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### Special Analysis

#### YUGOSLAVIA: No Way Out

*Yugoslavia still appears on the way to dissolution, either in a bloodbath or, much less likely, through mutual agreements among the republics. Although the federal military's close brush with Croatian forces last month sobered some leaders on both sides, tension remains high and tempers hot, and none of the parties has shown any willingness to compromise. The Army apparently has been waiting only for orders from civilian authorities to put down the northern secessionist movements; although it probably cannot save the federation, it now faces humiliation, dismemberment, and absorption by Serbia's forces if it does not try.*

A last-minute compromise between federal and Croatian authorities narrowly averted armed conflict late last month. Each side has since accused the other of failing to live up to the agreement, and the Army has threatened to arrest Croatian Defense Minister Spigelj. Talks between federal officials and leaders of the republics to salvage some semblance of national unity are going nowhere; Slovenia announced last Friday that it wanted to initiate negotiations on secession.

#### Military Poised

The Army still appears intent on taking action in Croatia.

The major constraint on the Army appears to have been that it wants the blessing of civilian leaders. Senior officers, faced with an ethnically fragmented and potentially unreliable force, may believe their chances of maintaining cohesion in any combat will improve if the military is not viewed as its instigator. If Croatian and Slovenian leaders refuse to participate in future presidency sessions—Yugoslav President Jovic, a hardline Serb, chairs them—that could give the military enough political cover to intervene.

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### Compromise or Conflict

The near conflict last month appears to have sobered some federal and republic civilian leaders. Representatives of the middle-ground Republics of Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina have insisted publicly that only peaceful means be used to resolve the crisis. Federal Prime Minister Markovic, a Croat, has aggressively pursued the role of mediator in the past few weeks despite earlier remarks indicating he would support use of force by the Army under certain circumstances.

But the key players are as intransigent as ever. Public support is growing in Croatia for outright secession, as opposed to greater autonomy. Serbian President Milosevic recently accused Croatia's government of fascism and of planning genocide against Serbs. He probably believes Slovenia's secession and military intervention against Croatia would strengthen Serbia's ability to pursue territorial claims against other republics.

The contenders probably can pull Yugoslavia back from the brink only a limited number of times. All major parties are heavily armed, and tempers are hot. Armed conflict could occur with little warning if the Army carries through with arrests of senior Croatian officials or if there is serious ethnic violence, perhaps intentionally staged by procrackdown Serb radicals. A crunch point will also come if the Army and Milosevic conclude that Croatia is taking specific steps to follow Slovenia in seceding from the federation.