

# Catholicism and Politics in Socialist Yugoslavia

PEDRO RAMET

Relations between the Catholic Church and the Communist State in Yugoslavia present the observer with a fascinating, if paradoxical, situation. On the one hand, the régime, even while imposing sundry constraints on the Church, poses as the guarantor of freedom of religion, according religion status as the "private affair" of the individual, but denying the Church any right to engage in social issues — which impels the Church to resist what ecclesiastical spokesmen call the "privatization of religion", or its divorce from society.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the Church, partly through its traditional identification with national aspirations, partly on account of a more recently developed role as advocate of human rights, and partly because of its unremitting interest in the affairs of society, has persisted in efforts to expand its legitimate sphere of activity, even seeking, during the constitutional revisions, to gain entry into the organs of policy-making.

Long a force for Croatian integration, the Catholic Church today constitutes a powerful bulwark for Croatian exclusivists and confronts the régime as the principal disintegrative institutional force in the developed northern republics of Yugoslavia. At the same time, Belgrade's seemingly innocuous slogan of "privatization" conceals an insidious endeavour to erode the institutional and social resources of the Church and to edge it into oblivion.

The Church has repeatedly declared that it is being unjustly constrained by the authorities. Belgrade, however, has attempted to pose as the guarantor of freedom of conscience, and the constitutional codes since 1953 have all guaranteed freedom of belief and of worship. A book published in 1962 laid down what is still the official line on the subject: "The principle of freedom of conscience and of the separation of Church and State means that religion is the private concern of Yugoslav citizens. It is no concern of the State whether a citizen belongs to one faith or another or belongs to none at all."<sup>2</sup>

## *The Evolution of Church-State Relations in Yugoslavia*

The record of the evolution of church-state relations in Yugoslavia shows increasingly outspoken participation by the Church in the discussion of social

problems and human rights and steadily expanding legitimacy for its role as spiritual guardian of its congregation. Relations between the Catholic Church and the Yugoslav socialist State can be broken down into five phases:

- (1) 1943-1945: struggle between the Catholic Church and the Partisans;
- (2) 1945-1953: unrelenting communist hostility toward the Church;
- (3) 1953-1964: mutual search for a *modus vivendi*;
- (4) 1964-1970: mutual tolerance and recognition;
- (5) 1970-(today): renewed confrontation over human and national rights.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, the Catholic Church's opposition to communism began much earlier than 1943 and the Church newspaper, *Katolički list* (Catholic Newspaper), was stridently anti-communist as early as the early 1930s; the papal encyclical of 1939, *Divini redemptoris*, grounded the Church's stance in doctrine. During the second world war the Vatican consistently opposed Tito's Partisans, and when the second session of the Partisan front organization, the Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), declared itself the Provisional Government at Jajce on 29 November 1943, the Vatican continued to hope that the communist government would prove unable to stabilize its rule. Indeed, the Vatican refused to believe that the Allies would allow the communists to take over in Yugoslavia. Thus, while the Catholic Church continued to condemn the racist excesses of the fascist state of Croatia, it also strongly anathematized the communists.

Among the Dalmatian Slavs, some clergymen, such as Miho Pusić, Bishop of Hvar, and Jerolim Mileta, Bishop of Šibenik, who participated in an AVNOJ session, tried in vain to make peace with the Partisans. But the Yugoslav communists, then flushed with Stalinist idealism, were in no mood to be generous where the Catholic Church, viewed as one of the most reactionary pillars of the *ancien régime*, was concerned. They nurtured hopes of destroying the Church altogether, and soon undertook a policy of systematic harassment and persecution.

Communist repression in the succeeding phase (1945-53) took five principal forms: (1) the jailing of some leading clergymen on fabricated or exaggerated charges; (2) the expropriation of church property; (3) the attempt to gain a measure of control over the lower clergy through the institution of government-controlled priests' associations; (4) the curtailment of ecclesiastical prerogatives (including a ban on religious instruction beyond primary school, which was subsequently expanded by removing religion from the curricula of all schools); and (5) the harassment of the clergy, even to the point of provoking physical assaults on the Church's ministers. In one such incident, which took place in 1947, Mgr Ukmar was beaten up by a group of communist agitators, and his companion, Fr M. Buletić, was killed: the two men had been on their way to Lanišće to administer confirmation. In the en-

suing trial, Ukmar received six years in prison for provocation, while the two men convicted of the death of Buletić received three and five months respectively.<sup>4</sup> Typically, such incidents were favourably reported in the government-controlled press.

At a Franciscan monastery at Široki Brijeg, 29 priests died in what the communists called a heroic siege against resisting fascists, and what the Franciscans later described (in a pamphlet published in summer 1971) as a massacre of unarmed civilians.<sup>5</sup> Mgr Josip Carević, Bishop of Dubrovnik, disappeared. Mgr Janko Šimrak, Eastern-Rite Catholic Bishop of Križevci, died in August 1946 as a result of beatings during months in prison. Mgr Josip Stjepan Garić (Bishop of Banja Luka), Mgr Ivan Šarić (Archbishop of Sarajevo), and Mgr Gregori Rožman (Bishop of Ljubljana), who had taken refuge abroad, were denied permission to return. Their colleague, Mgr Peter Čule, Bishop of Mostar, was sentenced (in July 1948) to 11½ years in prison. The Catholic press, which had consisted of some one hundred periodical publications before the war, almost totally disappeared now: *Blagovest* (Annunciation, Skopje and Belgrade) continued to be published, while *Oznanilo* (Sign) of the Catholic Church in Slovenia, appeared as a two-page (front and back) bulletin from 1945 to 1946, and as a four-page bulletin from 1946 to 1952. Seminaries were closed and confiscated in Zagreb, Split, Travnik, Sent Vid, Ljubljana, Maribor, Sinj and elsewhere. Catholic hospitals, orphanages and homes for the aged were likewise closed down or confiscated, while a large number of Catholic secondary schools were unilaterally taken over by the State.<sup>6</sup> Some six hundred Slovenian priests went to jail.

The Church, however, stood its ground, and in a pastoral letter of 21 September 1945 protested against the continuing persecution of priests and believers and reminded the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) of its wartime pledge to respect freedom of worship and conscience. "We Catholic bishops of Yugoslavia," the letter went on, "condemn . . . all ideologies and social systems which are erected not on the eternal foundation of revelation and Christian principle, but rather on the basis of materialistic, godless, philosophical science."<sup>7</sup>

In their determination to break the power of the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia, the communists were convinced of the necessity of dealing with Archbishop Stepinac of Zagreb who, on account of his efforts to protect Serbs, Jews and gypsies from *Ustaša*\* policies, had emerged from the war as one of the most respected leaders in Croatia, and was now widely viewed as the symbol of Croatian national aspirations. Failing to obtain his recall by the Vatican, the communists arrested Stepinac and put him on trial on 30 September 1946 on charges of collaboration with the Croatian *Ustaše*. The trial was a complete farce. Stepinac was allowed to consult with his defence

\*The *Ustaša* (pl. *Ustaše*) were the fascist nationalist group of Croatian exiles put into power in 1941 by the invading Germans and Italians as the Independent State of Croatia — Ed.

counsel only once, and then only for an hour, although his trial lasted almost two weeks (ending 11 October). Stepinac's answers to questions put by the president of the court or by the prosecution were regularly cut off in mid-sentence by further questions, suggesting that the questions were not questions at all, but accusations and insinuations to which no objection would be brooked. Admission to the courtroom was strictly controlled by OZNA (the secret police), so that those present were almost without exception hostile to Stepinac, whom they hissed and booed. Much of the actual testimony was simply suppressed or drastically rephrased before being published in the official press. Moreover, the court denied the defence the right to cross-examine prosecution witnesses and in fact disqualified some fourteen proposed defence witnesses on the grounds that "... the proposed defence witnesses are notorious Fascists and Fascists cannot testify on behalf of Fascists in our country". As a result, only a small proportion of the two weeks' proceedings was devoted to the defence. Stepinac was finally convicted, on the basis of spurious, fabricated and distorted evidence, of having endorsed fascism and genocide in Croatia and of having collaborated with the *Ustaše*, and sentenced to sixteen years' hard labour.<sup>8</sup> The communists knew quite well that the Archbishop had repeatedly denounced the racist theories and genocidal policies of the *Ustaše*. Stepinac's real "crime" was to have opposed the Partisans. Stepinac in fact spent five years in the infamous Lepoglava prison, albeit under "privileged" conditions, before being finally transferred to house arrest in his native village in December 1951 in what was apparently a conciliatory gesture by Belgrade. The Vatican responded by elevating Stepinac to the rank of cardinal — a move which Belgrade interpreted as an insult and which prompted the régime to break off diplomatic relations with the Holy See.<sup>9</sup> Stepinac represented much more than simply Croatian Catholicism. He was in fact widely viewed as a Croatian patriot, and, upon his death in 1960, intense public pressure forced the régime to permit the interment of his remains in the Cathedral in Zagreb.

Arrests of priests — often on fabricated or trumped-up charges — continued after the Stepinac trial. The government expropriated a large number of convents throughout the country, and in Slovenia and Bosnia nuns were forbidden to appear in public in their habits. Yugoslavia's bishops, acting on the advice of the Vatican, subsequently forbade their clergy to join the priests' associations, which the Church suspected of being infiltrated and controlled by the secret police.

There were two factors militating for a change of policy around 1953: the fact that the persecution of priests, and especially the illegal arrests and baseless prosecutions, were harming Yugoslavia's reputation in the West, with which the country was expanding economic links; and secondly, the fact of the incipient processes of liberalization and decentralization. In January 1953, the government amnestied 43 priests — a symbolic gesture even though another 161 priests remained behind bars.<sup>10</sup> This was followed by a

speech by Tito at Ruma, in which he called for an end to the campaign of physical harassment of the clergy. Finally, on 27 April 1953, Yugoslavia enacted a new Law on the Legal Status of Religious Communities, which offered some hope insofar as it guaranteed freedom of conscience and religious belief.

During the period 1953-64, the Church was at last able to come into the open and operate more or less without fear. It accordingly indicated its willingness to co-operate with the régime on a legalistic basis and sought to expand its activities within the legal framework of the Constitution. The number of contacts between church leaders and state representatives increased. However, the authorities were unable to manipulate the Catholic Church as they had the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Islamic community, and church policy remained beyond party influence. In frustration, *Vjesnik* (Herald) accused the Catholic Church in 1959 of being the only recalcitrant and unco-operative religious body in Yugoslavia.<sup>11</sup> Church-state relations were not helped by the arrest of a Franciscan priest, Friar Rudi Jerek, the same year, on charges of espionage and organization of terrorist groups. Yet the régime made a conscientious effort to avoid implicating the Vatican and sporadic blandishments betrayed Belgrade's continued interest in effecting a *rapprochement* with the Church. A memorandum signed by Yugoslavia's bishops in September 1960 and submitted to the government recounted a long list of complaints (especially emphasizing the breach of law by the government) and made a number of demands, including the right to build and repair churches and the return of sequestered church property. On the other hand, the bishops also noted that

the Constitution guarantees freedom of faith and conscience to all citizens, while the Law on the Legal Status of Religious Communities concretizes and defines this constitutional provision more closely. These legal provisions contain the nucleus of all that is necessary for relations between the Church and the State to develop in line with the principle of a free Church in a free State.<sup>12</sup>

This calculated compliment left the door open to negotiations between the two parties, and indeed the memorandum added explicitly that

the Catholic episcopate is prepared to give its full support to all efforts to find a really healthy and durable *modus vivendi* between Church and State in our country.<sup>13</sup>

A fourth phase in church-state relations began some time in the mid-sixties. There were signs as early as 1964 of a new mood, signs that the intensified courting on the part of church officials was beginning to bear fruit. Then again, the passage of Yugoslavia's third post-war constitution in 1963 signalled a greater willingness on the part of the régime to respect legality. Contacts between Church and State gradually became routinized and sys-

tematized, leading, on 25 June 1966, to the signing of a Protocol by Belgrade and the Vatican and the exchange of governmental representatives (*vladine predstavnike*). Under the terms of the Protocol, Belgrade gave the Catholic Church a specific guarantee of freedom to practise religious rites and rituals. This trend culminated, four years later, in the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two (Yugoslavia becoming thereby the first socialist country to recognize the Vatican), and this was followed by a visit by Tito to the Vatican in March 1971.

This diplomatic watershed coincided with a transformation of church-state relations in Yugoslavia and can serve as a rough signpost to the beginning of a fifth phase. Until the extension of diplomatic recognition, the official position that "there is not and cannot be Marxism without atheism"<sup>14</sup> appeared to condemn the Church; it appeared to be at most a tolerated species, not a protected species, and was clearly viewed as an impediment to the development of a mature socialist consciousness. With the extension of official recognition signified by the exchange of ambassadors, the Church could find reason to hope it would no longer have to concern itself with mere survival, but might hope to elicit certain concessions from the régime on the basis of dialogue rather than pressure. At the same time, the rising tide of Croatian nationalism, with which at least a segment of the Croatian Catholic Church associated itself, obliged the Church to take up a position, and the quashing of the Croatian Spring\* in late 1971 left the Church as the only surviving champion of Croatian national rights.

Simultaneously, the gradual liberalization of Yugoslav politics, especially during 1966-71, allowed the Church to start new periodicals, such as the family weekly *Kana* (Cana — in Galilee) and *Ognjišće* (Hearth), a youth magazine, and to make the rounds among "lapsed Catholics", endeavouring to bring them back to church.<sup>15</sup> The Church opened numerous youth centres, guitar schools and recreation clubs, especially in smaller towns and rural communities, and began sponsoring sporting and other events, enabling the Church to retain a hold on Catholic youth. This emboldened activity was characteristic not only in Croatia and Slovenia but also in Bosnia, where the Church dramatically expanded its publishing activity.<sup>16</sup> The régime was evidently nettled by this side-effect of liberalization and accused the Church of singling out intellectuals for proselytization. As early as January 1972, *Oslobodjenje* (Liberation), the organ of the Bosnian party, fretted that the Catholic Church ". . . is taking over the youth most of all".<sup>17</sup> Subsequently, in December 1976, Šito Ćorić, a priest in Konjic, revived the Church's old Bosnian cultural organ, *Znaci i koraci* (Signs and Footprints).<sup>18</sup>

The Croatian Church's confidence was redoubled with the accession of Pope John Paul II, the former Cardinal Wojtyła of Kraków — the first Pope

\*The upsurge of nationalist fervour, culminating in 1970-71, which united all Croats, including intellectuals, the Catholic hierarchy, clergy and laity — Ed.

from Eastern Europe. John Paul II is determined to expand the prerogatives of the Church in Eastern Europe and has exploited his Polish nationality to the full. In April 1980, the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, began publishing a Polish edition, the first issue of which appeared on newsstands in Poland on 5 April. That this represented only a first step in a wider "Slavic strategy" seemed clear from the comments of Archbishop Andrzej Maria Deskur, chief of the Vatican's Commission on Social Communications, who indicated that the Church was now taking a greater interest in all Slavic nations.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Vatican Radio has recently been making regular Serbo-Croat broadcasts which, among other things, include information on the ecclesiastical situation in Yugoslavia. Somewhat unnerved by the Church's new self-confidence, the head of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia (SAWPY) accused the Church of self-serving hypocrisy: "Ecumenism," he declared, "is not internationalism — however much certain people may claim it is — but a particular form of expansionism."<sup>20</sup>

Though the Catholic Church's independence can only be a source of uncertainty for Belgrade's builders of socialism, it is the Church's re-emergence as the self-appointed champion of the exclusivist interests of the Croats and Slovenes *qua* Croats and Slovenes which is the more disquieting to Belgrade. "A depoliticized church does not bother the state," Todo Kurtović wrote —

what is more, it can even be useful if, for its own part, it creates conditions for a free religious life . . . but the identification of religion and nationality in our conditions is sheer politicization — it is an undiluted clerical act . . . It cannot be viewed as anything but a political act when someone claims . . . that no one can be a good Croat unless he is a good Catholic.<sup>21</sup>

But the Church was convinced that by identifying itself with the new nationalism, drawing upon the centuries-old identification of religion and nationality in the Balkans, it could refresh religious devotion at the well-springs of nationalist euphoria. Hence, some priests actively stimulated the Croatian national revival in the early 1970s.<sup>22</sup> Croatian nationalism, which had been specifically condemned at the 10th Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists (LC) of Croatia (in January 1970) as uniformly "anti-socialist" and "anti-self-management",<sup>23</sup> was now openly praised by the Church. Certain clergy associated themselves with the nationalist *Matica hrvatska*\* and the Croatian "mass movement" and there were allegations that some Catholic priests in Bosnia had bribed young children in order to persuade them to draw their families into *Matica hrvatska* and to subscribe to various religious publications.<sup>24</sup> The Third Order of St Francis in Split was specifically said to be involved in nationalist

\*"Croatian Homeland", a Croatian Literary Society with strong nationalist leanings — Ed.

activities, while Synaxis (the Society of Young Christians, founded by the Dominican Tihomir Zovko) was said — in a charge never denied by the Church — to have had a “strong nationalist base” in Rijeka.<sup>25</sup> And despite the suppression of the so-called “Croatian Spring”, some elements in the Catholic Church still dream of riding the crest of a nationalist wave in Croatia and continue to stimulate expressions of Croatian nationalism.<sup>26</sup> As recently as May 1977, Bonifacij Barbarić, a Catholic priest from Konjic (in Bosnia-Herzegovina), allegedly organized an outdoor party at which Croatian nationalist songs were sung and displayed insignia and flags of the defunct Croatian *Ustaša* state.<sup>27</sup>

This national tendency has been, in part, responsible for the Catholic Church's notable success among Croatian youth. In fact, the early 1970s were not only a period of nationalist fervour but also a period of religious revival, in which the Catholic Church played a major role. In late 1971, for example, a religious celebration in Veprić, near Makarska, had an openly nationalist tone. More significant, however, was the massive festival organized by the Catholic Church in early August 1971 at Marija Bistrica, near Zagreb, in order to foster devotion to Mary. Church sources claimed that some 200,000 people attended — making it easily the largest church gathering of the year.<sup>28</sup> As agnostics and incompletely socialized would-be atheists were steadily wooed “back” into the Church, *Borba* (Struggle) lamented that the strength of the Church was pitifully underestimated by the rank and file of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) and criticized the “erroneous” notion that believers constituted a small minority in socialist Yugoslavia.<sup>29</sup>

The LCY had no intention of allowing the Church to participate in the framing of social policy, federal policy or anything else, and early in 1975 it resumed pressure. *Glas koncila* (Voice of the Council), organ of the Croatian Catholics and *Družina* (Family), that of Slovenia's Catholics, charged the authorities with having resumed the policy of official pressure against religious education, and cited examples of harassment and intimidation of Catholics in recent months — incidents which were concentrated in the rural areas, the traditional stronghold of the Church. In Ljubljana, a communist organization met to discuss ways of “preventing practising believers from being elected to responsible positions” in public and economic life.<sup>30</sup> In certain districts, students were interrogated about their religious inclinations, and those admitting to having attended religious instruction were discriminated against.

Later that year, Yugoslavia's republics issued a series of draft laws on religion (which were later passed), “curb(ing) or entirely prohibit(ing) any public activity by church functionaries off church premises”. The Slovene law additionally banned child-care centres, as well as cultural, charitable and business activities.<sup>31</sup> In Serbia, the new law also prohibits the distribution of religious literature outside church grounds, except in special church shops or

on a subscription basis. Croatia's law (to be discussed below) was passed belatedly in 1978, after prolonged debate.

Yugoslavia's authorities began making more vigorous efforts in 1975 to suppress any public sign of the observance of Christmas, and Belgrade's *Politika* sharply denounced a record shop in Subotica which displayed an album of Christmas carols. This policy of suppression has been to an extent successful insofar as religion has become, in some ways, a "private affair", as provided by the Yugoslav Constitution (proof that constitutional guarantees can be read two ways). Christmas in Belgrade in 1979, for example, came and went with no outward evidence. Only the "New Year's" cards, bearing the image, in some cases, of Santa Claus, suggested a legacy from the religious observance.

For all the legal niceties and for all the real improvement in the climate of church-state relations, the communist authorities have maintained constant pressure on the Church. Religious organizations are regularly hampered in their work by bureaucratic obstacles. Parents are pressured to keep their children out of religious classes. The Church is barred from broadcasting its own radio and television programmes, hindered in its access to believers in hospitals, and denied access to believers in prisons and the armed forces. Legal obstacles to the construction or renovation of church edifices have been created and building permits have been held up, sometimes for years.<sup>32</sup> When building permits are granted, the Party often insists that the resulting edifice be huge, in order to serve as a monument to freedom of religion in Yugoslavia — a practice which has led to some grumbling among higher clergy.<sup>33</sup> Priests are intermittently arrested and jailed. In March 1977, for instance, 16 Franciscans from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were reportedly "subjected to prolonged interrogations and harassment by the UDBa (the Yugoslav secret police) after having signed a letter to President Husák of Czechoslovakia protesting about the reprisals against Charter 77 signatories".<sup>34</sup> A priest in Slavonia\* was sentenced to five years in prison in summer 1980 for having written to *Glas koncila*, the Catholic newspaper, reporting break-ins to churches, physical attacks against a priest and other infringements, to which the state authorities had refused to pay the slightest attention. In May 1981, a 27-year-old Catholic priest was jailed for fifty days for having asked students in his religious classes to remove Tito emblems from their school jackets; the accused clergyman denied the charge.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Church's Threat to the State*

The Catholic Church's threat to socialist Yugoslavia is threefold. First of all, there is the Church's defence of Croatian national rights, which unnerves the

\* A district of northeast Croatia — Ed.

anti-nationalist LCY, and which has already been discussed above. The LCY has accused "certain ecclesiastical circles" of trying to obstruct the drawing together of national groups (*zblizavanje naroda*) and has countered by attempting to convince Yugoslavia's Croats and Slovenes that "... the Catholic Church is a worldwide organization and (therefore) in no instance can it pretend to represent the Croatian or the Slovenian nation."<sup>36</sup>

Secondly, as a fully autonomous institution whose head resides in a foreign country, the Catholic Church confronts the LCY as an alternative focus of loyalty. The demand made in 1971 by some Church members and clergy for admission into the League of Communists was interpreted as "an attempt to infiltrate" the Communist Party.<sup>37</sup> F. Perko's suggestion, made the following year, that the religious bodies ought to be authorized to elect delegates to represent them as confessional organizations in the republican and federal assemblies (*skupštine*) was likewise construed as an effort to dilute the ideologically progressive — if no longer monolithic — governmental apparatus with reactionary elements.<sup>38</sup> Efforts by the Catholic Church in the early 1970s to obtain class time in schools for "moral education" under the inspiration of the Church were tagged as "interference" and quashed.<sup>39</sup> Attempts during the 1971-73 constitutional debates to win equal status with atheism for Christianity in Marxist Yugoslavia and to obtain a ban on anti-religious propaganda were brushed aside as an impertinence.<sup>40</sup> And championing of human rights in the post-Helsinki era by the Catholic Church in Croatia and Slovenia has been excoriated as hypocritical manipulation designed to fan the flames of sectarianism.<sup>41</sup>

In particular, tensions flared up between the Slovenian Catholic Church and the régime in mid-1979 over the insistence of Archbishop Jože Pogačnik of Ljubljana that the régime pay greater respect to human rights and his vocal remonstrations against the atheistic education of the young.<sup>42</sup> The régime became so ruffled that it implanted listening devices in the archbishop's residence. The move backfired when the archbishop, having discovered the devices, publicly protested against the invasion of his privacy.<sup>43</sup>

Thirdly, Catholicism threatens the LCY ideologically. Behind the oft-repeated hysterical allegations that the clerical press is actively trying to restore a multi-party system in Yugoslavia — sometimes amplified by the charge that the Catholic clergy wants to restore capitalism in Yugoslavia — lies the recognition that Catholicism's claim to absolute truth is not reconcilable with Marxism's claim to scientific truth, that the belief in the rectification of injustice in a supernatural world tends to relativize the value imputed to secular tasks and to weaken the resolution to carry out governmental programmes, and that the doctrine of the Kingdom of God is singularly ill-suited to socialism's claim to have realized (or, perhaps, to be in the process of realizing) the best system (and Yugoslavia's spokesmen insist that "self-managing socialism" is the "best" political system).<sup>44</sup>

*The State's Threat to the Church*

At the same time, the Marxist State, with its programme of socialization to secular values, poses a threat to the Church. Although Frane Franić, the Archbishop of Split, told a church synod in 1977 that western secularization was a greater danger to the Church than Marxist atheism, his colleague in Zagreb, Franjo Kuharić, has not been so insouciant and warned, in *Glas koncila*, that

our people are being turned against religion, against God's commandments, the Church's laws, the sacraments . . . Systematic atheization advances by all means at its disposal . . . [and] in our country, atheization is present in the area of public education, starting from kindergarten and going all the way to the university.<sup>45</sup>

News of the formation, in 1980, of a Committee of SAWP Croatia for Social Questions of Religion (modelled on similar committees already established in other republics) spurred certain clerical elements to protest. *Glas koncila*, one of the Croatian Church's chief periodicals, warned that the establishment of the committee would automatically create a boundary between believers and non-believers. Answering these charges, *Vjesnik* reminded *Glas koncila* that the Socialist Alliance was "not an atheist organization but a front of all socialist-oriented citizens, without regard to whether they are theists, atheists, deists, pantheists or anything else", and argued that it was therefore mistaken to construe the proposed committee as an atheist tool of control.<sup>46</sup>

The nature of these co-ordination committees for relations with religious organizations is illuminated by the controversy which had surrounded the earlier establishment of such committees in Slovenia. Although they were intended to include both party members and priests in their membership, the Catholic Church in Slovenia reacted critically and certain church leaders prohibited priests under their jurisdiction from joining them.<sup>47</sup> Control is indeed the issue.

In other respects, too, the situation is much the same in Slovenia, where in January 1979, a Slovenian priest, Ivan Likar, complained that

atheist propaganda and indoctrination in schools are becoming more intensive from day to day. Schoolbooks describe religion, morality, and the Church in such a way that the believer cannot avoid the impression that he is not even a second-class citizen, but that he is beyond any social class, an untouchable pariah.<sup>48</sup>

It is not so much that there is an active programme of atheization but rather that the LC's control of education and, albeit loosely, of the media creates an environment of engulfing socialization, in which Catholic values are inevitably subordinated to those of the socialist state. A 1967 survey con-

ducted by Belgrade's Centre for Public Opinion Research provided some indication both of the penetration of Marxist values and orientations, and of the strong linkage between educational level and secularization in Yugoslavia. Respondents were asked how they felt about the growing activity of the Church among young people. Twenty-five per cent of respondents were positive, while 48% were negative and 26% "didn't know". However, this anti-clerical profile sharpens at a higher educational level. Seventy-three per cent of high school graduates disapproved of the Church's campaign, while 83% of university graduates disapproved.<sup>49</sup> Belgrade's policy combines toleration with a strategy of encouraging and actually working for a secularization which it hopes will gradually erode the Church's base of support.

Finally, the State threatens the Church institutionally through its concerted campaign to drive a wedge between two schools of thought in the Church. On the one hand are those more inclined to active co-operation with the régime and on the other is the conservative core for whom anything more than mutual toleration is inconceivable unless the Church can be recognized as a legitimate participant in political life (e.g. through representation in socio-political bodies). More particularly, the State has persisted in efforts to exploit the longstanding rivalry between Archbishop Frančić of Split, who has become known as an advocate of Christian-Marxist dialogue, and Archbishop Kuharić of Zagreb, who attributes little importance to dialogue.<sup>50</sup> The Church is, to be sure, no monolith, but the régime's efforts are geared to aggravating these potential divides. The official party line is that a by-and-large co-operative, "progressive" clergy is headed by a traditionalist archbishop (Kuharić), surrounded by a coterie of unco-operative clericalists. Accordingly, the régime has been happy to publicize the former assistant bishop of Maribor, Vekoslav Grmič, who has repeatedly affirmed his positive assessment of Yugoslav self-managing socialism and of the party's religious policy.<sup>51</sup> Church spokesmen rarely admit to division within the Church but regularly accuse the party of attempting to sow discord within it.<sup>52</sup> In fact, however, the truth here is somewhat different from what either party claims since while the Church is in fact divided, the nature of that division is not what the régime purports it to be. Rather than the "traditionalist" faction being a minority in an otherwise "progressive" church, it is the "left-wing" faction, best represented by Grmič of Slovenia, which is in a distinct minority, while the loose "traditionalist" coalition represents the mainstream of ecclesiastical thinking in Yugoslavia today. It must be remembered that the "traditionalists" are not what the régime says they are.

#### *Recent Currents in Church-State Relations*

It is thus clear that the *modus vivendi* worked out between Church and State in Yugoslavia is provisional at best — neither participant being entirely enamoured of the *status quo*. The Church, for its part, has persisted in efforts

to obtain entry into the schools, to obtain pastoral access to prisons, and to reopen the Stepinac case (with a view to his complete exoneration and posthumous rehabilitation). Jože Pogačnik, the late Archbishop of Ljubljana, was especially involved with the question of religious education in the schools and posed as the champion of parents' rights. "It is contrary to the rights of believing parents," he said,

if their children are educated in an atheist spirit. If religion is a private affair, then so too is atheism. It offends the rights of parents when schoolbooks present a false, "clerical" picture of Christianity.<sup>53</sup>

Pogačnik requested that the Church be permitted to conduct religious instruction in state schools, or, alternatively, that instruction in Marxism be dropped. However, a party spokesman, Nikola Potkonjak, reacted negatively, and said that it was unrealistic to expect the schools to stand somehow "outside society" and "outside the policy of society". He declared that, on the contrary, the schools were morally *obliged* to expose students to Marxist ideology. No teacher, said Potkonjak, was exempt from the obligation "... to develop in his students a scientific Marxist worldview (and) to arm them for the struggle against all sorts of errors and falsehoods, against all forms of the enslavement and dehumanization of man."<sup>54</sup> Pogačnik's demand for ecclesiastical entry into the school system aroused the indignation of Jure Bilić, a high-ranking Croatian party official: "Could a Marxist teach at a religious school?" he asked rhetorically.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, both in Croatia and in Slovenia, Church access to radio and television, for example, for broadcasting liturgical services, was ruled out.<sup>56</sup>

These currents coalesced in the extended debate surrounding the proposed laws on religious organizations in Slovenia and Croatia. From 1974 (when the latest Yugoslav Constitution came into effect) to 1975 there had been no such law in Slovenia, and it was not until 1977 that a draft law was published in Croatia. The Slovenian law provoked a lively debate, centring on the controversial fifth article of the draft law, which would have barred the Church from engaging in activities of "general and special social interest", thus prohibiting the Church from sponsoring just those activities which had contributed to the religious revival of the early 1970s. The Church in Slovenia would also have been barred from engaging in pre-school education and healthcare.<sup>57</sup> Firm remonstrance on the part of the Church succeeded in toning down many of the draft law's provisions, but the intentions of the régime were quite apparent.

Many of the same issues were revived in 1977, when the Croatian draft law was the subject of public debate. Few Yugoslav laws have excited as much public attention as this one. The Croatian Church challenged the need for a specific law on *religious* organizations, claiming that the necessary parameters were already established by other laws, among them the general press

law.<sup>58</sup> More specifically, the Church proposed some 25 changes to the draft law, registering three strong objections. First, while the law would assure the right of the Church to operate its own press, the bishops wanted this right more vaguely stated ("to disseminate information by using other types of mass media") in order to leave open a legal basis for continuing to seek access to radio and television. Secondly, the bishops demanded the deletion of article 9, which stated that "religious communities and their clergy are not permitted to engage in any type of socio-economic activity that does not directly serve the religious communities or the religious needs of believers". And thirdly, the bishops objected to a clause requiring the consent of a child before its parents could enrol it for religious education.<sup>59</sup> When the final text was adopted by the Croatian *Sabor* (parliament) in March 1978, only 12 of the 25 corrections sought by the Croatian bishops had been incorporated and *Glas koncila* ruefully noted that "they have told us openly that the law has always been a weapon (or instrument) in the hands of the ruling class".<sup>60</sup>

Of the three key provisions which had excited the most ecclesiastical interest, only one passed into law as originally drafted — the article guaranteeing the Church's freedom of publication. Despite persistent efforts by the church hierarchy to obtain legal sanction for church access to radio and television, the authorities stood firm and declined to introduce these items into the relevant article. On the other hand, the bishops had their way with article 9 (which would have limited the Church to the role of spiritual caretaker) and even, for the most part, with the article dealing with a child's consent for religious instruction (the draft required such consent from age seven on, the bishops wanted such instruction to be entirely up to the parents, the final law compromised by requiring the child's consent from age 14 on). Among those provisions allowed to stand was one which Archbishop Kuharić viewed with particular misgivings, the articles (10-11) guaranteeing priests and other "employees" of religious organizations the right to form their own associations. The Church understandably considered this a device to encourage factionalism within the Croatian Catholic Church, such as resulted from the reorganization of the *Kršćanska Sadašnjost* (Christianity Today) publishing house as a Theological Association in 1977.<sup>61</sup> In a striking concession to the Church, however, the authorities revised a clause requiring the activity of religious organizations to be "in harmony with the Constitution and laws of Yugoslavia" to read rather that their activity should "not contradict the Constitution and laws of Yugoslavia".<sup>62</sup>

The Catholic Church has remained the boldest of the three main religious organizations in Yugoslavia, acting often with surprising audacity. In November 1980, for instance, some 43 leading intellectuals and Catholic priests in Croatia signed a petition demanding amnesty for all Yugoslavia's political prisoners. Among the signatories were Mgr Nikola Soldo (secretary of the Bishops' Conference), Živko Kustić (chief editor of *Glas koncila*), and Dr Jure Kolariš (assistant professor of the theology faculty in Zagreb).<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, the Catholic Church has refused to write off Cardinal Stepinac, and denies that he compromised himself in any way with the fascists. However, the régime has been equally adamant on this issue and when  *Glas koncila* reprinted an article from  *L'Osservatore Romano*, in early 1970, in which Stepinac was depicted as the "protector of the Croatian people", the Catholic news organ was temporarily banned.<sup>64</sup> More recently, hardliners in the LCY have revived discussion of Stepinac in an endeavour to bridle the Church by linking it with fascism. In February 1981,  *Slobodna Dalmacija* (Free Dalmatia) condemned alleged appeals on Stepinac's behalf, remarking that Stepinac

knew hundreds of priests who were in the power of the  *Ustaše* and even some renowned cut-throats. . . . But let someone find a document in which Stepinac excommunicated any priest from the church for collaboration with the occupiers and enemies. . . . Why did Stepinac give his support to Pavelić\* after these brutalities by the  *Ustaše* and fascists?<sup>65</sup>

No matter that it is on record that Stepinac repeatedly protested against  *Ustaše* brutalities, or that the Vatican has consistently opposed Belgrade's position on this issue. The régime finds in Stepinac a ready symbol which it can manipulate in order to brand the entire Catholic Church as "fascist".

In 1979, the Catholic Church initiated processes to consider the canonization of Stepinac. While this was certainly a challenge to the régime, it did not provoke an immediate change in the political climate. Even earlier, in 1977, Milka Planinc, then President of the Croatian party, had accused Kuharić of acting in the spirit of Stepinac and of trying to exploit "the pulpit to appear as the protector of the Croatian nation".<sup>66</sup> But the abusive press campaign which began early 1981 — in which Archbishop Kuharić was accused,  *inter alia*, of having supported Hitler and Mussolini and of participation in "counter-revolutionary activities"<sup>67</sup> — seems rather to be due to the régime's apprehension that the Croatian Church might emulate the Polish Church, plus the general insecurity of the headless post-Tito régime towards the Catholic Church.

Yugoslavia continues occasionally to indulge in rather senseless bullying of the Church. In September 1981, for instance, in the midst of régime complaints about the Catholic journal,  *Naša ognjišta* (Our Hearths) published by the Franciscans in the Herzegovinan town of Duvna, police from nearby Livno ransacked the Franciscan monastery in a 14-hour search that ended at 5 a.m. with the confiscation of 153 objects. A similar search was also conducted in the house of a member of the editorial board of  *Naša ognjišta*, resulting in the confiscation of 13 books.<sup>68</sup> Shortly thereafter, in November

\*The leader of the  *Ustaša* movement — Ed.

1981, two Franciscans, likewise from Duvna, were put on trial in connection with an alleged miraculous appearance of the Virgin Mary in Medjugorje (near Čitluk) during the summer. (See Christopher Cviic's article "A Fatima in a Communist Land?" in *RCL* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 4-9 — Ed.) Accused at the same time of having close links with émigré *Ustaše* organizations, the two received sentences of 5½ and 8 years in prison respectively, joining the parish priest of Čitluk, Jozo Zovko, already in prison on a 3½-year term because of the miracle.<sup>69</sup>

Similarly, the régime created an uproar over a mosaic in the parish church in Stražeman in which Archbishop Stepinac and Dr Ivan Merz, an activist in Catholic Action in the 1920s, were depicted. Archbishop Franić enquired in surprise "by what right can anyone be forbidden to have a picture of his late archbishop either in his church or in his home?"<sup>70</sup> But by spring 1982, the "offensive" mosaic had been removed.<sup>71</sup>

On the other hand, the régime has shown itself to be generous on occasion, or, as in the case of Archbishop Pogačnik, strangely forgiving. The Slovenian archbishop, frequently attacked by the régime during his lifetime for alleged interference in public affairs, was not even one year in the grave when he was posthumously awarded the Order of the Republic with Silver Star for his contributions to improving church-state relations.<sup>72</sup>

### Conclusion

The Catholic Church certainly enjoys more freedom in Yugoslavia than it does in any other communist country. But it has had to fight to win and maintain that freedom, and there remain distinct limits to what the communist authorities will tolerate. Yet the evolution of church-state relations in Yugoslavia illustrates the remarkable resilience that religious organizations have always had and which is the Church's surest guarantee in a system whose leading institutional force remains committed to the Marxist principle of the withering away of religious affiliation. Thus, the Church remains a tolerated species but one destined for extinction in the ripeness of time, when the achievement of the communist paradise on earth will banish State and Church, nationalism and class inequality, hierarchy and subordination, into historical oblivion. Hence, the Church finds itself being nudged to the periphery of social and cultural life — to say nothing of its official banishment from politics — to a niche in which it cannot be content. For the Catholic Church draws its strength from its association with the mainstream of culture, from symbiosis with political authority (and hence its enduring hostility to the complete separation of Church and State, in Yugoslavia<sup>73</sup> as elsewhere), and by engagement in the issues of the day (even if motivated by the desire to block change). The Church's paramount desire has been and remains "... to influence the politics and cultural life of society ... from the standpoint of religious values". Its defence of human rights and of the

national aspirations of the Croats is part and parcel of that aspiration. But that aspiration, as I have indicated, is precisely the LCY's definition of the "mortal sin" of clericalism.<sup>74</sup> Hence, for all the vaunted liberality of the Yugoslav system, the Catholic Church enjoys a precarious position — it has greater freedom in Yugoslavia than in most communist countries, but is repeatedly vilified and/or attacked in the party press; it has its own press, but can circulate publications only through the churches and they are intermittently banned;<sup>75</sup> it is able to conduct religious instruction openly, but those attending are discriminated against and obstacles are erected to impede attendance; believers are told they enjoy equal rights with non-believers, but they are excluded from the officer corps, the diplomatic service, senior posts in economic management, the upper echelons of governmental service, and, of course, membership in the party. In fact, it is vain to hope that the LCY might become more tolerant, for at the core of its rather ambivalent policy toward the Church lies a recognition of the fundamental challenge posed by an essentially *legitimate* institution, with powerful claims on the loyalty of the population, to a régime still in quest of legitimacy.

<sup>1</sup>Ivan Cvitković, "Stavovi suvremenih teologa o odnosu religije i religijskih zajednica prema politici u socijalizmu", in *Politička misao*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (1978), p. 653.

<sup>2</sup>Rastko Vidić, *The Position of the Church in Yugoslavia* (Belgrade: Jugoslavia, 1962), pp. 8-9.

<sup>3</sup>A somewhat different periodization is given in Zdenko Roter, "Razvoj odnosa između Katoličke crkve i države u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji", translated from Slovenian into Serbo-Croat by Ivica Mlivončica, in *Pogledi*, Vol. 2, Nos. 4-5 (1970), pp. 100-102.

<sup>4</sup>Other cases are enumerated in Stella Alexandar, *Church and State in Yugoslavia since 1945* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 133-34.

<sup>5</sup>Richard Pattee, *The Case of Cardinal Aloisius Stepinac* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1953), p. 48. This incident is also discussed in *Borba*, 13 August 1971, p. 6, and 11 September 1971, p. 5; and *Politika*, 18 August 1971, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>Pattee, pp. 48-50; interview, Ljubljana, July 1982.

<sup>7</sup>Quoted in "Religion und Marxismus in Jugoslawien", in *Osteuropa*, Vol. 30, No. 2, February 1980, p. A117.

<sup>8</sup>Pattee, pp. 56-64, 75-76, 108.

<sup>9</sup>Alexander, pp. 136-141. See also "Die Stellung der Kirchen in Jugoslawien", in *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa*, Vol. 14, Nos. 3-4, March-April 1965, p. 49.

<sup>10</sup>*The Times*, London, 9 January 1953, and *Vjesnik*, 22 May 1953, as cited, respectively, in Alexander, pp. 136 and 132.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>12</sup>Quoted in Zdenko Roter, "Relations between the State and the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia", in *Socialist Thought and Practice*, Vol. 18, No. 11 (1974), p. 69; see also Alexander, p. 241.

<sup>13</sup>Quoted in "Belgrad und die Katholische Kirche", in *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa*, Vol. 10, Nos. 4-5, April-May 1961, p. 57.

<sup>14</sup>*Hrvatski tjednik*, 18 June 1971, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup>*Ekonomska politika*, 28 December 1970, pp. 42-44, translated in Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS)/Translations on Eastern Europe: Political, Sociological and Military Affairs, 23 March 1971.

<sup>16</sup>*Borba*, 13 February 1971, p. 5; and *Oslobodjenje*, 22 April 1972, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup>*Oslobodjenje* (30 January 1972), p. 4, translated in JPRS/Translations on Eastern Europe: Political, Sociological and Military Affairs, 16 February 1972.

<sup>18</sup>Miroslav Jurišić, "Posvetiti znatno više brige marksističkom i idejno-političkom obrazovanju mladih", in *Socijalistički savez radnog naroda Bosne i Hercegovine u ostvarivanju*

političke u odnosu na religiju i djelovanje vjerskih zajednica, Savjetovanje predsjednika opštinskih, Gradske i medjuopštinskih konferencija Socijalističkog saveza radnog naroda Bosne i Hercegovine (Sarajevo: Republička konferencija SSRN BiH, July 1977), p. 73.

<sup>19</sup> *New York Times*, 10 April 1980, p. A-17.

<sup>20</sup> Todo Kurtović, *Crkva i religija u socijalističkom samoupravnom društvu* (Belgrade: Rad, 1978), p. 122.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 139.

<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, some Croatian bishops were openly hostile to the Croatian reform movement. See *Vjesnik — sedam dana*, 28 April 1979, p. 31, and Christopher Cvić, "Recent Developments in Church-State Relations in Yugoslavia", in *RCL*, Vol. 1, No. 2, March-April 1973, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> Ivan Perić, *Suvremeni hrvatski nacionalizam*, Zagreb, August Cesarec, 1976, p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> *Slobodna Dalmacija*, 15 January 1972, p. 2; and *Oslobodjenje*, 12 January 1972, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> *Glas koncila*, 6 February 1972, pp. 14-15.

<sup>26</sup> In January 1980, Franjo Kuharić, Archbishop of Zagreb, in his annual New Year's message to the president of the Croatian *Sabor*, pointedly omitted any reference to Yugoslavia and spoke only of "our Croatian homeland" — an expression not used either by Jure Bilić, *Sabor* president, or by the Orthodox Bishop of Karlovac, who was also present. See *Vjesnik*, 11 January 1980, p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> Jurisić, p. 74.

<sup>28</sup> *NIN*, No. 1077, 29 August 1971, p. 37; and *Slobodna Dalmacija*, 15 January 1972, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> In 1953, the last time census respondents were asked to declare their religion, only 12.1% of the total population declared themselves atheists; in Croatia, this proportion was 10%: *Borba*, 31 December 1974, 1 and 2 January 1975, p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in *International Herald Tribune*, Paris, 6 May 1975, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> *New York Times*, 22 December 1975, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> *Glas koncila*, 17 May 1981, p. 3, translated in JPRS/East Europe Report: Political, Social and Military Affairs, 1 July 1981; and *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 27 January 1981, p. 4. Several high-ranking clergy participated in a Yugoslav television programme dealing with religion in 1977 — described at the time as the "first religious programme on Yugoslav television since the establishment of the Yugoslav television network". *The Tablet*, 10 December 1977, p. 1189. (See reports in *RCL*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 78-9 and No. 2, p. 199 — Ed.)

<sup>33</sup> Interview, Zagreb, July 1982.

<sup>34</sup> Amnesty International Report 1977, p. 287.

<sup>35</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 5 August 1980, p. 5; and *New York Times*, 3 June 1981, p. A-6.

<sup>36</sup> Kurtović, pp. 356, 358. The Church, in turn, has protested its loyalty. Archbishop Jože Pogačnik of Ljubljana told *Delo*, thus, that "... we religious citizens are not only loyal, true patriots, but are devoted, both in soul and in heart, [both] to our narrow homeland [i.e. Slovenia] and to our wide homeland [i.e. Yugoslavia]. We are fully conscious that there is no life for Slovenes outside Yugoslavia." Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>37</sup> Antun Biber, as quoted in *Hrvatski tjednik*, 4 June 1971, p. 5.

<sup>38</sup> Cvitković, p. 664.

<sup>39</sup> *Komunist*, 13 July 1972, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> Kurtović, pp. 142-43.

<sup>41</sup> *Vjesnik*, 28 February 1980, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 29 May, 8 August, and 13 August 1979. See also *Borba*, 5 August 1979, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> George Schöpflin, "After Tito: Unity Test for Leadership", in *Soviet Analyst*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 20 February 1980, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> See, for instance, *Borba*, 8 February 1980, p. 4 and Mutrović, pp. 13 and 139.

<sup>45</sup> *Glas koncila*, No. 5, 1980, quoted in *Vjesnik*, 25 March 1980, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> *Vjesnik*, 7 March 1980, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> *Tanjug*, 13 July 1979, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)/Yugoslavia, 16 July 1979.

<sup>48</sup> *Družina*, January 1979, as quoted in Zdenko Antić, "Yugoslavia: Toward Further Relaxation" in "Religion under 'Real Socialism'", Radio Free Europe Research, 31 May 1979, p. 29.

<sup>49</sup> At the other end of the scale, illiterate persons were more likely to approve, than to disapprove, of the Church's incipient intensification of efforts at proselytization. See Bogdan

Denitch, "Religion and Social Change in Yugoslavia", in Bohdan R. Bociurkiw and John W. Strong (eds.), *Religion and Atheism in the USSR and Eastern Europe*, London, Macmillan, 1974, p. 377.

<sup>50</sup>See church complaints on this score in *Glas koncila*, 7 January 1973, p. 12.

<sup>51</sup>See interview with Grmič in *Start*, No. 320, 25 April 1981, pp. 7-8.

<sup>52</sup>Actually, one of the most gnawing sources of internal discord in the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia arose not from any machinations of the régime but from the reorganization of the *Kršćanska Sadašnjost* (Christianity Today) publishing house as a "self-managing" Theological Association by a group of liberal Catholic theologians in May 1977. Archbishop Kuharić of Zagreb agonized over this compromise with the socialist régime, which had been adopted without his clearance, while the Archbishop of Split, Frane Franić, forbade priests in his archdiocese to have anything whatsoever to do with the organization. See *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 23 July 1980, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup>Quoted in *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 29 May 1979.

<sup>54</sup>"Religion und Marxismus . . .", p. A111.

<sup>55</sup>Quoted in *Politika*, 2 April 1979, translated into German in *ibid*.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, and *The Times*, 22 January 1981.

<sup>57</sup>*Glas koncila*, 26 October 1975, pp. 5-6; see also *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 24 November 1975.

<sup>58</sup>*Glas koncila*, 8 January 1978, cited in Zdenko Antic, "New Law on Religious Communities in Croatia in Preparation", *Radio Free Europe Research*, 23 February 1978.

<sup>59</sup>Zdenko Antic, "Catholic Bishops Criticize Draft Law on Religious Communities in Croatia", *Radio Free Europe Research*, 22 February 1978, pp. 2-3.

<sup>60</sup>*Glas koncila*, 23 April 1978, translated by Zdenko Antic, *Radio Free Europe Research*, 27 April 1978, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup>See footnote 52.

<sup>62</sup>*Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 31 May 1978.

<sup>63</sup>Radio Vatican in Serbo-Croat, 30 December 1980, translated in FBIS/Yugoslavia, 31 December 1980.

<sup>64</sup>Michael B. Petrovich, "Yugoslavia: Religion and the Tensions of a Multi-National State", in *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 1, March 1972, p. 132.

<sup>65</sup>*Slobodna Dalmacija*, 19 February 1981, excerpted in *Tanjug*, 19 February 1981, translated in FBIS/Yugoslavia, 20 February 1981.

<sup>66</sup>Quoted in Zdenko Antic, "Catholic Clergy in Croatia under Sharp Attack", *Radio Free Europe Research*, 29 July 1977, p. 4.

<sup>67</sup>*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 16 September 1981, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup>Aktualnosti Kršćanska Sadašnjosti (AKSA), 11 September 1981.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 13 and 27 November 1981; and *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 24 October 1981, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup>AKSA, 6 November 1981, translated by Stella Alexander.

<sup>71</sup>*Večernji list*, 8 April 1982, as reported in AKSA, 9 April 1982.

<sup>72</sup>AKSA, 30 December 1980.

<sup>73</sup>Denitch reports an interesting case of the Church seeking to impose its moral standards on the community at large. The case concerned the publication of a book of poetry in which certain verses manifested hostility to God and religion. The Slovenian Archbishop took the matter to court in 1959 and attempted to have the book banned on the grounds that it violated the constitutional proscription of the 'spreading of national and religious hatreds'. When the local court decided in favour of the Church, various communist and non-Party writers and intellectuals banded together with the book's publisher and took the issue to the Supreme Court, arguing that freedom of speech applied to atheists as well as to theists. The Supreme Court, swayed by this argument, overturned the lower court's ruling. But as Denitch wryly notes, it is clear that at least "... some church leaders even today have no objections to censorship when it is on their behalf. On the contrary, they actively seek it, even in a communist secular state." Denitch, p. 386.

<sup>74</sup>See Cvitković, p. 658. See also Ivica Račan, "Politika saveza komunista prema crkvi i religiji", in *Naše teme*, Vol. 20, No. 6, June 1976, esp. pp. 967-69.

<sup>75</sup>In 1974, for instance, the régime placed an entire series of issues of *Glas koncila* under ban. See *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 2 October 1974.