

Central Intelligence Agency

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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

Feb 3

THE SARAJEVO WINTER OLYMPICS:  
PROSPECTS FOR A TERRORIST INCIDENT

Summary

[Redacted]

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The Yugoslav leadership has much at stake in hosting a successful Olympics, free of violence, and security officials have spent the past two and a half years working to ensure the safety of those who will attend the 8-19 February games. The unprecedented number of foreign visitors may strain Yugoslav security resources, however, and a terrorist operation by one of a number of groups that might be interested in exploiting the games cannot be ruled out. Further, the fact that Yugoslavia will be the object of world attention might well spur groups to conduct operations against Yugoslav installations elsewhere in Yugoslavia or abroad. [Redacted]

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Should violence occur, we believe that it would probably be at the hands of one of the various Yugoslav emigre groups--most likely the Croats--who have successfully attacked Yugoslav targets in the past. The Yugoslav security services have for years [Redacted] neutralized much of the terrorist activity planned both within Yugoslavia and against its foreign missions. [Redacted]

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Iranian-sponsored terrorism--probably against US or French participants at the games--cannot be ruled out. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] Yugoslavia is concerned that the sentencing of 12 Muslim activists in Sarajevo last summer may have piqued Iranian interest in causing an incident. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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We judge radical Palestinian terrorism to be unlikely because Israel--otherwise a prime target--will not field a team at the Winter Games. [redacted]

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This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] [redacted] the Instability and Insurgency Center, Office of Global Issues. Comments may be directed to the Deputy Chief, Instability and Insurgency Center [redacted]

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THE SARAJEVO WINTER OLYMPICS:  
PROSPECTS FOR A TERRORIST INCIDENT

Yugoslavia's decision to have Sarajevo host the XIV Olympic Winter Games followed several years of squabbling over the wisdom of hosting the Olympics. Some Yugoslavs argued that the project is a waste of badly needed hard currency, talent, and effort, at a time when the economically depressed nation might better use its resources elsewhere. Others, such as the Slovenes, campaigned to host the games in their republics. The Bosnians, however, carried the day and have a great deal at stake in making the games a success. [REDACTED]

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The whole Yugoslav leadership wants the Winter Olympics to go well as a sign of national pride and vitality. A successful Olympics free from a terrorist incident could be the tonic needed to restore confidence at home and abroad in the regime, confidence that has been severely undermined by the leadership's lackluster performance in tackling the nation's economic and political shortcomings. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

The Terrorist Threat

The Emigres

Terrorism is not new to the Balkans. Since its inception, Yugoslavia has had to cope with numerous terrorist threats, particularly from emigre groups. In combatting the threat posed by the emigres, the Yugoslav Government has benefited from the bitter ethnic hatreds and political differences that divide these groups and prevent them from mounting a united opposition. Even within groups of the same nationality there are sharp divisions on goals and tactics. Nevertheless, the strong dedication to "a cause" has produced a number of successes. Emigres have murdered Yugoslav diplomats, bombed theaters, bus stations, and trains, and blown up a Yugoslav airliner. The Yugoslav Minister of Interior has stated that a number of emigre organizations have made threats against the Winter Olympics. There are three main groups of emigres whom Yugoslav officials are monitoring closely--the Croats, the Albanians, and the Serbs. [REDACTED]

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The Croats. The group most likely to attempt to disrupt the Olympics would be one of the Croatian extremist organizations: the Croation National Committee, the Croatian National Resistance, the Croatian Liberation Movement or the Croatian Revolutionary Brotherhood. Croatian emigres have demonstrated a capability to carry out terrorist attacks both inside and outside Yugoslavia. The Croatian extremists are dedicated to the destruction of the Yugoslav state and the creation of an independent Croatia. There are between 3,000 and 5,000 Croatian emigres worldwide--mainly in West Germany--who belong to groups

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[REDACTED]

advocating violence. These groups are well aware of the historical significance of Sarajevo, and would like nothing better than to embarrass the post-Tito regime. In their eyes a successful terrorist incident would:

- o Gain publicity for the Croatian cause.
- o Avenge the murders of Croatian emigre activists [REDACTED]
- o Jeopardize tourism and thereby deal an economic blow to Yugoslavia's already troubled economy.
- o Reinforce their conviction that the future of the Yugoslav state without Tito is tenuous.

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The fact that Bosnia-Hercegovina, the site of the Olympics, is a region claimed for Croatia by the emigres makes an incident all the more appealing. [REDACTED]

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Belgrade has warned of escalating hostile activities by anti-Yugoslav emigres--apparently concerned that the emigres will disrupt the games, thereby jeopardizing the upcoming tourist season in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs have met with officials in Vienna and no doubt expressed concern that well-known extremists from Western Europe and elsewhere may use Austria as a staging area for operations against Yugoslavia. In addition, Yugoslav officials apparently believe that anti-Yugoslav Croatian emigres have at their disposal weapons, explosives, and other equipment that could be used to conduct terrorist operations. [REDACTED]

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Other indications point to a Yugoslav fear of violence at the hands of Croatian emigres:

- o According to a report we received from the FBI in late January, a Yugoslav intelligence service member based in

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[REDACTED]

San Francisco stated three Croats in Canada may be involved in planning terrorist acts against the Winter Olympics and/or the Los Angeles games.

- o In early December the Yugoslav Embassy in Washington provided the State Department with information on several individuals resident in the US, which alleges their involvement in preparation of terrorist acts during the games.

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The Albanians. A second, highly volatile group of emigres are the ethnic Albanians from the autonomous province of Kosovo in Serbia. Although they are less numerous and not as well organized as the Croats, they have both the motive and some capability to attempt to foment terrorism. They also funnel aid to Albanians still in Kosovo and could utilize them to carry out

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a terrorist strike. [redacted]

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In post-war Yugoslavia, the Kosovo Albanians were subjected to harsh discrimination by the Serbs and their national expression and aspirations were brutally suppressed. Pent-up frustrations following years of abuse burst into riots in late 1968, and sporadic disturbances have continued since that time. Officials in Belgrade have pointed an accusing finger at Tirana and emigre circles in the West. Meddling from Tirana appears to have been more of propaganda activity, rather than supplying money and/or arms. [redacted]

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The Serbs. We also believe the Serbs are capable of planning and carrying out a terrorist attack. The majority of Serb emigres oppose the communists and want to reestablish Serb dominance in Yugoslavia. However, [redacted] the Serbs are not well organized and not as prone to violence as either the Croats or Albanians, even though there are individual Serbs willing to use violence against Yugoslavia. If the Serbs were to be responsible for a terrorist attack it most likely would be perpetrated by the Serbian Youth Movement for Freedom or the Serbian Western Guard. [redacted]

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[REDACTED]

The Non-Emigre Threat

Other terrorists such as the Armenians or radical pro-Iranians might seize the opportunity of the Olympics to strike. Because these groups have no apparent axe to grind with Belgrade, their targets probably would be foreign nationals at the Olympics, or possibly diplomatic missions in Belgrade. [REDACTED]

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The Iranians. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Iranian-sponsored terrorism cannot be ruled out.

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Possible targets could include US and French participants. Iraq--a leading adversary--will not be represented at the games. [REDACTED]

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High-level Bosnian officials have told Western diplomats privately that they are worried Tehran might send a "hit team" to Sarajevo in reaction to the trial and sentencing of 12 local Muslim activists in Sarajevo last summer whose arrests reportedly have touched only the surface of the Muslim movement in Bosnia.

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[REDACTED]

It is possible that the Iranians already have assets inside Yugoslavia who could assist, or even carry out, a terrorist attack. Some Yugoslav Muslims have made trips to Iran where, according to US Embassy reporting, they appear to have been indoctrinated with Khomeini-style Muslim fundamentalism. Muslim



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[redacted]

agitation has also prompted Belgrade to deport several Iranian student troublemakers. [redacted]

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The Armenians. One Armenian terrorist group--the right-wing Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (JCAG)--murdered the Turkish Ambassador to Yugoslavia in March 1983. The JCAG and the Marxist Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) are seeking revenge for the genocide of Armenians at the hands of the Turks during World War I and the union of all Armenians into an independent state. Both groups have systematically carried out a series of bombings and murders against Turkish targets since 1975. [redacted]

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We suspect JCAG--based on its earlier successful attack in Yugoslavia--is capable of conducting attacks against Turks during the Olympic games. Armenian nationalist organizations and individuals are conducting a campaign of increased pressure on Yugoslavia as the Belgrade trial of two JCAG members accused in the March assassination continues. We believe, however, it is unlikely that JCAG will conduct any operations that might jeopardize the outcome of the trial, due to end shortly. [redacted]

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ASALA, in our view, lacks a support apparatus in Yugoslavia and its operations have been disrupted by a bitter internal dispute over the organization's use of indiscriminate violence. [redacted]

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Palestinians. We believe that Palestinian terrorism, although possible, is unlikely to occur in conjunction with the Winter Olympics. Belgrade recognizes the PLO and is a strong supporter of the Palestinian cause. Non-PLO radical Palestinians such as Abu Nidal's Black June Organization (BJO) or Abu Ibrahim, leader of the

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Iraq-based 15 May Organization, might be willing to attempt a terrorist attack. The absence of an Israeli team at the Winter Games, however, removes what would otherwise be a prime target.

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Libyans. Libyan-sponsored terrorism also appears unlikely. Relations between Belgrade and Tripoli are good, and Libya would want to avoid embarrassing Yugoslavs or damaging their bilateral relations. Yugoslavia is engaged in a number of major construction projects in Libya, and the Yugoslavs train Libyan technicians and pilots.

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Yugoslav Preparations

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Yugoslav security has worked diligently for two and a half years to prevent a terrorist incident at the Olympics. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Nevertheless, the task of guaranteeing the security of the Olympic spectators and participants is a large and difficult one and the possibility exists that a terrorist could penetrate the country's security, or conduct an operation against Yugoslav facilities elsewhere in Yugoslavia or abroad. [REDACTED]

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Security plans and preparations for the games have been centralized under the Sarajevo Organizing Committee for Olympic Security, headed by Tomislav Juric. The committee has full responsibility for Olympic accreditation, VIP security and overall physical security. [REDACTED]

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Most recently with an eye toward the Olympics, the Yugoslavs have engaged in a series of high-level consultations with a variety of Western countries to monitor and neutralize the emigre threat, as well as to improve security. The West German Government has agreed to cooperate with Yugoslav security personnel in screening airport arrivals in Sarajevo and other Yugoslav cities. Earlier, Dolanc told US officials he was fed up with the lack of cooperation by the West Germans in countering anti-Yugoslav efforts--originating from West German territory--to threaten the security of the games. [REDACTED]

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Recently a team of US security specialists met with Yugoslav officials to exchange information and to review security plans, no doubt spurred on by the following considerations:

- o Detection of surveillance by Arab individuals--one of whom possessed as many as five or six passports--of the US Embassy during late October/early November.
- o State reporting that, at least as of early December, no additional security was planned for the American Center Library and the Embassy temporary branch office, since the Yugoslavs had assured that "all sites" would be adequately covered by the Olympic security net.
- o Embassy comment that Juric appears unfamiliar with the US concept of protective detail coverage, citing similar problems encountered by the British in discussing a projected visit by a member of the Royal Family. [REDACTED]

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The following excerpt from an article in the major Sarajevo daily press in October provides interesting insight into the question of Olympic security:

"We are making use of the experience of others, but the security of the 14th Olympic Winter Games will have its unique aspects. We will have well-protected games, but at the same time these will be the games that, in comparison to previous ones, will be guarded by the smallest number of professional and armed personnel, because we are placing maximum reliance on a broad system of social self-protection." [REDACTED]

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Should a terrorist incident mar the games, particularly at the hands of Muslim nationalists, the careers of a number of leading politicians will be undermined. The most prominent is Bosnian strongman and Olympic Organizing Committee chairman Branko Mikulic,

[REDACTED]

who hopes to become the next representative on the federal presidency from Bosnia-Hercegovina this spring. Despite repeated warning signals that Khomeini-style Muslim political stirrings were taking place in Bosnia-Hercegovina, local leaders denied such activity. The arrest in April 1983 and later sentencing of 12 Bosnian Muslims for antiregime activity severely embarrassed Mikulic and local leaders. If Muslim activists disrupt the Games, the political future of these leaders will be in doubt. [REDACTED]

XIV Olympic Winter Games At Sarajevo  
8-19 February 1984

Attending

Andorra  
Argentina  
Australia  
Austria  
Belgium  
Bolivia  
Canada  
Chile  
Costa Rica  
Cyprus  
Czechoslovakia  
Denmark  
East Germany  
Egypt  
Finland  
France  
Great Britain  
Greece  
Hungary  
Netherlands  
Iceland  
Italy  
Japan  
Liechtenstein  
Mongolia  
Monaco  
New Zealand  
North Korea  
Norway  
Peoples Republic of China  
Poland  
Puerto Rico  
Romania  
San Marino  
South Korea  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Turkey  
U.S.  
U.S.S.R.  
West Germany  
Yugoslavia

In Doubt

Iran  
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