

THE REACTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS FROM THE SOUTH SLAVIC LANDS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS IN THE USA TO THE DISSOLUTION OF YUGOSLAVIA (1989–1993)

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COBISS 1.01

ABSTRACT

The Reactions of Immigrants from the South Slavic Lands and their Descendants in the USA to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia (1989–1993)

The paper describes the activities of the organizations of individual ethnic groups in the US from the regions of former Yugoslavia. These groups on the one hand supported Serbian interests and centralized and unified Yugoslavia, and on the other supported the interests of the other former Yugoslav republics to establish independent states.

KEY WORDS: Yugoslav diaspora, immigrant organizations, USA, former Yugoslavia

IZVLEČEK

Reakcije jugoslovanskih izseljencev in njihovih potomcev v ZDA na razpad nekdanje Jugoslavije (1989–1993)

V prispevku je orisano delovanje organizacij posameznih priseljenskih skupnosti v ZDA z območja nekdanje Jugoslavije. Te so na eni strani podpirale srbske interese in s tem enotno Jugoslavijo, na drugi pa interese drugih nekdanjih jugoslovanskih republik po ustanavljanju neodvisnih držav.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: jugoslovanski izseljenci, izseljenske organizacije, ZDA, nekdanja Jugoslavija

INTRODUCTION

This paper addresses the attitudes of immigrants to the US from the former Yugoslav lands to the events that led to the federation's dissolution, as well as the active role of immigrants from these regions and their descendants in the USA in influencing US policy with regard to Yugoslavia's dissolution. Generally the group of immigrants most responsive to the events in the Old Country was the first generation of immigrants; however, the immigrants' attachment to the Old Country was evident in all generations. Identification with the problems of the homeland was the greatest and activities increased during periods of crisis (Higham 1978: 3-4). The 1990s were seen as the years of a propaganda war or "War of Words" by all Yugoslav immigrant communities in the USA (Taylor 1992: 6). The leaders of individual ethnic groups—with very few exceptions—defended the policies of their republics or their "national leaders" in the homeland. The immigrants wrote letters to newspaper editors and US politicians and sought support from elected officials who were descendants of immigrants from their respective ethnic groups.

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The first part discusses the diaspora from the former Yugoslavia in the USA, its divisions and organizations at the crossroads of the 1990s, when the process of dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) began. Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian and Albanian Americans are also part of the American electorate. To some extent the members of these ethnic groups were elected to the US Congress, state legislatures and city councils, and could try to influence the policies towards their homeland, or they could also influence the other members of Congress and the administration by simply writing letters to them as voters.

The US Congress and the administration listened to citizens who were (or had ancestors who were) from the former Yugoslavia. Discussions in the pages of American ethnic daily and weekly newspapers or other media reflected the viewpoint of one or the other side in their interpretation of the Yugoslav crisis.

US politicians, including those who were born in the region or had their roots there, have always listened to their constituents when formulating their "Yugoslav" policy. Yes, they listened; but US policy was not primarily based on impulses from immigrant communities. It was the policy of a superpower. It almost always followed the European Union's policy towards the region. In the beginning of the 1990s, the US made initiatives to solve the problems caused by the dissolution of the SFRY, but not only that; Americans decisively imposed solutions based on their military strength. Above all, it is very important to stress the role of the reactions of immigrant communities to the events in the old homelands in the revival of ethnic consciousness among Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Albanian, and Macedonian Americans in the 1990s.

A special section deals with the question of returnees and their influence on political events in the old homeland. There is no doubt that the money that the political parties in the SFRY received from emigrants to fight their electoral battles at the beginning of the 1990s, in the first free and democratic elections after World War II, played an important role.

THE VOLUME, DIVERSITY, AND DISPERSAL OF THE EMIGRANTS FROM THE REGION OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Mass emigration from the South Slavic lands took place from the mid-19th century onward. At the crossroads of the 1990s, ca. 1.1 million emigrants and their descendants from the region lived in the USA. According to the 1990 US Census, there were 544,270 Croats, 20,365 Macedonians, 116,795 Serbs, 124,437 Slovenes, 257,994 "Yugoslavs," and 47,710 Albanians in the USA according to ethnicity (1990 Census).

Emigrants from the territories of the former Yugoslavia and their descendants can be categorized according to the reasons for emigration or according to the period of their emigration. With regard to the **reason for emigration** they can be divided to: (a) those who emigrated for political reasons and (b) those who emigrated for economic reasons. With regard to the **period of emigration**: (a) "old" economic emigrants – emigrants and descendants of those who emigrated before World War II; (b) "political émigrés" – those who emigrated for political reasons (i.e. fear for their lives or political repression from the Communist system) after World War II, and their descendants; (c) economic emigrants – those who emigrated in the 1950s illegally according to Yugoslav law; (d) legal economic emigrants – those who emigrated from the 1960s onward; (e) "new emigrants" – those fleeing the wars in the region of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

In this paper, the immigrants themselves are described as first generation, their children as second generation, their grandchildren as third generation, etc. In spite of the fact that linguistic identity is lost, in many cases, by the second generation, ethnic identity may be preserved until the fifth generation or longer.

From the 1920s onwards, Yugoslav diplomats tried in vain to convince the emigrants to identify themselves as “Yugoslavs” and to organize pan-Yugoslav organizations. The immigrants themselves continued to identify, however, as Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, etc. and most of their organizations remained ethnically based.

ORGANIZATIONS OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE NEW HOMELAND

After immigrants settled in the USA, they organized their ethnic parishes, built their national homes and organized fraternal benefit societies. Especially those who came after World War II, but also the “old” immigrant stock, organized politically as well (Klemenčič 1995: 131–264).

The oldest form of organization was the **fraternal benefit societies**, which were actually insurance companies. They were established because at the time there was no health insurance in the US. They have kept some of their functions (providing health and life insurance) up to the present day. With their profits, these organizations supported the immigrants’ cultural and publishing activities. They also supported political activities in labor/industry battles and immigrants’ activities with regard to the events in the homeland during periods of crisis.

Today, eight Slovene fraternal organizations still exist in the USA. The largest among them are the Slovene National Benefit Society, founded in 1904, the American-Slovenian Catholic Union, founded in 1894, and the American Mutual Life Association, founded in 1910 (Klemenčič 1996a: 21–32). Among Croatian fraternal benefit societies, the Croatian Fraternal Union, founded in 1894, deserves mention (Čizmić, 1994); while among Serbian fraternal organizations, one of the most important is the Serb National Federation, founded in 1901.¹

Among **ethnic parishes** there were Catholic and Evangelical ethnic parishes for Croatian and Slovene immigrants and Orthodox parishes for Serb, Montenegrin, and Macedonian immigrants. In the Orthodox Church, immigrants’ parishes were organized in their own dioceses, based on the ethnicity of the parishioners. Both Catholic parishes and Orthodox ethnic churches kept their services in the mother tongues of the immigrants, despite the fact that the priests (especially in the case of Catholics) soon started to conduct mass in English. Catholic and Orthodox parishes also supported cultural societies; there are schools in many parishes and parish-supported language schools for second- and third-generation students. With these additional activities, they contributed towards preserving of ethnic identities, culture, language, customs, and other values of individual ethnic groups.

National homes (cultural centers) are special buildings that serve as meeting places for immigrants for political purposes as well as for cultural performances like concerts, plays, etc. Political events were held supporting various political options at home or in the US elections, especially when the candidates were members of one of the ethnic groups from the former Yugoslavia.

Immigrants also founded various **political organizations**. They included political clubs that supported political parties in the old homeland and also Democrats and in some cases even Republicans. Some Leftists organized the clubs of the Yugoslav Socialist Federation. After World War II, additional political organizations of the émigré community were formed, counting on the financial support of the “old” immigrants. For example, Slovenes formed world-wide organizations such as the National Committee for Slovenia, the Movement for a Slovene State, continued political activities in form of political parties such as the Slovene People’s Party, the Slovene Democratic Party, etc. Up to the beginning of the 1980s they tried to form a vision of a “different” kind of Slovenia. Some of them were already demanding

¹ 92nd Anniversary – Serb National Federation, June 15, 1901 – June 15, 1993. *American Srbobran* (hereinafter referred to as AS) 86(16150): 5-6 (9 June 1993).

an independent Slovene state, while others demanded the democratization of Yugoslavia and fought for Slovenia to remain in a newly-formed, multiparty democratic Yugoslavia. At the beginning of the 1990s Slovene Americans established a special organization, "United Americans for Slovenia," in order to be active in support of the recognition of Slovenia as an independent state (Klemenčič 1998: 175–193).

Even more colorful were the political organizations of American Croats. The Croatian diaspora strongly supported the struggle to establish a unified, free, independent and democratic state of Croatia. The organization United American Croats was founded for that purpose after World War II as an umbrella organization for major Croatian American organizations. In 1969, the First Croatian Congress for North America was held and organized the North American Council for Independence of Croatia (Čizmić, Miletić, Prpić 2000: 411–437). The Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) also organized chapters in the USA and Canada. The first HDZ convention for America and Canada took place on 20 January 1990 in Cleveland, Ohio. The HDZ chapters in the USA and Canada raised nearly \$1 million to support the democratic forces replacing the Communist Party in the Republic of Croatia in democratic elections (Čizmić, Miletić, Prpić 2000: 477–487). At the same time, Slovene Americans raised \$100,000 to give support to democratic opposition parties in Slovenia (Klemenčič 1993: 333–344).

From the 1970s onwards, but especially at the crossroads of the 1990s, American Croats organized many demonstrations in major American cities where substantial communities of Croats lived. Those demonstrations were held under the slogan "*Never Again Yugoslavia – Independent Croatia in the European Community*" (Čizmić, Miletić, Prpić 2000: 489).

At the beginning of the 1990s, there were more than thirty organizations for Serbian Americans. Most of them were anti-Communist and anti-Yugoslav. They continued to develop the cult of the Chetnik movement and Orthodoxy. On the basis of all this they also kept alive the idea of Greater Serbia (Bošković 1985: 63–119; Grečić, Lupšina 1994).

Macedonian Americans were members of the Macedonian Patriotic Organization for the USA and Canada (MPO), established in 1922, and advocated an independent Macedonian state, but for a very long time believed that the language spoken by Macedonian Slavs was Bulgarian. The second organization, the United Macedonians Organization (UMO) was established in 1959. This was an organization of US and Canadian citizens of Macedonian descent, who consider Macedonian as a separate language and Macedonians as a separate ethnic group. They had friendly ties with the Socialist Republic of Macedonia (Klemenčič 2005a: 590–591).

American Albanians, of whom more than half came from Kosovo in the 1990s, were organized politically in organizations such as the League of Prizren, Albanian Democratic Union, National Committee for Free Kosovo, Albanian American Civic League, etc. Most of them advocated the Greater-Albanian idea; their programs differed only in the means through which they would reach their final goal (Bošković 1985: 111–116).

SERBIAN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES BEFORE THE DISSOLUTION OF YUGOSLAVIA

Even before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Serbian Americans fought battles in Congress over the issue of Kosovo. They succeeded on many issues thanks to Rep. Helen Delich Bentley (R-MD), a Serbian American. After being active in the Nixon presidential campaign, she chaired the Federal Maritime Commission. She left that office in 1975 to become a business consultant and, in 1984, was elected to Congress representing Baltimore and Hartford counties in Maryland. She was re-elected four more times, and Serbian Americans from all over the US helped fund her re-election campaigns.

From the beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Serbian Americans vigorously defended their interests in the territories of former Yugoslavia, especially Kosovo. They had cordial relations with the

Communist leadership of the Republic of Serbia, led by Slobodan Milošević, and a Serbian-American official delegation led by the President of the SNF, Božidar Rade Stone (Stojanović), and Rep. Bentley attended the famous celebration of the 600th Anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1989.² At the same time they tried to capitalize on the importance of Serbian-American scientists such as Mihailo Ivdorski Pupin and Nikola Tesla to the development of the USA in order to gain support for the Serbian cause in then Yugoslavia.³ They also tried to erect a monument to Draža Mihailović as a rescuer of American pilots during World War II.⁴

Rep. Bentley persistently lobbied for what she considered the “Serbian Truth” in interpreting the Kosovo question and also the questions of the rights of the Serbs in Croatia. She also solicited the support of other members of US Congress from districts where large numbers of the electorate were of Serbian descent. Those members of Congress always had difficulties, however, since in addition to Serbian Americans, their constituents also included Croatian, Slovene and Albanian Americans. Some members of Congress who were described by the organ of the Serb National Federation, *American Srbobran*, as “good friends of the Serbs” included for example Dante Fascell (D-FL), Lee Hamilton (D-IN) and Gus Yatron (D-PA), a Greek American, Orthodox by faith and already as such, according to Serbian-American views, predestined to be a good friend of the Serbs.⁵

After Rep. John Blatnik (D-MN), a Slovene American, convinced President Truman that the conflict between Tito and Stalin was “genuine and real,” American support of Yugoslavia was constant from 1948 on, in spite of ups and downs, even though the Yugoslav government was Communist (Klemenčič, Žagar 2004: 201; Lees 1997). Serious problems in Yugoslav-US relations arose for the first time at the end of the 1980s, when during debates in the US Congress on aid to Yugoslavia, discussion centered on respect for human rights in Kosovo and the rest of Yugoslavia. This issue became a topic during the presidential campaign, when then presidential candidate George Bush answered the call of Rep. Joseph J. DioGuardi (D-NY), an Albanian American, for respect of human rights in Kosovo and voiced his enthusiastic support of democratization processes in Slovenia in a letter:

... I, too, believe we should encourage the national government of Yugoslavia to do all it can to ensure the preservation of human and political rights and the autonomy of all nationality groups in Yugoslavia. I am pleased and share your enthusiasm for the recent trends in Slovenia ... Clearly, that Republic’s move towards a more liberal political and economic climate is most welcome. However, I remain concerned about ethnic Albanians in Kosovo...⁶

Serbian Americans were not pleased with this letter and wrote to then Vice-President Bush to express their views about Yugoslavia and the crisis in Serbian-Albanian relations.⁷ Rep. Bentley, who led Bush’s electoral campaign in Maryland, also protested. She wrote about the “forcing out of Serb culture in Kosovo” and that “Bush’s support of the Albanian cause will influence 1.2 million American Serbs when

2 Serbian-American Delegation at 600th Anniversary of Kosovo. AS 83(15947): 1, 3 (5 July 1989).

3 Roe, Robert A. (1989). Celebrating the 134th Anniversary of the Birth of Scientist-Inventor Nikola Tesla. AS 84(16008): 8 (5 September 1990), reprinted from *Congressional Record – House*, 11 July 1990; Gekas, George W. (1989). In Recognition of Michael I. Pupin. AS 83(15965): 4, (8 November 1989), reprinted from *Congressional Record – House*, 4 October 1989.

4 A Tribute to Gen. Draza Mihailovich. AS 84(15989): 3 (18 April 1990), reprinted from *Congressional Record – House* (29 March 1990).

5 Bentley Calls Serb/Americans to Arms vs. H. RES. 352. AS 84(16005): 3 (15 August 1990).

6 Letter from George Bush to Joseph J. DioGuardi, September 27, 1988. AS 82(15915): 1 (9 November 1988).

7 Letters from Slobodan Curcic (Princeton University) et. al to George Bush, Vice-President of the United States of America, October 25, 1988. AS 82(15914): 2 (2 November 1988); Clergy Brotherhood of the Serbian Orthodox Church of the USA to Vice-President George Bush, October 26, 1988. *Ibid*, 1.

they cast their votes in the forthcoming presidential election”⁸ Even before 1991, Rep. Bentley had opposed any attempts at Congressional resolutions in which various members of Congress criticized Serbian policy on Kosovo. For example, in September 1989 she opposed a resolution introduced by Rep. Thomas P. Lantos (D-CA) during the debates on a Fiscal Year '90 State Department Authorization Bill in which he accused Serbia of fomenting unrest in Kosovo. Rep. Bentley asked American Serbs to write letters to members of Congress to protest against it.⁹ As a result of those protests, a joint Conference Committee composed of the leadership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee voted on November 7, 1989 to delete all references to the Kosovo crisis from the above mentioned bill. Mrs. Bentley personally lobbied each member of the Conference Committee, who noted in conversation with her the appeals of the Serbs to delete the Kosovo provisions from the bill. In accordance with the current policy of the US administration's support of united Yugoslavia her efforts were supported by the US State Department and some other members of Congress.¹⁰

On April 24, 1990, the Human Rights Caucus of the US Congress, under the chairmanship of Rep. Thomas Lantos (D-CA), took up the subject of Yugoslavia and Kosovo. Quite a few US Senators, including Robert Dole (R-KS), Larry Pressler (R-SD), Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), Claiborne Pell (D-RI), and US Representatives Hank Brown (R-CO), Ben Gilman (R-NY), William Broomfield (R-MI), John Porter (R-IL), Helen Delich-Bentley (R-MD), and Jim Moody (D-WI) took part in the session. Delegations of concerned parties were also invited. Former US Congressman Joseph DioGuardi, an Albanian lobbyist, was the spokesman for the Albanian group, and Rep. Bentley for the Serbian group. The Serbian side brought as witnesses members of the Orthodox hierarchy from Kosovo and important writers and scientists, among them Dobrica Ćosić.¹¹

In July 1990, 300 American Serbs meeting in Washington, DC overwhelmingly passed two resolutions calling for increased democracy and human rights for fellow Serbs in Yugoslavia. The resolutions were given by the Serbian Americans present to Dr. Aleksandar Prlja, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Serbia, to be carried to the government of that republic. Dr. Prlja attended the sessions as a guest. In addition to the two resolutions, the Serbian American community asked Dr. Prlja to confront the Communist leaders, informing them that "...we here in the United States anxiously anticipate the dissipation of the Communist stronghold in Serbia. Furthermore, the Red Star, a symbol of Communist monopoly, should be removed from the official flag of Serbia..."¹²

Rep. Bentley also led a delegation of American Serbs who observed the first free and multi-party elections in Serbia on December 9, 1990. In a special statement, she appealed to all eligible Serbs to take advantage of their ability to vote in the first real free, fair, multi-party election in which opposition parties were participating.¹³

At the crossroads of the 1990s the Serb supporters including Rep. Bentley successfully fought for "Serbian interests" in the US. Neither of the houses of the US Congress passed any measures against Milošević and the West also did not react, because it had only one aim – to keep Yugoslavia united in one piece (Klemenčič, Žagar 2004: 287–293). During the years 1991 and 1992, American Serbs tried to

8 Letter from Helen Delich Bentley to Vice-President George Bush, October 21, 1988. AS 82(15914): 7 (2 November 1988).

9 Pismo g-dje Delić Bentli Srbima. AS 83(15958): 9 (20 September 1989); Delich Issue – 2nd Call: Serbian Americans – All – Must Act Now. AS 83(15959): 1 (27 September 1989).

10 House-Senate Conference Deletes Provisions Offensive to Serbian-Americans from State Department Bill. AS 83(15965): 1 (8 November 1989).

11 US Human Rights Caucus Met On Kosovo – April 24, 1990. AS 84(15991): 1 (2 May 1990).

12 Serbian-Americans Call for Democracy and Human Rights for Serbs in Yugoslavia. AS 84(16004): 2 (1 August 1990).

13 Congresswoman Bentley Urges Serbians to Vote in Slated Free Multi-Party Elections. AS 84(16021): 3 (5 December 1990); Bentley Leads (Serbian/American) Observer Group in the Republic of Serbia. AS 84(16023): 1, 5 (19 December 1990).

prove the justifiability of Serbian demands – articulated by Milošević – that all the Serbs of former Yugoslavia (Serbs in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo) had the right to live in one state. Therefore American Serbs sharply opposed anything that was not in accordance with these plans.

THE EFFORTS OF AMERICAN CROATS, SLOVENES, AND MACEDONIANS FOR THE RECOGNITION OF CROATIA, SLOVENIA, AND MACEDONIA AS INDEPENDENT STATES

As mentioned in the introduction, after Yugoslavia's dissolution began with the ten-day war in Slovenia and continued with Yugoslav Wars of Succession, the immigrants and their descendants looked for support for their respective homelands particularly from elected officials who were descendents of immigrants from their respective ethnic groups. They wrote letters to newspaper editors and US politicians. Politicians of Slovene descent included US Congressmen Dennis Eckart (D-OH), James Oberstar (D-MN), and US Senator George J. Voinovich (R-OH), whose mother was Slovene and father was Serbian. Among politicians of Serb descent we have already mentioned Rep. Helen Bentley. Among Croatian Americans, former Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich deserves mention.

Until Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina were recognized by most of the world's countries (including the USA in April 1992), and until the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was accepted into the United Nations in April 1993, most of the activities of Slovene, Croatian and Macedonian Americans were channeled into pressuring the USA to recognize the independence of these states (Klemenčič 1995: 379–380). They succeeded in persuading some large American cities (Cleveland, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, etc., in which many Croatian and Slovene Americans live) to issue resolutions recognizing the independence of Slovenia and Croatia by the end of June/beginning of July 1991 (Klemenčič, Kristen 1999: 14–15). Most Croatian and Slovene Americans voted for Bill Clinton in 1992 because most of them were Democrats, and also because of Clinton's criticism of George H. W. Bush's policy with regard to the Balkans.

American Slovenes and Croats

When Slovene politicians at the crossroads of the 1990s started the process after the successful conclusion of which Slovenia became an independent state, leading members of the Slovene government visited important centers of the Slovene immigrant communities, including in the US. Their aim was to explain to the immigrants and their descendants the political activities of the Slovene government and ask for their support for the Slovene Declaration of Independence (Klemenčič 2005b: 87).

When US Secretary of State James Baker visited Yugoslavia in June 1991, he pleaded for a united and democratic Yugoslavia. By taking such an unrealistic approach, Baker encouraged the Serb-dominated Yugoslav People's Army to fight to maintain a united Yugoslavia (Klemenčič, Žagar 2004: 292). Baker's visit was condemned in the Croatian and Slovene ethnic press and in other media.¹⁴

Slovenes throughout the world reacted to the actions of the Yugoslav army in Slovenia after Slovenia declared independence in June 1991 by means of protests addressed to the governments of their states. Solidarity among American Slovenes during the intervention of the Yugoslav army against Slovenia was complete. Their dismay and personal impatience towards the events in Slovenia were apparent in their numerous phone calls to friends in Slovenia.

As early as June 27, 1991, Ohio Congressman of Slovene descent Dennis Eckart drew the atten-

14 For example: Ob Bakerjevem obisku Jugoslavije. *Ameriška Domovina* 93(25): 1 (20 June 1991).

tion of the US Congress to the problem of the attack of the Yugoslav army in Slovenia. He demanded the support of the State Department and the US President for democracy and economic reforms in Slovenia. He also called for action to prevent violence in this republic, "the homeland of my parents and grandfathers" (Eckart 1991: 16757).

On July 1, 1991, when the action of the Yugoslav army against the Slovenes reached its peak, representatives of Slovene ethnic organizations met in Cleveland and organized the *United Americans for Slovenia*. The activities of this organization were intensive for nine months, and its Committee held a meeting almost every week, exerting pressure on the government of the United States to recognize Slovene independence. Edmund J. Turk, the former president of the Cleveland City Council and a former district judge, was elected president of United Americans for Slovenia. As many as 659 different societies and groups of American Slovenes had joined this organization by the end of 1991 (Klemenčič, Kristen 1999: 16).

On July 4, 1991, numerous volunteers gathered in the rooms of the American Mutual Life Association in Cleveland to organize a letter-writing campaign to American state legislators, to members of the US Congress, and to the US President and members of his administration to demand US recognition of the Republic of Slovenia (Klemenčič, Kristen 1999: 17). Slovene Americans also sought the help of the two members of Congress who were of Slovene descent, Reps. Eckart and Oberstar. Senator John Glenn (D-OH) and Rep. Eckart sent a joint resolution to President George Bush expressing their request that Slovenia and Croatia be recognized. As early as June 28, 1991, George Voinovich, then governor of Ohio, asked President George Bush in a letter to intercede in connection with the activity of the Yugoslav army in Slovenia. In his letter of July 3, Voinovich reminded Bush that during his presidential campaign in 1988, Bush had talked about the problem of oppressed nations, of the Lithuanians in particular, and that people were asking themselves why he did not react in the case of Yugoslavia in the same way as he had in Iraq.¹⁵ Representatives of the fraternal benefit organizations sent numerous letters of protest demanding the recognition of Slovene independence to President Bush and to the senators of those US states where these organizations had their headquarters.¹⁶

During the June 1991 war for Slovenia and especially during the war in Croatia, American Slovenes and Croats and their organizations organized demonstrations in support of Slovene and Croat independence. Demonstrations took place in many cities from coast to coast, as well as in front of the United States Capitol and the United Nations. When the three-month moratorium for further implementation of Slovene independence ended on 8 October 1991, Slovene Americans used a special hotline and made thousands of phone calls to the White House (Klemenčič 1995: 376–382). American Slovenes and Croats continued to pressure the American government to recognize Croatia and Slovenia. Slovene Americans organized a phone-in to the White House for the recognition of Slovenia on February 10 and 12, 1992. The US recognized Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 1992 (Klemenčič 1996b: 409), and it was celebrated by Slovene and Croatian Americans from coast to coast.

Macedonian Americans

During the period of the widening of the political and economic crises and interethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s, interest among Macedonian Americans in the events in the old homeland increased significantly. Some Macedonian Americans thought that the time had come for the realization of the idea of a united and free independent Macedonia. The MPO in particular advocated a "Free

15 Archive of Slovenska Izseljenska Matica, Ljubljana. Letter from George V. Voinovich to US President George Bush, 28 June 1991; Letter from George V. Voinovich to US President George Bush, 3 July 1991.

16 Archive of Slovenska Izseljenska Matica, Ljubljana. Letter from American Mutual Life Association to US Senator John H. Glenn, 28 June 1991.

and Independent Macedonia – a Switzerland of the Balkans,” which would comprise Vardar, Aegean and Pirin Macedonia,¹⁷ taking its slogan from the title of Ivan Mihailoff’s book (Mihailoff, 1950). In this Macedonia, all of its ethnic groups would coexist in peace. In spite of the fact that they considered the language spoken by Slavs in Macedonia a Bulgarian dialect,¹⁸ the MPO advocated an independent Macedonian state. Even in the 1990s, their political philosophy could be compared with the foundations on which the Swiss Confederation is based:

... the Swiss, just as the Macedonians, are a *Volk* because geography, history, political structures, and linguistic diversity have made them one. The Swiss, whether French, German, or Italian in language, participate in one national entity ... Such will be the case in a free and independent Macedonia. The Macedonians are one because their venerable history makes them one ... (Lebamoff 1990: 1, 3)

The endeavors of Macedonian Americans to help achieve the independence of Macedonia and activities for its international recognition were not an easy task, especially due to the small size of the group. This fight was also difficult due to the historically proven fact that the powers did not like new states to be established in Europe. Under these circumstances Macedonia in diaspora had two goals to achieve, namely to convince the political leadership of Macedonia to declare independence as soon as possible and then to achieve its international recognition as an independent state (Klemenčič 2005a: 586).

All these dilemmas caused the political leadership of Macedonia to declare its independence six months after the other former Yugoslav republics did, i.e. on 19 November 1991. The *Macedonian Tribune* reported proudly and happily on the declaration of Macedonian sovereignty (however, still within Yugoslavia), which took place in January 1991 after the Macedonian parliament was constituted following free and democratic elections.¹⁹ Macedonian Americans—like Croat and Slovene Americans—tried to assist their homeland in their endeavors for international recognition by writing letters to distinguished politicians and institutions.

The proclamation of Macedonian independence revitalized the Macedonian question as a whole. In particular, Greece opposed its international recognition, especially under the name Macedonia, because, according to the Greeks, the name showed territorial pretensions of the Republic of Macedonia to Aegean Macedonia (Danforth 1995: 47–48; Klemenčič 2005a: 595).

In order to exert pressure for the international recognition of Macedonia, the president of the MPO, Ivan A. Lebamoff, sent a resolution of the Detroit MPO Convention to heads of state around the world asking for the recognition of Macedonian independence. Many responded (Klemenčič 2005a: 592–593). A few days after the Macedonian parliament declared the independence of Macedonia. A delegation of the MPO visited Washington, DC in an attempt to persuade the US government to recognize Macedonia as an independent state. The delegation was received by both US senators from Indiana, Daniel Coats and Richard Lugar, and also by some members of the House of Representatives from Indiana.²⁰

The representatives of the MPO met on 19 December 1991 in Toronto with the representatives of the new Macedonian immigrants who promoted Macedonian as a separate language codified in the homeland, i.e. the United Macedonians Organization. The meeting began with the simple statement that both parties were not there to solve the differences that existed between them, but to strengthen areas in which they agreed. They discussed a common goal – a free and independent Macedonia. The result of this meeting was a resolution in which they demanded the international recognition of the Republic of Macedonia as an independent state. In this petition they emphasized that the people of

17 MPO – New Colossus. *Macedonian Tribune* (further quoted as *MT*) 63(3052): 1 (24 August 1989).

18 For the historical standpoints of the MPO on the Bulgarian identity of Macedonians see Lybyer (1944).

19 Vardar Macedonia, with newly elected multiparty parliament, is ready for political change. *MT* 65(3088): 1 (7 February 1991); Vardar Macedonia declares sovereignty. *MT* 65(3089): 1 (21 February 1991).

20 MPO presses for free Macedonia in D.C. *MT* 65(3108): 1 (28 November 1991).

Macedonia share a common language, tradition, and history and that the undue influence of Belgrade, Athens, and Sofia is just as undesirable in the Republic of Macedonia as Russification was in the Soviet Union. They faxed it to Macedonia and Bulgaria and mailed it to more than 600 of the most influential politicians all over the world (Klemenčič 2005a: 597).

At the beginning of 1992, Greeks at home and in diaspora demonstrated against recognition of Macedonian independence, above all against the name of the new state – “Macedonia.” They protested that Macedonia was an ancient Greek name and that “Macedonians” had stolen this name from them. Macedonians also demonstrated, but they had to do that very carefully. There are many more Greeks in the world than Macedonians. In many places disturbances of peace and order occurred, and police had to intervene to separate Greek and Macedonian demonstrators (Danforth 1995: 30–32).

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America demanded that Macedonian independence not be recognized by the USA.²¹ MPO President Lebamoff sent a letter of protest against this position to the patriarchs and bishops of the Orthodox Church worldwide and to numerous newspapers. He also asked Macedonian Americans to enhance their propaganda activities to get Macedonia internationally recognized as soon as possible. So in the first half of 1992, Macedonian Americans started a mass campaign for international recognition of Macedonia. They wrote numerous articles in American newspapers and made many phone calls to US Senators in which they demanded international recognition of Macedonian independence (Klemenčič 2005a: 599–600).

There were a lot of misunderstandings. For example, Sen. Alfonse D’Amato (R-NY) addressed Lebamoff as a distinguished member of the Greek-American community. Lebamoff responded that he is not a Greek and Macedonians are not Greeks, and continued:

... We are Slavs, who speak a dialect very similar to the Bulgarian language. Our alphabet is Cyrillic. While some Macedonians consider themselves Bulgarians from Macedonia, there is another group who consider themselves purely Macedonian.

Those Macedonians living in the part of Macedonia that is in Greece are considered by the Greek government to be either Bulgarians or Slav-speaking Greeks. In essence they are not Greeks. They are Bulgarian or Macedonian Slavs, who have been dominated by Greek politics since 1913, when Macedonia was divided among Yugoslavia (it was actually Serbia – M. K.), Bulgaria and Greece, pursuant to the Treaty of Bucharest of 1913.

The Greek claim that Macedonia is Greek is denied by history...²²

MPO members carefully followed the events in the US Congress. The MPO reacted to a speech by Senator Lugar (R-IN), in which he asked that the United States step forward to lead the UN and NATO to strict enforcement of a cease-fire in Yugoslavia before it was too late. The MPO asked Senator Lugar to propose that the country send US troops to Macedonia. MPO President Lebamoff also wrote about his proposal to Macedonian President Gligorov. Sen. Lugar’s reaction to the MPO proposal was positive. Rep. Fascell, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, also reacted positively.

During the summer and autumn of 1992 quite a few articles were published in major American newspapers on the problems connected with America’s not recognizing of Macedonia. They were reprinted in the *Macedonian Tribune*. The issue of (non-)recognition of Macedonia was also discussed on 1 October 1992 in the US House of Representatives. Member of Congress Jill L. Long (D-IN) also sponsored the MPO resolution. In November 1992, the MPO asked Macedonian Americans to call the White House Hotline and ask President Bush to recognize the Republic of Macedonia immediately (Klemenčič 2005a: 603).

All the above mentioned activities and also the political activities of Macedonian politicians from Macedonia finally yielded some results. On 8 April 1992 Macedonia was admitted to the UN, although

21 Letter from Iakovos, Archbishop of North and South America to Parishioners, February 6, 1992. *MT* 66(3120): 5 (14 May 1992).

22 Ivan A. Lebamoff to US Senator Alfonse M. D’Amato, April 7, 1992, *MT* 66 (3121): 8, 11 (May 28, 1992).

not under its constitutional name but under the temporary name “Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.” Macedonian-Greek misunderstandings did not cease after Macedonia became a UN member. It took the US until November 2004 to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name. US recognition of the name “Republic of Macedonia” again caused great unhappiness among Greeks. Greeks even today remain of the opinion that Macedonia is only a Greek northern province.

ACTION IN THE US CONGRESS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON AMERICANS FROM YUGOSLAVIA AND THEIR DESCENDANTS

The US Congress influences American foreign policy, especially the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Quite a few hearings on US policy regarding Yugoslavia can be found in the *Congressional Record* for the first half of the 1990s. US senators and representatives, Americans connected with Yugoslavia by their ancestry, and representatives of organizations from Yugoslavia presented their views at these hearings. Congress passed resolutions, especially during the budget debate, when US assistance was in question and members could introduce conditions for it.

On February 21, 1991, the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, chaired by Joseph Biden, held a hearing on “The Civil War in Yugoslavia: The US Response.” The first three speakers were Sen. Dole and Reps. Moody and Bentley. Sen. Dole said, among other things:

... In my view, the United States urgently needs to review its policy toward Yugoslavia to determine the best means for encouraging the growth of democracy and the restoration of full human and individual rights for all of the people in Yugoslavia...

... I think that the divisions we see in Yugoslavia today are not only ethnic, but political as well—and these political divisions are deep. Old-style communism is pitted against new-born democracy and at this point, we don't know which side will win ...²³

Then Rep. Moody explained that his involvement with Yugoslavia began in 1958, when he served as the CARE representative there.²⁴ Rep. Bentley explained the Serb side of the story.²⁵ The position of the US Department of State was presented by James Dobbins who emphasized that that the United States wanted to promote continued unity of Yugoslavia, and not to aid any secession movement. He also said that Croatia or Slovenia would have to first secure the consent of all the republics of Yugoslavia, including Serbia, to break away.²⁶

This was followed by the “Public Panel,” where the views of ethnic groups were heard. Rade Stone, President of the SNF, explained the Serb view; former US Congressman Joseph DioGuardi the Albanian; former Minnesota Governor Rudolph Perpich the Croatian; and Slovene Heritage Foundation President Karl Bonutti the Slovene view.

DioGuardi stated that the Serbs had created a modern Warsaw Ghetto in Kosovo. He also accused Serbia of chauvinism and communism.²⁷ Karl Bonutti spoke about the Slovenian government's plans for

23 Remarks of Senator Bob Dole before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Yugoslavia. AS 85(16033): 5 (6 March 1991).

24 “Statement of the Honorable Jim Moody (D-Wis.) before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on European Affairs, February 21, 1991,” AS 85 (16032): 4 (February 27, 1991); “US Policy on Yugoslavia Outlined,” MT 65 (3093): 1, 5 (April 18, 1991).

25 “Senate Meets On Serb Affairs,” AS 85 (16032): 5 (February 27, 1991).

26 Ibid.

27 US Senate Hearing, February 21, 1991. AS 85(16035): 6–7 (20 March 1991).

the future. He argued that federal democracies—like in the US—are unfair in ethnically diverse countries like Yugoslavia. This is so, he claimed, because the presence of one large group transforms the system into a de facto “democratic dictatorship.”²⁸ Rudy Perpich, former governor of Minnesota, stated that since its last election, Croatia had been on the road to democracy and a free market, as well as integration with the European Community. He claimed that Croatia was subject to outside pressures from various parties, including the Yugoslav army, and warned of the possibility of a political coup in Belgrade. Like Rep. Bentley before him, he asserted that the US could and should promote peaceful resolution of the conflict in Yugoslavia.²⁹

Sen. Dole had in February 1991 announced a bill that would allow the US to reward non-communist Yugoslav republics by giving them direct aid, an idea that appeared to contradict US policy.³⁰ In S. RES. 106 on Human Rights in Yugoslavia, which Sen. Dole proposed two months later, on April 18, 1991, he wrote that federal authorities in Yugoslavia do not fulfill the criteria of US Congress for receiving material aid from the USA. He also demanded that the US Congress pass a law in accordance to which the US would cease all economic and technical assistance in case of a military coup in Yugoslavia.³¹ Rep. Bentley this time unsuccessfully organized Serbs in America to protest against the Dole proposal as well as against support that Kosovo Albanians were given during discussion in the House of Representatives on foreign aid.³²

In October 1991, debates took place in the US Senate on Bill S. 1793, to restrict US assistance for Serbia or any part of Yugoslavia controlled by Serbia until certain conditions (democratization and respect for the rights of minorities—M.K.) were met.³³ According to *American Srbobran* it represented the most anti-Serb proposal ever to reach the Senate floor. Therefore, *American Srbobran* asked Serbian Americans to send letters of protest to their members of Congress and also to the editors of major American newspapers and to radio and TV stations.³⁴ The historical facts of World War II, including Croatian crimes against the Serbs, and also pressures by the Albanian majority towards the Serb minority in Kosovo were cited as reasons.³⁵ This time as well they were unsuccessful.

Representative Bentley also protested against H. R. 5258 of May 21, 1992, which provided for the withdrawal of most favored nation status from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and for the resumption of such status if certain conditions were fulfilled; i.e., the FRY ceased its armed conflict with the other ethnic peoples of the region formerly comprising the SFRY and agreed to respect the borders of the six republics that comprised the SFRY under the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution.

Rep. Bentley stated further that she phoned Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panić, who expressed grave concern that “the present economic sanctions will result in thousands more deaths of children and elderly this winter because of lack of heat and that the 550,000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, including 90,000 Muslims, living in Serbian homes, will suffer more than they already have.” She finished by urging the members of Congress to take a closer look at the bill and at the situation on the ground in former Yugoslavia, and urged their nay vote on H.R. 5258.³⁶

28 Prof. Bonutti before Senate Committee. *Ameriška Domovina* 93(8): 1 (21 February 1991).

29 US Senate Hearing, February 21, 1991: Croatsians—Looking to the Future, by Rudy Perpich. AS 85(16035): 6 (20 March 1991).

30 Senator Dole champions aid for democracy in Yugoslavia. *MT* 65(3090): 1 (7 March 1991).

31 US Senator Robert Dole Pushed Sen. Res. 106 Anti-Serbia, April 18, 1991. AS 85(16041): 5 (1 May 1991), reprinted from *Congressional Record – Senate*, S4175, 18 April 1991.

32 Helen Delich Bentley Call: To All Serbs. AS 85(16045): 1 (29 May 1991).

33 Senator D’Amato presses for sanctions against Serbia. *MT* 65(3107): 1 (14 November 1991).

34 All Serbs—Called Upon—To Now Write to Your US Senator and Congressperson. AS 85(16064): 9 (16 October 1991).

35 Letter from Natalia Markovic to Honorable Senators D’Amato, Dole, Glenn, Pell, Gore, Nickles, Pressler, Riegle and Seymour; also to Senators Lugar, Coats, Dixon and Simon, 16 October 1991. AS 85(16067): 7 (6 November 1991); Letter from Milorad Sofrenovic to the Editor, 7 November 1991. AS 85(16068): 5 (13 November 1991).

36 Statement of the Honorable Helen Delich Bentley in Opposition to H.R. 5258. AS 85(16113): 7 (30 September 1992).

Later Rep. Bentley succeeded in preventing the passing of some resolutions and bills in the US Congress that would harm Serbian interests. Serbian Americans supported her election campaigns financially. In 1994, rather than try for reelection to Congress, she tried her luck in the gubernatorial election in Maryland, where she lost. As reasons the media cited her age—she was already 71 years old—and her support of the “Serbian cause” in Congress.

Helen Bentley also initiated the “Serbian American National Information Network” (SerbNet), which was organized to propagate the “Serbian cause” to the US media and US governmental organizations.³⁷ SerbNet, needing financial support for its activities, appealed to Serbian Americans; some individuals supported the organization with contributions of over \$ 400.³⁸

The results of the SerbNet activities were soon evident. They published their views in local newspapers and also tried to raise the ethnic pride of the Serbian Americans. At the same time they started an even more aggressive propaganda campaign to help the “Serbian cause.” When in August 1992 US politicians began seriously thinking about military intervention in the FRY, SerbNet published a one-page statement, in the *New York Times* as well as elsewhere, in which they asked the Republican and Democratic candidates, President Bush and Governor Clinton, “Why Take Sides in a Civil War? Instead, Be the Peacemaker in Bosnia.” With this they invited the Serbs to demonstrate in front of the UN building in New York in August 1991.³⁹ Some American newspapers started to publish Serb-friendly articles.

Yugoslav Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević, an émigré in the USA, carefully monitored the events in the regions of the former Yugoslavia. In May 1991, he had said in an interview for the *Milwaukee Journal* that constitutional monarchy would be the best solution to end the inter-ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia. “Despite the thinking, it remains in many respects under the yoke of old-fashioned Communism,” he said. “Under the guise of nationalism the Communist old guard and new guard—particularly in Serbia but also in Croatia and Slovenia—is attempting to return to power by generating ethnic conflicts.”⁴⁰

Later Prince Aleksandar commented again on events in the region. At the end of April 1993, when UN sanctions were imposed on the FRY, he wrote to UN Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali to say that “sanctions will not work to reach the goals.”⁴¹

MASS DEMONSTRATIONS OF AMERICANS FROM FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

As already mentioned, in the early 1990s, Slovene and Croatian Americans demonstrated on the streets of major American cities to demand recognition of their respective states. Serbian Americans also demonstrated on August 15, 1992, in front of the UN building in New York, under the slogan “Serbs have the right to independence on their historic territory;” and demanded that the UN intervene in favor of a peaceful division of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They demanded also the right of the Serbs in Krajina to self-determination and the end of sanctions against Serbia.⁴²

In February 1993, Serbian Americans organized demonstrations in Washington, DC, where 2,000

37 Serbs—All Must Stand Up. SerbNet, Local Chapters—Must To Be Organized—Now. AS 86(16085): 1 (11 March 1992).

38 Public Relations Fund Appeal To All Serbs: Financial Action—By All—Is Needed—Now. AS 86(16099): 1 (17 June 1992); SerbNet Chapter of Central PA—Serb Relief Fund. AS 86(16102): 2 (8 July 1992).

39 Why Take Sides in a Civil War? AS 86(16105): 11 (5 August 1992).

40 Yugoslavia’s Prince Favors Return to Monarchy. AS 85(16046): 8 (5 June 1991), reprinted from the *Milwaukee Journal*, 16 May 1991.

41 Saopštenje kancelarije Nj.K.V. prestolonaslednika Aleksandra: Pismo prestolonaslednika Generalnom sekretaru Ujedinjenih nacija, 26. aprila 1993. AS 87(16146): 16 (12 May 1993).

42 Svima Srbima poziv na demonstracije. AS 86(16105): 15 (5 August 1992).

people participated. They protested against American policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, and demanded that CNN, the *New York Times*, and *USA Today* “speak the truth.”⁴³

HUMANITARIAN AID FROM CROATIAN AND SERBIAN AMERICANS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE GROUPS IN THE HOMELANDS

Emigrants from the region of former Yugoslavia were not only actively involved in the politics of their homelands. They were also active in gathering financial and material aid.

Most of the help which the Slovene diaspora gave to Slovenia through financial means came during and immediately after the Yugoslav Army's attack on Slovenia. Slovene Americans reacted as they had during the two World Wars and undertook to raise funds. Their activities were carried out by Slovene fraternal benefit societies. Money raised by selling Slovene flags was intended to cover the costs of political activities and help to repay the damage caused by the actions of the Yugoslav army in Slovenia. In this way more than \$ 2 million was raised in 1991 and 1992 (Klemenčič 1996b: 391–409).

Croatian immigrants gathered humanitarian aid by collecting money or food, medicine and clothing through various funds and organizations (Committee for Charitable Help in Croatia, Croatian Fraternal Union Fund, Fund of Croatians in the Diaspora for Help in Croatia, etc.) in the first half of the 1990s. All the organizations cooperated closely with the Croatian Caritas, American Red Cross, etc. In Ohio alone, they raised more than \$ 40 million and sent 130 tons of medicine, food and other supplies. Other immigrant groups also participated in this charitable action, such as some Slovene fraternals, Macedonian churches, etc.

As of March 1992 the Cleveland Croatian Americans had shipped 1,600 tons of clothing and food to Croatia. Humanitarian aid collected in the United States was worth tens of millions of dollars. It is estimated that each Croatian family in the diaspora contributed more than \$3,500. This included help to the Croatian army. They bought military equipment, primarily helmets and uniforms. In addition, thousands of individuals sent thousands of dollars in cash directly to their relatives and friends and also to Croatian Caritas, the Red Cross, and other institutions.

Serbian Americans tried to help their homeland with humanitarian aid as they did during the First and Second World Wars. Already in the mid-1980s, Serbian Americans were interested in the situation of the Serbs in other Yugoslav republics. In the 1990s they were busy collecting money to complete the largest Orthodox Church in the World, St. Sava Memorial Church, at Vračar in Belgrade. *American Srbobran* published many appeals for money.⁴⁴ They raised millions of US dollars worldwide.⁴⁵ Money was also collected by fraternal organizations. In February 1989, Serb Patriarch German thanked SNF President Stone for donations by members of the SNF. With the last donation, contributions by SNF members came to more than \$217,000.⁴⁶

The military activities started in Croatia in the summer of 1991 and the media reported on thousands of refugees. Serbian Americans started to gather money for relief for Serbian refugees. In August 1991, Serbian dioceses founded the Church Relief Committee. They collected above all bedding and

43 For Love of Their Fellow Serbs, American Serbs March on Washington. AS 87(16138): 9 (17 March 1993).

44 Easter Appeal: Srbin i Srpkinja—Will You Help St. Sava? AS 82(15884): 3 (30 March 1988); St. Sava Vracar—Is Important. Unity—With St. Sava. AS 82(15917): 1 (23 November 1988); Did You Give To The Vracar Church? Do So—Now, to Accelerate to Completion. AS 83(15955): 1 (30 August 1989).

45 St. Sava Vracar Committee Report. AS 82(15892): 1 (25 May 1988).

46 Serbian Patriarch Acknowledges SNF Contributions of \$217,226.04. AS 83(15932): 1 (15 March 1989).

clothing, personal hygiene products, food, medicine, and money.⁴⁷ The New Gračanica Metropolitanate Diocese for America and Canada purchased a 100-bed hospital for refugees in Serbia.⁴⁸ The first part of the relief was brought to the homeland by Metropolitan Irenej of New Gračanica, who visited Serbia during October 7-19, 1991.⁴⁹

RETURNEES IN GOVERNMENTS AND PARLIAMENTS OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED STATES IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA (1990–1993)

Democratically elected leaders of the newly established states invited some who had emigrated from their homelands or their descendants to work in the new governments. The best known is Milan Panić, owner of a pharmaceutical firm in Los Angeles. With the permission of the US State Department, he became the prime minister of Serbia in 1992. He was a candidate for President of the Republic of Serbia (FRY) in 1992. Radmila Milentijević, a university professor of political science, became a member of the government without portfolio and later minister of information in the FRY government during the reign of Slobodan Milošević.

Gojko Šušak, a restaurant owner from Canada, was minister of defense in the Croatian government of President Franjo Tuđman. Zdravka Bušić, a librarian at Case Western Reserve University and Oberlin College, returned to Croatia in 1990 and served in Tuđman's cabinet as his Chief-of-Staff and later as an adviser and archivist. In 1995, she was elected to the Croatian Parliament, serving as chair of the Committee for Interparliamentary Relations. In some cases the US government did not allow US citizens to leave to become actively involved in the politics of the newly established countries. The best known is the former governor of Minnesota, George J. (Rudy) Perpich, who in 1990 was refused permission from the US Department of State and thus could not become Croatian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The returned emigrants who became members of governments and parliaments made a contribution to the developments in the new countries. In Serbia, for example, Panić brought hope for a democratic solution without bloodshed in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; his attempt, however, failed.

Gojko Šušak came from Herzegovina and was a representative of the nationalistic right-wing HDZ. As such he appealed to fellow emigrants to gather funds in order to arm Croatian volunteers among the Croatian émigré community and was also in favor of the division of Bosnia. He served as Croatian Minister of Defense.

CONCLUSION

The recognition of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina by the European Union and other countries in January 1992, and by the United States in April 1992, and the admittance of Macedonia to the United Nations, were not primarily the result of pressure by the Slovene, Croatian and Macedonian communities in the USA and elsewhere in the world. However, it is important to recognize how those communities tried to influence the United States' and other countries' policies toward their old countries, and demonstrates that whenever the old countries were in crisis, the immigrant groups' cohesive-

47 Clothing, (Winter) Bedding, Food, Medicine and Money Donations Needed for United Serb Church Relief Effort. AS 85(16063): 5 (9 October 1991).

48 New Gračanica Metropolitanate Diocese for America and Canada Purchases 100 Bed Hospital for Refugees in Serbia. AS 85(16063): 5 (9 October 1991).

49 Metropolitan Irenej Takes Aid to the Serbian People! AS 85(16069): 5 (20 November 1991).

ness was at its highest point. This cohesiveness will help these immigrant communities to learn about themselves and to survive a little longer. The activities of the immigrants from Yugoslavia and their descendants in the 1990s prove that ethnic consciousness of immigrants and their willingness to support their ancestral homelands lasts beyond the third generation.

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POVZETEK

REAKCIJE JUGOSLOVANSKIH IZSELJENCEV IN NJIHOVIH POTOMCEV V ZDA NA RAZPAD NEKDANJE JUGOSLAVIJE (1989–1993)

Matjaž KLEMENČIČ

Izseljenci z območja nekdanje Jugoslavije so v splošnem podprli voditelje njihovih narodov ob razpadanju Jugoslavije. Tako so Srbi podprli politiko režima Slobodana Miloševića in njene namene, da bi vsi Srbi živeli v eni državi. Na drugi strani pa so slovenski, hrvaški, makedonski in albanski priseljenci v državah njihove priselitve podpirali želje voditeljev njihovih narodov po samostojnosti.

V članku je prikazano delovanje organizacij posameznih priseljenjskih skupnosti v ZDA z namenom, da bi na eni strani podprli srbske interese in s tem enotno Jugoslavijo, na drugi pa interese drugih skupnosti po ustanavljanju novih držav na območju nekdanje Jugoslavije. Poleg tega sta prikazana tudi vpliv in delovanje nekaterih najpomembnejših voditeljev priseljenjskih skupnosti ter politikov, ki po poreklu izhajajo iz krogov izseljenskih skupnosti z območja nekdanje Jugoslavije. Ti so vplivali na priznavanje novih realnosti na tleh razpadle Jugoslavije.

V države nekdanje Jugoslavije so se tudi vrnili posamezni izseljenci in tam odigrali dokaj pomembno politično vlogo. V članku je prikazan tudi ta vidik vpliva izseljencev v procesu razpadanja in na politiko držav, ki so nastale na območju nekdanje Jugoslavije.