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YUGOSLAVIA: Serbs Gird for Confrontation

Serbian President Milosevic's withdrawal from the federal Presidency and mobilization of Serbian security forces set the stage for confrontation with his opponents this week.

Under the Yugoslav Constitution, Milosevic would have replaced President Jovic, who resigned Friday, as Serbia's representative on the Presidency. The Montenegrin and Vojvodinan representatives, both Serb puppets, also resigned from the Presidency. Krajina—a Serb-populated region in Croatia—announced once again that it was separating from Croatia

[REDACTED] a Yugoslav Army armored battalion—31 tanks—has moved by rail to Belgrade and that tank crews at a Belgrade facility yesterday were preparing for deployment, but there is no other indication the Army plans to move immediately.

A Communist-organized demonstration in Belgrade to show support for Jovic, Milosevic, and the military drew only 12,000 on Saturday; the Communists had hoped for 100,000. A similar rally in Zagreb drew about 2,000. Serbian opposition leaders have condemned Milosevic's action and plan to hold a rally in Belgrade on Wednesday, when the Serbian Assembly is to convene

[REDACTED] Milosevic's refusal to recognize federal authority and the resignations of the Montenegrin and Vojvodinan Presidency representatives further deepen Yugoslavia's constitutional crisis and will cripple the federal government. Milosevic's purposes are unclear; he may aim to consolidate a Serb "bloc" and secure his own position,

[REDACTED] But he may provoke a violent confrontation, possibly involving the Serbian minority in Croatia, in the hope of forcing the largely Serbian leadership of the Army to intervene in his behalf

Senior military officers now can produce either a violent or negotiated resolution. They are divided among themselves and probably are reluctant to act for fear that military discipline would degenerate and precipitate civil war. Violence between Serbs and Croats or serious disturbances in Belgrade, however, could play into the hands of leaders pushing for action

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