

Top Secret

Special Analysis

YUGOSLAVIA:

Growing Military Concern Over Unrest

*Recent strikes in Yugoslavia have deepened military concern that ethnic and worker unrest is threatening not only national stability but also military cohesiveness. The military will probably urge the government to order a crackdown on the freewheeling Slovene press and a more forceful repression of ethnic and labor protests. A unilateral military intervention at the national or regional level, however, is not likely any time soon.*

The military wants political leaders to deal more decisively with antimilitary sentiments in Slovenia, ethnic tensions in the south, and the economy. Military leaders reportedly believe these problems threaten both public order and military interests. The Slovene youth press, for example, attacked defense spending and the foreign arms sales that support the military budget. Ethnic tensions erupted last year over a sensational barracks slaying, and labor unrest may disrupt defense industries.

The military, however, lacks clear remedies and may be divided as to the most effective tactics. In the near term, it almost certainly will not intervene against civilian authorities.

Despite the arrests of several Slovene journalists last month on charges of compromising military secrets, the military will probably take little further action if Slovene leaders can end the attacks by the youth press. Military leaders will also insist the government and party strengthen control over ethnic groups in Kosovo Province bordering Albania to avoid being called in to restore order.

Chances for military intervention at the national or regional level would increase if the violence becomes more widespread and coordinated or if fundamental military interests are threatened.

Aside from the greater risk of overreaction in a crisis, the military almost certainly would first try to move politicians into action by issuing a clear warning of unilateral intervention.

Political leaders also are concerned about the disorders but are trying to deal with them without repressive measures. If local authorities lose control, the national government will probably turn to special police units before calling in the military as a last resort.

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