

endangered by the centralist preference for ekavian, demonstrated its general acceptance as the Croat national idiom on the part of the Belgrade administrations and the Croats themselves—this despite Karadžić's espousal of ijekavian and the trace of his linguistic concepts in post-1892 Croat ijekavian recension. For all his countenance of Croat-Serb linguistic unity, in 1921 Maretić himself could not forbear the dismissal of proposals for the acceptance of ekavian in Croatia as idealistic and impractical. Thus the Croat struggle against linguistic centralism was fought not under the banner of old Illyrianist linguistic standard but in defense of Broz's phonetic orthography and Maretić's grammar, both based on Karadžić's linguistic credo. Where the most stubborn among Croat unitarists struggled with ekavian, often with comical results, the majority of Croats rejected linguistic Serbianization.³⁶ With the growing consciousness that the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes constituted separate nationalities, linguistic unitarism was deprived of its ideological foundations. The Croats confirmed their own linguistic standard, which owed a great deal to Karadžić's Croat followers. Two experiments in linguistic unitarism parted ways.

Centralization

Although the proponents of Yugoslavia's unification had presumed that the establishment of the Yugoslav state, freed from external tutelage, would remove the nationality conflict from the political agenda, events proved otherwise. Owing to the systematic fostering of centralizing measures, the primary result of both the Great Serbian and unitarist conceptions of Yugoslavia's state organization, and the resistance that those measures provoked among the non-Serb nationalities, the national question became the most important problem of Yugoslavia's internal relations. The essence of Yugoslavia's national question was the conflict between the protagonists of several antagonistic national ideologies, which expressed themselves in the struggle over the organization of the new state. Whereas the proponents of unitarism sought to obliterate all historically derived differences between the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes by means of a strictly centralized state, the majority of Serbian political parties used centralism to further Serbian pre-

36. The awkwardness of unitarist Croats in their use of ekavian stemmed from the fact that not every *je* syllable was a reflex of *jats*. Such unitarist enthusiasts as Mijo Radošević, a Croat socialist who became a sort of unitarist fascist, often committed the folly of changing every *je* into *e*, thereby coining such nonwords as *oduševljenje*, instead of *oduševljenje* (enthusiasm), which is the same in ijekavian and ekavian. See Mijo Radošević, *Osnovi savremene Jugoslavije: Nova Politika* (Zagreb, 1935), p. 514.

dominance. This meant that the partisans of a unitarist and a Great Serbian version of Yugoslavia were counterposed to the representatives of the non-Serb national movements, who either demanded a federated (or confederated) state structure or sought guarantees for their national aspirations outside the framework of Yugoslavia.¹

From the outset, Serbia had the upper hand. The delegation sent by the National Council to Belgrade did not negotiate with the Serbian government strictly in accordance with the directives, which had allowed for several alternative forms of state organization; instead, Pavelić's address to Regent Aleksandar, in which the term "unitary state" was repeatedly emphasized, left little doubt that the delegation considered that form of state as incontrovertible. References to the regent's "reigning power" also gave a veneer of conclusiveness to the continuing debate between the monarchists and the republicans. In addition, the delegation agreed to the formation of a unitary, though parliamentary, government, responsible to a unitary legislature, which had yet to be formed. They also agreed that the existing autonomous administrative organs would continue their work under the control of the new government—though the simultaneous responsibility of these organs to the autonomous legislatures was also reaffirmed.

On December 3, 1918, the leadership of the National Council promulgated the unification act and the consequent end of its own supreme sovereign authority in the former Austro-Hungarian territories. The statement of the National Council specified that the administrative function of this body would cease to exist upon the establishment of the new joint cabinet in Belgrade. Protests from sections of Croat opinion were voiced even before this formal notice could be imparted. On December 2, the Frankists, revived by the mass disenchantment, began disseminating a proclamation that condemned the undemocratic nature of state unification. On December 5, popular discontent erupted. Soldiers of the still active Croat units of the former Austro-Hungarian army, the Fifty-third Infantry Regiment and the Twenty-fifth Home Guard Infantry Regiment stationed in Zagreb, marched to Jelčić Square in the center of the city, protesting the unification. They confronted the militia and regular units loyal to the National Council, which were awaiting the demonstrators. According to official accounts, the pitched battle

1. On the interwar history of Yugoslavia, with special reference to the national question, in addition to the already cited works of Ferdo Čulinović and Rudolf Horvat, the following works can be used with profit: Franjo Tudjman, "Uvod u historiju socijalističke Jugoslavije," *Forum*, vol. 2 (1963), no. 3, pp. 292–352; no. 4, pp. 530–564; no. 4, pp. 702–741; Sergej Dimitrijević et al., eds., *Iz istorije Jugoslavije 1918–1945: Zbornik predavanja* (Belgrade, 1958); Julijana Vrcinac, *Naša najnovija istorija: Pregled (1919–1945)* (Belgrade, 1967); Wayne S. Vucinich, "Interwar Yugoslavia," in *Contemporary Yugoslavia: Twenty Years of Socialist Experiment*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich (Berkeley, 1969); L. B. Valev, G. M. Slavin, and I. I. Udaltsov, eds., *Istorija Jugoslavii*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1963); Momchilo M. Dzhrutch, *Obrazovanie mnogonatsional'nogo gosudarstva Jugoslavii (1918–1921 gg.)* (Moscow, 1970).

claimed the lives of thirteen combatants, and an additional seventeen persons were wounded. The overwhelming majority of victims were from the ranks of demonstrating soldiers.²

This incident, which envenomed political sentiments in its own right, ushered in a series of official acts aimed at the gradual obliteration of administrative autonomy in Croatia and elsewhere through the extension of Serbian laws and institutions to all areas of the new state. Privately, most Serbian politicians, notably the Radicals, did not consider Yugoslavia a new state at all but merely an expansion of Serbian state territory. Serbia's sovereignty was not ending but rather was being aggrandized within a Greater Serbia. This view was still muffled, but the first centralizing measures were not in marked variance with the concept. Thus, even though Regent Aleksandar consented to the demand of the National Council that the existing regional authorities would continue performing their administrative tasks until the impending constitutional assembly made the final decision on the nature of state organization, in reality only the Serbian government remained sovereign in the interregnum between December 1 and the naming of Yugoslavia's first cabinet on December 20. This situation continued all but in name until the proclamation of the 1921 Constitution, while the exercise of governmental authority on the part of the National Council and its nominally legally subject equivalents in Ljubljana, Split, Sarajevo, and Novi Sad, was becoming increasingly dependent on the Serbian military authorities, and after December 20, on the joint cabinet in Belgrade. In this way, also, universal expectations of national equality were seriously compromised.

On December 10, shortly after the demonstration of the Croat troops, the National Council announced the reorganization of the military hitherto under its command. Former Croat units of the Austro-Hungarian army were disbanded, while the Serbian military mission, headed by Milan Pribičević, proceeded to fashion new regiments in agreement with the military section of the National Council.³ This was but a prelude to more systematic centralizing measures in which Regent Aleksandar and Svetozar Pribičević played particularly prominent roles. On December 15 an agreed list of members of Yugoslavia's first cabinet was submitted to Aleksandar for approval. This was the result of a negotiated compromise between the representatives of the National Council and the various Serbian parties. Of the twenty allotted portfolios, nine were assigned to ministers from Serbia, six to those from Croatia, two each to the representatives of Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and one to a minister from Montenegro. In national terms, thirteen ministers were Serbs, four were Croats, two were Slovenes, and one was a

Bosnian Muslim.⁴ This unequal distribution of cabinet responsibilities established a precedent that held throughout the interwar period.⁵ Presented with such a list, which predictably did not include representatives of the HPSS, Regent Aleksandar brought on the new state's first government crisis by refusing to sanction the appointment of Pašić as prime minister. The premier-ship was then offered to Stojan Protić, who Aleksandar considered less apt to counter his political designs. Significantly, Aleksandar's confirmation of the Protić cabinet on December 20 was made part of the same official act that accepted the resignation of the previous Serbian cabinet.⁶ Trumbić, however, became minister of foreign affairs, while Pribičević acquired the weighty ministry of the interior, with the proviso that Marko Trifković (1864-1930), an NRS dissident and minister of justice, would de facto be responsible for internal affairs on the territory of the preunification Serbia.

The first steps of the new government confirmed the forebodings of the anticentralist forces. Pribičević's cabinet position enabled him to become an unlimited arbiter in administrative and political matters, and he energetically made the most of it to carry out strict centralizing measures. One of his first actions was to demand the resignations of regional governments. This act was motivated by customary principles of parliamentary responsibility, although the interim legislature was not yet summoned. On January 7, 1919, after the resignations had been submitted, Aleksandar, on Pribičević's advice and without consulting the regional legislative bodies, confirmed some of the

4. *Službene novine*, Jan. 12, 1919, p. 1.

5. Rudolf Bičanić, a noted Croat economist and an aide to Vlado Maček, Radić's successor at the head of the Croat Peasant Party, arrived at the following table showing the national composition of Yugoslavia's cabinets between 1918 and 1938. Bičanić defined Croats of national parties as members of anticentralist, strictly Croat political groups; Croats by descent were unitarist Croats. Big ministries were premiership, foreign affairs, interior, army, finances, justice, and education; economic ministries were trade, transportation, forests and minerals, agriculture, construction, social policy, national health, posts and telegraph; small ministries were without portfolio, religion, agrarian reform, standardization of laws, nutrition, physical education. See Bičanić, *Ekonomika podloga hrvatskog pitanja*, 2d ed. (Zagreb, 1938), pp. 63-67.

Ministers	Ministries		
	Total	Big	Economic Small
Serbsians	399	208	133 58
Serbs from outside Serbia	53	23	19 11
Croats of national parties	26	2	19 5
Croats by descent	111	14	56 41
Slovenes	49	5	58 6
Bosnian Muslims	18	0	14 4
Total	656	252	299 125

6. *Službene novine*, Jan. 12, 1919, p. 1.

2. Josip Horvat, *Politička povijest Hrvatske 1918-1929* (Zagreb, 1938), pp. 165-169.

3. Ferdo Šišić, comp., *Dokumenti o postanku Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, 1914-1919* (Zagreb, 1920), p. 285.

previous heads of regional administrations and rejected others.⁷ Similarly, most of the regional administrative branches (commissions) were abolished, in some regions altogether (Vojvodina), while in Croatia-Slavonia, out of eleven previous commissions, only the *ressorts* for interior, judiciary, and worship were continued.

The new government also saw fit to compel constitutional solutions that would prevail until the decisions of the Constituent Assembly. Attempts were made to lift out certain sections of the old Serbian constitution and extend them, in part at least, to the whole territory of Yugoslavia. Although these attempts were not completely successful, many sections of the Serbian constitution dealing with, among other matters, citizens' rights, as well as numerous Serbian laws, were extended statewide, with or without reference to the source of their inspiration.⁸ In this way, too, the prerogatives of the forthcoming Constituent Assembly were prepossessed.

Serious conflict arose on the question of ratification of the unification act. On December 29, 1918, the Serbian National Assembly formally upheld the decision to ratify. The Croats were insistent that the Croatian Sabor should similarly ratify Croatia's entrance into the new state, but Protić's cabinet acting on Pribićević's advice, sought to circumvent the Sabor, fearful of the complications that might arise if the Croat deputies who opposed the unification could openly air their views, and perhaps obstruct the ratification. Although the refusal to sanction the convening of the Sabor could have provided some limited immediate advantage for the centralist forces, in the long run this tactic rebounded with a vengeance, since the Croat opposition (and particularly Radić's HPSS) could henceforth challenge the legality of the unification. But where Protić would have preferred to restore the prerogatives of the regional assemblies in the extremely attenuated way, he was confronted by Pribićević's intransigence. The minister of the interior went so far as to declare that as long as he was alive there would be no Croatian Sabor.⁹

Pribićević's determination to devalue Croat institutions was again demonstrated on the occasion of Aleksandar's appointment of Pribićević's protégé,

Ivan Paleček, as the new Croatian Ban, as if such a decision were within the regent's legal capacity.¹⁰ This nomination, inspired by Pribićević, ran counter to the wishes of the SSP, which would have preferred to see its leader Pavelić in the post. Paleček's immediate declaration to the effect that he would perform his duties in accordance with the directives from the Protić cabinet, since in his view the Zagreb authorities were no longer autonomous, merely compounded the resentment aroused by his appointment. Thus, the office of the Ban was seriously debilitated. Matters were improved slightly during Protić's second cabinet (February to May 1920) owing to the appointment of Matko Laginja (1852-1930), a Croat autonomist, as the new Ban. Laginja succeeded in righting another violation of the old Croatian constitution: during his tenure the authorities released Stjepan Radić and several other political prisoners, who, though old Sabor deputies, had languished in jail from March 1919 after being arrested and held without trial at Pribićević's express order.

The role of the military and the gendarmerie in the process of centralization has been discussed earlier. But though the policies of these agencies had a dramatic effect on popular feelings outside Serbia, ordinary citizens had relatively few contacts with military officers and gendarmes. Matters stood otherwise in regard to the civil administration. Since the activities of the state bureaucracy concerned everyone, the state's reputation was dependent on its performance. Even before 1918 the prestige of the civil servants left much to be desired in all parts of the future Yugoslav state. The peasants in particular traditionally viewed the bureaucrats as unrelenting foes, who enforced unpopular legislation to the economic detriment of the countryside and seemed to enjoy humiliating the downtrodden and the humble.¹¹ This is not the place for a detailed examination of the accuracy of such popularly held opinions; nor is it possible to evaluate the comparative standing of the various civil services before 1918, including a prevalent view that the Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy, for all its shortcomings, was composed of trained and competent administrators, who operated in an efficient and disciplined manner, within a structure of a state that upheld rigorous legality. It can be concluded, however, that whatever expectations the populace nurtured in regard to improvement in the civil service after unification did not materialize.

There were many reasons for this blighted hope. In Yugoslavia, in marked contrast to the official policy in some other successor states, notably Czechoslovakia and Poland, the old Austro-Hungarian bureaucratic apparatus was thoroughly destroyed. The reputedly harsh practices and association with an alien regime were taken as sufficient grounds for dismissal not only of

7. *Ibid.*, Feb. 3, 1919, p. 1.

8. On February 26, 1919, the cabinet signed a decision that extended statewide Serbia's 1915 Law about the Treatment of the Property of the Subjects of States in War with Serbia. *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1919, p. 1. On February 25, 1919, the cabinet decided that chapters 9 and 10 of Serbia's Criminal (Penal) Code should be extended statewide. *Ibid.*, April 10, 1919, p. 1. On August 19, 1919, at the suggestion of the minister of the army and the navy, the regent decided to extend statewide the military laws of Serbia, including the Law about the Organization of the Army; the Law about the Military Provisioning; the Military Penal Code; the Law about the Organization of Military Courts; the Law about the Procedure of Military Courts in Criminal Cases; the Law about the Military-Disciplinary Court; and the Law about the Marriages of Officers, Noncommissioned Officers, Corporals, and Privates, with all the attending additions and provisions based on the listed laws. *Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1919, p. 1.

9. Horvat, *Politička povijest*, p. 202.

10. *Službene novine*, Feb. 3, 1919, p. 1. The appointment was made on January 7, 1919.

11. For an excellent analysis of relations between peasants and bureaucrats see Jozo Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics, and Economic Change in Yugoslavia* (Stanford, 1955), p. 250.

German and Hungarian employees but also of Croats, Slovenes, and even Habsburg Serbs. In their place the centralized state apparatus appointed large numbers of Serbians, who, to make matters worse, often had few or no qualifications for the tasks they were expected to undertake.¹² In large part, the concentration of Serbians in the bureaucracy was a result of the patronage dispensed by the Serbian political parties, and as these parties became entrenched, the bureaucracy grew larger and larger and rife with corruption.¹³ By the 1930s, the state bureaucracy numbered some 350,000 individuals, or roughly every ninth citizen. Under this burden, efficiency declined, state expenditures had to be limited, and, inevitably, the taxpayers suffered.

Ideological criteria in public service appointments were most evident in public instruction. Pribičević, as minister of education from 1920 to 1922, carried out a wholesale purge of schoolteachers who were judged not sufficiently unitaristic: at the end of the 1921–1922 school year he transferred or pensioned off some 600 teachers in Croatia-Slavonia alone.¹⁴ Like Franjo Šekretar, in the short story by Jakša Kušan, many teachers were "sent down" for years of "rustication" in the provinces of Yugoslavia's southeastern rim, where they yearned for a post in the "most neglected, most distant, blackest, and smallest village in Croatia . . . moreover where there [were] no politics."¹⁵ Pribičević would have had them become heralds of unitarism, bending the historical record for the sake of "correct development of citizens' consciousness and solidarity: . . . My aim and that of the other educational factors, indeed of all conscious citizens, is to work by all powers and means to improve the unfavorable situation in our national instruction."¹⁶

The process of centralization affected other institutions as well. Serbian politicians placed great importance on the exaltation of the Orthodox church, which, though not officially the state religion, was quite established, Pašić

having insisted as early as the Corfu conference of 1917 that the monarchs of future Yugoslavia be Orthodox.¹⁷ But since the Serbs before 1918 belonged to five autocephalous Orthodox churches—the Metropolitanate of the Kingdom of Serbia, the Metropolitanate of the Kingdom of Montenegro, the Metropolitanate of Karlovci (Hungary, Croatia-Slavonia), the Metropolitanate of Bukovina-Dalmatia (in the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy), and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Bosnia-Herzegovina, San-džak, Metohia, Kosovo, Macedonia)—Serbian political leaders pressed for the speedy subordination of the churches outside Serbia to the Metropolitanate of Serbia.¹⁸ But soon they expressed the preference for the unification of Yugoslavia's Orthodox churches within the new organization, which would be superior in dignity to the hierarchical status of the prewar Orthodox church organizations—the Serbian Patriarchate of the Orthodox church of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, as the successor of the Patriarchate of Peć.

Though Yugoslavia's Orthodox churches had specific ecclesiastical traditions, the government, riding the wave of Serb nationalism, did not encounter serious obstacles in steering the local churchmen into union. And where the canonical releases were necessary, as in the cases of the metropolitan of Bukovina-Dalmatia, now in Romania, and the ecumenical patriarch in Istanbul, the government was prepared to purchase these releases. On September 19, 1919, Davidović's cabinet approved the payment of 800,000 francs, Serbia's old debt to the Ecumenical patriarchate, "in addition to 200,000 francs in expenses" in order to complete the separation of "our Church from the Patriarchate of Constantinople."¹⁹

The unification of Yugoslavia's Orthodox churches was solemnly proclaimed in September 1920, and the Holy Archihieratic Synod of the united church then elected Dimitrije Pavlović, hitherto the metropolitan of Serbia, as the first patriarch of renewed Serbian patriarchate, with its see in Belgrade. In fact, the state quickly intervened in this procedure and promulgated a special patriarchal electoral code, whereby the election was carried out by a special electoral chamber that included, ex officio, a fair number of high state officials, though it stood to reason that, even under the prevailing circumstances, these office holders would not always be Orthodox.

The new election of Patriarch Dimitrije showed the extent of state control over the Orthodox church, something that could not be accomplished to the

17. Bogumil Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu* (Ljubljana, 1928), p. 233.

18. Dr. Milan Pećanac, adviser to the commander of Serbian troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, appraised Protić on December 11, 1919, of the request by his superior for Belgrade's instructions on how the Orthodox eparchies of Bosnia-Herzegovina "should be subjoined to the autocephalous church of the Kingdom of Serbia." Dragoslav Janković and Bogdan Krizman, eds., *Gradija o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, vol. 2 (Belgrade, 1964), p. 713.

19. Bogumil Hrabak, ed., "Zapisnici sednica Davidovićeve dve vlade od avgusta 1919. do februara 1920," *Arhivski vjesnik*, vol. 13 (1970), no. 13, p. 26.

12. For a study of bureaucratic advancement in postunification Yugoslavia see Bogomir A. Raikovich, *L'avancement et le traitement des fonctionnaires publics du Royaume des Serbes, Croates et Slovènes* (Paris, 1929[?]). There are no comprehensive studies on the national makeup of Yugoslavia's civil service, diplomatic corps, and the judiciary in the 1920s. Writing on the developments of the 1930s, however, progovernment authors usually concede the minimal Croat presence in the foreign service (in 1934, of Yugoslavia's 18 envoys, 15 were Serbs, 3 Croats, and none Slovenes; of the 127 embassy counsellors and secretaries, 106 were Serbs, 18 Croats, and 3 Slovenes), central ministries (there, the Croats constituted only 16.21 percent of university-trained officials in 1935), and notarial service. On the other hand, fair Croat participation was cited in education (though this often reflected the greater number of schools in the Croat lands) and judiciary (28.48 percent of all judges in 1934). See Bogdan Prica, *Hrvatsko pitanje i brojke* (Belgrade, 1937), pp. 38–43.

13. For a highly personal and dramatic study of corruption in interwar Yugoslavia see Zvonimir Kulundžić, *Politika i korupcija u kraljevskoj Jugoslaviji* (Zagreb, 1968).

14. Stojan Protić, "Proganjanje učitelja u Hrvatskoj," *Radikal*, Sept. 28, 1922, p. 1.

15. Jakša Kušan, "Suhi Ponor," *Forum*, vol. 17 (1978), nos. 1–2, p. 111.

16. Svetozar Pribičević, "Nacionalna zadaća škole: Inicijativa ministra prosvjete: geografsko istorijska predavanja u školama o ujedinjenju," *Riječ Srba-Hrvata-Slovenaca*, May 2, 1921, p. 2.

same degree over the Catholic church or the Islamic community. Indeed, according to the Decree on the Establishment of the Ministry of Cults (June 31, 1919), the minister of cults had supreme executive power over the Orthodox church in Serbia and Montenegro, thereby maintaining the confessional policy of prewar Serbia. Moreover, despite the official separation of church and state (1929), the king and the government of Yugoslavia continued to intervene in church finances, educational institutions, appointments of bishops, and patriarchal election.²⁰ The unification of Yugoslavia's Islamic communities was carried out in similar fashion, but the powerful Bosnian Muslim community refused to transfer the seat of the *reis ul-ulema*, the highest Muslim religious official in Yugoslavia, to Belgrade. Sarajevo thereby became the center of Yugoslav Islam.

The establishment of a united economic system was no less sensitive. Portions of Yugoslavia were utterly ravaged in the war. Serbia, which had lost some 30,000 men in the Balkan wars, suffered 275,000 additional combat casualties (or 40 percent of its army) in the First World War, while Montenegro lost 25,000 men. Various epidemics and other casualties claimed the lives of an additional 800,000 civilians in Serbia. Not only did these losses amount to almost a quarter of Serbia's inhabitants, but its postwar population included some 114,000 invalids and over half a million orphans. The loss of life in the former Austro-Hungarian portions of Yugoslavia was only a trifle less dramatic. According to one approximation, these regions lost some 757,000 people, 150,000 of whom were combat casualties.²¹

Economic problems were aggravated by dislocations caused by wartime destruction and speculation in the purveyance of food and materiel. Though the Belgrade government was uncharacteristically slow in attempting to cope with the autarkic tendencies in the economies of Yugoslavia's constituent regions, the most economically pressing and politically sensitive problem of unified currency could not be postponed.²² At the point of unification, the territory of the new state was saturated with no less than four distinct currencies: Serbian dinars (circulation 340,600,000 on December 31, 1918), Montenegrin perpers, Bulgarian leva (circulation about 50 million), and, most important, the Austro-Hungarian crowns (circulation 5,323,000,000 in January 1919, of that 4,900,000,000 outside Serbia and Montenegro).²³ The overriding necessity of creating a new, autonomous state currency opened up endless possibilities for political manipulation, since it was not a matter of

indifference how the circulating currencies would be converted. Therefore, the currency question produced the first direct clash between Serbia and the former Austro-Hungarian provinces in the realm of financial policy, with the status of the Austro-Hungarian crowns as the focus of contention.

The relatively large number of crowns in circulation can be explained in terms of the substantial wartime exports of agrarian products from the Monarchy's South Slav territories. But since crowns were also circulating in the other successor states, it was necessary to distinguish the "Yugoslav" crowns from all the rest and so put an end to the surreptitious "import" of crowns from the neighboring countries, particularly from Austria, which was still issuing them. This was effected on January 31, 1919, by a primitive method of stamping the circulating crowns. In fact, since the imprints could easily be forged, the import of the contraband currency did not cease. It was then decided to further distinguish the circulating crowns by fastening them with special stamps. All told, by November 5, 1919, over five and a half million crowns were thus "retreaded" but this time with a difference, since the government unilaterally decided to withdraw 20 percent of all crowns brought in for validation. This decision was defended as a deflationary measure, but since the government did not withdraw the seized crowns and instead used them to cover its debts, the inflationary currents were in fact increased.²⁴ The government's action can be evaluated only as an aspect of a calculated political strategy, whose aim was to stabilize the dinar at the expense of the crown. In the first phase of this process, the immediate result was the expropriation of 20 percent of private savings from former Austro-Hungarian territories, which—contrary to the government's hue and cry—did not affect the speculators but did affect the relatively unsophisticated savers, most notably the peasants.

Even if it was necessary to take into account the special interests of devastated Serbia, the rate of exchange between the dinar and the crown was quite unjustifiable. The government was clearly intent on decreasing the value of the crown in order to prepare ground for the final conversion rate, which would be favorable to the dinar. Accordingly, the politically motivated Belgrade stock exchange registered the steady decline of the crown, while the Ministry of Finance used such estimates to sanction the crown's lower rate of exchange, in turn enhancing the value of the dinar.²⁵ In addi-

24. Bičanić, *Ekonomska podloga*, pp. 41–42. In Kočevje (Slovenia), Communist-led miners revolted against the government's seizure of a fifth of the crowns brought for special stamping. The army had to be used to suppress them.

25. For more details see Tomašević, *Novac i kredit*, pp. 156–157. The rate of exchange between dinars and crowns was:

Nov. 1918 to March 18, 1919: 100 dinars = 200 crowns

March 19, 1919 to June 4, 1919: 100 dinars = 250 crowns

June 5, 1919 to Nov. 12, 1919: 100 dinars = 300 crowns

Nov. 13, 1919 to Dec. 31, 1919: 100 dinars = 350 crowns

Jan. 1, 1920 to the exchange of crowns: 100 dinars = 400 crowns

20. Djoko Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, vol. 2, *Od početka XIX veka do kraja Drugog svetskog rata* (Munich, 1966), pp. 610–622.

21. The figures are from Tomašević, *Peasants, Politics*, pp. 225, 223. See also Délégation du Royaume des Serbes, Croates et Slovènes à la Conférence de la Paix, *Rapport sur les Dommages de Guerre causés à la Serbie et au Monténégro présenté à la Commission des Réparations des Dommages* (1919), p. 15.

22. For more details on the currency question see Iozo Tomašević, *Novac i kredit* (Zagreb, 1938), pp. 152–159.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

tion, the government's determination to prevent the parity conversion of the two currencies was implemented by initiatives that directly precipitated the crown's inflationary decline. Besides the already mentioned floating of the withdrawn crowns, the government also continued to circulate some three-hundred million "damaged" crowns, which were nominally replaced by an equivalent sum obtained from the Austrian bank of issue.

The final rate of exchange, carried out between February and June 1920, sanctioned the issuing of one dinar for four crowns. This step in effect depleted the savings of the population in the former Austro-Hungarian areas and changed the economic relations between these areas and Serbia, whose purchasing power was considerably strengthened. This, however, was only the beginning. The privileged status of Serbia and the narrow national considerations that guided its political leaders in fashioning the economic policy were reflected in practically every branch of economic life in which the state had its hand. This necessarily fanned the national conflicts.

One of the most important of the economic issues was the inequitable distribution of taxation, since the levying system directly affected Yugoslavia's entire population and had a significant impact on the attitudes of ordinary citizens, particularly the peasants. As in many other branches of public life, taxation practices that existed in Yugoslavia's component parts before the unification were markedly diverse. Not only did differences exist between the levying systems in Serbia and Austria-Hungary, but also the South Slavic areas of the latter state were subject to different taxation regulations. The practical difficulties in unifying these systems were compounded by a disorderly and, in large part, corrupt, administration. Nevertheless, administrative abuses were only one aspect of the problem, for the central government in fact encouraged the perpetuation of different standards of taxation. Income taxes, for example, were paid only in Vojvodina, Croatia, and Slovenia.²⁶ Land taxes on a hectare of land of equal quality were twice as high in Vojvodina and Croatia as in Serbia. Table 2-1, derived by the Novi Sad Chamber of Commerce in 1928, graphically illustrates the prevailing practices. These statistics were based on information obtained from the Ministry of Finances, which fact has led some observers to suspect that the real situation was in fact worse.²⁷ A conclusive statement on this subject is not yet—and may never be—possible. Nevertheless, it does not alter the fact that severe inequalities in the taxation system favored Serbia and were unfair not

26. The following, a modified version of Bičanić's table (*Ekonomska podloga*, p. 49), illustrates discrepancies in land taxation, showing taxes in dinars, by land surface:

	3 hectares	5 hectares	10 hectares
Vojvodina and Croatia	209	341	674
Serbia	103	172	344

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

Table 2-1. Yugoslavia's land taxation, 1919-1928

Province	Indirect taxes in millions of dinars	Percentage of total taxes	Dinar amount of tax per inhabitant	For every 100 dinars paid in Serbia, amounts paid in other regions
Slovenia	1,411	13.9	1,336	240
Croatia-Slavonia	2,123	20.9	915	160
Dalmatia	296	2.9	454	80
Bosnia-Herzegovina	1,312	12.9	634	110
Vojvodina	2,550	25.2	1,864	330
Serbia and Montenegro	2,420	23.9	559	100
Total or average	10,112	100.0 ^a	777	

Source: Bičanić, *Ekonomska podloga*.

a. Rounded figure.

only to the Croats and the Slovenes but also to the Serbs outside Serbia proper. The taxation systems were finally unified in 1928 as a result of a political campaign initiated by Radić's party in alliance with the Serb minority of Croatia-Slavonia.

The policy of centralization was the logical consequence of the political advantage taken in the new state by the Serbian national and unitary Yugoslavist ideologies, which, though not complementary, promoted similar policies. Whereas the men of the Radical party wished to turn Yugoslavia into an extension of the old Serbian state, abolishing all non-Serb national identities, their Democratic opponents sought to impose an integral Yugoslav identity under essentially Serbian symbols. In both cases these were the programs of the educated classes, representing most of what was good and everything that was bad about South Slavic intelligentsia, whose members were impatient to change Yugoslav reality and were not too particular about the means.

Yugoslavia's intellectuals were not distinguished by a high level of democratic spirit. They were intolerant, often irascible, largely ignorant of history, narrowly rationalistic, and unduly impressed with the superiority of Western Europe. They looked upon themselves as engineers who would pull a passive backward country into modernity, if need be by force. Instead of recognizing that the separate South Slavic peoples were long formed and could not now be integrated, they tried to bring about a Great Serbia or a Great Yugoslavia, some out of sheer idealism, some for more pragmatic reasons. Their attempts to accomplish the impossible were doomed to failure and only succeeded in provoking resistance of such intensity, notably among the Croats, that it could be stemmed only at the expense of parliamentary democracy. Instead of creating a powerful modern state, the intellectual makers of Yugoslavia paved the way for instability, dictatorship, and foreign intervention.

In June 1915, after King Nikola, contrary to the wishes of General Janković, ordered the Montenegrin army to occupy Shkodër, Pašić sought Janković's resignation. But Colonel Petar Pešić, a Serbian officer who succeeded Janković as chief of the Montenegrin supreme staff, urged postponement of a confrontation with King Nikola, arguing that, "should our [Serbian] interests demand that Montenegro be brought into a hopeless situation, it would be better to use another pretext, and not the issue of Shkodër."²⁵ Pešić was particularly worried about the patriotic reaction of the Montenegrins, who were behind Nikola on this issue. But after the combined offensive of the Central Powers in the fall of 1915 broke the resistance of the Serbian army and forced its remnants into general withdrawal, restraint was no longer necessary. Though Nikola's forces loyally defended the line of Serbian retreat, Serbia had lost the war; the remnant of its army was not appreciably larger than the embattled Montenegrin forces, and Serbia's independence could only be restored in the event of an Allied victory, which was still not certain. It was therefore essential that Montenegro should not reap any benefits of precedence from these defeats. The Montenegrin state and dynasty had to be discredited by surrender and King Nikola propelled into exile without his army.

To accomplish this, Pešić concentrated Montenegrin forces in Hercegovina and the Sandžak, leaving Austro-Hungarian access from the Bay of Kotor, via the Lovćen massif, practically undefended. On December 28, 1915, claiming that the key outpost of Lovćen had already fallen to the enemy, Pešić succeeded in pressuring the reluctant King Nikola to sue for a brief ceasefire. The Austro-Hungarian side agreed, provided the Montenegrins laid down their arms and surrendered the Serbian forces in their country to the invaders. King Nikola demurred, claiming that the conditions were unacceptable. Three days later, again at the urging of Pešić and Pašić's cabinet, King Nikola finally sued for a separate peace. The Montenegrin soldiers, convinced that the king had betrayed them, started leaving their positions, and military chaos follows.²⁶ A decade later, General Pešić, who by that time had served as Yugoslavia's defense minister and chief-of-staff, defended himself against charges that he counseled Nikola to conclude peace with Vienna: "Did [my critics] stop to think of the situation that our whole people would have had to face had not King Nikola sent that *dépêche* to Franz Joseph, and that in addition to the Serbian supreme command we also had the Montenegrin supreme staff at the Salonika front, and that upon the breach of that front and entrance to the Fatherland—besides King Petar there was also King Nikola?"²⁷

In fact, King Nikola had expected nothing from Vienna. He left Cetinje in the middle of night on December 29. He rode with a small company, stop-

ping every few minutes to look back over the moonlit monuments of Montenegro's sacred history. In early January he left Montenegro for good and reached France via Shëngjin and Italy, establishing his government-in-exile first in Bordeaux and then Neuilly. In the meanwhile, Austro-Hungarian troops pushed toward Cetinje and Podgorica, entrapping the bulk of the Montenegrin army that was still in the Sandžak. All negotiations with Nikola's remaining ministers ceased, as Vienna imposed a special occupation regime on the defeated country. The rest of the war held only more reversals for Nikola's exiled government, which, thanks to the work of Serbian diplomats, was not favored by the Entente. Montenegro's peace initiatives, which Nikola no longer recognized, received the most negative interpretations.

In April 1916, Nikola engaged none other than Andrija Radović, his former prisoner, as his new prime minister. Radović proceeded to draw up a plan for the unification of Serbia and Montenegro, whereby Nikola would abdicate in favor of Regent Aleksandar, who would in turn be succeeded by Nikola's heir, Prince Danilo, and so on in alternate transmission of royal dignity. Nikola at first hesitated and then, with Italy's encouragement, put aside Radović's proposal. Radović, who in fact, coordinated his moves with Pašić, reiterated his plan and, upon Nikola's outright refusal, resigned. At this point Pašić started applying direct Serbian pressure on King Nikola. The Serbian leader influenced many notable Montenegrins against participation in Nikola's future cabinets and engaged Radović as head of the pro-Serbian Montenegrin Committee for National Unification, which was founded in Geneva in February 1917. Thereafter Pašić boycotted the exiled government of Montenegro, extending to Radović's committee the courtesy due Montenegro's legitimate representative. Nikola's position was further weakened by the overthrow of the Russian imperial government in February 1917. Though no Montenegrins were invited to participate in the conference that produced the Corfu Declaration, which in an offhand reference to Montenegro assumed its unification with Serbia, Radović's committee expressed its full agreement with the declaration, affirming the committee's conviction that "with this war Montenegro is ending its role as a separate Serb state."²⁸

King Nikola was outmaneuvered. True, his ministers still in Montenegro tried, on their own authority, to obtain Austro-Hungarian support for a united Montenegro-Serbia, ruled by Nikola's son Mirko under Vienna's protection.²⁹ But try as Nikola did, he had little hope of countering Serbia. Pašić frustrated Nikola's attempts to mobilize the armed forces, made up of the few loyal Montenegrin units in exile as well as Montenegrin immigrants from

28. Šišić, *Dokumenti*, p. 100.

29. Novica Rakočević, "Politička aktivnost knjaz Mirka Petrovića u toku austrougarske okupacije Crne Gore," *Istorijski zapisi*, vol. 23 (1970), nos. 3-4, pp. 265-266.

25. Cited in Terzić et al., *Operacije*, p. 23.

26. Plamenac, "Uzroci," pp. 360-366.

27. Petar Pešić, "Komandovanje u ratu," *Pravda: Dnevnik*, May 9, 1925, p. 2.

North America. And Radović's committee, with Serbian aid, successfully recruited Montenegrin volunteers for the Serbian army, sometimes under provocative auspices. One unit, recruited in Canada, bore the name of Miloš Šaulić, an opposition leader who had allegedly been poisoned on Nikola's orders in 1904.³⁰ In October 1918, King Nikola came out for a "Yugoslav confederation, in which each [unit] will preserve its rights, religion, laws, and customs, and in which nobody will dare impose primacy."³¹ This further stirred up the Serbian leaders. As one of them put it at the Geneva conference with the JO, "I would not hold [King Nikola's] past against him were he to hold by what is good today. But I have seen his last declaration, which is not ours, because he wants a confederation."³² Nor did the JO avail the fading monarch. The exiled Croats and Slovenes feared upsetting Pašić on this issue and accepted his view that the question of Montenegro was an internal Serb matter.

For a time, Pašić's campaign against Montenegro caused no alarm among pro-Serbian Montenegrins, but the entrance of the Serbian army, made up in part of Montenegrin volunteers, into Montenegro in November 1918 brought a reaction. Before leaving for Montenegro, the commander of the Serbian troops was received by Regent Aleksandar who told him, "In your work in Montenegro do not be tenderhearted. King Nikola must be prevented from returning to Montenegro at all costs, even if we have to use extreme measures."³³ In fact, the Montenegrin irregulars and remnants of Nikola's army expressed friendship for the Serbians and fought alongside them against the retreating Austro-Hungarians. But though the Serbians showed great haste in demobilizing the Montenegrin troops, it was not immediately evident that they meant to do away with the Montenegrin state nor that King Nikola, who was denied access to his country by the French, would not be returning.

Nikola, meanwhile, was placing all his hope in his royal son-in-law in Rome, hoping to profit from Italy's occupation of Kotor and Bar and from Italian demands for a power condominium in Montenegro, from which Serbian troops would be excluded. Italian pressure and the possibility that the Allies might yet accept the exiled Nikola forced Pašić's hand. Serbian occupation officials and local partisans of Montenegro's unilateral unification with Serbia moved quickly to legalize Serbian rule over Montenegro and in the process displayed their intentions to the public gaze. Early in November 1918, men of Radović's committee carried out a campaign of sorts for the

election of deputies to the special Great National Assembly that was to decide on the future status of Montenegro. The election was public, indirect, proportioned to favor the partisans of unilateral unification with Serbia, and conducted under Serbian military scrutiny.³⁴ In Nikšić, for example, the votes were bought with the army's flour, and notices of the election were posted only after the voting was over.³⁵ And in Cetinje, the hotbed of opposition, the opponents of unilateral unification were jeered and withdrew from the polling place.³⁶ Their list of candidates was printed on green paper and the proponents of unilateral unification on white paper, leading to the later names of two Montenegrin camps, the *zelenasi* (Greens) and the *bjelasi* (Whites), which in a sense perpetuated the old divisions between the *pravasi* and the *klubasi*. For the moment, the Greens were overcome. The election of November 19 brought about a White majority for the Great National Assembly, which, on November 26, deposed King Nikola by a vote of 163 to 0, with three absent electors, and proclaimed the immediate unification of Montenegro and Serbia under the Karadjordjevićs.³⁷ The assembly set up a five-man executive national committee (three of whose members, Marko Daković among them, were sentenced in the Bombing Trial).

The Great National Assembly was held at Podgorica, away from Cetinje and the areas of greatest pro-Petrović sentiment in Old Montenegro. But in the *nahije* of Katuni (especially in the tribes of Cetinje, Čevo, Bjelice, and Cuce), elsewhere in Old Montenegro, and even in the Brda (Moračani, Rovci, Piperi) and Montenegrin Hercegovina (Nikšići, Rudinjani), the decision of the assembly was understood as Serbia's annexation of Montenegro. But where the Green half of Montenegro nursed revenge against a burning shame, the Whites in the Brda (notably Bjelopavlići) and beyond (Vasojevići), and in Hercegovina (Drobnjaci, a part of Nikšići, and Grahovljani) celebrated effective Pan-Serbianism. Bipolar reactions represented historic divisions of Montenegro, though both orientations had adherents in every tribe. But whereas the Greens were mainly villagers, the Whites had practically all the townspeople, merchants, and craftsmen, most of the educated youth, and indeed, most of Montenegro's old administrative and military elite. Even the queen's brother, one of the five members of the executive national committee, belonged to their ranks, though not King Nikola's closest diehard supporters, such as Jovan Plamenac (1873-1944), a former minister of the interior, who personally supervised the prosecution in the Kolašin

30. Vujović, *Ujedinjenje*, p. 265.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

32. Vojislav Marinković, in discussion at Geneva Nov. 6, 1918, according to Trumbić's notes. Dragoslav Janković and Bogdan Krizman, eds., *Gradija o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, vol. 2 (Belgrade, 1964), p. 501.

33. Cited in Vujović, *Ujedinjenje* p. 307.

34. For details on the electoral procedures see *ibid.*, pp. 317-318.

35. Hoover Institution Archives, Charles W. Furlong Collection, Box 3: Outcard no. 283. Interview with Revolutionists in the Afternoon of Feb. 21st [1919] in the Mountains South of Nikšić [sic].

36. Vujović, *Ujedinjenje* pp. 321-322.

37. Janković and Krizman, *Gradija*, vol. 2, 655-658.

Affair. In part by accident, in part by mnemonic power of Njegoš's "Mountain Wreath," the two halves of Montenegro clashed on Christmas Eve, just as in the days of Metropolitan Danilo.

At the very beginning of January 1919, Plamenac and other Green leaders stirred up the tribes to rebellion. By January 3 the Greens had besieged Cetinje and several other towns. Except at Cetinje, they were soon routed by the White militias and the Serbian army. At the capital, however, the numerically superior rebels held on against 887 defenders. The bloody battle began on January 6, Christmas Eve by the Julian calendar. Despite attempts at negotiations, fighting continued until Christmas morning. The rebels could not withstand the firepower of better-armed defenders, who also used artillery. With the lifting of the siege and the withdrawal of the Greens, who either surrendered or absconded to their tribal lands (or, like Plamenac, to the Italian zone of occupation), the rebellion collapsed. At Cetinje, sixteen Whites and Serbians fell in battle and sixty-three others were wounded.³⁸ Though the Greens had the support of the larger part of the people, they were not as organized and politically united as their opponents and apparently discounted the possibility of protracted insurgency, hoping instead to provoke Allied intervention by their armed demonstration. Moreover, they were irresolute, avoiding bloodshed wherever possible.³⁹ But instead of pressing their adversaries into a more reasonable stance, they merely provoked retribution, which grew into wholesale political terror.

Famine and turmoil followed in the wake of the Christmas rebellion. The Serbian authorities armed White youth detachments and set them upon Green villages, even when no collusion with the Green outlaws, or *komitas*, was apparent. The Whites, often aided by the gendarmes, did more looting and burning than pursuing. They stole livestock, destroyed beehives, burned houses, took hostages (often women and children), and sometimes executed prisoners without trial. They also committed many rapes and horrible atrocities, for example the flaying alive of two members of the Bulatović sept in the Rovci.⁴⁰ The Green *komitas* responded in kind. They burned and rustled, killed leading Whites, including members of the Great National Assembly, and attacked public buildings. Indeed, the situation in Montenegro from 1919 to the mid-1920s amounted to a state of war, as the insurgents commandeered trains, robbed banks, and fought pitched battles with the army and the Whites.⁴¹ And though the Montenegrin Communists, themselves a detachment of Serbian-educated "youth," generally supported the Whites, there was even a Red form of Green insurgency, led by Dr. Vukašin Marković, an

38. Vujović, *Ujedinjenje*, pp. 362-364.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 367-369.

40. "Horrible Serbian Atrocities in Montenegro," *Montenegrin Press Bureau* (Rome), Sept. 19, 1920, pp. 2-3.

41. These actions are covered in some detail in Vujović, *Ujedinjenje*, pp. 469-520.

eccentric physician who joined the Bolsheviks in prerevolutionary Russia and returned to his native Piperi in 1921 to fight for a "free self-administration of Montenegro in a federation with Yugoslavia."⁴²

In July 1919, the insurgents held a sort of congress in a mountain hideaway, the Čeranića Gora, close to Nikšić. At this conclave, those who argued for a militant course prevailed, and, though there were probably never more than several thousand active outlaws at any one time, the authorities were aware that the new order was not popular. In January 1920, the army commander in Cetinje reported to Belgrade: "Today, in this district, the overwhelming majority of people, from children to old men, except for a third of the townspeople, are opposed to the [established] order."⁴³ In the absence of any national parties, electoral absenteeism in Montenegro was exceptionally high during the 1920 parliamentary elections. In two out of three electoral districts of Old Montenegro more than half of the eligible voters did not participate in the balloting. Of the tribes in the *nahiye* of Katuni, absenteeism was highest among the Cetinje tribe (50.38 percent), Čeklići and Bjelice (48.18), and Cuce (45.64), which together were the most active base of Green insurgency. But though the police authorities were well aware that Montenegrin opposition stemmed from the initial "tampering with the sensitive cords of popular self-esteem, pride, and ambition," they only pointed to the mistakes that were made "in accepting the worst riffraff into the ranks of youth," called for weapons control and the resettlement of local officials, and urged "awakening the people's national consciousness."⁴⁴

When informed about the Christmas rebellion at his headquarters in Neuilly, King Nikola expressed his confidence that Montenegro would "not be taken like a maiden without a dowry."⁴⁵ But despite the sharpness of popular opposition to the regime in Montenegro, the exiled monarch was hardly in a position to influence developments in his occupied kingdom. He had no international standing, the powers having decided that Montenegro's representation at the Paris Peace Conference would be settled once the situation in Montenegro had cleared up, nor did he have funds (he had even had to sell his diamond-encrusted baton of a Russian field marshal). True, Italy helped in transporting Montenegrin refugees, including the group Plamenac led out of the Christmas rebellion, who were shipped from Shëngjin in northern Albania to Gaeta and later moved to several other camps in Latium, Abruzzi, and Campania, where the Italians allowed and endowed the formation of

42. Dimitrije-Dimo Vujović, "Učesće dr Vukašina Markovića u oktobarskoj revoluciji i njeni objekti u Crnoj Gori," *Prilozi za istoriju socijalizma*, vol. 5 (1968), pp. 490-514.

43. Cited in Vujović, *Ujedinjenje*, p. 504.

44. Gojko M. Žugčić, "Javna bezbednost u Crnoj Gori," *Policija*, vol. 8 (1921), nos. 5-8, pp. 300-311.

45. Cited in Vujović, *Ujedinjenje*, p. 406.

Nikola's Montenegrin army.⁴⁶ The price of this assistance, however, was the almost total dependence upon Italy, a country that was not popular among the king's former subjects. The army in exile, which at its high point in August 1920 numbered 1,532 officers and men, was the chief resource of Italian intrigue that included the men of the Croat Comité, Albanians, and other enemies of Belgrade. Though some of these soldiers were sent on covert missions to Montenegro, the army in exile floundered after Italy settled its frontier disputes with Yugoslavia in the Treaty of Rapallo (November 1920) and agreed to liquidate the Montenegrin question, which meant the end of political and military support to the exiles.

Though Belgrade blamed King Nikola for most of its problems in Montenegro, the allegiance to the ex-king was not the principal source of the Green movement. Most Greens respected the king, but their first loyalty was to Montenegro's dignity. Most of them, in fact, were not opposed to a unification with Serbia, "but only befittingly," that is, on conditions of equality and the preservation of Montenegrin identity. Above all, the *zelenasi* were motivated by wounded patriotism. In a letter to the Serbian commander in Rijeka Crnojevića, the local head of the Green insurgents noted that "Montenegro, our Fatherland, had defended and safeguarded the torch of Serb freedom for six hundred years." Only the "Austro-Magyars" had succeeded in extinguishing that torch, and the Montenegrins awaited the day of liberation: "We greeted your [Serbian] arrival with great enthusiasm, thinking that you were coming as brothers to brothers, so that we should grasp each other's hand, kiss each other, and march embraced into our great Yugoslavia. . . . But you were insincere. You brought us Judas's silver pieces, to buy with them our dear Montenegro and turn her over as a dowry to the Karadjordjević king." As a result, the "whole Montenegrin people [*Crnogorski narod*], the people who honor their holy things, their traditions, their banner, and their sovereign rights," rose up in revolt.⁴⁷ The rights of the dynasty were not cited.

In their hierarchy of preferences, most of the insurgents probably preferred independent Montenegro, though not necessarily under Nikola's scepter. Failing this, like Nikola, they preferred a confederated South Slavic state, but not one ruled by the Serbian dynasty. A group of rebels who conferred with Major Charles W. Furlong, an American intelligence officer, explained it in the following way: "[The insurgents] said that if there is going to be a Jugo-Slavia they want a Republic, but if there must be a King, they want King Nicholas and not King Peter. They want a big Jugo-Slavia but no big Serbia. They would rather have a big Montenegro than a big Serbia. If they join Jugo-Slavia they want King Nicholas to be King of Montenegro and not

46. On the ups and downs of the Montenegrin army in exile see *ibid.*, pp. 416-438.

47. Cited in *ibid.*, pp. 354-355.

to have King Peter king of Serbia and Montenegro. They want to join independently and not lose their rights."⁴⁸ But even the very existence of Montenegro could be sacrificed, should the course of settlement avoid impairing the dignity of Montenegrins. The demands of the insurgent committee to the Serbian troops and Whites at Cetinje included the following point: "We concur with the idea that Montenegro enter into a great Yugoslav state with the same rights as all the other provinces, without any internal political frontiers. The form of governance we leave to the legal decision of a *regularly elected assembly* of all Yugoslavs . . . to which we shall *heartily* submit."⁴⁹

King Nikola died on March 1, 1921, far away from Montenegro, in lush Antibes on the Côte d'Azur, thus depriving his phantom state of its sole dower—his presence and reputation. The last Petrović ruler realized one final wish. He did not die a street mendicant, as he feared, but "as befits men who had a history."⁵⁰ Jovan Plamenac held on to an increasingly fragmented retinue, periodically stirring up tempests in the émigré teacup. Back home, the Green insurgency subsided, as the gendarmes smoked the outlaws, like badgers, out of their holes.⁵¹ The land was worn out after more than a decade of almost incessant warfare. But if the outlawry stopped, the Montenegrin divisions were not filled. They were simply recognized as permanent fixtures of the Montenegrin landscape.

The Whites, though internally divided among various centralist parties, nevertheless retained their basic characteristic—Serbocentric opposition to any manifestation of Montenegrin separatism. In extreme cases, this led some of them to advocate the wholesale resettlement of Montenegrins in the interest of state unity.⁵² Most often, however, the Whites were satisfied to note that their horizons transcended those of Montenegro, whose history they elevated inasmuch as it was complementary to the growth of Great Serbia. Accordingly, they pointedly contrasted Montenegro to "Šumadija," that is, to the central area of Serbia proper, in an attempt to extend the appellation of Serbia to Montenegro as well.⁵³

The Greens, especially after those among them who were not compromised by insurgency entered electoral politics on a federalist (autonomist) platform (1923) and then established the Montenegrin Party (1925), in-

48. Hoover Institution Archives, Charles W. Furlong Collection, Box 3: Outcard no. 283. Inter-view with Revolutionists.

49. Cited in Vujović, *Ujedinjenje*, p. 360.

50. Nikola I Petrović-Njegoš, *Pisma* (Cetinje, 1969), p. 406.

51. The atmosphere of these pursuits is vividly reconstructed in a short story by Radovan Zogović, in which a group of insurgents is literally smoked out of a mountain cave. See his "Nerazdvojni," in *Radovan Zogović, Noć i polu vijeka* (Novi Sad, 1978), pp. 284-313.

52. This was advocated in Novica Sautić, *Crna Gora* (Belgrade, 1924), pp. 35-36.

53. Nikola Škerović, "Crna Gora u Svetom Ratu," *Nova Evropa*, vol. 13 (1926), nos. 10-11, p. 308.

creasingly shunned armed struggle and stressed that, though they were for a federal Yugoslavia, they remained true Serbs. Sekula Drljević (1884–1945), the party's leading theoretician, often stressed Montenegrin's adherence to Serb nationhood and to the unity of Yugoslav state.⁵⁴ At the same time, however, he argued that a single nation need not necessarily have a single state, leaving a back door open for the legitimization of Montenegrin statehood. In short, Green demands for a federal Yugoslavia did not imply that the country should be divided into three federal units, one each for the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, the only three South Slavic nationalities within Yugoslavia that the Montenegrin federalists recognized. Instead, they believed that the federalization of Yugoslavia could be accomplished within the framework of pre-1918 frontiers, which were historically determined, much like the nationalities themselves, but in a different pattern.⁵⁴ As a result, the legal form of Green struggle became no more than an annoyance to the centralist and Great Serbian forces. It was less than that after the amnesty of pro-Petrović émigrés in 1925 and the return of Jovan Plamenac, who, not all that incongruously, became an exponent of Pašić's NRS. Montenegrin attitude and Serbdom settled on mutual permeation.

The path of the Green movement from armed resistance toward a form of regional autonomism was inevitable as long as the Montenegrins considered themselves Serbs. To be sure, some Montenegrin federalists tended toward a concept of separate Montenegrin nationhood. As early as 1921, Drljević stated that the mentalities of Serbians and Montenegrins were irreconcilable: "The visage of the former was speckled with [Ottoman] slavery; liberty gave the latter a new visage."⁵⁵ But it was not until the Axis occupation, which restored the frontier between Serbia and Montenegro, that he advanced the notion that the Montenegrins were not Serbs, indeed that they were not even Slavs: "Races are communities of blood, whereas peoples are creatures of history. With its language, the Montenegrin people belong to the Slavic linguistic community. By their blood, however, they belong [to the Dinaric peoples]. According to the contemporary science of European races, [Dinaric] peoples are the descendants of the Illyrians. . . . Hence not just the kinship, but the identity of certain cultural forms among the Dinaric peoples, all the way from Albanians to South Tyroleans, who are Germanized Illyrians."⁵⁶

Drljević's racial theories belonged to the era of Hitler, but Green sprouts had burst into a theory of Montenegrin nationhood somewhat earlier under quite different auspices—within the Communist movement, which was exceptionally strong in Montenegro in part because of the tradition of Green insurgency. By the end of the interwar period the Communists concluded that

54. Dimitrije-Dimo Vujović, *Crnogorski federalisti, 1919–1929* (Titograd, 1981), pp. 203–210.
55. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 78.
56. Sekula Drljević, *Balkanski sukobi 1905.–1941.* (Zagreb, 1944), p. 163.

the Montenegrins were indeed a separate nationality: "The old [Petrović] regime, owing to its expansionist pretensions, supported the legend that Montenegrins were Serbs, so that the forming of Montenegrins into a [separate] nation, in fact, started taking shape only when the Montenegrins experienced Serb violence and exploitation."⁵⁷ Commenting on this "legend," Milovan Djilas added the following note to the same text: "This was out of date way back, though not entirely out of date in the [popular] psyche, which is not essential."⁵⁸ But the bialate Psyche of the Montenegrins did not have butterfly wings.

The Kaçaks

Albanians are the most chivalrous people in Europe.

Antun Gustav Matoš, 1907

And it is difficult, truly difficult, for a peaceful people like ours to have orderly relations with [the Albanians], a people who satisfied their needs in a way that was not known to any other European people. (Shouts: By pillage and theft!)

Ljuba Davidović at the congress
of the Democratic party, 1921

Shtatë kraliat kanë thënë,
se shqiptaret gjakun s'lanë.

Seven kingdoms have said,
that the Albanians do not forgive blood.

From an Albanian folk song (Macedonia)

To the Serbs, Kosovo, Metohia, the environs of Shkodër, and the stretch of western Macedonia from the Šar Range to Lake Ohrid were sacred lands. Holy King Stefan Uroš III radiated tongues of flame against the would-be Turkish desecrators from his marble sarcophagus in the monastery of High Dečani. Holy Jelena, the widow of Stefan Uroš I, took the veil in the church of Saint Nicholas in Shkodër (Skadar on the Bojana), the capital of old Zeta. According to folk epic, Prince Marko awarded the empire to "young tsar" Uroš at the "white church" of Samodreža and slew brigand Musa Kesedžija

57. Moša Pijade, "Teze o nacionalnom pitanju," in Pero Damjanović et al., eds., *Peta zemaljska konferencija KPJ (19–23. oktobar 1940)* (Belgrade, 1980), p. 386.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 386, n. ***.