required for nomination. For the city level, at least 100 signatures or a minimum of 5 percent of the voters were required for nomination. For nomination at the republic level, at least 500 signatures were required for the Socio-Political Chamber, at least 400 signatures or a minimum of 5 percent of the voters were required for the Chamber of Municipalities, and at least 200 signatures or 5 percent of the voters were required for the Chamber of Associated Labor. All nominations had to be submitted at least 20 days prior to the first day of the elections.

To be eligible for election, candidates for socio-political chambers and chambers of municipalities (communes) had to be residents of the districts in which the elections took place; to be eligible for election to chambers of associated labor, candidates had to be working in the districts in which the elections took place. No one could serve on any assembly if he was a functionary or a judge elected or appointed by that assembly or its executive council.

The law also specified that the mandate of elected representatives or deputies could be terminated early if they: a) resigned; b) were recalled by the voters who elected them; c) were found by a court to be incapable of carrying out their duties; d) were found guilty by a court and sentenced to jail for 6 months or more; e) were elected or appointed a functionary or judge by the assembly or executive council of the assembly to which they were delegates; or f) moved out of or stopped working in the district they represented.

The elections for all chambers of all local, city and republic assemblies were to be held in two rounds. In order to win election in the first round, a candidate had to receive a majority of the votes actually cast, that is, the votes of more than 50 percent of all those who voted, as well as the votes of at least a third of the total number of registered voters. Voters had to choose only one candidate in any given race. If none of the candidates received enough votes to win in the first round, a run-off election was to be held two weeks later. To be eligible to run in this second round, a candidate had to have received at least seven percent of the votes actually cast in the first round. There had to be at least two candidates in the run-off races, otherwise the entire election was to be repeated. To win in the second round, a candidate had only to receive a plurality, that is, the largest number of the votes actually cast.

The election dates were set as follows:

- First Round: Sunday, April 22: elections to socio-political chambers and chambers of municipalities (communes) at the local, city and republic levels. Also, elections to chambers of associated labor

at all levels for those voters working in the agricultural sector.

Monday, April 23: elections to chambers of associated labor at all levels.

- Second Round: Sunday, May 5: run-off elections for socio-political chambers and chambers of municipalities (communes) at all levels; run-off elections for chambers of associated labor at all levels for agricultural voters.

Monday, May 6: run-off elections for all chambers of associated labor at all levels.

To administer the elections, a vast network of election commissions was established at the local polling stations, electoral districts, at the municipal level, the city level, and, overseeing the entire process, at the republic level. Altogether, there were an estimated 12,000 election commissions at all levels throughout the republic, involving some 75,000 persons. To serve on an election commission, one had to be an eligible voter who was not a candidate for election. To ensure that the commissions conducted their work in an impartial and balanced manner, the election law specified that no one political party could have more than one-third of the members or their alternates on any election commission.

The Republic Election Commission consisted of both a permanent body and an enlarged composition. The permanent body consisted of a chairman and four members, plus their alternates, all of whom were appointed by the Republic Assembly. The President of the Supreme Court of Croatia, Milko Gajski, served ex officio as Chairman of the Republic Election Commission, and his alternate was ex officio a judge on the Croatian Supreme Court. All commission members had to be lawyers. The enlarged composition consisted of a member and an alternate from every political organization which had nominated candidates for the Socio-Political Chamber of the Republic Assembly in at least half of the republic's total electoral districts. Four organizations qualified for such representation: the Croatian Democratic Union, the Coalition of National Understanding, the Communist Party and the Socialist Alliance. While only the permanent body was charged with responsibility for the preparation of the elections, the entire Commission was responsible for overseeing the carrying out of the elections and for announcing the election results.

To monitor the conduct of the pre-election campaign, the election law also established a republic Committee for Supervision of the Elections, appointed by the Republic Assembly, whose chairman was ex officio President of the Constitutional Court of Croatia. Members of the Supervision Committee could not be from the leadership of any political organization which had candidates in the elections. The Committee was charged specifically with supervising the lawfulness of the campaign, ensuring the equal rights and

protecting the dignity of the candidates, and pointing out any actions of the media, political and other organizations, government officials or candidates themselves which violated proper procedure or threatened the equal rights of any candidates.

The Structure of the New Parliament

As noted above, the size and configuration of the new Assembly of the Republic of Croatia would remain the same as it had been before the elections: a total of 356 deputies serving in three representative bodies -- the Socio-Political Chamber (80), the Chamber of Municipalities (116), and the Chamber of Associated Labor (160). The political composition of the new multi-party assembly would depend to a large degree on the fact that Croatia chose the French election system of absolute representation, rather than the proportional system adopted by Slovenia. The Communist Party in Slovenia had realized that it was likely to lose in the elections and therefore opted for a proportional system to assure the Party of at least some representation in the new parliament. On the other hand, the Croatian Communists, at the time they were drawing up the election law in early 1990, believed they were certain to win a majority of the votes in the spring elections, and thus chose a "winner-take-all" system which they felt would assure their control of the new assembly and limit the influence of opposition parties. The opposition, however, and especially the CDU, gained strength rapidly in the run-up to the elections, so that by election day the Communists' strategy appeared likely to backfire on them.

Control of the new Assembly was especially important in Croatia because it was the Assembly -- not the electorate as in Slovenia -- which would choose the republic's new President, who, in turn, would name a candidate to form the new government. As its first task, the new Assembly would elect the President and the four other members of the Croatian Presidency (from candidates proposed by the Assembly's Election Commission or by petition from 30 Assembly members). The new Presidency would then nominate candidates for the President of the Assembly and the President of the Croatian Executive Council (Premier), to be elected by the Assembly.

The Role of the Military and Other Organizations

There was no special role set aside for the military or any other organizations in the Croatian elections. Unlike the exception for the merchant marine, there was no provision for members of the armed forces to vote at their duty stations, either in Croatia or elsewhere in Yugoslavia. In order to vote, soldiers on active duty had to request leave and return to their place of residence. Most were not expected to do so, but this was unlikely to influence the election results one way or the other.

Districting, Candidates

There were close to 10,000 electoral districts established at the local level for elections to all three chambers of the 116 municipality assemblies. At the Zagreb city level, there were 166 electoral districts: 40 for the socio-political chamber, 56 for the chamber of municipalities, and 70 for the chamber of associated labor. At the republic level, there

were 356 electoral districts: 80 for the Socio-Political Chamber, 116 for the Chamber of Municipalities, and 160 for the Chamber of Associated Labor. For an election to be held in any electoral district there had to be at least two candidates running.

Altogether, there were 28,846 candidates for election to some 9,500 assembly seats at all three levels of government. There were 26,337 candidates for over 9,000 seats in the municipality assemblies, and 803 candidates for the 166 seats in the Zagreb city assembly. For the Republic Assembly, there were 1,706 candidates for the 356 seats. Of this total, only 105, or 6 percent, were women. The number of candidates who were affiliated with political parties was 1,153, or 67.6 percent. Independent candidates thus accounted for virtually one-third of the total -- 553, or 32.4 percent. It was generally believed that most of the independents were former Communist Party members who either were still supportive of the Party and running in the guise of being independent, or had genuinely decided to leave the party but were not yet ready to cast their lot with any opposition group. In either case, the large number of independents added an element of uncertainty to the final outcome, especially in the Chamber of Associated Labor, where more than 75 percent of all independent candidates were running, accounting for half of the total candidates for that chamber. Of party-affiliated candidates, the largest number were Communists -- 324 or 19 percent, followed by the CDU -- 273 or 15.9 percent, the Coalition -- 263 or 15.5 percent, and the Socialists -- 166 or 9.7 percent.

The breakdown of candidates for the Assembly's three bodies was as follows:

Socio-Political Chamber
(382 candidates for 80 seats)

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats Won</u>	<u>Percentage of Vote</u>
Croatian Democratic Union	77	20
Coalition of National Understanding	76	20
Communist Party	73	19
Socialist Alliance	60	16
Independent candidates	46	12
Others	50	13

Chamber of Municipalities
(468 candidates for 116 seats)

Communist Party	99	21
Croatian Democratic Union	88	19
Coalition of National Understanding	85	18
Socialist Alliance	66	14
Independent candidates	71	15
Others	59	13

Chamber of Associated Labor
(850 candidates for 160 seats *)

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats Won</u>	<u>Percentage of Vote</u>
Communist Party	152	18
Croatian Democratic Union	107	13
Coalition of National Understanding	103	12
Socialist Alliance	40	5
Independent candidates	428	50
Others	20	2

- * In three electoral districts no elections were held because only one candidate was running.

Campaigning, Funding, Access to the Media

The election law specified that candidates had the right to put forth and explain their election platform under equal conditions. The law did not place any restrictions on campaign activities, with the exception that all campaigning was banned during the 24 hours preceding the day of elections. However, no political campaigning was permitted at places of employment: e.g., factories, institutions or the university. In addition, the Communist Party cells in factories, which had traditionally played a major role in the political indoctrination of workers, were reportedly abolished 2 months before the elections. Campaigning was permitted in front of factories, however, and posters were permitted inside (the staff delegation saw Communist Party posters at the gates of one factory and a Tadjman poster inside the plant itself).

If there was any constraint on campaigning, it was the short time available to political parties in the run-up to the elections. The parties had less than 5 months in which to organize themselves after the 11th Congress decision to hold multi-party elections, and less than 2 months in which to campaign after passage of the election law. All the major political organizations held public rallies throughout the republic, the largest and most effective organized by the CDU. Tadjman himself delivered up to four stump speeches a day, and by the end of the campaign his rallies were drawing an estimated 250,000 supporters. The rallies were replete with nationalist symbolism, such as the waving of the former Croatian flag and the singing of long-banned Croatian folk songs. The Communists failed to attract any mass outpouring, while the Coalition centered its rallies in Zagreb. All parties made extensive use of campaign posters and distributed Western-style campaign literature, buttons and other materials.

The CDU was also the most effective fundraiser, drawing on Croatian emigre communities and workers abroad for an estimated \$5 million. Sensitive to charges of organized foreign support, Tadjman emphasized in a meeting with the staff delegation that

all campaign contributions came from individual supporters, not from organizations. Some of the small parties in the Coalition were also able to tap foreign sources for much more limited funding. All parties enjoyed unrestricted access to the media for radio, television and newsprint campaign promotion, with full-page advertisements dominating the newspapers in the days just before the elections. Two nights before the elections, the leaders of the four principal political organizations participated in a 3-hour television debate which attracted a wide public audience. Altogether, the relatively brief but highly intensive period of political campaigning had generated enormous public interest and awareness by the time of the elections.

Harassment, Intimidations, Complaints

No outright harassment of candidates was reported, although the CDU claimed an attempt to assassinate Tudjman had been made in March, when a Serb armed with a pistol charged the speaker's podium. The weapon was later revealed to have been only a gas-powered pistol, but Tudjman increased his bodyguard thereafter. The opposition also complained that the Communists had included their campaign literature in the invitation letters sent to voters. There was one well-publicized incident several days before the elections at a military base near Zagreb, in which a Communist Party official reportedly attempted to pressure soldiers to vote for the Party. This incident was acknowledged by the authorities, investigated by the Supervision Committee, and reportedly corrected. There were also allegations of attempts by the Communists to pressure factory workers to vote for the Party. Tudjman, in his meeting with the staff delegation, stated that the Communists had threatened workers with being fired if they voted for the CDU and had caused the CDU other problems in places of work. But Tudjman's major complaint was that the Communists used their entrenched position, their greater resources, and their control of the media unfairly to influence campaign reporting, relegating CDU rallies in the thousands to the back pages while reporting Communist rallies of only hundreds on page one, and consistently deflating the numbers attending CDU rallies while exaggerating Communist support. The CDU also complained that it had not been given an opportunity to make an input into the drawing up of the election law, even though it had requested to do so. On the other hand, the Communists complained that the CDU rallies were marked by intolerance toward political opponents who were denounced as traitors or enemies of the Croatian people, and that the CDU aimed threats and insults at Serbia. The Communists also charged that by displaying the traditional Croatian flag with its old coat of arms, the CDU was invoking memories of the pro-fascist, wartime "Independent State of Croatia."

THE BALLOTING AND RESULTS

Voting

Several days before the elections, registered voters received invitations to vote, together with computer-printed identification labels which they were asked to bring with them to their polling stations. The first round of voting took place on Sunday, April 22, and

Monday, April 23, at some 8,000 polling stations throughout the republic. The staff delegation visited 10 polling stations on the first day in the city of Zagreb, the nearby town of Samobor, and two outlying villages. On the second day, the delegation visited five polling stations for elections to chambers of associated labor at a large industrial complex, a museum and Zagreb University. The delegation was welcomed and allowed to observe the voting at all polling stations except for one in the manufacturing area of the industrial complex, where it was given information but told it could not remain to watch the voting process. Three other groups also served as U.S. election monitors: a delegation from the National Republican Institute for International Affairs, a group from Lawyers for Democratic Reforms, and three delegates from the Croatian Democratic Project. Other foreign observers whom the delegation encountered included a group of Canadian federal and provincial parliamentarians, a Maltese representative of the Council of Europe, and a representative of the Austrian Peoples Party.

On April 22, polling stations were open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. as prescribed by the election law. Some remained open until later to accommodate all voters waiting to cast their ballots; others closed promptly at 8 p.m. even if voters were still waiting. This variation appeared to depend solely on the way different election commission chairmen chose to interpret their instructions. Every polling station was manned and supervised by an election commission, usually consisting of six persons -- a chairperson and two members plus their alternates -- to handle an average local electorate of 350 - 450 voters. Polling stations serving larger electorates -- in some cases more than 1,000 voters -- had two six-person teams assigned to them. At more than half the polling stations visited, the commission chairpersons were from the Communist Party, with the others either from the CDU or independents. The Communist Party, the CDU and independents were represented on all commissions visited, with the Coalition and the Socialists represented on only a few. Other than their representatives on election commissions, political parties were strictly forbidden to have observers at polling stations, unlike the situation in Slovenia. Most polling stations on the first day were located in schools. The way they were set up and the way voters were processed varied considerably and appeared to depend primarily on the organizational abilities of their commission chairpersons. In some cases voters could get their ballots, vote, and exit quickly, while in others long lines formed, due to poor arrangements for traffic flow. In some cases voting privacy was assured by tables with high cardboard partitions set far apart, while in others there was little privacy due to crowding, poor partitioning and the sharing of tables.

On arrival at their polling stations, voters presented some form of personal identification (driver's license, identity card or passport) as well as the computerized label they had received in the mail. Both forms of identification were requested, but one or the other was sufficient. The commission checked voters' names against a master computerized list of registered voters, and, if they matched, gave them their ballots. If their names were not on the list but they appeared eligible to vote at that location, they were sent to the "town hall" of the local municipality to obtain a certification of voting eligibility, and returned with

it to cast their ballots. The commission also maintained a separate list of those registered voters who were physically absent from their homes, either because they were working abroad or were serving in the military. The staff delegation saw few instances of such persons returning home to vote, despite reports of long lines at borders; altogether it was estimated that only about 10,000 Croats working abroad actually voted in the first round. Voters who were illiterate or infirm were allowed to have someone, including a commission member, assist them in marking their ballots. If registered voters were ill either at home or in a hospital, and requested to vote, two commission members would take ballots to them. Eligible voters who were in prison could not vote. Although they retained their legal right to vote, it was explained, they were unable to exercise this right since they were deprived by another law of their freedom of movement.

Once the commission had established a voter's eligibility, the voter was given a number of ballots, ranging from four to seven, depending on the various assemblies being voted for at that polling station. In the city of Zagreb, for example, a voter received seven ballots: two for the municipality assembly, two for the Zagreb assembly, and one each for the Republic Assembly's Socio-Political Chamber and Chamber of Municipalities, and the Zagreb Assembly's representative to the Chamber of Municipalities. In towns outside Zagreb, voters received only four ballots: two for their municipality assembly and two for the Republic Assembly. In rural towns, agricultural workers received these four ballots, plus two more for the chambers of associated labor of their municipality and of the Republic Assembly. The names of candidates were listed alphabetically and numbered on the ballots, which were about 6 by 8 inches in size and came in various but similar colors. Voters were instructed to mark their ballots by circling the number of the one candidate they wished to vote for on each ballot. Ballots with more than one circle, a mark other than a circle, or marked in any other way, were declared invalid. After being marked, the ballots were folded in half and placed in separate boxes corresponding to the number of ballots issued.

The procedure was essentially the same on the second day, April 23, when voting for chambers of associated labor took place at polling stations located in various places of work. However, there was a great disparity in the size of labor force electorates (from 32 employees of a museum to 2,300 students at the faculty of law, for example), and greater flexibility in the 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. polling station hours (one with only a few voters closed well before noon, for example, while another at a large industrial plant remained open until 6:30 a.m. the next morning to accommodate the night shift). Voters for chambers of associated labor did not receive computerized invitations, but were informed of the elections at workers' meetings the week before. The lists of such voters were compiled by each enterprise. Voters received either three ballots if they worked in Zagreb, or only two ballots if they were outside the city. A large number of workers voted at factories and institutions (85 to 90 percent), while only a few students bothered to vote, largely because they were unaware that they qualified as "workers" to vote for chambers of associated labor. Overall, however, voter turnout over the 2 days of the first round was extremely

high --- 83 percent of the voting population by official count.

Counting

As soon as a polling station closed, all six members of its election commission assembled to count the results in the presence of each other. The number of registered voters who actually voted was first certified and reconciled with the number of unused ballots. The commission was then instructed to count the votes, ballot box-by-ballot box, and to compile a list of candidates in the order of the number of votes received in each race. These results had to be reported to the local municipality election commission within 18 hours. The municipality commission had to compile and verify all the results from its constituent polling stations, and then forward them to the Republic Election Commission for tabulation and announcement of the final, official results.

On the first day, the staff delegation succeeded in observing the counting at one polling station, but was denied permission to do so at a second. In the latter case, the chairman of the election commission of the local municipality intervened in favor of the delegation but referred the matter to the Republic Commission, which ruled that the delegation's credentials did not extend to observation of the counting, despite written authorization to observe the work of the election commissions. A member of the Lawyers for Democratic Reforms group was also denied permission to observe the counting, but several other foreign observers did manage to view the counting, particularly when they stayed on at a polling station after the voting. For the next day's elections for the chambers of associated labor, the staff delegation was again able to observe counting. As the delegation's own experience showed, permission to observe the counting was granted at the discretion of individual polling station commissions.

Results

As soon as the first results began to come in, it was clear that Tadjman and his CDU were headed for a landslide victory in the elections. Of the 356 seats in the Republic Assembly, 131 were decided by majority vote in the April 22-23 first round. Of these, the CDU won 104 seats, or more than 79 percent of those decided and almost 30 percent of the total. The Communists captured only 13 seats, less than 10 percent of those decided and less than 4 percent of the total, while the Coalition won a mere three seats. The CDU appeared to be genuinely surprised by the strength of its first-round victory, and adopted a confident but low-key approach going into the second round, where a final victory seemed assured. The Communists, trying to make the best of their poor showing, in which even their leader Racan failed to win a majority in his home district, now presented themselves in the new role of a strong opposition. The Party appealed to voters that if they had "voted for change" in the first round, then they should "vote for democracy" in the second round. The Coalition, stunned by the magnitude of its first round defeat, was dealt another blow by the defection of the Croatian Democratic Party -- its strongest partner -- and appeared to be virtually eliminated as a political force in the future.

In the second-round voting on May 6-7, which was simplified by the smaller number of candidates and the requirement of only a simple plurality to win, an additional 198 seats were decided in the Republic Assembly. The CDU's margin of victory was considerably less than it had been in the first round, however, as it captured only 42 percent of the seats decided (compared to 79 percent in the first round), while the Communists gained strength, winning 26.5 percent (compared to less than 10 percent in the first round).

A third and final round of voting took place on May 20-21, at which time an additional 22 seats were decided -- four in the Socio-Political Chamber, five in the Chamber of Municipalities, and 13 in the Chamber of Associated Labor. As a result, 351 of the total number of 356 seats in the new Republic Assembly were filled. Five remaining seats -- one in the Chamber of Municipalities and four in the Chamber of Associated Labor -- were not filled due to the lack of candidates, and elections for them are to be held at a later date. The CDU ended up with an overall majority of almost 59 percent in the new Assembly, and took control of all three of its chambers. The Communist Party won 20.8 percent, but the Communists together with the Socialist Alliance formed a total "Left Bloc" opposition of 26.5 percent. The breakdown of the 351 Assembly seats is as follows:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats Won</u>	<u>Percentage of Vote</u>
Croatian Democratic Union	206	58.7
Communist Party	73	20.8
Communist Party/Socialist Alliance	17	4.8
Independent candidates	13	3.7
Coalition of National Understanding	11	3.1
Croatian Democratic Party	10	2.9
Serbian Democratic Party	5	1.4
Socialist Alliance	3	0.9
Others	13	3.7

Fraud, Other Complaints

There was no evidence of organized election fraud or manipulation of the vote. No serious complaints were filed by any of the contending parties, the Communists accepting their defeat as a matter of course, and the Coalition acknowledging that the elections had been conducted fairly. There were a number of problems, but these appeared to have been more procedural than intentional, resulting from inexperience, the complexity of the elections, and the short time available to prepare for them. The major problem concerned inaccuracies in the voter registration lists, which either included too many names (persons deceased or who had moved), or, in many cases, omitted the names of eligible voters. Such persons had to go through the time-consuming process of obtaining verification of their status from the local municipality, which resulted in long and occasionally unruly lines with many voters denied the chance to cast their ballots when polling stations closed on time. There were long delays reported at the borders for those Croatian voters working

abroad. There were also reports in March that military units had scheduled maneuvers on election days to prevent soldiers from voting, but these appeared to be unfounded and were later countered by other reports that military commanders were actively encouraging soldiers to take leave in order to return home to vote. The similarity in the colors of the ballots also caused confusion, and, as they were not given control numbers, there was the possibility that they could be switched.

Some observers noted that the large proportion of independents on the polling station election commissions appeared to violate the rule that limited any one party to no more than a third of the commission members. These commissions, as a matter of fact, could have had a broader party representation, and the CDU did complain that it experienced difficulty in getting its representatives on them. When there was a delay in announcing the results of the first round, suspicions arose that the vote was being manipulated, but the delay was apparently the result of confusion and computer problems, and in any case the final outcome served to allay such concerns. The press reported that one of the American lawyers filed a complaint that he had been prevented from observing the counting. After the elections, the U.S. Consul General in Zagreb raised this issue with the Chairman of the Republic Election Commission, who maintained that the election law clearly prohibited anyone (even himself) from observing the counting, but acknowledged that this provision should be changed.

Formation of a New Government

The new, multi-party Croatian Assembly held its first session on May 30 and, as expected, elected CDU leader Franjo Tudjman to be the new President of the Republic. The Assembly also elected Stjepan Mesic, the CDU's Executive Secretary, to head the new Croatian government as President of the Executive Council (Premier). Zarko Domljan, also from the CDU, was elected President of the new Assembly. The Communist Party was given one seat on the Presidency, and one of the four Vice-Presidents of the Assembly. The following day, the Assembly adopted the program of the new government. Premier Mesic proposed an Executive Council, or cabinet, of 16 members, 14 of whom were elected, and four chairpersons of committees not included in the cabinet. The Assembly also elected three Vice-Premiers -- Mato Babic, Milan Ramljak and Bernardo Jurlina -- and then adjourned until its next scheduled session on June 20.

CONCLUSION: POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ELECTIONS

While Yugoslavia has often appeared to be at a crossroads in its political and economic course, only to continue to muddle through its difficulties, the elections in Slovenia and Croatia have brought the country to a point where some very serious and difficult decisions will have to be made. As it now stands, the northern republics are being governed by freely elected officials, while the other republics continue to be ruled by Communist officials who have monopolized political power since the second World War and where, to varying degrees, human rights problems continue to exist. The likelihood that any country could stay together for very long in this condition is doubtful, especially in a country with as much national and ethnic diversity as Yugoslavia.

The Slovenian and Croatian elections have confirmed the general course these two republics, and Slovenia in particular, have been following for some time -- more political liberalization and greater autonomy if not full sovereignty. As they begin the complicated task of solidifying their democratic gains through constitutional and other legal changes, the ball now effectively passes into the court of the rest of Yugoslavia. There are three possible ways in which Yugoslavia could respond to the outcome of the Slovenian and Croatian elections. First, Belgrade could decide to deploy the Yugoslav People's Army in Slovenia and Croatia to ensure that they do not secede from the federation. Second, Yugoslavs could all decide simply to go their own way and the entire country could disintegrate. Third, the rest of Yugoslavia could follow the same course as Slovenia and Croatia, especially by holding free elections, and seek to convince the new political leaders in Ljubljana and Zagreb that their future would be brightest in a democratic and united Yugoslavia.

Given the Byzantine nature of Yugoslav politics, it is difficult to predict which course will prevail. Already, there are signs that Yugoslavs may be moving down all three. In his inaugural address, the new President of the Presidency of Yugoslavia, Borisav Jovic, warned that the country is on the edge of civil war and disintegration, and urged the republics to await changes to the federal Constitution before changing their own. The collective Presidency said the next day that urgent measures to protect the political integrity of the country are indispensable. In May, the Army began to move weapons and ammunition in Slovenia to more secure facilities (such measures were suspended after strong Slovenian protest). Jovic did mention, however, the possibility of creating a mechanism by which the nationalities could choose their own course.

In the meantime, alternative groups are sprouting up throughout Yugoslavia, and elections in the republics and at the federal level are likely within a year. Serbia, along with its two provinces, remains the main hold-out, and the crisis in Kosovo continues to be the main obstacle to the establishment of a more democratic political system throughout Yugoslavia. Montenegro, while often supporting Serbia, is less hesitant on holding free elections. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia have already taken steps toward free

elections and, as they do, Serbia will be increasingly isolated within the federation, and its leadership will likely feel more pressure from the population to make similar moves. Even if the entire country goes the democratic route, there is no certainty that it will hold together, but it definitely has a greater potential to do so that way than by seeking to maintain the status quo.

Resolving Yugoslavia's economic problems also remains a key factor, and, although he is not a freely elected official, thus far Prime Minister Markovic is highly regarded and stands a greater chance of solving these problems than his predecessors. His ability to convince the Slovenes and Croats to work with him rather than going their own way will be crucial to the final outcome of the current situation.

The Slovenes and the Croats will soon be organized and ready to look more closely at their future course. While many of the new leaders are inexperienced, having never held public office before, it is believed that they will adapt easily to their new situation and handle affairs responsibly. The assumption of political power, as well as the reaction of Moscow to the declarations of independence in the three Baltic States, may well make the new governments in Slovenia and Croatia more cautious on the question of creating a confederation or seceding from Yugoslavia. While remaining firm in their positions, they will likely be more willing to seek at least a dialogue with the other republics.

Croatia has thus far followed Slovenia's lead on political reform, but, with both republics now having freely elected governments, they are now at a similar stage. Given the greater size of Croatia and its potential for nationalist unrest, however, Slovenia will probably be eclipsed by Croatia as the target for criticism by hard-liners in Belgrade. Furthermore, if Slovenia remains isolated with Croatia in Yugoslavia for long, there may be increasing differences between them as the Slovenes jealously guard their autonomy from their more populous neighbor next door.

With these factors all in play, timing will be critical in determining how things will evolve. If Slovenia and Croatia concentrate on developing their purely internal matters and are patient with the remainder of the country, and if the remainder moves toward constitutional reform and free elections quickly, a positive solution that keeps Yugoslavia together is certainly possible. If the other republics and the federal government move too slowly, and if talks over a confederation fail and the northern republics declare their own independence, more troubled times will likely lay ahead in Yugoslavia.