YUGOSLAVIA

FROM "NATIONAL COMMUNISM" TO NATIONAL COLLAPSE

US Intelligence Community Estimative Products on Yugoslavia, 1948-1990

NIC 2006-004 December 2006

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Preface

The National Intelligence Council is pleased to issue this collection of declassified national intelligence reports on Yugoslavia. They cover the period from Tito's break with Stalin in 1948 to 1990—the eve of Yugoslavia's collapse into secession and civil war. This material represents a valuable record for historians, intelligence specialists, and others with an interest in the story of Yugoslavia's break from the Soviet Bloc and its effort to strike an independent path to "national communism." It offers special insights into the thinking that helped shape Washington's responses to Yugoslavia's independent stance and into the Intelligence Community's appraisals later of the internal tensions that led to the country's ultimate collapse.

This is the third in a series of recent publications of declassified national intelligence products—the first, focusing on China, was released in 2004 and the next, on Vietnam, followed one year later. These documents on Yugoslavia, like those in the previous collections, are "estimative" in nature, representing forward-looking efforts to explain how events might unfold in the region and thereby alert policymakers to the opportunities and challenges they might confront.

These records, some of which reach back over five decades, represent the considered judgments of the best experts within the Intelligence Community at the time. The work of our intelligence analysts today reflects the best of this tradition—careful review of the evidence and a reasoned approach to arriving at judgments—but the estimative product itself has evolved, becoming much more concise and inclusive of divergent views and showing greater transparency in how we arrive at judgments. Also, today, we search for expertise wherever it can be found—whether it be within the Intelligence Community or the academic, business or think-tank worlds, around the corner or around the globe. Our goal is to bring together the best minds that can be found to consider the broadest spectrum of views and fully explore alternative hypotheses.

The National Intelligence Council is working to improve the readability, accessibility, and, of course, the utility of its estimative products for policymakers. Declassification, compilation, and study of earlier estimative products complement this effort. Publication of this volume affirms our continuing commitment—where feasible and appropriate—to tell the story of intelligence.

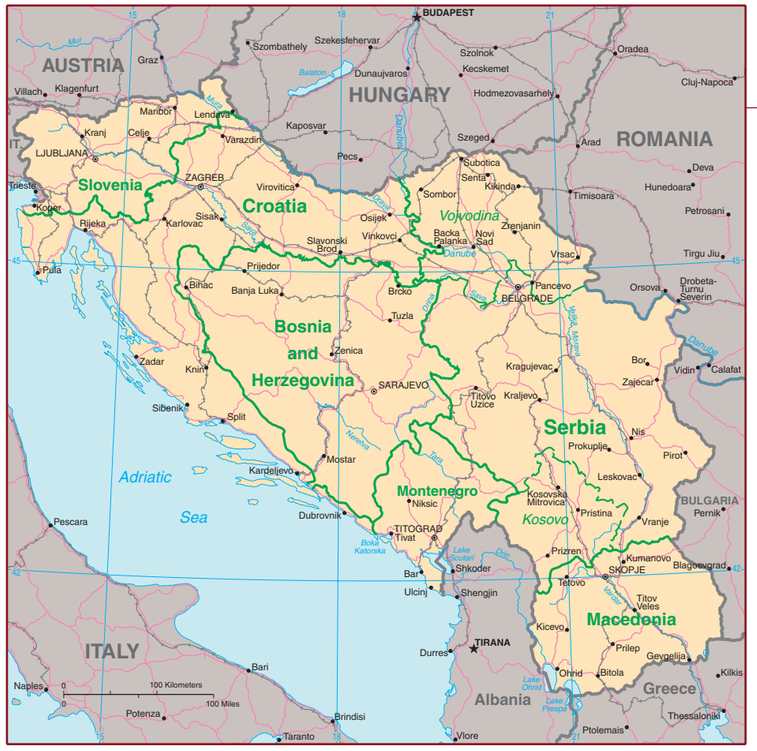
Putting this volume together required the efforts of a great number of people. John K. Allen and others on the staff of the Information Review Officer for the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency managed the task of identifying and declassifying the relevant documents. Marten van Heuven, a former National Intelligence Officer for Europe, who led the work that produced the final National Intelligence Estimate in the collection, wrote the introduction. Ambassador Richard Kauzlarich, our current NIO for Europe, offered valuable substantive guidance for this book. Mathew Burrows and his team in the Analysis and Production Staff of the National Intelligence Council performed the editing and developed the format, graphics, and all the details to bring it to publication.

I also would like to personally thank Lee Hamilton, Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and his staff at the Cold War International History Project, who partnered with the National Intelligence Council to give scholars and practitioners an opportunity to take the measure of this analytic work and draw insights for the future. Finally, we should not forget the dedicated officers of the Intelligence Community themselves whose expertise forms this collection.

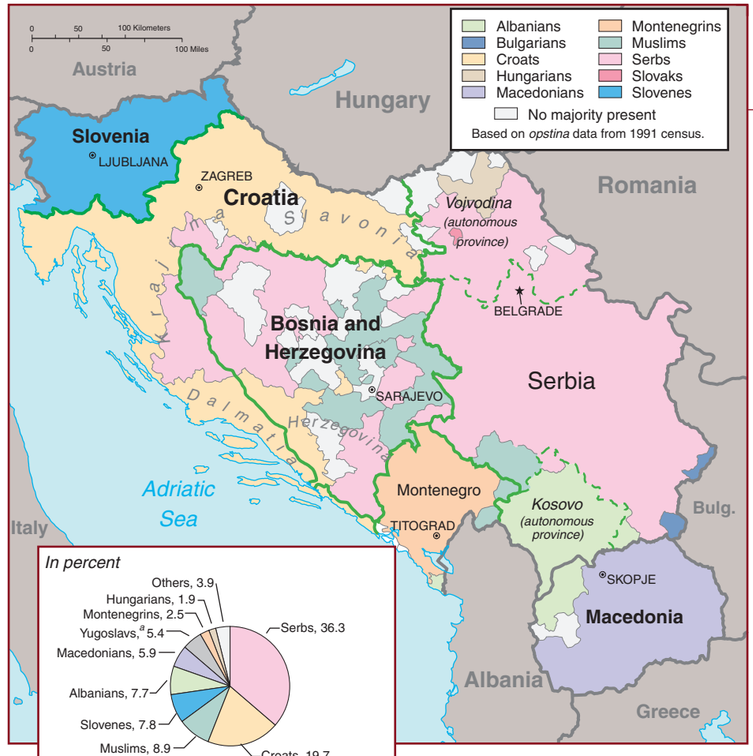
C. Thomas Fingar
Chairman, National Intelligence Council

HISTORICAL YUGOSLAVIA

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1990



Ethnic Composition in the Former Yugoslavia, 1991



1100

925-1102
Kingdom of Croatia

1102
Croatia loses independence, accepts Hungarian king

1331-55
Kingdom of Serbia goldern age

1389
Serbs defeated by Ottoman Turks at Battle of Kosovo

1527
Croatia passes under Hapsburg sovereignty

1718
Turks withdraw from Croatia

1830
Serbia granted autonomy within Ottoman Empire

1900

1878
Treaty of Berlin:
- Serbia independent
- Montenegro independent
- Macedonia returned to Ottomans
- Bosnia and Herzegovina administered by Austria-Hungary

1912-13
Balkan Wars–Serbia acquires N. Macedonia

1914
Assassination of Austrian archduke at Sarajevo by pro-Serbian terrorist launches WWI

1918
"Yugoslavia" created as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes

1929
Name changed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia

1934
Assassination of King Alexander

1940

1941
WWII invasion by German and Italian forces; "independent state" set up in Croatia under *ustaši* extremists, puppet regime in Serbia

1941-44
Partisan warfare against Germans

1944
Belgrade liberated by Soviets and Tito's Partisans

1946
Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia composed of six republics under Tito

June 1948
Yugoslavia breaks from Soviet Bloc

July 1948
Tito ends support to Greek Communist forces

1954
Provisional settlement of dispute with Italy over Free Territory of Trieste

1960

1965-66
Major round of economic reforms

1971
Croatian "Spring" suppressed

1974
Constitution increases powers of the republics

1975
Final agreement over Trieste

1980
Tito's death, country ruled by collective presidency

1988-89
Resurgent Serbian nationalism sparks separatist movements in Croatia and Slovenia

1989
Serbia amends its constitution to increase control over Kosovo Province, troops quell demonstrations by ethnic Albanians in Kosovo

1990
First free multiparty election won by non-Communists in Croatia and Slovenia, both moving toward separation; ethnic tensions coming to a boil in Kosovo

1990

DI Design Center/MPG 409730AI/753540AI (A04646)/753543AI (R00472) 10-06

Contents

ORE: Office of Reports and Estimates
NIE: National Intelligence Estimate
SNIE: Special National Intelligence Estimate
NSSM: National Security Study Memorandum
ONE: Office of National Estimates
IIM: Interagency Intelligence Memorandum
M/H: Memorandum for Holders

See CD inside back pocket for searchable texts of the above 34 declassified intelligence products on Yugoslavia.

Foreword

The 34 documents in this collection comprise all of the estimative products on Yugoslavia forwarded by the Intelligence Community to policymakers between 1948, when the community first began producing formal intelligence estimates, and 1990, when the Yugoslav federation began to dissolve.* The documents were produced by the Office of National Estimates (ONE), established in 1950 for the sole purpose of producing such "national intelligence assessments," and, beginning in 1973, by the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) system, an integral part of today's National Intelligence Council. The Office of Reports and Evaluations, ONE's predecessor organization, produced the first five documents in the collection.

The documents fall into two broad categories: 1) formal products of the national intelligence estimative process, and 2) memoranda written and disseminated unilaterally by ONE. The most important difference between the two categories of documents is that the products of the formal process—mostly National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs)—were coordinated within the Intelligence Community while the ONE memoranda were not. Importantly, however, both the formal products and the substantive ONE memoranda were written for and disseminated to the highest levels of policymakers, including in many cases the President.

None of the ONE memoranda have been declassified before, and most of the NIEs and other formal estimative products in the collection have either not before been declassified or have only been declassified in part. The documents are presented virtually intact. The passage of time and of Yugoslavia have made it possible to make public material which might otherwise have been considered still sensitive. What little material has been redacted relates to still relevant intelligence sources and methods and not to the substance of the analysis.

The two documents included as appendices, while not estimative products, are intended to illuminate the collection. The document at Appendix A, published in the Summer 1985 edition of *Studies in Intelligence*, provides a notion of what makers of policy on Yugoslavia received by way of analysis before the formal estimative process was

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* The 34 documents do not, however, represent the totality of intelligence analysis on Yugoslavia. During the 42-year span covered by this collection, the constituent members of the Intelligence Community produced their own stream of assessments and reports on Yugoslavia, from which the estimative products herein were distilled. For an explanation of how estimative products differ from other forms of analysis see the section entitled "Intelligence Analysis and Policy Formulation" in Appendix B, the National Defense University (NDU) Case Study.

established. The document at Appendix B provides context for readers not familiar with the intelligence process and how intelligence in general and NIE 15-90 in particular influenced the policymaking process. They are reprinted here with the permission of their authors, the State Department's Robert Blum, and Thomas W. Shreeve of the National Defense University.

This collection, a joint undertaking of the National Intelligence Council and CIA's Information Management Services (IMS), was compiled by John Allen working under the aegis of the National Intelligence Officer for Europe Ambasador Richard Kauzlarich. A number of other individuals from the National Intelligence Council and from the staff (in IMS) of the Information Review Officer for the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency participated in the preparation of the collection

John K. Allen, Jr.

Mr. Allen is a 30-year veteran of the CIA who served in operations, analysis, and the management of analysis. He served on the NIC as an NIO during 1994 and 1995. He was on the editorial team that compiled two other collections of historically significant estimative products—*Tracking the Dragon, National Intelligence Estimates on China During the Era of Mao, 1948-1976* and *National Estimative Products on Vietnam, 1948-1975*. Mr. Allen received a B.A from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, an MPA from Harvard University, and is a graduate of the Air War College.

Richard D. Kauzlarich

Ambassador Kauzlarich was appointed NIO for Europe in September 2003. He is a 32-year veteran of the Foreign Service. He served as United States Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997-99 and to Azerbaijan in 1994-97. Among his other senior positions at the Department of State, he was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of European Affairs responsible for relations with the former Soviet Union and economic ties with the European Union. He also served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs and Deputy Director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. Ambassador Kauzlarich received his B.A. from Valparaiso University and M.A.s from Indiana University and the University of Michigan.

Introduction

By Marten H. A. van Heuven

Marten van Heuven served as National Intelligence Officer for Europe from September 1987 to May 1991. Starting his career in the Department of State's Office of the Legal Adviser, Mr. van Heuven's overseas Foreign Service assignments included Berlin, NATO, The Hague, and Bonn. He also served as Deputy US Permanent Representative to the UN, Geneva. In Washington, he worked in the Office of East European Affairs, was Director of the Office of West European Affairs, and also served a tour in the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Mr. van Heuven received a B.A. from Yale University, an LL.B. from Yale Law School, and a Master in International Affairs from Columbia University. He spent a year as a Mid Career Fellow at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, and a year at the Department of State's Senior Seminar.

The estimative materials presented in this volume are an important contribution to institutional and national history. They reflect the considered judgment of analysts from all parts of the Intelligence Community. As my former colleague Robert L. Suettinger has aptly noted, National Estimates put on the record the big judgments, about trends and possible futures, irrespective of whether these judgments fit the mode of thinking of policymakers.[1] As such, the Estimates included in this volume should be of interest to historians and scholars.

The publication of these Estimates serves an additional purpose. The issues that affected Yugoslavia during the period of its existence survive the country's dissolution. The traditional description of Yugoslavia as a country of six republics, five nationalities, four languages, three religions, two alphabets, and one party (under Tito), held the promise of analytical and estimative complexity. Yugoslavia made good on that promise.

Even the birth of six countries to replace what used to be Yugoslavia is not the end of the story. It is the beginning of another story, as those diplomats, soldiers and representatives of non-governmental organizations presently active in the region are ready to attest. This volume contains source material for those officials and others—in the United States and Europe—now tasked with helping to shape the future of the Balkans. If it is true that history matters, this observation applies abundantly in an area that seems driven, often in unhelpful ways, by historical recollections and a disposition of its people to prefer dwelling on the past rather than facing the future.

[1] Introduction, ***Tracking the Dragon: National Intelligence Estimates on China During the Era of Mao, 1948-1976***, p. xii, October 2004.

American Involvement in Yugoslavia

Why did Yugoslavia matter to the United States? American interest in the Balkans antedated the creation of the Yugoslav state. The atrocities committed in the first (1912) and second (1913) Balkan wars led the Carnegie Endowment to organize an International Committee of Inquiry, which produced a study on the causes and conduct of the wars, published by Carnegie in 1914. In 1993, in the midst of the carnage accompanying the breakup of Yugoslavia, Carnegie President Morton Abramowitz reissued the Report, with an Introduction by George F. Kennan. Aggressive nationalism was a root cause of the Balkans' and later Yugoslavia's troubles. In the words of Kennan, "But that nationalism, as it manifested itself on the field of battle, drew on deeper traits of character inherited, presumably, from a distant tribal past: a tendency to view the outsider, generally, with dark suspicion, and to see the political-military opponent, in particular, as a fearful and implacable enemy to be rendered harmless only by total and unpitying destruction. And so it remains today."[2]

Following World War I, President Wilson and his advisers were intimately involved in charting the future of the Balkans before and during the Paris Peace Conference.[3] During World War II, the Allies—the United States included—dealt with Yugoslavia as a significant piece of the strategic puzzle how to contain and defeat the Axis powers.

Prologue: The 1948 Belgrade-Moscow split—an intelligence failure?

When Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform, Washington began to look at Yugoslavia as part of the broader East-West Cold War that was beginning to emerge. Against this backdrop of US-Soviet conflict, the story of Yugoslavia told in these Estimates begins to unfold.

To understand the Estimates, however, it is important to know about the Yugoslav-Cominform split that preceded them. On June 28, 1948, the Cominform countries condemned Yugoslavia for pursuing policies hostile to the Soviet Union and expelled Belgrade from Cominform. The surprise in Washington—as, indeed, elsewhere in the West—at the sudden news of the split, would not be the last time that the Washington policy community was unable or unwilling to digest warnings from its diplomats overseas, or its analysts at home. In 1990, history would repeat itself.

In a well-sourced study, published in 1985, Robert Blum concludes that the inability of Washington to anticipate the Yugoslav expulsion from the Cominform was a story of failed political intelligence of major proportions, in both collection and analysis (see Appendix A).

Blum's detailed account, however, suggests an alternative conclusion. Already in February 1947, and in subsequent messages to Washington, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in

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[2] "Introduction, "*The Other Balkan Wars, A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in Retrospect", 1993*, p.11.

[3] Ronald Steel, "*Walter Lippman and the American Century"*, Atlantic Monthly Press, Ch. 11.

Belgrade John Cabot warned of a possible split. In June 1947, he noted that Yugoslav interests "may not always blindly follow Russian instructions." He followed up with another warning, on July 7, 1947, that "conflicts of interest with Russia are inevitable and the intense nationalism of the country [would] play a decisive role." Nationalism, not ideology, according to Cabot, would drive Yugoslav policies. Reportedly, when this message was shown to then Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson, he wrote "rubbish" across the text.

Still, Embassy Belgrade judged that there was the possibility of a split. U.S. Chargé d'Affaires R. Borden Reams, reported to Washington on June 18, 1948, that "—for [the] first time in history, [the] Soviet Union is faced with [a] consolidated Communist regime outside [its] own borders willing to risk independence or even [a] contrary course." Reams concluded that he was "convinced that [a] definite split exists."

Blum argues that although there were many talented officers in the State Department, perhaps "not enough people" were focusing on inner-Soviet Bloc relations and Yugoslavia. Maybe they lacked the time. Maybe the signals were "confusing and misleading." Possibly, the mind set in Washington, which was comfortable with the certainty of who the enemies were, produced a skewed perception.

What is remarkable is not that observers did not foresee the split before it occurred. In Communist systems, in particular, policy can be set on the whim of a single ruler, and is by nature unpredictable. The remarkable fact is that Embassy officers, Ambassador Cabot and Chargé Reams in particular, fingered nationalism as the underlying potent trend that, at some point, would drive the Yugoslavs to assert their independence. As to Washington, a Policy Planning Staff memorandum dated June 30, 1948, largely drafted by George Kennan, concluded, "[f]or the first time in history, we may now have within the international community a Communist state…independent of Moscow."[4]

Was this an intelligence failure? It is worth recalling that, at that time, there was no intelligence community to make estimative judgments. There was no mechanism in Washington to filter and organize the insightful but sporadic reports of knowledgeable and experienced diplomatic observers into a cohesive estimative opinion. That said, there is no guaranty that, even if an intelligence community had been in place and fully staffed at the time, Acheson would not have acted as he did. Sometimes policymakers already have their minds made up.

The Estimates: Paradox and Perspective

The estimative materials in this collection regarding Yugoslavia present a paradox. On the one hand, they reflect a thorough appreciation of the state of the country over the period 1948-1990. The factual basis for the assessments is detailed and, overall, accurate. Trends in Yugoslav-Soviet relations, the internal political and economic situation, and the cohesion of the country are, largely, correctly identified. Judgments

[4] John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace*, Oxford, 1987, pp. 157-158.

about their likely evolution are mostly on the mark, even if, in some cases, hedged by caveats.

On the one hand, the large role the Soviet Union plays as a backdrop to the Yugoslav issue is striking. Analysts focused on the importance of Yugoslavia's run for independence for its broader implications within the Communist world. In some cases the analysts seemed to be trying to estimate Soviet power and influence through Yugoslav judgments of it as the Yugoslavs themselves dealt with Moscow

On the other hand, the Estimates on Yugoslavia do not reflect much of an effort to put the course of the country into the mainstream of the evolution of Europe. Yet, Yugoslavia was a key part of a Europe that was changing, on both sides of the Iron Curtain. After the Treaty of Rome, in 1957, Western European countries started pooling sovereignty into European Community—and later European Union (EU)—institutions, processes and practices. Meanwhile, Eastern European countries, after the death of Stalin, embarked on a long and uneven road toward self-assertion.

The Estimates contain sporadic references to those other events, such as the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and the "Prague Spring" of 1968. While they do refer to changing Kremlin policies and tactics, they are largely silent on the transition in East-West relations, from the Cold War to the détente that followed the Cuban Missile crisis. Nor are the Yugoslav estimative materials directly linked, for the most part, to the growing trends within Moscow's East European satellite states toward liberalization from the Kremlin.

These issues, to be sure, were undoubtedly tackled by the Intelligence Community in other estimative work directly focused on those countries and trends. Nevertheless, what is missing in the Yugoslav estimative materials presented here is anything more than a sketch on the broader canvas of political liberalization in Europe—both East and West. Yet, as the last Estimate included in this volume (NIE 15-90) was being prepared, the cascade of change was well under way. Solidarity was part of the Polish government. The Hungarian People's Republic had been abolished. The Berlin Wall had come down. Germany was putting together the remaining elements toward unification. Ceausescu was dead.

The evolution of Yugoslavia was part and parcel of this larger European tableau. Indeed, in the lead-up to these events, the "Yugoslav experiment" must have been an attention-getter to East Europeans, just as it was an irritant to Moscow. The estimative materials focus largely on the latter aspect, and leave mostly unexplored the degree to which Tito and the Yugoslav leadership saw themselves as catalysts in a changing Europe. The Estimates focus mostly on Yugoslavia's global role, as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. They are largely silent on the Yugoslav role as a catalyst for change in Eastern Europe, and where (if at all) Yugoslavia fit into the process of Western European political and economic integration.

Finally, the Estimates deal with the role and importance of nationalism and, in particular, its relative nature as both a centralizing and disruptive force. In this sense, the agony of Yugoslavia served in the early period to show that Communism was not monolithic and, in the last period, served to usher in a post-Communist world where separatist nationalism would contribute so much to the shaping of the new order.

The Estimates: What They Tell Us about What Washington Knew

Unlike American knowledge about the Soviet Union, which was uneven, United States estimative intelligence on Yugoslavia was based on commanding access to much factual information. Western engagement to bolster Yugoslavia through economic assistance, military transfers, and diplomatic and other contacts opened the door. Yugoslavia's Five-Year Plans were also a relatively open book, although, as some of the Estimates noted, this information was not of uniform quality.

The Estimates also provided policymakers with a detailed and considered analytical picture of the complex mix of historical factors, national and regional interests, proclivity for dispute, economic challenges and, last but not least, the role of the West, including the United States. The Estimates were careful to point out that these factors might lead to a range of outcomes. Indeed, several Estimates explicitly examined multiple alternative possibilities. On the whole, the judgment calls on key issues proved right. The Soviet Union did not use armed force against Yugoslavia. The country did hold together after Tito's passing, until, in 1990, it became clear it would not. The Yugoslav "experiment" did have an effect on the evolution of Moscow's Satellites. Western assistance never translated into deciding influence. Paradoxically, the ability of Yugoslavia to hold together as long as it did might have reinforced the Washington policy of support for the political independence and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. When this prospect became untenable, policy was slow to adjust.

The Estimates, on the whole, probably contributed to what became a settled Washington policy view that, for reasons of regional stability and Western interests, Yugoslavia should remain politically independent and unified. Yet, it was that policy of support for the political independence and territorial integrity of the country that suffered a shipwreck in 1991. The Intelligence Community saw it coming. Reluctantly but eventually, the Washington policy community came around to this view. By then, not surprisingly, the situation had deteriorated and would lead to armed conflict and Western military intervention.

The story told by the Estimates from 1948 to 1990 is one of great improvisation, orchestrated by Tito. While improvisation succeeded in achieving Tito's foreign policy objectives, accommodating to internal pressures for openness and decentralization, Tito's approach ultimately led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Even the potential solution of a loosely confederated Yugoslavia never acquired a life of its own; the internal pressures proved too strong. But the Estimates never fully explore the question why Tito, whose style as a ruthless dictator worked for him, chose to create a very different style of collective rule for his successors.

The Estimative Record

The initial focus was on the Soviet Union, and how the Kremlin would deal with a renegade Yugoslavia. Over time, the perspective mutated into an interest in Yugoslavia's policy of non-alignment, which sought a careful balance between East and West, while seeking an enlarged global role, which on occasion bumped against Western interests. The Estimates were clear-headed about the importance of Western assistance, but sober about the limited degree of influence the West would have on Yugoslavia's domestic and foreign policies. As the Kremlin's hard line mellowed, the Intelligence Community's perspective refocused on a newly evolving relationship between Belgrade and Moscow, in which Tito successfully sought to preserve Yugoslav freedom of action, drawing on a strong sense of Yugoslav national pride. As Tito aged, the analysis became increasingly dominated by the succession issue, and the incipient crisis of competing and antagonistic nationalistic feelings among the constituent parts of Yugoslavia. Finally, the Intelligence Community was riveted on the impending disintegration of Yugoslavia.

A separation into different phases is somewhat artificial. All elements mentioned in the Estimates were present to some degree during the entire period under review. Nonetheless, the phases offer a rough picture of how analytic—and policy—attention to Yugoslavia evolved.

It is hard, even with the benefit of hindsight, to evaluate the effect of this body of estimative material on the Washington policy process. The volume of the material suggests, however, that Yugoslavia did not suffer from a lack of analysis. The length of some of the Estimates is noteworthy, given that they were intended principally for top policy officials. It is reasonable to infer that the US policy world drew on the large amount of factual material—and the analytic judgments based on it—provided in the Estimates in organized form. It may also be assumed that US government decisions concerning assistance to Yugoslavia were informed by the judgments that Yugoslavia needed assistance, but that providing assistance would not give the West much influence on Tito's Yugoslavia. It is probably safe to conclude that the estimative record in this volume provided a broad basis on which Washington policymakers could and did operate. There may be another lesson here. The analysts failed to go beyond their judgments on Yugoslavia to consider what this might mean more broadly for the US and the West, what challenges it would pose and what opportunities, perhaps even imperatives, for action it signified.

There also is the problem of different perspectives of policy makers in Washington on the one hand, and those of US representatives abroad and analysts at home on the other. Robert Blum notes correctly that, as the capital of a world power, Washington is a city of agendas and action. Once in motion, it takes more than a suggestion from diplomats overseas—as we saw regarding the 1948 split with Moscow—or from the Intelligence Community to accept that a fundamental change may be in the offing. Blum may be hitting the nail on the head when he observes, "Early in 1948 was a period of action rather than open-minded reflection about the Soviet Bloc." But, as historian John

Lewis Gaddis points out, "What is remarkable about American policy toward international communism in the early days of the Cold War is how quickly the possibility of encouraging heretical growths came to be seen, and acted upon."[5] That is the lesson of the Yugoslavia estimates.

1948-1952: Split with Moscow and the Soviet Threat to Yugoslav Survival

The focus during this period is on the Soviet Union. The key concern is strategic, and relates to Western efforts to contain Soviet communism. The key question is whether, and under what circumstances, the Kremlin will seek to regain control over Belgrade. A corollary question is how the split will affect Soviet policies toward its Satellites. There is considerable attention to the ability of the Yugoslav economy to withstand pressure from Moscow to undermine Yugoslav stability.

ORE 49-48, dated November 18, 1948, addresses the prospects of a Yugoslav state outside of Kremlin control. This compact and informative Estimate addresses issues that would occupy American policymakers for years to come. But it also identifies the factor of Yugoslav "national" self-interest as overriding the cause of "international" communism. In a perhaps unintended turn of phrase, the opening sentence of the Estimate refers to the "first" major rift in the USSR's satellite empire. This reflects an official American appreciation of the weakness of the Soviet notion of expansion through world communism. It explicitly states that, short of the use of armed force, Communist party discipline "may not always guarantee the complete submission to Kremlin authority demanded by the Soviet system."

The Estimate expects that the rift with Tito will cause the Kremlin to purge "nationalist" Communists in the satellite countries under its domain. It also expects Tito to strengthen his international position. But caution will prevail on both sides. Moscow cannot afford to drive Tito into the arms of the West. Tito, for his part, will also seek to avoid a showdown.

The Estimate seems to hedge on the issue of possible reconciliation. There is mention of Tito's "slim hope of an ultimate compromise solution for the re-admission of Yugoslavia into the Soviet orbit." But the judgment call goes the other way. "Early reconciliation between Tito and the Cominform is highly unlikely." Moreover, "it will become increasingly unlikely that there can be an accommodation between the USSR and Yugoslavia as long as Tito and his followers retain control of the Yugoslav Government."

ORE 16-49, issued on February 10, 1949, focuses on the paradoxes facing Tito. Despite the rift, Yugoslavia is following Moscow's anti-Western foreign policy line. "It is evident, however, that as Tito's economic situation grows more desperate and his economic dependence on the West (particularly the US) intensifies, he may be forced to modify his hitherto vigorous anti-Western foreign policy."

[5] Ibid., p. 149.

ORE 44-49, issued on June 20, 1949, turns to the Yugoslav regime's ability to resist Soviet pressure during 1949. The effort is impressive. It canvasses the military, political, economic and subversive measures available to Moscow, concluding that Tito will withstand these pressures. The Estimate's judgments are unambiguous: There will be no war. Though there may be border incidents, these will not develop into large-scale guerilla warfare. Tito will stay in power during 1949. A Soviet attempt to create an independent Macedonia is unlikely. Cominform propaganda will rally the non-Communist Yugoslav population to Tito's camp. Tito is acting on his "early conviction" that Kremlin planners do not want a war with the West, giving him the courage to defy the USSR. And Tito can handle the estimated two percent (a remarkably specific number) of anti-Tito elements within the Party. The Soviet Bloc will not be able to exert sufficient economic pressure to force the collapse of the Yugoslav economy. Tito will seek industrial imports from the West, even as Yugoslavia continues to trade with the East.

The Estimate adds another judgment to which one element of the Intelligence Community took exception "For the purposes of US policy," military pressures from the East "may eventually necessitate" Western military and economic assistance. The Director of Naval Intelligence took a footnote: "The Office of Naval Intelligence has no cognizance over the formulation of U.S. policy." This is an early indication of the reluctance of elements in the Intelligence Community to be part of analysis that ventures into the policy arena.

ORE 8-50, issued on May 11, 1950, judges that the position of Yugoslavia has improved. The failure of past Soviet tactics has forced Moscow to revise its estimate as to the vulnerability of the Tito government. Future Soviet tactics will continue to be aimed at preventing Yugoslav stabilization. But "large-scale guerilla warfare against Yugoslavia does not appear likely in 1950." Since Tito needs Western assistance, he will be amenable to settling outstanding issues. The strategic significance of Yugoslavia, as an obstacle to Soviet expansion, or as a potential Western base, "will progressively increase as Yugoslav ties with the West grow stronger."

ORE 20-50, issued on September 1, 1950, constitutes another (see **ORE 44-49**) comprehensive attempt to assess the state of the Yugoslav economy, in answer to the question whether Yugoslavia can hold its own in the face of continued Soviet pressure. What is remarkable about the Estimate is the detail of the statistics on all elements of the economy. The key judgment is that the economy has made a strong recovery from the effects of World War II, and has adjusted to the break with the USSR. But there are caveats. The Tito government is pursuing heavy industrialization within the framework of a planned economy. This approach is causing innumerable problems. The Estimate finds that Yugoslav resources are adequate to support gradual industrial expansion, well beyond pre-war levels, but "Tito's success in strengthening and expanding Yugoslavia's economy will depend primarily on the extent to which he realizes the basic limitations on the rate and extent of economic development possible in a country of Yugoslavia's resources." The bottom line is that, in 1950, the United States had a detailed picture about the state of the Yugoslav economy.

NIE-7, dated November 21, 1950, is a snapshot of the effect of the economic crisis on Yugoslavia's stability. "Substantial outside aid is essential." The dangers are internal discontent and external pressures. But "the probability is that Tito's police regime can survive," though in weakened condition. The Soviet aim remains the elimination of the Tito government, though the Kremlin has been "unwilling thus far to launch a military attack." Relations with Western governments have improved; in the United Nations, Yugoslavia is no longer a Communist mouthpiece, but is moving toward neutrality.

The Estimate addresses specifically Yugoslavia's importance to the West. The discussion is strategic, and reveals an evolution of the mindset in Washington. Yugoslavia is important "as a vital link in the defense of the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Near and Middle East; its inclusion in the bloc that forms a potential threat to the southern flank of a Soviet attack on Western Europe; and its importance as a key member of a potential Balkan-Near and Middle East bastion of Western-oriented states from which the Communist Satellites and the USSR can be attacked directly." This last phrase is as startling as it is unusual for such a policy consideration to be included in an Estimate. Yugoslavia is judged to be a salient in the Soviet ideological front, but of secondary economic importance to the West, mainly as a convenient outlet for Western manufactures.

The next few Estimates return to the question of the odds of a Soviet armed attack. Concerns apparently were high in 1951-1952. **NIE 29**, issued on March 20, 1951, begins with the premise that the Soviets, still wedded to the idea of replacing the Tito regime with one subservient to the USSR, are unlikely to be able to overthrow Tito by a coup. Hence, Tito's overthrow can only be achieved by armed invasion. Moscow's Satellites are now judged to be capable of launching a major surprise invasion. Combined Satellite and Soviet forces also could invade Yugoslavia. Western assistance and military supplies, however, could enable Yugoslav forces to hold out in the mountains. While there is evidence of preparations for a possible invasion by Satellite forces, these "do not, however, provide conclusive evidence of an intention to attack." Kremlin thinking is anyone's guess. But an attack in 1951 should be considered "a serious possibility." This last word stands in curious contrast to the stronger term used in the title of the Estimate, which mentions the "probability" of an attack. **A Review of the Conclusions of NIE-29,** issued on May 4, 1951, reports that Satellite capabilities for initiating an attack with little or no warning have increased, but there have been no major changes in Soviet strength. The NIE expresses the following judgment: "Although developments to date do not appear to warrant the conclusion that a Satellite attack will take place in 1951, or indicate that such an attack is more likely this spring than later in the year, they do give added emphasis to the conclusion of NIE-29 that 'an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951 should be considered a serious possibility'."

NIE-29/2, issued on January 4, 1952, revisits the threat of invasion once more. The key judgment is that "we believe that an attack upon Yugoslavia in 1952 is unlikely." The judgment was not unanimous; The Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Department of the Army, agreed that an attack was unlikely "unless the USSR is prepared to accept general war." He also warned about the effect of "unforeseen political events and/or

miscalculation." The Estimate assesses the Soviets as follows: "Past Soviet actions suggest that the Kremlin does not consider Yugoslavia as an isolated problem, but views it as one of several factors affecting the general position of the USSR. Consequently, there is little likelihood that the USSR will launch a Satellite attack upon Yugoslavia without carefully assessing the effect of such an attack upon the general Soviet political and strategic position."

The preceding three estimative products reflect the classic analytic challenge of distinguishing between capabilities and intentions and the importance of getting both right. It was critical at this uncertain period in terms of developments elsewhere in Europe and the Korean peninsula that the Intelligence Community provide clear, unambiguous, and accurate judgments about Soviet intentions.

1953-1963: Yugoslavia and the West—the Policy of Non-alignment

The focus in this period shifts away from preoccupation with the threat of Soviet bloc invasion to Yugoslavia's relations with the West. The judgments are focused on Yugoslavia's response to the post-1955 shift in Moscow's policy toward Belgrade. The key question is whether, and under what circumstances, Yugoslavia can hold its own in a bi-polar world.

NIE-93, issued on June 26, 1953, emphasizes the Yugoslav relationship with the United States and the West. Yugoslavia will require outside military aid. Tito also needs US economic aid, particularly to help underwrite Yugoslavia's foreign exchange deficits. Tito may calculate that the United States will regard Yugoslavia of sufficient strategic importance to leave Washington no choice but to continue economic assistance. In his contacts with the US, the UK, and France, Tito "will probably continue to seek greater commitments from the NATO powers," but he "will not press for full membership in NATO." Yugoslavia's approach will be to "obtain the maximum Western commitments for Yugoslavia's defense while allowing minimum Western influence over Yugoslavia's domestic and foreign policies." Given the steady pattern of Yugoslav efforts to seek a balanced position between East and West, the mention of full membership in NATO is surprising. It is oddly out of context with US intelligence judgments about Yugoslavia's foreign policy orientation up to this time.

ONE Memorandum to the DCI, dated October 13, 1953, assesses Tito's reaction to the US/UK decisions to leave Trieste and turn the city and surrounding area over to Italian control. The Memorandum forecasts strong Yugoslav objections, but unwillingness to jeopardize a growing relationship with the West that has brought Yugoslavia much needed support.

In the mid-Fifties, in the space of 18 months, the Intelligence Community sought to define—and redefine—-probable developments in Yugoslavia, its future orientation, and probable effects of possible US courses of action. These National Estimates, each of which supersedes or partially supersedes the previous one, are **NIE 31-55**, issued on

February 23, 1955 (superseding NIE 93), **NIE 31/1-55**, issued on May 19, 1955, **NIE 31-2-55**, issued on September 7, 1955, and **NIE 31-56**, issued on July 24, 1956.

Since the rift with the Kremlin, Yugoslavia's position has been anomalous. First, it hoped the split might be temporary. Unremitting Soviet hostility and economic difficulties compelled closer relations with the West. In 1950, Yugoslavia accepted Western assistance rather than face economic collapse. Capitalizing on Western interest in keeping Yugoslavia free from Soviet domination, Tito built up diplomatic and military ties with the West, amounting by mid-1955 to $700 million in economic grants and close to $1 billion in military aid. Belgrade also reoriented its foreign trade toward the West. It accommodated itself to the Western solution to the Trieste issue, and entered into mutual defense commitments with Greece and Turkey.

By 1955, however, Stalin had died and the Kremlin was pursuing "normalization" of relations with Yugoslavia. Normalization included resumption of full diplomatic relations with Moscow and the Satellites, renewed Party relations, reopening of borders, restoration of trade in non-strategic materials, and other measures making for a more normal relationship.

The initiatives for improved relations came from Moscow. Initially, the Yugoslavs viewed them warily. With time, however, they warmed to renewed contacts with the Soviet world. They began to see the possibility of "peaceful coexistence." In April and May 1955, Tito was conveying to Western diplomats the idea that Western security might best be served by a neutral belt comprising Yugoslavia, Austria, a reunified Germany, Sweden, and possibly other states. Meanwhile, Yugoslav negotiators were showing themselves as "disputatious and unbending" on aid issues. And, on May 13, came the announcement that a Soviet delegation headed by Khrushchev and Bulganin would shortly visit Belgrade.

The Intelligence Community assessed that "the Yugoslav regime probably believes that its own best interests…lie in avoiding too close an association with either great power bloc." But the answer to the key estimative question was elusive: "The currently unresolved state of Tito's relationships with both the West and the Sino-Soviet Bloc, makes it impossible to chart future Yugoslav foreign policy with any great degree of certainty." Meanwhile, Belgrade would view its relationship with the West strictly as "a marriage of convenience."

But there was clarity on a key trend: "Yugoslavia's position vis-à-vis the two major power blocs is in process of readjustment." Furthermore, "[E]vidence available so far indicates that Yugoslavia has preserved its independent status. We consider it unlikely that Tito has as yet decided that his interest can best be served from a position within rather than outside the Communist orbit or that he has made a covert agreement with Moscow to join the Bloc." But, he will "almost certainly side with the USSR on most major international issues."

The new situation required a look at the issue of US influence. The judgment was not encouraging: "US ability to influence Yugoslav policy—never decisive at its strongest—has sharply declined in the last two years and will probably continue to do so."

Two further Estimates delve into the gyrations of Yugoslavia's policies and prospects. They are **NIE 31-57**, issued on June 11, 1957, and **SNIE 31/1-57**, issued on November 19, 1957, which supersedes the former on foreign policy issues.

The internal situation is marked by the same trends noted in previous estimates. The power of the Yugoslav Communist dictatorship remains intact, despite chronic popular discontent, dissatisfaction among youth, nationalist and separatist forces, bad feelings between the economically backward and more advanced republics, and chronic fear of Serb domination. This relatively shallow analysis of Yugoslav internal developments reflected both the low priority accorded to this in Washington, as well as a lack of information.

Yugoslavia is following a foreign policy of maneuver and non-commitment, reflecting a desire to maintain national independence, the Marxist-Leninist predilection of its leaders, the necessity of preventing European hegemony of any one great power, the strategic need for friendly neighbors, the continuing requirement of foreign aid, and the unique position of a Communist country outside the Soviet Bloc.

The revolution in Hungary has subjected the relationship with Moscow to new strains. The high point of the earlier rapprochement has been Tito's visit to Moscow in June 1956. But now, "the Soviet leaders appear not to have foreseen the political and ideological effects in the Satellites of restoring Tito to good standing in the Communist world." Thus, "it was Soviet misgivings about the course of events in the Satellites that brought about serious strains in the relationship in the second half of 1956 and led to renewed attempts to isolate Yugoslavia from the rest of Eastern Europe." In fact, Moscow started blaming Yugoslavia for Soviet troubles in Eastern Europe. But it came around again to a softer view. **SNIE 31/1-57** opens with the judgment that "The Yugoslav leaders have appeared convinced that the USSR under Khrushchev is willing to live with Yugoslav independence and with gradually increasing autonomy among the Satellite regimes." Though there have been and will be many ups and downs, "Yugoslavia will maintain its rapprochement with the USSR."

The Hungarian rebellion also had domestic effects on Yugoslavia, where the leadership "appeared to be seriously concerned" about Hungarian popular disaffection. **NIE 31-57** examines four "possible developments" for a post-Tito Yugoslavia. One is "a period of crisis in which traditional national rivalries would reassert themselves and the unity of the Yugoslav state would break down." The Estimate does not assess the likelihood of such a scenario, although it is interesting that the focus has shifted from the centralizing to the disintegrative nature of nationalism. Also, the Hungarian uprising "brought to the fore previously latent fears that US policy poses a potential threat to all Communist states."

NIE 15-61, issued on May 23, 1961, four years later, presents a picture of a more settled pattern. Yugoslavia is politically stable. (This stability may explain the gap between Estimates regarding Yugoslavia.) It is gaining domestic support for its distinctive type of mixed socialism. Personal consumption is up and annual economic growth is at 12 percent. This picture "is unlikely to undergo substantial change in the next several years." Yugoslavia is judged as having skillfully exploited its unique position as a Communist state outside the Sino-Soviet orbit. It enjoys a substantial flow of Western military and economic aid. Its policy of non-alignment has given it international prestige. "We do not expect any substantial change in these policies."

NIE 10-61, issued on August 8, 1961, while not Yugoslav-specific, does address the broad theme of authority and control in the Communist movement and also assesses the role of Yugoslavia in the process. It paints a comprehensive picture of inexorable, fissiparous tendencies, concluding that observable trends suggested increasing complexity and diversity within the Communist system, and a growing challenge to Moscow's attempts to assert influence and control.

The Estimate frankly attributes the fact of unity within the Communist movement not so much to the absence of conflict of interest, as to the overwhelming influence of Soviet economic and military power. Two factors, however, are steadily eroding Moscow's predominance. One is the ascendance to state power of the Communist parties in Eastern Europe. The other is the impulse given by World War II to autonomous tendencies among the Communist parties in Europe. Both factors contribute to a growing sense of particular national interests, and to greater self-reliance of local Communist parties in articulating and promoting them.

Khrushchev, who succeeded Stalin after the latter's death in 1953, was conscious of the need for a more flexible approach. His intent, according to the Estimate, was not to grant genuine autonomy, but to allow a more flexible policy to guarantee maximum effective Soviet control. This new approach, however, far from assuaging restlessness in Eastern Europe, only encouraged the release of pent-up forces wanting reform. This evolution is stimulated further by the reversal of Stalin's policy toward Yugoslavia and the recognition of its Communist party's right to a "separate road."

The Estimate notes Albanian fears that Yugoslavia might re-establish its former tutelage over the Albanian Communist movement, and thus constitute a threat to Albanian independence—a theme addressed earlier in **NIE-42/1**, issued October 20, 1952. This is why Albania chose to align itself with China.

The Estimate dwells on the rise of China and the competing influence of the Chinese Communist Party in the Communist system. The Estimate considers it unlikely that the two major Communist parties can resolve their differences, but regards an open rupture as equally unlikely, leaving the two parties openly contending for leadership, but with the Soviet Communist Party in the stronger position because of greater Soviet economic and military power. These trends, according to the Estimate, could eventually

diminish the effectiveness of the Communist movement as a whole, opening new opportunities for the West.

The Estimate further predicts that, in this field of tension, other parties will be tempted to bargain between Moscow and Beijing, adding, cautiously but presciently, that "[I]n the long run, some of the parties in Eastern Europe, or factions within them, may attempt to develop further the autonomy conceded by Stalin's successors." The Summary of the Estimate concludes by noting the "remarkable survival of old-fashioned impulses of nationalism."

1963-1967: "Revolutionary Workers' Movement" and Return to Moscow

Picking up the analytical line of **NIE 10-61**, the perspective during this period shifts to loosening cohesion in the Communist world. The key question is what place and role Yugoslavia has in a Communist world in which Moscow must compete for allegiance.

A **Memorandum For The Director** on ***Yugoslavia and the Soviet Bloc***, issued on July 18, 1963, by the Board of National Estimates, and signed by Chairman Sherman Kent, reveals just how much changed since the Yugoslav break with Moscow fifteen years earlier. A terse, 13-paragraph memorandum, it presents a picture of economic progress and political stability. Yugoslavia has a new constitution. Leadership succession seems to have been settled by the elevation of Alexander Ranković to second position in the government and in the party. The economy is on the upsurge. Yugoslav pessimism about relations with the Common Market, and about Most Favored Nation (MFN) status with the United States, is offset by optimism about Yugoslavia's prospects in relations with the underdeveloped world, which Belgrade sees as potential markets for products of Yugoslav industry.

Relations with Moscow have improved significantly. This is "in very great part the personal work of Tito," who visited Moscow in December 1962, confirming his impression—thus the memorandum—that Khrushchev and his associates were altering the internal system in the USSR in the direction favored by Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia is now receiving Soviet military goods. Mutual exchanges with Moscow Satellites have increased; there are even joint projects.

Belgrade's previous emphasis on its independence of all "blocs" has been replaced by a rhetoric stressing the importance of Yugoslavia's role as part of the "international revolutionary workers' movement." The change reflects the altered Yugoslav assessment that Moscow now accepts independent behavior of other Communist countries.

The memorandum states that Moscow is no longer working to regain control over Yugoslavia; instead, Khrushchev seeks Yugoslav support within the Communist world, to demonstrate that intimate relations with Moscow are possible without becoming a Soviet puppet.

The key judgment of the estimative memorandum is that Yugoslav cooperation with Moscow is likely to grow, though it expresses a caveat that this depends on Khrushchev's "political fortunes and life span." As to Tito's successors, the memorandum concludes that they will continue to attach priority to maintaining Yugoslav independence. Analysts now must begin assessing the shape and implications of post-Tito Yugoslavia.

1967-1983: Succession and Emerging Ethnic Nationalism.

After another lengthy estimative gap, the focus during this period is the internal evolution of Yugoslavia. Tito's death in 1980 is the defining event of this period. The key question is how the internal trends—ethnic nationalism in particular—driving the transition/succession process will affect the unity of the country after Tito leaves the scene.

NIE 15-67, issued April 13, 1967, returns to Yugoslavia with a detailed exposition of the Yugoslav "Experiment." It characterizes the country as a Communist state in name and in theory, but in practice as fully independent. It gives the "experiment" high marks; Yugoslavia has a viable and independent—though unstable—economy, it has democratized public institutions, and it enjoys a significant global position. Progress toward decentralization will not be smooth, but "probably irreversible."

The discussion focuses on forces tugging at the country's cohesion—six republics whose people "are divided by differences in religion, nationality, language, political experience, and economic development." Curiously absent is any reference to the lethal armed internal conflict during WW II and the residual animosities, which that conflict generated. Moreover, according to the Estimate, Yugoslavia is a state "whose political, economic, and foreign policies have for nearly 20 years reflected mainly improvisation and compromise."

Paragraph six of the discussion lays bare the underlying seeds of schism: Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Macedonians think of themselves first in those national terms, and only secondarily as Yugoslavs. This represents an interesting and important analytical shift. The early (e.g. 1948) emphasis on nationalism stressed the external manifestation of Yugoslav national identity as a sign of independence from the Soviet bloc. Now national identity is analyzed as relating to particular internal (to Yugoslavia) ethnic interests.

Moreover, the country's populations, except the Serbs, are haunted by fears of a return to "greater Serb" hegemony. The unifying Soviet threat has diminished. Progressive devolution of economic and political responsibility has enhanced the attraction of a loose confederation, as opposed to strict central federal control. Disparities of wealth are driving the constituent republics apart.

The Estimate notes that, while Tito has managed these problems of "particularization," he does not anticipate any real solution. It warns of exploitation by ambitious politicians

of the emotional appeal of particularism, but sees, on balance, an attenuation of particularist trends. However, should Tito die before completing his overhaul of State and party structures, "[I]t is remotely possible that a concatenation of…unfavorable events could endanger the cohesion of the Federation." However, the Estimate's bottom line is that the state will survive intact.

An **ONE Memorandum**, dated March 10, 1969, deals with the succession problem, and its effect on internal stability. The basic threat is factionalism. The picture is confused: Ideological convictions, national antagonisms "rooted deep in history," and personal loyalties make prediction hazardous. Yugoslavia has been in a state of flux for nearly two decades, in an environment of innovation and experimentation, plagued by constant problems of antagonisms, economic weakness and political factionalism. Aware that "liberalization of the economy generates a need for political liberalization," Tito has now discarded the expedient of an heir apparent, preferring not to lodge too much power in the hands of one individual. The memorandum dryly notes, however, that as long as Tito remains in power, there is no way to test the new system of collective governance. But the ultimate judgment is cautiously positive: Tito's departure will not produce an immediate crisis.

A lengthy **"Intelligence Appraisal"**, issued by ONE on July 27, 1971, lays out a detailed picture of Yugoslavia. The notation that it is in response to National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 129 indicates that this is a case where the policy and intelligence worlds in Washington are interacting. The picture is mixed. Yugoslavia faces a difficult transition. It is moving to new, more open patterns of politics. Its economy, moving toward radical decentralization of authority, faces problems. The country enjoys greater contact with the West. Its leadership is preparing for the post-Tito period.

The key question is whether Yugoslavia can survive as a single state, despite bitter antagonisms between Serbs and Croats, Serbs and Albanians, and strong regional rivalries and resentments. The principal power centers at the top of the Communist Party (LCY) and the federal government appear indecisive. But there is "a good chance" that over the long term a sense of common purpose, buttressed by a sense of common peril, will enable the hybrid Yugoslav system to survive "essentially intact." The Soviet Union is seen as the most menacing threat, a view accentuated by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Suspicions of Western Europe have abated, and Yugoslav political and cultural views are increasingly shaped by Western concepts.

Success in carving out international stature is providing a spur to national pride and cohesion. Relations with the United States have improved markedly. "Belgrade seems to have reassessed the entire course of its post-1948 relations with Washington and concluded that American sympathy and support for Yugoslav independence is genuine—not just an artificial and inherently temporary adjunct of the United States-Soviet relationship." However, the appraisal is deeply hedged. "Change and disarray will confront the Yugoslav leadership with a variety of serious problems." Separatist

sentiments will weaken the federation. The Yugoslav system will remain unsettled. Beyond these "rather gloomy near certainties," and the "somber eventualities within Yugoslavia itself," the future of Yugoslavia remains indistinct. The Estimate proffers four illustrative scenarios of possible futures. The most likely is a linear projection of the existing Yugoslav situation: a united, independent, and non-aligned Yugoslavia. Other scenarios are more troubling. One is a contested secession, after Croatia breaks away. A variant is total disintegration, with a state of civil war marked by fighting, whereupon "Yugoslavia ceases to exist." Some republics turn to the Soviet Union for help. Others turn to the West.

Discussion of these scenarios leads to a fundamental—and prescient—judgment: in all these alternatives, the West and the United States may have a critical role to play. This conclusion is worth remembering in the light of the remark in 1991, attributed to then Secretary of State James Baker, that "the United States does not have a dog in this fight."

An **ONE Memorandum**, issued on January 5, 1972, deals with the crisis in Croatia, where students at Zagreb University had gone on strike the previous November. The Estimate concludes that the main share of responsibility for the crisis should be attributed to the strong liberal wing of the Croatian Communist Party (League of Communists of Croatia), which has sought to exploit nationalistic sentiment in order to consolidate local power and win concessions from Belgrade. Tito bore down hard on these manifestations of "rotten liberalism." But he also made clear that the essentials of his decentralized system should survive. Croatian liberals in Zagreb drew encouragement from Tito's assertions that there cannot be a return to the past. But his concept of a Communist Party that guides but does not lead suffered a setback. The Estimate identifies the conundrum posed by a basic contradiction. How should one understand a program of decentralization that continues to be run firmly from the center?

Two themes stand out in this Assessment. One is the appearance of nationalism, not as a force in support of Yugoslav national unity, but of the opposite, namely separatism on the part of the Yugoslav republics. The second theme is put as a key question. "Can a country such as Yugoslavia—poor, backward and Balkan—long exist as a pluralistic society within a single state?" The Memorandum's answer: "[W]e see no need, as yet, to revise our previous estimates that the chances are slightly better than even that Yugoslavia will survive Tito's death as a single state."

An **ONE Memorandum**, dated 27 September, 1972, turns to the problem of Croatian separatists. It notes official Yugoslav concern about a spate of terrorist incidents, in Yugoslavia and abroad, such as the assassination of the Yugoslav ambassador to Sweden. The discussion introduces two new elements. One is the fact that, at the time of writing, there may now be a million Yugoslav "semi-émigrés" working abroad. The second is that exact numbers are non-existent. Moreover, no one in Belgrade has an accurate track of the activities of Yugoslavs abroad.

An **ONE Memorandum**, dated November 17, 1972, asked whether Yugoslavia can somehow strike a balance between the need for central authority and the urge for pluralistic achievement? And can Tito, in his waning years, achieve this balance?

The watershed crisis in Croatia has ended the era of federal optimism. Tito had to use his power and had to purge many officials, in Croatia and elsewhere. The Memorandum notes that "Tito would remind his critics that to allow the nationalists of Croatia and Serbia to rule without restraint from the center would simply make certain that there would ultimately be no Yugoslavia in which the democratic process could unfold."

The Memorandum also returns to the issue of nationalism. Nationalism is a force for unity against perceived outside threats. As such, it represents an alternative source of spiritual strength. "But…there are other kinds of nationalism—Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, etc.—which flourish in Yugoslavia, **and they are directed essentially against one another** and against Belgrade" (emphasis supplied).

NIE15-73, issued July 5, 1973, examines the prospects for Yugoslavia after Tito. Stane Dolanc, a Slovene, has emerged as Tito's heir apparent. Elemental fear of a hostile outside is keeping Yugoslavia together, despite a decline in federal power to help appease certain nationalist appetites. But Tito has misjudged the balance; the demonstrations in Zagreb took authorities by surprise. Tito, according to the Estimate, is not about to give up "the fundamentals of [his] course: "'pluralistic' socialism, international non-alignment, and national sovereignty." "But," the Estimate continues, "he is now convinced that only a strong, invigorated party can carry on in his absence. The Estimate concludes that, while Moscow would welcome a return of Yugoslavia to the Communist bloc fold, it is likely to turn a generally amiable face to post-Tito Yugoslavia.

NIE 15-79, dated 25 September, 1979, also addresses the prospects for post-Tito Yugoslavia. It registers a lower confidence score than NIE 15-73 about Yugoslavia's sustainability. While Tito's passing will not, during the next six months, pose a threat to the integrity or independence of the Yugoslav state, the successor regime will face mounting domestic and foreign challenges. The variables will be the nature of the Soviet reaction, economic 'stagflation,' and the efficacy of Western assistance. The judgment of the Estimate is that "the odds remain at least marginally in favor of Yugoslavia's continuing as an integral, independent state." "Internal instability and vulnerability to external pressures during a prolonged transition period, however, could make even an integral Yugoslavia a recurring source of international tension."

Though Tito can claim personal credit for Yugoslavia's international prestige disproportionate to its size, he is leaving inadequate and ineffective decisionmaking structures and procedures to deal with the challenges ahead. These include growing economic strains and sharper conflicts of interests among the constituent parts of Yugoslavia. Moscow is likely to move cautiously: "under certain circumstances Moscow would see advantages in a stable, viable Yugoslavia." As to the West, the

Estimate is clear about the limits of its influence: "No amount or kind of Western support can stop Tito's successors from engaging in a self-destructive succession struggle or prevent Yugoslavia's constituent nationalities from embarking on a civil war, if they are determined to do so. However, skillfully timed and carefully designed and orchestrated Western support could make a very large difference."

A **Memorandum to Holders of NIE 15-79**, issued on February 1, 1980, revisits the judgments above in the light of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It concludes that these principal judgments remain valid. The Afghanistan analogy has only limited application to Yugoslavia.

1983-1990: Post-Tito Disintegration and Collapse

With Tito gone and transitional structures failing, the analytical focus during this period is on the factors that are tearing Yugoslavia apart. The key question is whether it can hold together as a federal state. **NIE 15-90** addresses this question with classic analytical rigor and honesty.

SNIE 15-83, issued on January 31, 1983, is entitled ***Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?*** It is a dense and comprehensive analysis. Two problems in particular face the new leadership: economic slowdown and ethnic strains. The national leadership, hostage to the need for elusive consensus, is weak. The regime will try and muddle through. The West can help deal with financial problems; Moscow is unlikely to view this as a challenge it must counter, but might become more deeply involved to advance its interests. A troubled Yugoslavia will be a source of great power rivalry. A major crisis is likely to be gradual, and unlikely within the next year. But Yugoslavia will be on its own: Overcoming the crisis will depend on Yugoslavia's own leadership.

NIE 15-90, issued on October 18, 1990, brings matters to a head, declaring:

> Yugoslavia will cease to function as a federal state within a year, and will probably dissolve within two. Economic reform will not stave off the breakup. Serbia will block Slovene and Croat attempts to form an all-Yugoslav confederation. There will be a protracted armed uprising by Albanians in Kosovo. A full-scale, interrepublic war is unlikely, but serious intercommunal conflict will accompany the breakup and will continue afterward. The violence will be intractable and bitter. There is little the United States and its European allies can do to preserve Yugoslav unity. Yugoslavs will see such efforts as contradictory to advocacy of democracy and self-determination.

After 42 years, during which the judgment of the Intelligence Community had been that Yugoslavia would remain a unitary state, the judgment this time is that it will not. Moreover, this judgment is not hedged. It is unanimous.

The arguments that buttress the conclusions of NIE 15-90 start with internal factors, before briefly considering outside influences. In retrospect, these influences probably had more effect than they were credited with in the Estimate, both within Yugoslavia, as well as in the Washington policy community.

By the time the Estimate was being prepared for final approval, Europe was in the midst of a profound political transformation. The Soviet empire was crumbling; its fissures would lead to its dissolution in a little more than a year. Germany had unified. The Communist regimes in Eastern European countries were being replaced. There was a sense all over Eastern Europe of breaking bondage and of new political freedom. Inside Yugoslavia, this sense was present as well, albeit distributed unevenly. It was strongest in Slovenia and Croatia.

Moreover, the threat of Soviet intervention, for so many years the immanent inhibitor of Yugoslav freedom of action, was perceived to be absent, once and for all. "The Soviet Union will have only an indirect influence…on the outcome in Yugoslavia," **NIE 15-90** observes. This left the people of Yugoslavia to address their problems among themselves.

Finally, Western influence was weak. The West was busy with its own agenda: Germany with its unification, the rest of Western Europe with accommodating itself to a united Germany. The Washington policy community was preoccupied with the unraveling of the Soviet Union. Also, it was preparing for Desert Storm, the campaign to liberate Kuwait.

Furthermore, the West lacked a common view of events ahead in Yugoslavia. Nor was there anything like a common view how to meet future contingencies. An aversion to instability in the Balkans was mixed with a sense of the body politic—if not the governments—on both sides of the Atlantic that people in Eastern Europe and the Balkans were entitled to self-determination. The chant of the marchers in Leipzig, who peaceably called out "We are the people," found resonance. But, as subsequent events showed, there was, within the EU, incipient and deep disagreement about what was happening in Yugoslavia and what to do about it. Within the United States, there were also deep divisions of opinion and governmental indecisiveness. This lasted until the Clinton administration set in motion the events leading to the US-brokered Dayton Accords in 1995.

Within Yugoslavia, the sense that Serbia, under Milosevic, would block any outcome other than one that would ensure Serb domination, ensured that the notion of a looser Federation never took root. (The Estimate notes, interestingly, that Milosevic "will be reelected in December 1990, in a victory as illegitimate as the previous year's.") The only way out for Slovenia and Croatia was separation. The elements that had held Yugoslavia together had lost strength. Tito was dead. The Party was weak and disorganized. The Army was no longer an effective guarantor of unity, as its dismal performance in the skirmish with Slovenian forces in the spring of 1991 confirmed.

Religion—an aspect not given much attention in the Estimates—was another divisive element. Serb Orthodox clergy played a particularly divisive role.

In sum, the Intelligence Community had plenty of material in the fall of 1990 on which to base its conclusions. The Washington policy world and Embassy Belgrade shared an awareness of what might happen—but there was no agreement on what to do about it. The Intelligence Community used NIE 15-90 to make specific judgment calls, with timelines. The policy world hesitated. NIE 15-90 did find resonance at the working level of the Department of State's European Bureau. At the policy level, however, it was characterized as overblown and greeted with disdain. This unfavorable reaction should not cause surprise. The message was unwelcome because it spelled trouble ahead for an administration not ready to become involved in the Balkans. Indeed, this would not happen in a decisive way until 1995.

The National Defense University Case Study (Appendix B) describes how NIE 15-90 took shape. It poses the issue of the effect of estimative intelligence on the policy world. Estimative materials compete with many other influences on policymakers. But they can, on occasion, make a decisive contribution. An experienced colleague once told me that the problem with the conclusions of NIE 15-90 was that they were not actionable, i.e. that policymakers could do nothing with them. Strictly speaking, this comment is correct. Indeed, NIE 15-90 and earlier Estimates expressed the judgment that there was little the United States and its European allies could do to preserve Yugoslav unity. But the implication of a breakup inevitably posed the question how to accommodate the resulting pieces into the European political mosaic. NIE 15-90 did not address that issue. Nor did it speculate on how European states would react to a breakup of Yugoslavia. To do so would have been a stretch. As it was, the Estimate contained for policymakers a heavy dose of virtually indigestible judgments.

Concluding Observations

Now that Yugoslavia has broken apart, the new estimative and policy challenge will be to address, as NIE 15-90 could not, how to fit the resulting new states into European and transatlantic structures. This will be a challenge principally for European Union (EU). However, the issue will inevitably also command US attention. The task of estimative intelligence on the southwest Balkans will not be finished soon.

As long as the Balkans are unstable, Europe remains unstable. It is not possible now—if it ever was—to consider those Balkan countries that were part of the Ottoman Empire as outside Europe. While the EU is gingerly seeking its way toward further enlargement, all the countries formerly part of Yugoslavia are members or potential members. The EU cannot escape the challenge of devising a way to fit them into its structures and processes. An unstable Balkans will negatively affect prospects for effective EU cooperation with the US on global issues of common interest.

The issues will be essentially the same that characterized Yugoslavia during its existence: religious, ethnic and linguistic diversity; historical distrust and animosities; a

legacy of pervasive cruelty and violence; nationalism; and uneven economic development. These issues are elements of the larger problem in the Balkans, the competition between the need for cohesion and the legacy of separatism.

Today, the United States continues to play a role in sorting out the future of the former Yugoslav republics. Balkan stability remains an American interest, as do human rights for the people of the region, democracy, and economic progress. American involvement expanded even as Yugoslavia was breaking apart. With the negotiation of the Dayton Accords, a NATO force, with a substantial US military component, provided security while an international civilian presence sought to build an independent multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the late 1990s, NATO undertook military action to curtail Serbia's ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. United States forces took the lead role of this campaign, and, together with the EU and other partners, the US is seeking resolution of the final status for Kosovo.

Beyond the Balkans, the world today confronts Washington with a host of issues that bedevil global efforts at conflict prevention, crisis management, and nation building. The American experience in Yugoslavia through the period covered by these estimates shows that Yugoslavia incorporated all of these issues—many of which are in play in crises around the world today. Thus, today's analysts face the same challenge as analysts did 50 years ago—how to distinguish between capabilities and intent, clearly state the implications of change for US interests, and understand the evolutionary nature of estimating events and power relationships that are constantly unfolding and changing.