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YUGOSLAVIA: Leadership Crisis

Federal President Jovic's resignation has thrown Yugoslavia into a crisis that could destroy the remnants of federal authority. [Redacted]

Jovic resigned yesterday after the collective Presidency again rejected the military's attempt to impose martial law. Vice President Mesic, a Croatian, declared himself acting president and last night called for an emergency session of the Presidency [Redacted]

A statement by the supreme command of the armed forces said the military is "assessing" measures it will take in reaction to the Presidency's rejection of martial law. The Croats are telling Western diplomats that military intervention is imminent and they will fight. They have requested Western capitals to oppose publicly a military takeover. [Redacted]

According to Croatian officials, the military has offered Slovenia the right to leave Yugoslavia within 15 days if the republic does not support a Croatian independence effort. There have been past indications from the military that it is prepared to give up Slovenia in order to isolate Croatia [Redacted]

[Redacted] The Presidency's continued refusal to endorse martial law and Jovic's resignation may persuade the military that it now has virtually no chance of getting a legal mandate to act. If so, military leaders may believe their only options now are to intervene or acquiesce in what they see as the destruction of the Yugoslav state. At least some hardliners appear prepared to intervene [Redacted]

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