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**YUGOSLAVIA: New Republic-Army Confrontation Brewing**

Croatian leaders have rejected the Army's 24-hour deadline, which expired yesterday, to surrender the republic defense minister for trial in a military court. The republic Security Council instead threatened to try military officers who have engaged in "subversion" in Croatia. The Croatian Prime Minister yesterday charged that the Army is mounting new pressures, including military police patrols, that are pushing tensions back to the brink of civil war. The republic defense and interior ministers reportedly went to Slovenia to coordinate "security operations." The federal Presidency yesterday hosted a meeting of republic presidents to try to revive talks. The group deflected an attempt by Slovenia and Croatia to bar further Army meddling in domestic politics, and Croatia's representatives walked out of the session.

The Army almost certainly never expected Croatia to hand over senior officials and appears to want a showdown. If it believed the republic were again mobilizing reservists, the Army might try to seize Croatian leaders. Although most federal officials probably want to avoid violence, the Presidency's refusal to discuss Croatia's demands indicates it cannot be counted on to restrain the Army. Croatia probably will try to avoid a clash, but it will not surrender senior officials. If faced with new Army preparations for intervention, Croatian leaders may opt for immediate secession.

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