

Wayne S. Vucinich (ed.), *At the Brink of War and Peace: the Tito-Stalin Split in a Historic Perspective. Vol. X: War and Society in East Central Europe, a Series Edited by Bela Kiraly*. N. Y. Social Science Monographs of the Brooklyn College Press. Distributed by the Columbia University Press, 1982. xi, 341 pp.

According to the editor's preface, the objective of this particular collective work is a reconsideration of the effects of the expulsion of the CPY from the Cominform on 28 June 1948 (rendered erroneously as 28 July on p. ix) and *that* with a view to throwing light on the future of the Yugoslav Federation after Tito's death, some two years away at the time the volume had its inception. In actual fact, however, the work brings together a set of essays which deal with various aspects of Yugoslav history from 1948 to *ca.* 1971.

With the financial assistance of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies and Stanford University, the authors conferred at Palo Alto in 1978. Two of the papers read there were published elsewhere while one, that of Professor Kiraly, of which more below, was commissioned separately. Given the number of typographical errors and grammatical lapses still present in the text, the editing of the MS does not appear to have profited from the four years which elapsed between conference and publication. There is no index.

*At the Brink of War and Peace* is made up of twelve contributions. Not unexpectedly these vary in quality and significance, from average through good to outstanding. In my view three of the twelve merit special attention.

The first of these is authored by Professor Bela Kiraly and provides us with an insider account of Cominform preparation for the invasion of Yugoslavia during 1950-1951. In those years Kiraly was the commander-designate of the Hungarian invading forces. He watched the strength of his army grow from three to approximately twenty-one divisions and the production of military equipment become the first priority of the national industry. No doubt, as he says, Romanian, Bulgarian and Albanian preparations were comparable in extent. Certainly the government in Belgrade had reason to be concerned while that in Washington was right, from its point of view, in completely re-equipping and resupplying the People's Army, which had hitherto made do with a diversity of Royal Yugoslav, Nazi German, Fascist Italian, British and American material.

I would, however, be tempted to disagree with General Kiraly's principal conclusion, namely that the Cominform invasion of Yugoslavia was called off because of the unexpected intervention of America in the Korean War. I would instead be inclined to argue that the Korean venture was probably undertaken because even the mobilization of satellite armies against Yugoslavia, although combined with a propaganda barrage, an economic blockade and a campaign of subversion, was still not sufficient to bring about the overthrow of the "clique of Tito, Rankovic and Kardelj".

In view of the growing dependence of the People's Army on American military supplies, an actual invasion of Yugoslavia ran the risk of a confrontation with the other superpower, at the time still possessing a virtual monopoly of nuclear weapons. (The map depicting Cominform battle order appears at the beginning of the volume, without any indication of its relevance, while the Kiraly memoir is placed at the very end, without any reference to the map.).

Meantime the US Department of State had declared the Korean Peninsula to lie beyond the American defense perimeter in the Pacific, unwittingly offering Stalin a quick compensatory success against an easy target. Stalin needed a victory. Both the failure to bring the

Yugoslav Party to heel and the miscarriage of the Berlin blockade constituted severe blows to the stability of the new satellite empire and to the cadres sense of forward movement.

Unfortunately for Stalin, the unpredictable Americans changed their minds at the last moment, intervening militarily and driving back his North Korean proxies. Note that even then Stalin did not commit Soviet troops but instead persuaded the Chinese Communists to come in. Note also that, according to General Kiraly, immediately prior to the invasion of South Korea most high-ranking Hungarian career officers were taken out and shot, being replaced by quondam street car conductors and elementary school teachers, an unlikely act if an invasion of Yugoslavia had still stood on the agenda.

The second outstanding contribution in *At the Brink* was authored by Professor Ivo Banac, who provides us, so far as I know, with the first public analysis of the campaign of the KGB and its associated satellite services to destabilize the Partisan regime. In this endeavor Professor Banac had at his disposal a hitherto unexploited archive built up by the late Dinko A. Tomasic, professor of sociology at Indiana University, and centered around interviews conducted by American authorities stationed in Trieste and Austrian Carinthia during the early 1950s. (For another utilization of this same material cf. my *The Dynamics of Communism in Eastern Europe* [Westport, CN: Greenwood Press], p. 126).

Just as Kiraly reveals how extensive was Cominform military preparation so Banac's research suggests that the threat of Cominform subversion was greater than has generally been believed by Western scholars. Soviet authorities not only set about organizing a counter-CPY out of the 3500 Yugoslav cadres temporarily resident in the Bloc, but they were also able to establish Cominformist cells in the CPY itself, in the People's Army and in Yugoslav universities. In addition there were Cominformist uprisings in Montenegro in the summer and fall of 1948 in which entire regional organizations of the CPM participated, and there was guerrilla activity among the Serbs of Croatia, in Slavonia and, of course, in the Lika and Kordun.

In these circumstances the loyalty of the cadres to Tito's leadership was crucial both to the survival of the regime and the retention of its independence. This fact helps explain, it seems to me, the apparent paradox of a forcible collectivization of agriculture undertaken *after* the excommunication of 28 June. In this context forcible collectivization was not really an incongruous event (Eric R. Terzuolo) nor an attempt to appease Stalin (as Phyllis Auty and Pedro Ramet suggest) nor yet "a particularly self-defeating response to Moscow's charge that rural Yugoslavia was in the thrall of 'kulaks'" (Banac, p. 248). Jozo Tomasevich, who does us the favor of demonstrating that the collectivization effort was concentrated in those regions where it would do last damage to total output, also thinks of the campaign as illogical.

But it seems to me that forcible collectivization was instead a most necessary and living demonstration of Tito's orthodoxy, intended for the benefit of his shaken cadres, and in this function its place would soon be taken by the doctrine and practice of worker self-management. As William Zimmerman suggests, in what is perhaps the volume's most thoughtful essay, self-management could also serve as the basis of a *modus vivendi* with the population, while collectivization could not. And I would argue that this *modus* in turn became indispensable to the stability of the regime once the men in Belgrade could no longer afford to appeal to the Soviet military for help in the event of a flash rising or a secessionist republic.

The third major contribution of the Vucinich volume is provided by Lenard Cohen's study of ethnic distance within Yugoslav elites. Working with data culled from the 1971 census, Cohen shows that Serbs and Montenegrins taken together are overrepresented in

the Parties and the governments of Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and the Vojvodina, as well as in the federal governmental and Party services. It was generally known beforehand that Serbs and Montenegrins predominated in the officers' corps of the People's Army, the UDB-a and the major Belgrade banks, but this new data will lend greater substance to the continuing complaints of the Croats and the Shiptars, which have been the loudest, to the effect that nothing has changed since the days of the Karadjordjević monarchy.

With becoming modesty Cohen characterizes his findings as preliminary in character. I find them something more, as the application to his census data of a large sample test for the significance of a sample proportion will show. In the following table, prepared for present purposes, critical Z represents the degree of Serbian-Montenegrin overrepresentation at the .01 level of probability. The chances that this level of overrepresentation could have occurred by chance are only one in a hundred.  $N = 285,968$  and includes Party cadres, government bureaucrats, industrial managers, the technical intelligentsia, the physical scientists, the natural scientists and the literary and artistic intelligentsia, as reported in the 1971 census. The returns are given by ethnic group and by republic.

Preponderance of Serbs and Montenegrins within Yugoslav Political Elites\*  
(Critical Z at .01 level of probability = 2.58)

Political Unit	Z for Party & Mass Organization Functionaries	Z for Legislative and Government Personnel	Z for Total Elite
Federation	11.16	16.73	49.44
Croatia	6.00	7.78	Negative
B & H	6.39	6.31	6.15
Vojvodina	5.00	6.06	35.86
Kosovo	4.72	13.05	66.67

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\* The calculations are courtesy of Professor John M. Matilla, Department of Economics, Mayne State University.

Except in one case, where no overrepresentation of Serbs and Montenegrins appeared, all the Zs were larger than critical Z by anywhere from 2.3 to 25.8 times!

On the other hand, it is not entirely clear what would happen to the Yugoslav Federation were the Serb and Montenegrin preponderance to be eliminated.

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Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece*. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1980. XXIII plus pp. 485.

The purpose of Bruce R. Kuniholm's *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* is to consider the struggle for power between Britain, the United States, and Russia in the