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SPECIAL ANALYSIS

YUGOSLAVIA: Post-Tito Outlook

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If President Tito dies within the next few days or weeks, we believe there would be a smooth transfer of power to a collegial leadership. Apprehension about the Soviet threat--heightened by the invasion of Afghanistan--should serve to hold the new Yugoslav leaders together during the first few months. We also believe that the Soviets will not intervene militarily in the immediate post-Tito period, and that other forms of Soviet meddling or pressure during this period would only reinforce Yugoslav unity. We are less sanguine about the prospects of Yugoslav unity--and Soviet restraint--over the longer run. [REDACTED]

Should Tito die or remain incapacitated, his duties as party chief would revert to the chairman of the party Presidium, Stevan Doronjski, a Serb. In the state machinery, Tito's successor would be the Vice President of the collective Presidency, Lazar Kolisevski, who is a Macedonian. Neither of the two has much independent political support, and they will hold their posts only until their current one-year terms end. This collective approach to the succession was created personally by Tito--perhaps because he did not want his own authority diluted. [REDACTED]

Defense Minister Ljubovic and the armed forces are likely to play an important role in ensuring a smooth succession. Tito brought the tightly disciplined Army into close political collaboration with party leaders. We would expect the military, which is responsible for security, to tighten controls during the transition and to move decisively against any threat to national unity. [REDACTED]

Foreign Policy

In general, Yugoslavia will continue Tito's policy of trying to maintain a balance in relations between the East and West, while playing a role in the Third World. The Soviets, however, are widely regarded as the main threat

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to the country's independence--particularly in the wake of the invasion of Afghanistan, which Belgrade had denounced. [REDACTED]

Thus, during the first two months following Tito's departure, we would expect the collective leadership to:

- Look to the West in general--and the US in particular--for specific signs of support such as new credits and trade concessions; purchases of Western arms might also be stepped up.
- Seek closer ties with Romania and with Western Communist parties that have publicly rejected the Soviet move into Afghanistan.
- Increase defense spending--as was done after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968--with an eye toward both modernizing the Army and improving the country's ability to engage in guerrilla warfare. [REDACTED]

The View From Moscow

The Soviets thus far have not tried to exert overt pressure on Yugoslavia. Although they have shown in Afghanistan that they are prepared to use military force outside the Warsaw Pact, we believe that they will not intervene militarily in Yugoslavia in the near future--unless there is a complete leadership breakdown in Belgrade or a sharp policy shift toward the West. The Soviets know that they would face determined military and guerrilla opposition in Yugoslavia, and that military intervention there would totally undercut their efforts to continue detente with West European countries. [REDACTED]

Soviet covert action or pressure tactics aimed at influencing events in Belgrade cannot be ruled out. The Soviets, however, realize that any moves they make toward Yugoslavia--especially in the wake of their intervention in Afghanistan--will be closely scrutinized in the West

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and the Third World. Nonetheless, if there are indications of Soviet meddling, the effect almost certainly would be to strengthen Yugoslav unity and determination to maintain an independent foreign policy.

The Longer Run

Over the longer run, Yugoslav unity will come under increasing strain. Powerful party barons will begin working within the collegial system to further their own ambitions. Once Yugoslav leaders begin jockeying for position and become involved in political intrigues, the Soviets may see increased opportunities to exert influence.

Events in Afghanistan may well have important additional implications for Yugoslavia in the longer run. Belgrade is closely watching the US reaction to Afghanistan as an indicator of US willingness to oppose Soviet expansion.