

POTS, PUTTY, AND WIRES: CROATIAN SEPARATIST  
TERRORISM AND THE HIJACKING OF TWA 355

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## ABSTRACT

Luke Gensler: Pots, Putty, and Wires: Croatian Separatist Terrorism and the Hijacking of TWA 355

(Under the direction of Robert Jenkins)

On September 10, 1976, five Croatian nationalist, led by Zvonko Bušić, hijacked TWA flight 355 shortly after it took off from New York. What followed was a thirty-hour ordeal that saw the plane be re-routed and flown across the Atlantic. The journey ended in Paris, where French authorities refused to negotiate. This paper examines this hijacking and the circumstances surrounding it. I place the hijacking within three broader contexts: international terrorism; Croatian nationalism; and the Croatian separatist movement, which emerged in the Croatian diaspora following World War Two. I argue that the hijacking of TWA 355 was an act by Zvonko Bušić meant to cement his legacy in the history of Croatian nationalism. Bušić made clear choices to use the spectacle of international hijacking to publicize the cause of Croatian independence in an attempt to gain international support and legitimacy for Croatian independence.

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## INTRODUCTION

On September 10, 1976, TWA flight 355 was scheduled to travel from New York to Chicago. At 8:19 pm EST, those plans changed. Zvonko Bušić handed a flight attendant a note that was to be given to the captain. It read:

One, this airplane is hijacked.

Two, we are in possession of five gelignite bombs, four of which are set up in cast iron pans giving them the same kind of force as a giant grenade.

Three, in addition, we have left the same type of bomb in a locker across from the Commodore Hotel on 42nd Street. To find the locker take the subway entrance by the Bowery Savings Bank. After passing through the token booth there are three windows belonging to the bank. To the left of these windows are the lockers. The number of the locker is 5713.

Four, further instructions are contained in a letter inside this locker. The bomb can only be activated by pressing the switch to which it is attached but caution is suggested.

Five, the appropriate authorities should be notified from the plane immediately.

Six, the plane will ultimately be heading in the direction of London, England.<sup>1</sup>

After receiving the note from Mr. Bušić, the captain made an announcement to the plane that they had been hijacked. There were 86 passengers and 7 crewmembers on board. The pilot, Captain Dick Carey, re-routed the plane towards Montreal.

The hijackers were a motley group of four Croatian men and one young American woman. Their names were Zvonko Bušić, Julie Bušić, Frane Pešut, Slobodan Vlašić, and Petar Matanić. Zvonko Bušić undoubtedly was the leader. Bušić went to the lavatory and emerged wearing what appeared to be a dynamite vest. Bušić gave Frane Pešut a covered pot, which he was told was a bomb. Bušić instructed Pešut to sit in the back of the plane with the bomb.

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<sup>1</sup>“592 F.2d 13: United States of America, Plaintiff-appellee, v. Zvonko Busic, Julianne Busic, Petar Matanic, Frane Pesut, defendants-appellants,” United States Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. Argued December 8th, 1977, decided October 30th, 1987. Accessed January 27, 2014, <http://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F2/592/13/258617/#fnref1>.

Slobodan Vlašić wore a vest similar to Zvonko Bušić and patrolled near the front of the plane. Petar Matanić was given a tear gas gun, and was told to patrol the aisles and be in charge of the lavatory. Julie Bušić, Zvonko's wife, was responsible for passing out copies of their leaflets to the passengers and answering any questions that they had about the cause of Croatian independence. At 9:01 P.M. EST, the plane landed to refuel in Montreal, before heading to Gander, Newfoundland, where a stop was needed prior to making the trip across the Atlantic.<sup>2</sup>

Who were these hijackers? What did they want? Where did they come from? Why did they hijack an airplane? The hijacking of TWA 355 left many people asking all of these questions. Some of these questions were answered by the hijackers themselves in the two manifestos that were printed as part of their demands. This paper will answer these questions and place the hijacking in an historical context.

I argue that the hijacking of TWA 355 was an act by Zvonko Bušić to cement his place in the history of Croatian nationalism. The hijacking of TWA 355 represented an individual action devised by Bušić, rather than a clearly defined act within the Croatian separatist movement that emerged after World War Two. The hijacking represented a unique case because of clear choices made by Bušić to differentiate the act from other actions of the Croatian separatist movement. Bušić attempted to differentiate the hijacking from the established Croatian separatist movement by distancing his action from specific strands of Croatian nationalism evoked by Ante Starčević and Ante Pavelić, which carried strong negative historical connotations. Instead, Bušić attempted to associate his version of Croatian nationalism with the legacies of less controversial strands of Croatian nationalism of Stjepan Radić and the Croatian Spring. He used the hijacking as a tool to publicize a specific Croatian nationalist message to a specific audience, the American public, in hopes of gaining support and legitimacy for the cause of Croatian independence. While the

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<sup>2</sup>“Chronology of the Hijacking,” *The New York Times*, September 12, 1976.

hijacking in the narrowest sense was successful in placing the cause of Croatian independence on the front page of newspapers across the world, the geopolitics of the Cold War prevented any real change in policy by the United States towards Croatian independence.

I will draw upon three distinct sets of literature to address the hijacking. First, I will establish the historical framework of international terrorism by drawing on the work of David C. Rapoport and his 'wave theory' of modern terrorism. To supplement his theory, I will draw on works by Bruce Hoffman and Brian Jenkins to show how Bušić attempted to use the spectacle of an international hijacking to publicize the cause of Croatian independence. Second, I will trace the historical roots of Croatian nationalism and Croatian separatism by examining the development of relevant strands of Croatian nationalist thinking. Third, I will explore the formation of the Croatian separatist movement following World War Two and the development of the movement's use of terrorism.

I will analyze the hijacking from three perspectives: the background of the hijackers; the manifestos that the hijackers had printed; and the reaction to the event. An examination of the personal background of Zvonko Bušić will illuminate factors that drove him to the act of hijacking an airplane. An analysis of the manifesto will show a clear choice to distance the hijacking and Croatia's case for independence away from specific strands of Croatian nationalism that carried a strongly negative historical connotation. The reaction to the event will show that while the media was enamored with the spectacle of the hijacking, ultimately the tragic death of police officer Brian Murray as a result of the bomb placed in the locker, overshadowed any sympathetic feelings the hijackers attained through their action.

To analyze the hijacking, I will utilize a combination of primary and secondary sources on the event. Julie Bušić published a memoir in 2000 about the hijacking and her relationship

with Zvonko, entitled *Lovers and Madmen: A True Story of Passion, Politics, and Air Piracy*.<sup>3</sup> For newspaper sources, I rely upon articles published in three types of newspapers: large, national publications (*New York Times*, *Washington Post*, etc.); smaller publications from areas with large Croatian-American communities (*Cleveland Press* and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*); and Croatian-American newspapers published within the United States (*Danica* and *Zajedničar*). I also utilize archival documents from the FBI from the National Archives at College Park and the court transcript from the hijackers' appellate court trial.

The secondary literature on the hijacking is not extensive. J. Bower Bell devoted a chapter to the hijacking in his book, *A Time of Terror: How Democratic Societies Respond to Revolutionary Violence*, but focused extensively on the state reaction to the event, rather than the origins of the hijackers.<sup>4</sup> Paul Hockenos discussed the hijacking in his book, *Homeland Calling: Exile Patriotism and the Balkan Wars*, but focused on how the hijacking and the Croatian separatist movement affected the wars in the Balkans in the 1990s.<sup>5</sup> Stephen Clissold and Mate Nikola Tokić have written about the Croatian separatist movement, but neither has analyzed the hijacking of TWA 355 extensively.<sup>6</sup> My paper will build upon this existing literature by analyzing the hijacking of TWA 355 through a historical lense of terrorism and Croatian nationalism.

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<sup>3</sup>Julienne Eden Bušić, *Lovers and Madmen: A True Story of Passion, Politics and Air Piracy* (San Jose: Writers Club Press 2000).

<sup>4</sup>J. Bowyer Bell, "The Case of the Croatians," in *A Time of Terror: How Democratic Societies Respond to Revolutionary Violence* (New York: Basic Books, Inc.) 6-35.

<sup>5</sup>Paul Hockenos, *Homeland Calling: Exile Patriotism and the Balkan Wars* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003).

<sup>6</sup>See, Stephen Clissold, "Croat Separatism: Nationalism, Dissidence and Terrorism," *Conflict Studies*, no. 103 (1979); Nikola Mate Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict: Unity and Disunity in Post-Second World War Croatian Émigré Separatism," *European Review of History*, 16, no. 5 (2009): 739-753, DOI:10.1080/13507480903262751; Nikola Mate Tokić, "The End of "Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement." Cold War Politics and Émigré Croatian Separatist Violence, 1950-1980," *Social Science History* 36, no. 3 (2012): 421-445, [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/social\\_science\\_history/v036/36.3.tokic.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/social_science_history/v036/36.3.tokic.html).



## TERRORISM FRAMEWORK

To better understand the hijacking of TWA 355 and how the hijacking was different to other actions by Croatian separatist groups, it is helpful to place the event into a context of international terrorism. To illuminate the differences, I will utilize three terrorism scholars' works. David C. Rapoport developed a theory centered on waves of modern terrorism.<sup>7</sup> Rapoport's theory identified two key waves: the 'anticolonial' wave, during which the Croatian separatist movement arose; and, the 'New Left' wave, during which the technology of hijackings emerged. By framing the hijacking of TWA 355 within Rapoport's wave theory, the setting in which the goals and tactics of the Croatian separatist movement developed will become evident. In addition to Rapoport's wave theory, two terrorism scholars have highlighted two other key features of terrorism during the time of the hijacking. Brian Jenkins' famous 'terrorism as theater' argument will be highlighted as well as Bruce Hoffman's work on the internationalization of terrorism.

By utilizing these three authors' work, several important features of Croatian separatist terrorism and the hijacking of TWA 355 can be better explained. First, the origins of the Croatian separatist movement and the hijacking can be placed in Rapoport's second wave of modern terrorism, with the goal of national self-determination being at the center of the terrorist actions. Second, both utilized the technology of Rapoport's third wave, although the manner in which the hijackers of TWA 355 utilized the technology of the third wave differed from previous acts by Croatian separatist organizations. The hijackers of TWA 355 used the technology of hijacking in

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<sup>7</sup> David C. Rapoport, "The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism," in *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* ed. Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes (Georgetown University Press: Washington D.C., 2004).

an attempt to gain legitimacy through appealing to the international community, which echoed the sentiments of groups acting during the ‘anticolonial’ wave. Appeals to the international community for legitimacy were absent by Croatian separatist organizations, whose actions mirrored the more violent tactics of third wave groups by targeting symbols of the Yugoslav state. These differences in tactics will be elucidated later in the paper in a discussion of the Croatian separatist movement and a thorough examination of the hijacking of TWA 355. In addition to shedding light on the origins and differences in tactics and goals of the Croatian separatist movement and the hijacking of TWA 355, the application of Rapoport’s theory to the case of Croatian separatist terrorism will shed light on the difficulties of establishing clearly defined waves of terrorism. Croatian separatist terrorism clearly transcends its original establishing wave and can be used as an example of a terrorist organization that Rapoport’s theory has trouble properly placing.

Rapoport developed a theory of modern terrorism that divided terrorist activities since the late nineteenth-century into four waves. It has come to be viewed as a seminal work in the historiography of terrorism.<sup>8</sup> Rapoport’s theory has been argued to be “highly supportive through statistical analysis done with the most up-to-date data sets on terrorism.”<sup>9</sup> Rapoport described a wave as having three elements. First, he defined a wave as “a cycle of activity in a given period of time –a cycle characterized by expansion and contraction phases.”<sup>10</sup> Second, each wave had

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<sup>8</sup>See, Jean E. Rosenfield (ed.), *Terrorism, Identity and Legitimacy: The Four Waves theory and political violence*. (New York and London: Routledge, 2011) and Jeffrey Kaplan, “Terrorism’s Fifth Wave: A Theory, a Conundrum and a Dilemma.” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2, no. 2:(2008) <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/26/html>.

<sup>9</sup>Karen Rasler and William R. Thompson, “Looking for Waves,” in *Terrorism, Identity and Legitimacy: The Four Waves theory and political violence* ed. Jean E. Rosenfield (Routledge: New York, 2011), 13-29.

<sup>10</sup>Rapoport, “*Four Waves*,” 47.

an “international character.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, waves were “driven by a common predominant energy that shapes the participating groups’ characteristics and mutual relationships.”<sup>12</sup> The four waves were the ‘anarchist wave’, the ‘anticolonial’ wave, the ‘New Left’ wave, and the ‘religious’ wave. The names of the waves represented the wave’s “dominant energy but not its only feature.”<sup>13</sup> Each of the first three waves lasted about forty years, suggesting a generational factor in the length of the waves.<sup>14</sup> Waves are made up of different organizations, but the waves and organizations have “very different life rhythms,”<sup>15</sup> with waves more often than not, outlasting terrorist organizations. The relevant waves to the hijacking of TWA 355 were the second, the ‘anticolonial’ wave and the third wave, or the ‘New Left’ wave.

The most striking feature of the ‘anticolonial’ wave was the amount of success terrorist groups had at achieving their goals of national self-determination. The successes of second wave organizations came from three sources through which groups were able to grow their bases of support and legitimacy, both locally and internationally. First, organizations framed themselves and their struggles in new ways. Second, organizations utilized new tactics that were designed to broaden the appeal of their movement by provoking counter-atrocities by authorities. Third, the newly formed United Nations and its principle backer, the United States, both grew to support the dominant energy of anti-colonialism that drove this wave. The hijackers of TWA 355 attempted to emulate the successes of the nationalistic terrorist organizations of the second wave, particularly by attempting to gain support from the United States and supranational

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<sup>11</sup>Rapoport, “*Four Waves*,” 47.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 48.

organizations, as second wave organizations successfully did.

The ‘anticolonial’ wave spanned from its precipitating event, the Versailles Peace Conference at the end of World War One till it began to die out in the mid-1960s. Although the wave began with Versailles, it was not until after World War Two that many of the campaigns began to gain a foothold. The energy that drove the wave was anticolonial, with the main target being European empires. This energy manifested itself in calls for national self-determination, attacks against colonialism and through a new framing of the terrorists’ causes. Organizations began to use new terminology to describe their campaigns. They labeled themselves as ‘freedom fighters,’ which were battling ‘government terror.’<sup>16</sup> By emphasizing the anti-colonialism and calls for national self-determination and by framing their struggles in new ways, groups during the second wave were able to gain legitimacy and support for their causes. It was during this wave that the Croatian separatist movement emerged.

The second wave also utilized innovative tactics that were designed to garner support locally and internationally. Due to an increase in diaspora support, bank robberies were no longer a necessary tactic to gain funds.<sup>17</sup> Assassinations, which were the most prominent tactic of the first wave, were no longer common. The Balkans were an exception to this trend. The tactics that were most prevalent during the second wave were hit-and-run guerilla attacks, first aimed at police, who were the “government’s eyes and ears.”<sup>18</sup> By targeting police, the insurgents were hoping to force the military to become involved in the campaign. The military was viewed as

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<sup>16</sup>Rapoport, “*Four Waves*,” 54.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

more prone to counter-atrocities, which spark an increase local and international support for the terrorist organization's causes.<sup>19</sup>

Supranational organizations also emerged as a key actor during the second wave. The League of Nations drafted two conventions following the assassination of Alexander I of Serbia in 1934 in an attempt to address international terrorism. The League of Nations implemented neither action. Its successor, the UN, became a key source of legitimacy for nationalist and separatist movements.<sup>20</sup> Almost all of the new states admitted to the UN were former colonies. These former colonies were much more likely to support the causes of nationalist and separatist movements at the supranational level. Due to the influx of former colonies in UN, many debates within the UN began to use the terminology of 'freedom fighters' when addressing anticolonial wave activities.<sup>21</sup> It is also important to note that following the end of World War Two, the United States and the Soviet Union, both acted alongside the United Nations as key supporters of anti-colonialism. Following the second wave, legitimacy at the supranational level represented a key goal for groups seeking national self-determination.

Rapoport named the third wave, the 'New Left' wave after the predominately left-leaning politics and goals of the active organizations during the wave. The wave began with the Viet Cong successes against the American military during the Vietnam War. When the Vietnam War ended, the Palestinian Liberation Organization replaced the Viet Cong as the "heroic model" of the wave.<sup>22</sup> The term international terrorism began to be used again during the third wave as well. The third wave began to fade away in the 1980's as more and more of the national

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<sup>19</sup>Rapoport, "*Four Waves*," 54.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 55.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 56.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

governments began to crack down on terrorist activity, as well as the UN shifting away from support of national liberation groups.

The most important development during the third wave was the proliferation of airplane hijackings. While the first airplane hijacking occurred in 1931, the highest concentration of hijackings occurred over the period of 1968-1972, when an attempted hijacking occurred worldwide, once every 5.6 days.<sup>23</sup> The key feature of the technology of hijacking was its ability to easily garner widespread media coverage. Hijacking was far from the only method used during the third wave. Kidnappings were prominently utilized to create hostage situations and extort demands. Targeted assassinations re-appeared as a terrorist repertoire after largely fading away during the second wave. Groups also chose targets with “international significance.”<sup>24</sup> These targets included embassies, national air carriers or international businesses.

During the third wave, terrorists began to stage attacks outside their home country. These acts were often aimed at citizens of the outside country. These new tactical decisions differed from the national character of the second wave. Bruce Hoffman<sup>25</sup>, another scholar writing about the terrorism during the ‘New Left’ wave, stressed the internationalization of targets by terrorist groups and the goal of publicity during the third wave. He noted that terrorists began to expand their scope of action “to endow their acts with the power to attract attention and publicity that

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<sup>23</sup>Robert T. Holden, "The Contagiousness Of Aircraft Hijacking," *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 4 (1986): 874, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2779961>.

<sup>24</sup>Rapoport, “*Four Waves*,” 58.

<sup>25</sup>Hoffman defines the “Internationalization of Terrorism” as beginning with the 1968 El Al flight by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The similarities between Rapoport’s ‘New Left’ wave and Hoffman’s work make them easily comparable. See, Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 67-68.

attacks against their declared or avowed enemies often lacked.”<sup>26</sup> International publicity became a prominent goal of groups during the third wave.

Brian Jenkins, writing in 1974, captured the perceived usefulness of international terrorism. He wrote, “Terrorism may be aimed at gaining publicity. Through terrorism, the terrorists hope to attract attention to their cause and project themselves, as a force that merits recognition and that must be reckoned with... Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims. Terrorism is theater.”<sup>27</sup> Hijackings represented the ultimate stage for broadcasting an organizations message to a worldwide audience.

This discussion of Rapoport’s wave theory is relevant to this paper because it establishes the setting in which the Croatian separatist movement emerged and the origins of the tactics utilized by both the hijackers of TWA 355 and other actors in the Croatian separatist movement. Rapoport’s second wave is defined by anticolonial sentiment and the goal of national liberation. Groups found success during this wave through the use of guerrilla techniques and through support from the international community for de-colonization. The hijackers of TWA 355 attempted to achieve the same support from the international community, but utilized the innovative techniques of the third wave, namely hijacking, to achieve their goal.

I will use these three authors’ work to demonstrate the strategic choices that the hijackers of TWA 355 made that distinguish them from the other groups acting in the Croatian separatist movement. The hijackers of TWA 355 utilized third wave technology and strategies to attempt to foster support and gain legitimacy in an international setting. This strategy echoed those of groups in Rapoport’s second wave. Other actors in the Croatian separatist movement did not

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<sup>26</sup>Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 68.

<sup>27</sup>Brian Jenkins, *International Terrorism: A New Mode of Conflict*, Research Paper No. 48, California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy (Crescent Publications: Los Angeles, California, 1975), 4.

employ this strategy. They acted in manner similar to other active groups in the third wave of terrorism. An examination of history of the Croatian separatist movement, the hijacking of TWA 355, the biographies of the main hijackers and the group's two manifestos later in the paper will highlight these tactical choices and will illuminate the difficulties in establishing clearly defined waves of terrorism. Choices made in strategy, tactics, and goals were not the only avenue Zvonko Bušić and his co-conspirators chose to distinguish themselves from the broader Croatian separatist movement. A discussion of the historical background of Croatian nationalism and separatism will showcase other clear choices the hijackers made to distance themselves from more radical actors associated with Croatian nationalism and separatism. These choices included seeking to distance themselves from historical Croatian nationalist that carried a strong negative connotation and at the same time, invoking Croatian nationalists who do not carry such historical baggage.



## BACKGROUND ON CROATIAN NATIONALISM

Through a discussion of key figures and events in the historical development of Croatian nationalism, a multi-layered picture develops. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, a strand of Croatian nationalism with a focus on Croatian national independence developed with politician Ante Starčević and his Party of Rights. Starčević's historical legacy would later be invoked during the period of the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, NDH) under the fascist leadership of Ante Pavelić and the Ustaša. Inbetween Starčević and Pavelić, Stjepan Radić rose to become the most important Croatian national politician of the first thirty years of the twentieth century. Radić, who was responsible for the first mass mobilization of the Croatian peasantry, advanced a different strand of Croatian nationalism to that of Starčević. Radić was so successful and popular among the Croatian peasantry that his legacy was none-the-less co-opted by both the NDH and their chief rival in Yugoslavia, the Partisans, during World War Two. Finally, the Croatian Spring in the late 1960s and the early 1970s represented the most salient representation of Croatian nationalism in Tito's Yugoslavia. While noted for the diversity of views within it, the Croatian Spring was largely a nationalist movement with the goal of reforming Croatian rights within the framework of the federalist Yugoslavia.

These four historical cases were chosen because the major groups of the Croatian separatist movement defined their principles as being the legacy of Starčević, Radić, and Pavelić, while the hijackers of TWA 355 chose to place themselves inline with only Radić and the Croatian Spring. A discussion of these four iterations of Croatian nationalism is essential to this paper because the hijackers of TWA 355 made a clear choice to align themselves with the

legacies of Radić and the Croatian Spring and away from the negative historical connotations of Starčević, Pavelić, and the NDH.

The national question served as the most pressing political issue in Yugoslavia from its inception in 1918.<sup>28</sup> Historian Ivo Banac defined the national question as having “to do with the conditions (by definition inadequate) for the free and independent development of nations and national communities – inadequate, because were it otherwise the question would not exist.”<sup>29</sup> The national question in Yugoslavia would be “the most serious political problem in the Yugoslav state.”<sup>30</sup> This section will focus on calls for Croatian independence by highlighting prominent Croatian political elites.

In mid-nineteenth century, Ante Starčević developed and championed one of three strands of thinking about the Croatian question. The other two were: the Illyrian movement headed by Ljudevit Gaj initially and then taken up by Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer, which stressed a “South Slav federalist approach;”<sup>31</sup> and, the unitarist variant led by Svetozar Pribićević. Eugen Kvaternik and Ante Starčević developed the independent state variant, which will be discussed in this paper. Both the Illyrian movement and the unitarist variant would play major roles in the Yugoslav ideology of Tito, but the variant espoused by Starčević represented the key, pre-Yugoslavia ideology focusing on an independent Croatia.

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<sup>28</sup>The official title of the south Slav state was the Kingdom of Serb, Croats and Slovenes from 1918 to 1929, but colloquially, it was referred to as Yugoslavia from its formation in 1918. For simplicity’s sake, I will refer to the south Slav state as Yugoslavia in this paper.

<sup>29</sup>Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 12.

<sup>30</sup>Jill A. Irvine, *The Croat Question: Partisan Politics in the Formation of the Yugoslav Socialist State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 1.

<sup>31</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 23.

Starčević, along with Eugen Kvaternik and Ivan Matok founded the Party of Rights in 1861.<sup>32</sup> The Party of Rights had two main political tenets that drove its ideology. First, Starčević was driven by the desire “to accelerate the process of formation and integration of the Croatian nation.”<sup>33</sup> For Starčević, the Croatian nation was “define[d]... in ethnic terms, as a community, which shares the same myths, symbols, historic memories, culture, and above all, common national spirit.”<sup>34</sup> Starčević and the Party of Rights virulently opposed the Hapsburg Empire and “demanded that the Hapsburgs recognize the right of Croatia to an independent existence- a separate existence which was to be determined by ‘God and the Croats’ and not by Austria.”<sup>35</sup> His ideology had “a consistent and unselfish ideal of national liberation from the foreign Austrian and Magyar rule.”<sup>36</sup> An independent Croatian state for the Croatian nation was at the center of Starčević’s ideology.

The second tenet of Starčević and the Party of Rights was “genuine patriotism of all Croats,”<sup>37</sup> which manifested itself most visibly in a vehemently anti-Serb stance. He viewed homogeneity as a necessary precondition for a nation. Starčević refused to acknowledge the existence of any other south Slav nation other than the Bulgarians.<sup>38</sup> The land of Croatia included the lands Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. He viewed Serbs as Croats who had

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<sup>32</sup>Gerald Gilbert Govorchin, "Pravašto and the Croatian National Issue." *East European Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1978):57.

<sup>33</sup>Gordana Uzelac, *The Development of the Croatian Nation: an Historical and Sociological Analysis* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 102.

<sup>34</sup>Uzelac, *The Development*, 113.

<sup>35</sup>Govorchin, "Pravašto," 59.

<sup>36</sup>Mario S. Spalatin, "The Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević 1845-1871" *Journal of Croatian Studies* XV (1975):143.

<sup>37</sup>Uzelac, *The Development*, 101.

<sup>38</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 25.

converted to Orthodox and that the word ‘Serbian’ itself, “was merely a geographic expression and...was derived from the term ‘servus’ or slave.”<sup>39</sup> The dual tenets of a completely independent state for the Croatian nation and a virulent anti-Serb ideology would be incorporated into the ideology of future Croatian nationalists. Starčević emerged from the nineteenth-century as a leading figure of Croatian nationalism. Ante Pavelić invoked Starčević’s ideology so much so that one historian described Starčević as being “praised to the skies” during the NDH.<sup>40</sup> Starčević continued to be active in Croatian politics until his death in 1896. It was at the beginning of the twentieth century that a new Croatian politician emerged that introduced a different strand of thinking than Starčević.

In 1904, Stjepan Radić and his brother Antun founded the Croatian Popular Peasant Party (*Hrvatski Pučka Seljačka Stranka*, HPSS). Stjepan Radić was elected president of the party from its inception.<sup>41</sup> Radić would become the most important Croatian politician of his time before being assassinated in the Yugoslav parliament in Belgrade in 1928. Radić’s political agenda consistently evolved throughout his political career as he acted “as a torchbearer of national consciousness”<sup>42</sup> for the Croatian nation, but Croatian peasant rights remained at the center of his ideology.

When the HPSS formed in 1904, their stance on Croatian independence could not have been clearer. In a summary of the its general aims, the General Committee of the party stated, “Having assessed the Croatian past and present it became imperative that we should pursue a policy that will not only lead to a united Croatia and its complete independence, but will also

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<sup>39</sup>Govorchin, “Pravašto,” 59.

<sup>40</sup>Spalatin, “The Croatian Nationalism,” 145.

<sup>41</sup>Stjepan Gaži, “Stjepan Radić: His Life and Political Activities.” *Journal of Croatian Studies* 13-14 (1973): 33.

<sup>42</sup>Gaži, “Stjepan Radić,” 5.

provide for all people a better education and general social progress.”<sup>43</sup> At the founding of the party, this call for Croatian independence was aimed at the ruling Hapsburg Monarchy. Even with the common goal of an independent Croatia, the Radić brothers eschewed the radical Croatian nationalism of Starčević. They criticized Starčević brand of nationalism as being too abstract and not inclusive enough to the peasantry.<sup>44</sup>

Radić led the HPSS from its inception in 1904 till his death in 1928. The HPSS was the first political party to successfully mobilized Croatian peasantry. Over the course of his political career, the Radić’s politics morphed over time depending on the broader political situation at any given time. During the initial years of Radić’s political career, both before and during World War One, Radić strongly supported Croatian statehood through a reorganization of the Hapsburg Empire.<sup>45</sup> His political career became more dynamic at the end of World War One when negotiations started regarding the unification of the south Slav lands.

Radić led the HPSS through three different phases of political strategy dating from the negotiations regarding unification until his assassination. The first phase of Radić’s political activity towards Yugoslavia occurred from 1918 to 1925. During this time, Radić lobbied heavily against the unification of Yugoslavia. He argued against the creation of a Serb-led centralized state and for the creation of a Croatian republic. He based this argument on the belief that during the four years of war in Croatia, the peasantry suffered the worst fate of all the population during the war. The peasantry “was not only a state serf (and really genuine state slave), but [a peasant] was worse than a beast of burden to the sundry official and unofficial

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<sup>43</sup>Quoted in Gaži, "Stjepan Radić," 33.

<sup>44</sup>Spalatin, "The Croatian Nationalism," 144.

<sup>45</sup>Irvine, "The Croat Question." 40-41.

gentlemen.”<sup>46</sup> He viewed the only way to ensure the positive future of the peasantry in Croatia was to be against the unification of Yugoslavia and for the creation of a Croatian peasant state.

As a delegate to the final Yugoslav negotiations in Belgrade, Radić made an impassioned speech at the conference’s conclusion. Radić described the unification as “the most terrible thing, the greatest sin and the gravest political mistake.”<sup>47</sup> He ended his fiery speech with the lines, “Long live the republic. Long live Croatia.”<sup>48</sup> With few allies in his fight, he left Belgrade unsuccessful and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was officially created on December 1, 1918.

After the creation of the first Yugoslavia, Radić continued to oppose the policies and legitimacy of the new state. The name of the HPSS changed to the Croatian Republican Peasant Party (*Hrvatska republikanska seljačka stranka*, HRSS) “to emphasize its opposition to the Serbian dynasty,” and the party called for the creation of an independent Croatian republic.<sup>49</sup> Radić’s political power continued to grow during the early years of Yugoslavia, even with sporadic imprisonments for speaking out against the King, and the fact that Radić and the CRPP boycotted participating in the government of Yugoslavia.<sup>50</sup> Radić’s stance towards the Yugoslav state began to shift after the Vidovdan Constitution was passed in 1921, but it was not until a trip abroad in 1924 to European capitals and the Soviet Union that he realized that his policies towards Yugoslavia must change. Radić found little support abroad for the creation of a Croatian

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<sup>46</sup>Banac, *The National Question*, 237.

<sup>47</sup>Gaži, “Stjepan Radić,” 50.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 41.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

republic during his trip, and his immediate imprisonment upon return to Yugoslavia in 1924 made him rethink his strategy.<sup>51</sup>

The second phase of Radić's political strategy saw the HRSS completely change its orientation towards the Yugoslav state. From prison in 1925, Radić declared that the party should recognize the Yugoslav government as legitimate and fully participate in the political process. Radić saw participation as the only way forward to ensure greater peasant rights. The HRSS once again changed its name to reflect its shift in strategy. The new name for the party was the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*, HSS). The HSS actively participated in the government for the first time. The HSS's new platform included a shift in thinking about Croatian independence. The HSS advocated for increased Croatian autonomy driven by a change in the constitution of Yugoslavia.<sup>52</sup> This new strategy by the HSS lasted two years; by 1927, the HSS was disappointed at the lack of progress and withdrew its support from the government.

The final stage began in 1927 and lasted until Radić was assassinated in the parliament of Yugoslavia in Belgrade in 1928. During these last two years, Radić re-joined the opposition and formed an opposition movement with Svetozar Pribićević and his Independent Democratic Party (IDP). Together the IDP and the HSS called for an end to "Serb hegemony"<sup>53</sup> in Yugoslavia. Radić was assassinated on August 8, 1928. Political gridlock in Yugoslavia followed his death and King Alexander of Yugoslavia abolished the constitution, dissolved Parliament and declared a royal dictatorship.

The legacy of Stjepan Radić was mixed. Radić built a massive political base centered around Croatian peasants, but his political ideas surrounding Yugoslavia and Croatia consistently

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<sup>51</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 42.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 43.

morphed over time depending on the current political situation. The constant changing of Radić's political views and his immense popularity with Croatian peasantry after his death allowed his legacy to be claimed by multiple parties. During World War Two, both sides of the conflict in Yugoslavia laid claim to be the successors of Radić.<sup>54</sup> When compared with the nationalistic politics of Ante Starčević though, Radić is remembered for his mobilization of Croatian peasantry, while Starčević is remembered for his vehement anti-Serb beliefs. Both Starčević and Radić would be utilized as political symbols during the time of the NDH.

The Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, NDH) was created on April 10, 1941 with backing from fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. It only lasted four years until Tito's Partisans officially defeated the NDH on May 8, 1945. Ante Pavelić served as the supreme ruler of the NDH and the Ustaša<sup>55</sup> party, which ruled the NDH. Pavelić and the Ustaše based their ideology on the concept of the nation. The nation was “defined as a community of blood and common spirit” and “required a state for its protection.”<sup>56</sup> In this definition of the nation, the Pavelić developed two main political goals: the establishment of a Croatian state and “building a new social order.”<sup>57</sup> Through treaties with Mussolini's Italy (where Pavelić and the Ustaše were based after leaving Croatia following Stjepan Radić's assassination in 1928) and Nazi Germany, Pavelić was able to gain control over a Croatian state, albeit with separate Italian and German zones of occupation.<sup>58</sup> While the Ustaše were hopelessly reliant on German military

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<sup>54</sup>Mark Biondich, *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 251.

<sup>55</sup>Ustaša (Ustasha) is the singular form, while Ustaše (Ustasha) is the plural form.

<sup>56</sup>Uzelac, *The Development*, 158.

<sup>57</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 96.

<sup>58</sup>The two zones of occupation being: “the Italian zone covering the southern half of Croatia's territory running along a line approximately fifty miles west of Zagreb and Sarajevo; and the German zone to the north, including northern Bosnia, Slavonia, and the Karlovac region.” Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 98.



backing to prop up their regime, they none-the-less went about 'building a new social order' within the NDH.

The Ustaše utilized historical and racial ideas in their conception of the Croatian nation. The creation of the Croatian nation-state was the “ultimate goal and value of the Croatian nation.” The Ustaše created the ‘cult of the state’ that called on Croatians to devote their whole life, even death, to the Croatian state, as it was the fulfillment of a centuries old Croatian national legacy.<sup>59</sup> The Ustaše introduced racial conception into their Croatian national ideology. The racial dimension of the Ustaše ideology was based on the belief that Croatians were not a Slavic people, but actually were the descendants of Gothic peoples.<sup>60</sup> The Ustaše “used ‘biology’ to justify” the wartime atrocities that occurred in the NDH during the war.<sup>61</sup> The NDH was “the most brutal and most sanguinary satellite regime in the Axis sphere of influence during the Second World War,” with 623,000 total people dying in the territory during the war, and 80,000-90,000 dying at the Jasenovac concentration camp alone.<sup>62</sup>

The NDH is important to this paper for two reasons. First, the NDH was the first iteration of an independent Croatia in the twentieth century. The NDH was undoubtedly a repressive, violent, Nazi-backed regime that committed horrible wartime atrocities during World War Two. The historical legacy of this initial iteration of an independent Croatia will forever carry strong negative historical connotations associated with the wartime atrocities of the NDH. Second, the

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<sup>59</sup>Uzelac, *The Development*, 160.

<sup>60</sup>Nevenko Bartulin argues that the Ustaša’s racial ideas were not just products of their close relationship with Nazi Germany. He argues that racial ideas was present in “political and academic culture of Croatia long before 1941.” See, Nevenko Bartulin, *Racial Idea in the Independent State of Croatia Origins and Theory* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014) 7.

<sup>61</sup>Uzelac, *The Development*, 158.

<sup>62</sup>Sabrina P. Ramet, "The NDH - An Introduction." In *The Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1, 4.

leaders of the NDH fled Croatia and sought refuge in friendly countries, notably Argentina, West Germany and Spain. It was from these countries that the former leaders of the NDH created the organizations that would form the postwar Croatian separatist movement.

Before moving to the Croatian separatist movement that was located outside of Croatia, it is useful to note one other key political event occurred within Croatia. The Croatian Spring was a social movement that occurred in Croatia from 1966 to 1971. It represented the most active and influential Croatian nationalist movement within Yugoslavia after World War Two. It was noted for the diversity of views held by the multiple sets of actors that drove the movement, including three main groups: the Croatian Communist Party Leaders, Croatian intellectuals, and students. The three groups had varying views on the national question in Yugoslavia.

Two Communist Party leaders rose to power in Croatia during the Croatian Spring. They were Miko Tripalo, a member of the Presidency of the League of Communist of Yugoslavia (LCY) Executive Bureau and Savka Dabčević-Kučar, the League of Croatian Communists (LCC) Secretary.<sup>63</sup> The Party leaders sought to reform the standing of the republic of Croatia within Yugoslavia through the Party apparatus and were the most influential leaders of the Croatian Spring.

Their concerns centered on economics. Tripalo and Dabčević-Kučar focused predominately on the perceived-Federal/Serb domination of the Croatian economy. The perception in Croatia was that the government in Belgrade unfairly favored other republics over Croatia regarding foreign capital investments and Federal funding. Also, Tripalo and Dabčević-Kučar sought to reform the method of "redistribution of former Federal assets and obligations," and sought "reform of the banking and foreign currency systems."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 258.

Another key economic issue to arise during this time period was the perceived domination of the Croatian economy by Serb companies. Belgrade-based foreign trade companies held an almost monopoly, at 77.1 percent, of Yugoslav income in foreign trade. In Croatia, Serbian banks from Belgrade had monopolized credit in the wealthy tourist area of the Dalmatian Coast.<sup>65</sup> Tripalo and Dabčević-Kučar attempted to address these Croatian economic concerns by working through the Party apparatus of Yugoslavia, after gaining Tito's support over Miloš Žanko, a more conservative member of the LCC, at the Tenth Party Plenum in January 1970.

The intellectuals of the Croatian Spring largely gathered around the cultural organization, *Matica Hrvatska*, and the University of Zagreb.<sup>66</sup> Language issues were at the heart of the initial grievances of intellectuals, who published the *Declaration Concerning the Name and Position of Croatian Standard Language* in March 1967. One hundred and eighty scholars and cultural institutions in Croatia signed the *Declaration*. It called for the establishment of the equality in status and use of the Slovenian, Croatian, Serbian and Macedonian languages within Yugoslavia and for the consistent use of the Croatian language within Croatia. The *Declaration* was a sharp change in rhetoric towards language from agreements made in the 1950s. Previously, Party elites and intellectuals agreed that within Yugoslavia, Serbs and Croats spoke a common language entitled either Croato-Serbian or Serbo-Croatian, with two pronunciation variants - *ljekavski* in

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<sup>64</sup>Dennison Rusinow, *Crisis in Croatia* (Hanover, N.H: American Universities Field Staff, 1972), 13.

<sup>65</sup>Sabrina P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1962-1991* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992), 98.

<sup>66</sup>Ante Čuvalo, *The Croatian National Movement 1966-1972* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1990), 141; There was another much smaller group of Marxist internationalist intellectuals centered on the literary magazine *Praxis*. They were most well known for their critics of "Marxist ideology and practice and that [they] pushed for a better implementation of the Party proclaimed policies." See Čuvalo, *The Croatian*, 144.

Croatia and *ekavski* in Serbia- as well as two alphabets - Latin and Cyrillic- of equal status.<sup>67</sup> The *Declaration* was a response by Croatian intellectuals to a perceived "Serbianization of the Croatian language."<sup>68</sup> The issue of the 'Serbianization of the Croatian language' continued to be a cornerstone issue of the movement throughout.

As the Croatian Spring continued, intellectuals broadened their issue base to include demographic issues, economic concerns similar to those brought up by the Party leaders and controversial subjects like World War Two deaths in Croatia and the status of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The intellectuals focused their arguments around Croatian sovereignty, with sovereignty meaning "a Croat Communist leadership not susceptible to interfering central authorities."<sup>69</sup> The intellectual wing of the Croatian Spring offered a different avenue to express Croatian nationalist thought, which was outside of the Party apparatus.

The final group was students. The student movement centered around the University of Zagreb. The students were the most idealistic of the three groups. They backed the Party leadership and "demanded full human and national rights for the Croatian people."<sup>70</sup> The idealistic students' disappointment with lack of political reform led student groups to organize a strike in November 1971. It was this strike that triggered the crack down by Tito in December 1971. Tito's crackdown was extensive. Tito forced the Party leaders to step down. In addition, at least "741 persons were stripped of their posts and expelled from the party, another 280 party members were merely compelled to resign their posts, and yet another 131 functionaries were

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<sup>67</sup>Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia: A History* (McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal, 1999), 177.

<sup>68</sup>Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*, 101.

<sup>69</sup>Irvine, *The Croat Question*, 262.

<sup>70</sup>Čuvalo, *The Croatian*, 189.

demoted."<sup>71</sup> Many of the leaders of *Matica Hrvatska*, including future Croatian President Franjo Tuđman, were sentenced to long prison sentences during the crackdown. *Matica Hrvatska* and almost all of its publications were shut down. The purges also extended to "writers, filmmakers, university professors, and former liberal leaders" by its end in 1973.<sup>72</sup>

The Croatian Spring, while a nationalist movement, never came to be a separatist movement. The three factions of the Croatian Spring were working to improve Croatian national rights and acted in different ways to achieve their goal. Tito described his need for action after the student strike as being because the Croatian Spring was moving "little by little towards a Separatist [sic] line."<sup>73</sup> The Croatian Spring was a showcase of Croatian nationalism within the Yugoslav Communist system. While some intellectuals voiced opinions on taboo subjects, the movement was not allowed to run its full course. Croatian separatism at this time continued to be confined to the diaspora-based groups set up by the former leaders of the NDH.

Many different politicians since the mid-nineteenth century espoused notions of Croatian nationalism and the ideal of a Croatian independent state. The hijackers of TWA 355 had clear choices in which historical figures to invoke in their manifestos. Starčević and Pavelić represented an approach to Croatian nationalism and statehood that would forever be associated with the atrocities of the NDH, while Radić and the Croatian Spring both represented a different strand, even with their complex ideologies and historical legacies. An analysis of the manifestos published during the hijacker later in this paper will illuminate the choices of the hijackers. Notably, the hijackers made no mention of Starčević, Pavelić or the NDH. In contrast to that omission, the hijackers specifically invoked the legacy of Radić and the leaders of the Croatian

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<sup>71</sup>Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*, 139

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Quoted in Clissold, "Croat," 10.

Spring. The manifestos also presented arguments that echo both the economic and language grievances expressed during the Croatian Spring. The hijackers showed a clear choice in which historical legacy they hoped to be associated.

## THE CROATIAN SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

Following the flight of the leaders and sympathizers of the NDH in the aftermath of World War Two, a newly refashioned Croatian separatist movement formed within the Croatian diaspora outside of Yugoslavia. Multiple groups emerged, each started by a former leader of the NDH. A closer examination of the Croatian separatist movement that emerged following World War Two will illuminate two key characteristics of the movement. First, former Ustaša leaders began each of the three main umbrella groups following World War Two and guided the organizations to follow the ideology of the NDH. Second, a shift occurred within the Croatian separatist movement in the early 1960s and terrorist action became a prominent technique utilized by these separatist groups. These terrorist actions align with tactics described in Rapoport's 'New Left' wave.

Three separate Croatian separatist organizations emerged out of Croatian diaspora following World War Two. Ante Pavelić formed a group based out of Argentina (Pavelić's home after fleeing Croatia) called the Croatian Liberation Movement (HOP-*Hrvatski oslobodilački pokret*). HOP aimed to be an "umbrella organization for all Ustaša organizations abroad... whose single aim was the liberation of Croatia from the clutches of 'Serbo-communism'" (Tokić 2009: 741). HOP was the most well funded of the Croatian separatist groups in the immediate postwar period due to funds smuggled out of wartime Croatia and "could also count on at least the benevolence of some influential clerical circles" for support.<sup>74</sup>

In the Constitution of the Croatian Liberation Movement, the principles of HOP were

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<sup>74</sup>Clissold, "Croat," 5.

clearly presented. HOP's principles were derived from the political work of Starčević and his Party of Right, the Radić brothers and their Croatian Peasant Party and Pavelić and the Ustaša Party.<sup>75</sup> The Constitution also established three aims of HOP. First, HOP aimed to "refute the slanders spread against the Croatian people abroad and at propagating the truth concerning the Croatian State right."<sup>76</sup> Second, HOP aimed at "organizing and preparing the Croatian patriots and fighters for liberation of the Croatian people and for the re-establishment of the sovereign State of Croatia."<sup>77</sup> And third, to "take care of the interests of all Croatian minorities, which live out of the borders of the Croatian State, and observing all their justified aspirations."<sup>78</sup> While terrorism against Yugoslavia was not mentioned in this constitution written in 1956, following the radicalization of a new generation of Croats abroad, HOP and other groups turned to terrorism to further their cause.

The second major group to emerge was the Croatian National Committee (HNO - *Hrvatski narodni odbor*). Croatian Nationalist leader Branko Jelić formed the HNO in 1950 in Munich. Jelić was an original member of the Ustaša and the group's prewar representative to Nazi Germany.<sup>79</sup> The HNO, like the HOP, was "meant to serve as an umbrella organization for all Croats who sought the re-establishment of an Independent Croatian State."<sup>80</sup> While the HNO goal of the re-establishment of an independent Croatia matched that of other separatist groups, the HNO was none-the-less criticized for being too moderate. The HNO attracted supporters who

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<sup>75</sup>"Translation from Serbo-Croatian; Constitution of the Croatian Liberation Movement; Nature, Aim and Membership; Dinko Sakic," File 105-31569, Document 50, NARA box 165, Record Group 65, National Archives Records Administration at College Park.

<sup>76</sup>"Translation from Serbo-Croatian."

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Tokić, "The End of "Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement," 428.

<sup>80</sup>Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 741.



aimed to re-establish an independent Croatian state "based on the principles of democracy, human rights, and rule of law."<sup>81</sup> Jelić was also the only separatist leader to advocate for any relationship with Stalin's Soviet Union, another difference from other Croatian separatist groups.<sup>82</sup>

The third radical Croatian separatist group to emerge in the postwar period was the Croatian National Resistance (Otpor - *Hrvatski narodni otpor*). Vjekoslav 'Maks' Luburić founded Otpor in his postwar home of Franco's Spain in 1955. During World War Two, Luburić was in charge of the notorious concentration camp in Croatia, Jasenovac. Otpor was the most militant of the Croatian separatist groups formed in the postwar period. From its onset, Luburić vowed the organization would:

"Declare loud and clear: we are AGAINST EVERY YUGOSLAVIA ...it is essential to BREAK COMPLETELY FROM YUGOSLAVIA AS INDEPENDENT CROATIAN STATE the whole of Croatian territory, in its historical and ethnic borders without concern where the other nations [of Yugoslavia] choose to do the same or not."<sup>83</sup>

It was Otpor that Bušić was associated with during his time in the United States.<sup>84</sup> Bušić and the hijacking's connection to the Croatian separatist movement will be explored later in this paper.

Otpor was the most radical of the umbrella organizations that emerged after World War Two. At the top of every issue of Otpor's newsletter, they stated their radical agenda:

Our position is clear. Annihilate every Yugoslavia! To annihilate it with the Russians and the Americans, with the communists, non-communists, and anti-communists; to annihilate it with all those who annihilate it. To annihilate it with

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<sup>81</sup>Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 742.

<sup>82</sup>Clissold, "Croat," 7.

<sup>83</sup>Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 742.

<sup>84</sup>"ZVONKO BUSIC, ET AL, SKYJACKING OF TWA FLIGHT 355, SEPTEMBER 10, 1976; CAA-AIR PRIVACY," Folder 105-292599, Document 23, NARA Box 175, Record Group 65, National Archives Records Administration at College Park.

the dialectic of words and with dynamite, but to annihilate it absolutely; for, if there is any state which has no entitlement to existence, it is exclusively and alone Yugoslavia!<sup>85</sup>

While Otpor was considered the most radical of the separatist factions, all three groups based their ideology on the ideology of the Ustaša regime.

Up to the early 1960's, the Croatian separatist movement did not prominently utilize terrorism to achieve their goals. The Croatian separatist movement's goal was to amass recruits and prepare for the clash between East and West, which they believed to be eminent. The group's goals were "to position themselves as critical allies of the West in the struggle against global communism" and for this support, they believed, they would be rewarded with their own independent Croatian state.<sup>86</sup> Beginning in the early 1960s, the movement's tactics began to shift towards terrorism when a new generation of Croats arose within the émigré communities.

The organizations recruited their membership predominately from new Croatian migrants to Western Europe after World War Two. West Germany served as the ripest ground for finding new recruits in the 1960s because of an influx of guest workers from Yugoslavia, which accompanied the West German economic boom. From 1960 to 1976, the number of Yugoslav workers in West Germany rose from 22,000 to 640,000. These guest workers were 65 percent Croatian. The new Croatian migrants became the backbone of the Croatian separatist movement because they were "young, poor, uneducated and disaffected."<sup>87</sup> These new, young émigrés were inundated with radical propaganda to convert them to the Croatian separatist cause. One typical example of this propaganda read:

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<sup>85</sup>Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 745.

<sup>86</sup>Tokić, "The End of "Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement," 429.

<sup>87</sup>Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 743.

It must be clear to all, that this state [an independent Croatia] can only be established through a general Croatian revolution, and not through peaceful, legal, or diplomatic means. We know well the character and qualities of our adversary. They will never leave on their own, as long as they have the power and bayonets in their hands. One must take them away, so that the Croatian nation once again can have a state of its own accord and become master of its own destiny.<sup>88</sup>

The young and malleable Croatian émigrés would become one of the most active terrorist movements of the era.<sup>89</sup>

HOP, HNO, Otpor and other radical Croatian separatist groups were very active from the mid-1950 onward in Australia, Sweden and the US, in addition to the states where the HOP, HNO and Otpor were founded.<sup>90</sup> Over a ten-year period in Australia, various separatist groups "committed no fewer than 52 significant incidents of violence...leading to a high number of casualties and considerable property damage." Worldwide, they carried out "more than 50 assassinations or assassination attempts, 40 bombings of public buildings and monuments, and 2 airplane hijackings."<sup>91</sup> The terrorist acts carried out by Croatian separatists followed closely in line with the symbolic target choices of Rapoport's third wave.

The groups specifically sought to target symbols of the Yugoslav state. An instruction manual created by an Australian-based group urged supporters to "Destroy all Yugoslav embassies and consulates, kill Yugoslav diplomatic representatives because they are common criminals and Fascists. Prevent migrants from travelling on Yugoslav aircraft, and destroy Yugoslav aircraft. Wreck the travel agencies."<sup>92</sup> An Otpor leader also explicitly expressed a desire to target Yugoslav symbols by writing, "Yugoslavia does not exist only within its borders,

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<sup>88</sup>Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 745.

<sup>89</sup>Tokić, "The End of "Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement," 422.

<sup>90</sup>Hockenos, *Homeland Calling*, 60.

<sup>91</sup>Tokić, "The End of "Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement," 422.

<sup>92</sup>Quoted in Clissold, "Croat," 16.

but also abroad... We must annihilate Yugoslavia everywhere it exists.”<sup>93</sup> An example of this strategy in action was the other hijacking committed by Croatian separatists in the 1970s.

The first hijacking by Croatian separatist occurred in Sweden in 1972 when members of the terrorist organization Otpor hijacked SAS 130. Two precipitating events from the previous year led to the hijacking. First, on February 10, 1971, two Croatians seized the Yugoslav consulate in Gothenburg, Sweden. The gunmen vowed to killed the five hostages they seized, unless the Yugoslav authorities released a Croatian terrorist who was on death row in Croatia, and sent the released prisoner to Spain with \$100,000.<sup>94</sup> The gunmen held the Consulate for twenty-four hours before unceremoniously surrendering on February 11, 1971.<sup>95</sup>

The second event also involved Yugoslav officials in Sweden. On April 7, 1971, two Croatian gunmen entered the Yugoslav embassy and shot and killed Vladimir Rolović, the Yugoslav ambassador to Sweden. The gunmen also injured two other embassy employees.<sup>96</sup> After shooting the ambassador, the two gunmen surrendered to authorities. Three others were also arrested in connection with the planning of the assassination. A total of seven Croatians were in jail from these two acts. The hijacking of SAS 130 was a direct response to these two previous events.

On September 15, 1972, three Croatian men boarded SAS 130 in Gothenburg, Sweden. Shortly after departure, the three men hijacked the airplane with guns smuggled onto the plane. They demanded that the plane immediately redirect to Malmö, Sweden.<sup>97</sup> The plane proceeded to

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<sup>93</sup>Quoted in Tokić, "Landscapes of Conflict," 746.

<sup>94</sup>"Seize Consulate, Vow to Kill 5," *Chicago Tribune*, February 11, 1971.

<sup>95</sup>Dan Hansén, "Crisis and Perspectives on Policy Change: Swedish Counter-terrorism Policymaking." (PhD diss., University of Utrecht, 2007), 48.

<sup>96</sup>"Yugoslav Envoy Shot by 2 Croats in Sweden," *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1971.

<sup>97</sup>Hansén, "Crisis and Perspectives," 49.

Malmö with ninety total passengers, including the hijackers and crew.<sup>98</sup> The seven Croatians imprisoned for the seizure of the consulate in Gothenburg and the assassination in Stockholm were to be immediately released from prison and were to meet the hijacked airplane in Malmö.

In Malmö, the negotiations between the hijackers and the police continued. The hijackers and the police agreed that half of the released prisoners would board the plane, and then immediately half of the hostages would be released. This exchange would be repeated twice. The first exchange went according to plan, with half of the hostages released after three of the released prisoners boarded. After the next three released prisoners boarded the plane, the hijackers changed their demands. The hijackers refused to release the hostages as agreed upon earlier. They demanded that the plane be re-fueled and that they wanted one million Swedish crowns. Eventually, the hostages were released in exchanged for the plane being re-fueled and negotiated sum of five hundred thousand-crowns, but the airline crew remained onboard the hijacked aircraft.<sup>99</sup>

The hijackers then proceeded to force the pilots to fly to Spain. Once landed in Spain, Spanish authorities immediately surrounded the plane. The crew was released and the hijackers surrendered.<sup>100</sup> The Spanish authorities confiscated the five hundred thousand-crown ransom and held a trial for the hijackers, but after a year in prison, the hijackers were released. Some of the hijackers left for Paraguay after being released, where they mistakenly killed the Uruguayan ambassador to Paraguay, when they meant to kill the Yugoslav ambassador.<sup>101</sup> After this event,

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<sup>98</sup>“YUGOSLAVS HIJACK JET, MAKE SWEDEN FREE 6 PRISONERS: JET HIJACKING,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 1972.

<sup>99</sup>Hansén, “Crisis and Perspectives,” 51-53.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>101</sup>Clissold, “Croat,” 11.

these men were handed over to the Swedish authorities.<sup>102</sup>

Through the examination of the origins of the Croatian separatist movement and its shift to terrorist activity in the early 1960s a number of characteristics of the movement come to light. The Croatian separatist movement original leaders and ideology directly descended from the regime of the NDH. All three main umbrella organizations were led by former Ustaše leaders and espoused its ideology. Second, when the movement shifted towards terrorist activities in the early 1960s, the organizations acted like classic wave three actors. They specifically targeted symbols of the Yugoslav state outside of the Yugoslavia through bombings and targeted assassinations. The hijacking of SAS 130 showed Croatian separatists utilizing hijacking to secure demands and safe-passage that they believed would further the cause of Croatian independence. While Zvonko Bušić and the other hijackers of TWA 355 shared the same long-term goal, an independent Croatia, as these other Croatian separatist actors, a close examination of the hijacking of TWA 355 will shed light on the differences between the hijacking of TWA 355 and other Croatian separatist movement actions.

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<sup>102</sup>Hockenos, *Homeland Calling*, 64.

## THE HIJACKING

TWA flight 355 was originally scheduled to fly from New York to Chicago. Shortly after takeoff, the flight was hijacked and sent by the hijackers in the direction of London, England. In the meantime, at 11 P.M., EST the NYPD found the locker mentioned in the original hijacking note. Inside the locker were an envelope with copies of two leaflets and another set of demands and “a cast iron stew pot with two wires running out from under the pot’s lid and taped to the outside.”<sup>103</sup> The demands read:

Here are the demands which must be immediately met, one, both of these texts must appear in their entirety in tomorrow morning's edition of the following newspapers: New York Times, all three editions; Los Angeles Times; Chicago Tribune; International Herald Tribune; and Washington Post.

Two, at least one third of each text must be printed on the first page of the first section. The remainder in the first section.

Three, through a prearranged code word we shall hear if these demands have been met by tomorrow (sic) deadline. If they have not been met, a second timed explosive device which is likewise in a highly busy location shall be activated. In the event these texts are printed as per instructions, this device will be deactivated.

Four, the fate of many people hangs in the balance if any attempts whatsoever are made to circumvent our instructions. Fighters for Free Croatia.<sup>104</sup>

The NYPD removed the bomb from the locker and took it to a deactivation site in the Bronx. At 12:45 A.M. EST, the bomb exploded at the site in the Bronx. The blast killed police officer Brian Murray and seriously injured three other police officers.

The plane landed in Newfoundland at 1 A.M. Captain Carey informed Mr. Bušić that the current plane they were flying, a Boeing 727, was not equipped with the proper navigational equipment, and the crew were not rated properly to safely make a transatlantic flight. They

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<sup>103</sup>“592 F.2d 13”

<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

would have to wait for another plane, a Boeing 707, to guide them across the Atlantic. In order to secure the guide plane, and a helicopter to distribute leaflets over Montreal, the hijackers agreed to release 35 passengers.<sup>105</sup> After releasing the passengers and waiting several hours for the 707 to be arranged, TWA 355 took off for Keflavik Air Base in Iceland.

At 6:57 A.M. EST, the 727 landed in Iceland. In Iceland, the plane was refueled again, and luggage, containing copies of the group's leaflets, was transferred to the 707. The leaflets needed to be transferred because Mr. Bušić wanted the leaflets to be dropped above London, their next destination, and a Boeing 707 is better equipped to perform this task than a 727.<sup>106</sup>

The two planes eventually took off for London. The 727 performed holding patterns over London, while the 707 dropped the leaflets above the city. Over the next 24 hours, propaganda letters were also dropped above Montreal, Chicago and New York in fulfillment of the hijacker's request.<sup>107</sup> After successfully dropping the leaflets over London, both planes flew towards Charles de Gaulle Airport, where before landing, more leaflets were dropped over the city center of Paris.

The French authorities decided to take a hardline approach to the situation. Initially, they were not going to let the 727 land in Paris, but were eventually persuaded by the United States Federal Aviation Administration to allow the plane to land. Immediately the French authorities directed the plane to a remote area of the airport. It was around 1 P.M. EST. Several hours later, the French shot out the planes tires and blocked the runway. The French Interior Minister Michel Poniatowski then radioed out to the 727 and explained the French hardline position on the hijacking. He said,

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<sup>105</sup>Bell, *A Time of Terror*, 20.

<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, 20-21.

<sup>107</sup>"Chronology."



Your plane cannot take off. You are considered personally responsible for the lives of the passengers and the crew. You have therefore the choice of two solutions: To be executed if you threaten the lives of the hostages or to surrender to French authorities in order to be immediately deported. These conditions are irrevocable.<sup>108</sup>

This ultimatum by the French would bring an end to the journey.

At 9 P.M. EST, the hijackers spoke over the radio with American Ambassador Kenneth Rush. It was agreed that Julie Bušić would leave the plane and go to the control tower to receive confirmation that the manifestos had been published. She did this, and immediately after verifying the publications was arrested.<sup>109</sup>

At 2 A.M. EST, the ordeal finally ended. The remaining four hijackers surrendered to the authorities. Zvonko Bušić revealed to the passengers, crew and possibly the other two hijackers that the bombs had been fake. They were made of nothing but pots, silly putty and wires. The hijackers broke the ‘bombs’ into smaller pieces and distributed them to the remaining passengers.<sup>110</sup> While Bušić had hoped to fly the plane to Zagreb and distribute leaflets over the city, he still considered the event a success with mass publication of the cause of Croatian independence. The five hijackers were given a choice by the French to be deported to Yugoslavia or to the United States. They chose the United States, where they were charged with air piracy. The remaining passengers on the plane were flown to Chicago after the ordeal.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

While the whole ordeal took place over thirty hours, many were left wondering who were the hijackers and where did they come from? This section will analyze these questions. Zvonko Bušić identified himself as the leader of the group and mastermind of the hijacking. He was

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<sup>108</sup>Bell, *A Time of Terror*, 25.

<sup>109</sup>“Chronology.”

<sup>110</sup>William Goldschalg, “Unnoticed pans, gifts were ‘bombs,’” *Cleveland Press*, September 13, 1976.

subsequently interviewed about the hijacking. His wife Julie's role, which in the immediate aftermath of the event was unclear, can now be more firmly established with the publishing of her memoir. Julie's role was peripheral, although it will be seen that she played a part in researching planes and hijackings. The other three hijackers - Mark Vlašić, Petar Matanić and Frane Pešut – played minimal roles in planning the hijacking. Vlašić, Matanić, and Pešut were allegedly only told they were going on a “mission for Croatia” on the day of the hijacking.<sup>111</sup>

Zvonko Bušić was clearly the main protagonist of the hijacking of TWA 355. The U.S. justice system corroborated this statement. Zvonko Bušić spent 32 years in prison for the hijacking, while the other four participants spent between twelve and thirteen years in jail. It is beyond the scope of this paper to offer a comprehensive psychological profile of Zvonko and Julie Bušić. In lieu of a comprehensive profile, I will establish some relevant background information on the Bušićs that will provide the personal context out of which they hijacked TWA 355. I argue that Zvonko Bušić felt a deep connection to the cause of Croatian nationalism and independence and deeply desired to become a Croatian intellectual. Due to growing fear of assassination by Yugoslav intelligence services and his desire to become a major player in the Croatian separatist movement, Bušić ultimately turned to the act of hijacking an airplane to attempt to make an impact for his cause of Croatian independence. To analyze Bušić's background, I will utilize the work of Jeanne Knutson. Knutson interviewed Zvonko Bušić extensively for her chapter (1981) entitled “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Towards a Negative Identity: The Case of an American Revolutionary” in *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism*, ed. Yonah Alexander.<sup>112</sup> I also utilize Julie Bušić's memoir, which

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<sup>111</sup>Quoted in Max H. Seigel, “Croatian Hijacking Leader Takes Full Blame for Seizure and Bomb,” *The New York Times*, September 18, 1976.

was published in 2000.

Zvonko Bušić was born on January 23, 1946 in Gorica, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Yugoslavia. He described the village he grew up in as “alive with stories of Croatian history and of Croatian Patriots.”<sup>113</sup> While he does believe that both his parents and his siblings shared a strong sense of Croatian nationalism with him, there were two other important figures that Mr. Bušić identified as being very influential in his life and specifically, influenced his Croatian Nationalism.

The first figure was Stjepan Radić. As discussed earlier in this paper, Radić was the leading Croatian nationalist in the first quarter of the twentieth century, noted for his ability to mobilize Croatian peasantry. The second influential figure was Zvonko’s cousin, Bruno Bušić. Bruno Bušić was a Croatian intellectual and journalist. He was allegedly assassinated in Paris in 1978 by the Yugoslav intelligence service, UDBA.<sup>114</sup> Zvonko described Bruno Bušić “as some kind of ideal of Croatian nationalism and patriotism.”<sup>115</sup> Idolizing Stjepan Radić and Bruno Bušić from an early age, Zvonko Bušić became enthralled with Croatian nationalism before he left his hometown to study in Zagreb.

Bušić left his hometown with the goal of becoming a Croatian nationalist intellectual, in the same mold as Bruno Bušić. He began his studies in Zagreb in the early 1960s, but felt compelled to leave Yugoslavia and seek education abroad due to fear for his safety after openly

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<sup>112</sup>Jeanne Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Toward a Negative Identity: The Case of an American Revolutionary Terrorist,” in *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism* edited by Yonah Alexander (New York: Pergamon Press 1981).

<sup>113</sup>Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures,” 116.

<sup>114</sup>John Schindler, “Who Killed Bruno Bušić?” October 17, 2012. <http://20committee.com/2012/10/17/who-killed-bruno-busic/> Dr. Schindler is a historian at the Naval War College with a forthcoming book on the Yugoslav intelligence services.

<sup>115</sup>Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures,” 119.

supporting Croatian nationalist causes in Yugoslavia. He had seen friends of his be taken away to jail and “was tipped off that his turn was approaching.”<sup>116</sup> He left for Vienna and began a nomadic existence driven by fear and terror that would define his life from that point forward.

The next few years of Bušić’s life, he was constantly living in a state of flux with Bušić shuttling between Western Europe and the United States. Initially, he attempted to finish his studies in Vienna, only to have his visa revoked after he was forced to drop out of university due to financial concerns. Bušić never completed his university studies. It also was during this time that he met his future wife, Julie Schultz, who was an American tutoring English in Vienna.<sup>117</sup> With Zvonko unable to return to Yugoslavia out of fear of repercussions by the Yugoslav authorities, he convinced Julie and a friend of hers to travel to Zagreb in 1970 and drop leaflets from a prominent tower in Zagreb. Julie was arrested for this act and spent one month in prison in Yugoslavia.<sup>118</sup>

Also during this period, Bušić became associated with Croatian separatist groups both in the United States and Europe. Zvonko lived in Cleveland for a period in the late 1960s, where he joined the Cleveland wing of the Croatian separatist group, Otpor. A member of the Croatian community of Cleveland described him as being an “active” member of Otpor while in Cleveland.<sup>119</sup> Zvonko tried to organize the younger members of Otpor into a “more active faction,”<sup>120</sup> but he failed to accomplish this because the older members refused support him. While living in West Germany, Bušić met with Branko Jelić, who was the head of the Croatian

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<sup>116</sup>Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures,” 120.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 125.

<sup>118</sup>For a lengthy summary of this event, see Bušić, *Lovers and Madmen*, 49-110.

<sup>119</sup>“Hijacking pair exuded ‘lot of mystery,’” *Chicago Tribune*, September, 13, 1976.

<sup>120</sup>“ZVONKO BUSIC ET AL.”

separatist group, Croatian National Resistance (HNO - *Hrvatski narodni odbor*). Bušić and Jelić did not work together long before having a falling out because they did not “see eye-to-eye anymore.”<sup>121</sup> In Julie Bušić’s memoir, she described a trip that she and Zvonko took to Ireland to meet with members of the Irish Republican Army to establish connections between the Irish group and Croatian groups in Western Europe. The trip was ultimately unsuccessful with the Bušićs forced to leave Ireland without holding any significant meetings.<sup>122</sup>

By 1972, Zvonko and Julie were married and living in Oregon, while Julie returned to school. In September 1972, Zvonko read about the hijacking of SAS 130. He asked Julie to learn everything she could about airplanes and hijackings, including if it was possible to drop leaflets from a plane.<sup>123</sup> Julie Bušić set out to learn everything there was to know “about commercial planes, the 727s, the 747s, the DC-10s.”<sup>124</sup> This was the beginning of the planning for the hijacking of TWA 355.

In 1975, the couple moved to New York City. Zvonko continued to fear for his physical safety.<sup>125</sup> As Julie Bušić put it, it was also during this time that “the subject of hijacking [had] moved from simple hypothesis to a shady area that defies analysis.” Zvonko had made a decision to hijack an airplane for the cause of Croatian independence.<sup>126</sup> Julie Bušić attempted to reason with Zvonko that a hijacking would bring negative media attention and that she feared the repercussions of such a radical action. But Zvonko was adamant that a hijacking was the right

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<sup>121</sup>Bušić, *Lovers and Madmen*, 140-151.

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, 157-166.

<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*, 234-236.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, 236.

<sup>125</sup>Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures,” 126.

<sup>126</sup>Bušić, *Lovers and Madmen*, 241.

action. He later described a purpose of the hijacking as “to brighten up those ideas, to... keep hopes alive, to calm down people and... make them aware, most.”<sup>127</sup> While Julie allegedly attempted to convince Zvonko not to hijack the airplane, she ultimately decided to go along with her husband.

With the idea of hijacking an airplane firmly affixed in Bušić, Zvonko recruited the three other Croatians to carry out the hijacking with him and his wife. Bušić described the criteria for picking the other three hijackers as being centered on “the certainty that no Yugoslav infiltrators were involved, that all were good Croatian patriots, that those chosen trusted him and would be willing to following [sic] his lead without advanced questioning.”<sup>128</sup> The other three men allegedly did not know that they were going to be involved in a hijacking.<sup>129</sup> With a loyal crew assembled, Zvonko Bušić was now positioned to execute the act that he hoped would “confirm his identification with the Croatian people and the Croatian cause, to finalize his revolutionary identity.”<sup>130</sup> In the eyes of Bušić, the hijacking of TWA 355 would cement his legacy.

The final question to ask is how should this event be interpreted within the Croatian separatist movement? As previously discussed, Bušić had been associated with Croatian separatist organizations, but characteristics of the hijacking hardly point to this event being the work of an established terrorist actor. After the event, Bušić denied that the hijacking was connected to any Croatian separatist organization.<sup>131</sup> Hockenos, in his book *Homeland Calling: Exile Patriotism and the Balkan Wars*, contradicted this denial. Hockenos claimed “Bušić was a

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<sup>127</sup>Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures,” 127.

<sup>128</sup>Seigel, “Croatian Testifies.”

<sup>129</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup>Emphasis in original, Knutson, “Social and Psychodynamic Pressures,” 128.

<sup>131</sup>Zvonko Bušić, “Uz ‘Poziv Na Dostojanstvo i Slobodu,’” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, October 6, 1976.

prominent Otpor loyalist and leader of the North American branch in the early 1970s.”<sup>132</sup>

Hockenos added that the former leader of North American Otpor, Marin Sopta, said of the Bušićes, “The Bušićes were our heroes. They did more to promote the Croatian cause than anyone else.”<sup>133</sup> Hockenos also noted that Sopta visited Bušić often during his prison sentence.

Even with these connections to Otpor, characteristics of the hijacking point to the event being the work of an amateur, not the work of an established terrorist organization. During the trial, Bušić testified that he bought the dynamite for the real bomb from a man in a bar. Bušić claimed the man asked him, “You like a revolutionary. Are you?” To which Bušić replied, “Yes. And you look like the Mafia. You must sell illegal stuff.” Bušić then proceeded to buy dynamite from the man out of the trunk of the man’s car.<sup>134</sup> Other logistical factors also point to the hijacking being an amateur undertaking, such as the lack of real knowledge about the plane’s trans-Atlantic flight capability and the plane’s ability to actually drop leaflets over cities.

A brief examination of the background of Zvonko Bušić illuminates three key points that are relevant to the hijacking. First, Bušić sought to connect himself with other prominent Croatian nationalists, both in an historical sense, through Stjepan Radić, and a contemporary setting, through Bruno Bušić. Second the growing fear of physical violence, which allegedly had followed Bušić since his time in Yugoslavia, ultimately pushed Bušić to hijack TWA 355. Third, Zvonko Bušić had been associated with Croatian separatist groups in both the United States and Western Europe. Prior to the hijacking, Bušić failed to make his mark in the Croatian separatist cause. The hijacking would cement his legacy in the movement, but the amateur characteristics of the hijacking hardly lead one to believe that the hijacking was the work of an established

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<sup>132</sup>Hockenos, *Homeland Calling*, 65.

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>134</sup>Quoted in, Seigel, “Croatian testifies.”

terrorist organization. The hijacking of TWA 355 was a desperate act, carried out by a desperate man, but what message did Bušić publicize to the world through this act?

## ANALYSIS OF MANIFESTOS

Zvonko Bušić and his co-conspirators' main demand after hijacking TWA 355 was for the group's two manifestos to be published in five major newspapers: the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *LA Times* all published at least excerpts from the texts at the urging of the FBI.<sup>135</sup> In addition to the publishing of the texts in the newspapers, the hijackers demanded that copies of the leaflets be dropped over Chicago, Montreal, London and Paris. These two texts were at the center of the event. What can we learn by their contents?

The centrality of the leaflets to the hijackers sheds light on two key aspects of the hijacking. The centrality of the leaflets in the hijackers' demands showed that publicity was the primary goal of the hijackers. Unlike the hijackers of SAS 130 who demanded both cash and safe transportation, Zvonko Bušić was only concerned about the publication of the manifestos. In one of texts of the hijackers of TWA 355, the stated goal of the hijacking "was to present an accurate picture of the brutal oppression taking place in Yugoslavia," and "to illustrate the idea that there indeed exists, nobler values than the preservation of a bloody, totalitarianistic, and imperialistic creation."<sup>136</sup> The manifestos would present this 'accurate picture.' The hijackers were dependent on the spectacle of an international hijacking catching the attention of the media.

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<sup>135</sup>For an editorial perspective on the hijacking, See Frank J. Prial, "Editors of 4 Newspapers Explain Their Decisions to Print Demands," September 14, 1976, *New York Times*; William C. Rempel, "Editors Explain Decisions to Publish Hijack Demands," September 12, 1976, *Los Angeles Times*; Maxwell McCrohon, "Reporting the News: How The Tribune moved quickly to help the hostages," September 19, 1976, *Chicago Tribune*.

<sup>136</sup>"Text of 'Croatian Fighters,'" *New York Times*, September 11, 1976.



If publicity for the Croatian grievances against Yugoslavia was the sole goal of the hijacking, how was the hijacker's choice of audience important? The hijackers stated that they chose to target an American audience because "[w]hen the eventual uprising against Serbian Imperialism begins, the American people will not, then, allow themselves to be further manipulated regarding the justifications of such an occurrence."<sup>137</sup> The American audience was key to the hijackers goals because they wanted to present their case for Croatian independence.

Through the text of their manifestos, the hijackers made clear choices in where they placed themselves in the historic legacy of Croatian nationalism. Stjepan Radić was mentioned by name, but more importantly, there was no mention of Ante Starčević, Ante Pavelić, or the NDH. The hijackers also sought to identify with the Croatian Spring, as opposed to Starčević or Pavelić by citing similar grievances to those that arose during the Croatian Spring. Their attempts to distance themselves from the negative legacy of Pavelić and the NDH and to present parallel arguments to those made in the Croatian Spring become evident when analyzing the hijackers' manifestos.

The hijackers invoked two themes that can be drawn directly back to the Croatian Spring. First, economic grievances played a prominent role in the hijacker's text. They claimed, "The Croatian moral and material possessions are disposed of in any way Belgrade deems appropriate. Through taxes and all resources from the land."<sup>138</sup> The specific economic issue that the hijackers noted in the text was the percentage of national income being set apart "for use in under-developed countries." The hijackers claimed that 8 percent of Croatian national income was being repurposed to projects outside of Croatia by the Belgrade regime, when the United Nations

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<sup>137</sup>"Text of 'Croatian Fighters.'"

<sup>138</sup>"Text of 'Declaration' Issued by 'Headquarters of Croatian National Liberation Forces,'" *New York Times*, September 12, 1976.

only suggested the percentage for any nation to be 0.5 percent.<sup>139</sup> These economic grievances directly echo similar arguments that were prominently featured during the Croatian Spring.

Second, language issues played a prominent role in the texts. The texts claimed, “A frantic attack, unparalleled anytime or anyplace, is being waged against the Croatian language.”<sup>140</sup> While other dialects in Yugoslavia were currently being developed into modern languages, the hijackers claimed, “The Croatian grammar and orthography...is prohibited and burned.”<sup>141</sup> Once again, these arguments paralleled others made by Croatian intellectuals during the Croatian Spring. The manifesto also made references to Tito’s purge of the liberal Party leadership during the Croatian Spring. The text referred to forced resignation of the Party leaders during the Croatian Spring, Miko Tripalo and Dr. Savka Dapcević-Kučar, as a prominent example of Croatian political oppression.<sup>142</sup> The only other historic Croatian figure referenced specifically by name in the manifestos was Stjepan Radić.<sup>143</sup> As discussed earlier, many politicians cited Radić’s legacy on opposite sides of the spectrum during the Yugoslav period. The absence of any mention of the NDH, Pavelić or Starčević clearly showed a desire to distance the group from these negative connoting strands of Croatian nationalism.

By analyzing the two texts that the hijackers distributed, clear choices by the hijackers become evident. First, the hijackers chose to hijack an American airplane and demanded that their two texts be printed in four American newspapers, one international newspaper and be dropped above major Western capitals. These demands point to the desire to utilize the ‘theatre’

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<sup>139</sup>“Text of ‘Declaration.’”

<sup>140</sup>Ibid.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid.

<sup>142</sup>“Text of ‘Croatian Fighters.’”

<sup>143</sup>“Text of ‘Declaration.’”

of terrorism to publicize their cause, and gain legitimacy in the international sphere. Second, the hijackers aimed to place themselves away from the strongly negatively connoting strands of Croatian nationalism, instead attempting to associate with the more moderate ideas of Stjepan Radić and the Croatian Spring. These two choices by hijackers of TWA 355 differentiate their actions from those of other actors in the Croatian separatist movement.

## REACTION

The reaction to the hijacking took a number of different forms. Croatian-American newspapers and the Yugoslav state media clearly chose sides in their reporting of the event. The mainstream American media took a more nuanced approach by providing historical context to Croatian nationalism. The mainstream media also expressed sympathetic views towards the hijackers, which were evident in portrayals of the hijackers through interviews with passengers on TWA 355 and friends and family of the hijackers. Ultimately though, the death of police officer Brian Murray and the hijackers' conviction in court overshadowed any sympathetic views for the hijackers.

*Hrvatski Tjednik Danica –The Morning Star (Danica)* was a Croatian language weekly newspaper published by the Croatian Franciscans of St. Jerome Croatian Catholic Church in Chicago from 1946 to 1990. The Croatian Franciscans clearly defined the paper's political message on the Church's website by stating that one of the paper's goals was to "convey a specific answer to a number of pro-Yugoslav papers which were circulated throughout the United States and had a negative influence on the Croatian immigrants."<sup>144</sup> The newspaper also strongly favored Croatian independence. Following the collapse of the NDH and the re-creation of Yugoslavia, the Croatian Franciscans aimed to use the paper as a way "to circulate the truth

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<sup>144</sup>“The Franciscan Printery, Chicago,” St. Jerome's Catholic Church of Chicago, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://www.stjeromecroatian.org/eng/custody3.html>.

about Croatians, and broaden the national thoughts and ideas of an independent home.”<sup>145</sup>

*Danica* covered the hijacking and trial extensively. The paper supported the hijackers throughout.

The initial coverage in the edition following the hijacking included a lengthy summary of the event. At the end of initial coverage, they specifically compiled the positive reactions to the hijackers and their cause from the passengers on TWA 355 from interviews done with large American newspapers.<sup>146</sup> The paper also printed editorials extolling the American media’s coverage of the hijacking.<sup>147</sup> The most outright sign of support for the hijackers was the publishing of letters calling for monetary contributions toward the hijackers’ legal defense. The “Fund for Free Croatia,” wrote the appeal. The committee of the ‘Fund for Free Croatia’ included Father Slavko Slodo, a Croatian Franciscan and later editor of another publication by St. Jerome.<sup>148</sup> The paper also later published a letter from Zvonko Bušić from prison, which both defended the hijackers’ action and called for funds for their defense.<sup>149</sup>

The paper continued to support the hijackers throughout their trial in Federal Court. During the trial, the paper referred the Julie Bušić as the queen of the hijacking.<sup>150</sup> The paper also described the trial and the hijackers as,

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<sup>145</sup>“The Franciscan Printery, Chicago.”

<sup>146</sup>“Dogadjaj Koji je Uzburio Ameriku i Svijet,” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, September 15, 1976.

<sup>147</sup>For two examples see “‘Nepristrana Uskogrudnost’ ili Što Svijet misli o Hrvatima,” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, October 10 1976; and, “Borci Za Slobodnu Hrvatsku: Poziv Američkom Narodu,” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, October 13, 1976.

<sup>148</sup>“Fond Za Pomoć Utamničenicima Hrvatima,” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, Sept 28, 1976; “The Franciscan Printery, Chicago”

<sup>149</sup>Bušić, “Uz ‘Poziv Na Dostojanstvo i Slobodu.’”

<sup>150</sup>“Krajica Otmice,” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, October 13, 1976.

One of the most dramatic developments in Croatia's recent political history. Even if that history is being played out thousands of kilometers away from Croatia, it is closer to Croatia than anything that might be happening in Croatia itself. No one today strikes so deeply at the Croatian heart like the testimonies of our young messengers of freedom and human dignity. Nowhere is Croatia so convincingly accusing its prison Yugoslavia, like here in Brooklyn.<sup>151</sup>

The coverage by *Danica* in no ways represented the typical reaction to the event by Croatian-Americans. *Zajedničar*, the official organ of the Croatian Fraternal Union reacted to the hijacking in a polar opposite manner.

The Croatian Fraternal Union (CFU) was established in Pittsburgh in 1894 originally as a “mutual benefit society” for Croatian steelworkers. It would grow to become one of the largest Croatian-American groups in the United States. The CFU established *Zajedničar* in 1904. The paper was printed in both Croatian and English.<sup>152</sup> During World War Two, *Zajedničar* promoted an ambiguous policy towards Pavelić and the NDH. The paper promoted Yugoslav unity in its English-language section, while at the same time promoting Croatian independence in its Croatian-language section.<sup>153</sup> Following the war, the paper “maintained a ‘neutral’ but obviously pro-regime outlook toward Yugoslavia.”<sup>154</sup> This shift was motivated by the changing demographics of the Croatian-American community. As the Croatian community in the United States grew older the organization shifted towards supporting the official U.S. Government

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<sup>151</sup>Bogdan Radica, “Trenutak Istine Zvonka Bušića,” *Hrvatski Tjednik Danica-The Morning Star*, May 16, 1977. UNC-Chapel Hill Serbo-Croatian instructor Adnan Džumhur did this translation.

<sup>152</sup>Michael C. McAdams and Prpić, George J., “The Croatian Press,” in *The Ethnic Press in the United States: An Historical Analysis and Handbook*, ed. Sally M. Miller (New York, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1987) 46.

<sup>153</sup>McAdams and Prpić, “The Croatian Press,” 53.

<sup>154</sup>*Ibid.*, 55.

stance on Yugoslavia.<sup>155</sup> The paper's coverage of the hijacking echoed this shift.

*Zajedničar* was published weekly during the time of the hijacking. The first edition following the hijacking, on September 15, 1976, made no mention of the hijacking whatsoever. The paper's editors did not address the hijacking until the next issue, eleven days after the hijacking. The editors responded with a brief statement which read,

The Croatian Fraternal Union of America is a fraternal benefit society whose by-laws strictly prohibit the Society from engaging in any political controversy. The CFU, from its founders to the present day, is dedicated to the principle of promoting citizenship in the U.S. and Canada among its members. The CFU is an American organization of 110,000 members of Croatian or other Slav descent. As a fraternal organization, we disclaim any connection with any unlawful activities.<sup>156</sup>

Following the statement, *Zajedničar* re-printed the editorial response of the *Pittsburg Post-Gazette*, which denounced the hijacking as a “DEPLORABLE hijacking by Croatian terrorists.”<sup>157</sup> While the CFU denounced the hijacking as a terrorist action, they offered far from the most denunciatory reaction to the hijacking. Quite predictably, that reaction came from the state media in Yugoslavia.

The state media in Yugoslavia immediately denounced the hijacking as a terrorist attack by Ustaše, and criticized the American government's reaction to the event. This reaction was seen in newspapers across Yugoslavia including in the Zagreb paper *Vecerni List*, which “expect[ed] vigorous steps” to curb Croatian extremism.<sup>158</sup> The Yugoslav government also

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<sup>155</sup>McAdams and Prpić, “The Croatian Press,” 55.

<sup>156</sup>John Bodavinac, et al., “An Editorial,” *Zajedničar*, September 22, 1976.

<sup>157</sup>Emphasis in original, Bodavinac, et al., “An Editorial.”

<sup>158</sup>“Tanjug Cites Yugoslav Press on Ustashi Hijackers,” *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, Sept 13, 1976.

directly criticized the American handling of the hijacking, claiming that the United States had veered away from their stated policy and negotiated with terrorists.<sup>159</sup> While the official Yugoslav media reaction to the event was to immediately denounce the hijackers as fascist terrorists, the U.S. media's reaction was more nuanced.

Three types of articles dominated the initial American coverage of the hijacking: background on the conflict between Croatia and Yugoslavia; passengers' reactions to the hijacking; and portrayals of hijackers. In these three types of articles, the media established a nuanced and balanced reaction to the hijackings. These articles avoided extremes that *Danica* and the Yugoslav media portrayed. While the mainstream American media showed signs of sympathetic views about the hijackers, the coverage of the death of police officer Brian Murray and the hijackers' subsequent trial overshadowed any sympathetic thoughts.

All of the major newspapers that published the hijackers' manifestos produced stories on the background of the Croatian separatist movement. In these background articles, the media largely stayed away from directly labeling the hijackers as terrorists, instead choosing the less value-laden terms 'nationalist' or 'hijackers.' Most articles placed the event alongside the previous Croatian separatist terrorist action in Europe and South America, but also mentioned the long history of Croatian nationalism and Tito's crackdown of the Croatian Spring.<sup>160</sup> The newspapers produced balanced historical coverage of the event and its relevant history. The

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<sup>159</sup>Michael Getler, "Belgrade Attacks U.S. In Hijacking Aftermath," *Washington Post*, September 13, 1976.

<sup>160</sup>See, "Bloody Fight for Homeland," *Chicago Tribune*, September 12, 1976; Malcolm W. Browne, "Croatian Exiles and Tito's Secret Police Fight Clandestine War Worldwide," *New York Times*, September 12, 1976; Murray Seeger, "Croat Separatists Have Bloody History: CROAT SEPARATISTS' HISTORY," *Los Angeles Times*, September 13, 1976; Malcolm W. Browne, "Croats in Yugoslavia Charge Discrimination," *New York Times*, September 28, 1976; and, Thomas H. Greene, "The Sparring Goes On: Serb-Croat Rivalry Imperils Yugoslav Unity," *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1976.

idealistic nature of the hijackers was illuminated in articles based on interviews with passengers after the event, and stories on the hijackers themselves.

After the event, a number of the hostages spoke to the media and described the hijackers in a positive light. They described the Zvonko Bušić and his companions as “very polite,” and “nice guys,” that “didn’t want to hurt anybody.”<sup>161</sup> Another passenger after the hijacking said, “I wish [the hijackers] well ... They had nothing against us, but wanted only to get a story across. They were concerned for our welfare and we were treated well during most of it.”<sup>162</sup> Other passengers were less receptive to the hijackers cause, including Bishop Edward O’Rourke who led the hostages on the plane in prayer during the ordeal.<sup>163</sup> Hostage Richard Brockman’s article on the event captured the polarity of feelings that the hijacking forced on the hostages. In the article, he captured the range of emotions felt during the hijacking from fearing for his life when seeing a nervous man holding a ‘bomb’ to reading the leaflets of the hijackers and complimenting on how well they are written.<sup>164</sup> The *Los Angeles Times* noted that sympathetic feelings were common for hostages after traumatic experiences.<sup>165</sup> Printing sympathetic reactions from the passengers on TWA 355 was not the only way that the media covered the event in a sympathetic light.

Some news outlets also became enamored with the portrait of the hijackers as young idealists. The most obvious example of this was a two-part series that ran in the *Chicago Tribune*

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<sup>161</sup>Georgie Anne Geyer, “Terrorists Are ‘Nice Guys,’ Their Victims Say-Why?” *Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 1976.

<sup>162</sup>Clyde H. Farnsworth, “Bishop Led Passengers in Prayer and Pleaded With Their Captors,” *New York Times*, September 13, 1976.

<sup>163</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup>Richard Brockman, “Notes While Being Hijacked,” *The Atlantic*, December 1, 1976, [http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1976/12/notes-while-being-hijacked/305490/?single\\_page=true](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1976/12/notes-while-being-hijacked/305490/?single_page=true).

<sup>165</sup>Geyer, “Terrorist are nice guys.”



about six weeks after the hijacking. The first part of the series was titled “Julie Schultz- Just a nice girl from Portland.”<sup>166</sup> The first part asked, “SIMPLY THUGS. Terrorists, revolutionaries. Bomb-throwing, card-carrying crazies, all of them right? Wrong. At least that’s not the picture you get when you look behind the headlines and talk to the people who know Julie Busic [sic].”<sup>167</sup> The two-part profile included interviews with Julie’s family and friends and described Julie as a young woman deeply in love with a dedicated man, rather than as an extremist.<sup>168</sup>

Ultimately though, the tragic murder of police officer Brian J. Murray and the hijackers’ conviction in court overshadowed any positive sentiments that the hijackers young, idealistic-charm could bring them. Four thousand police officers attended the funeral of the slain police officer. Mournful images accompanied the stories about the funeral, including images of Murray’s wife, Kathleen and officer Henry Dworkin, who was also injured when the bomb exploded.<sup>169</sup> The media attention surrounding the hijacking died down by late October 1976, until the trial for the hijacking. The trial confirmed Zvonko as the mastermind of the operation, with some support from Julie, as they were both found guilty of air piracy resulting in a death, air piracy and conspiracy. The other hijackers standing trial, Peter Matanić and Frane Pešut, were acquitted on the charge of air piracy resulting in death, but were convicted of air piracy and conspiracy.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>166</sup>Marilynn Preston, “Tempo: Julie Schultz- Just a nice girl from Portland,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 25, 1976; and Marilyn Preston, “Family wonders, ‘Why?’: Hijacker’s love for a man lands her in jail,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 26, 1976.

<sup>167</sup>Preston, “Tempo: Julie Schultz- Just a nice girl.”

<sup>168</sup>For examples of positive-leaning portraits of the hijackers, see, Molly Ivins, “New York’s Croatians: Close-Knit and Fiery,” *New York Times*, September 18, 1976; and Tim Joyce, “Hijacker called dedicated,” *Cleveland Press*, September 13, 1976.

<sup>169</sup>“Thousands at L.I. Rites for Officer Killed in Bomb Blast,” *New York Times*, September 15, 1976.

<sup>170</sup>“4 Croatians Guilty in Hijacking of Jet,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 6, 1977. The fifth hijacker, Slobodan Vlašić, plead guilty to air piracy before going to trial.

The media coverage of the hijacking illuminated the complex nature of the case. The Croatian-American press and the Yugoslav state press clearly chose sides in their reporting of the hijacking. The mainstream American media showed some sympathy for the Croatians case, through nuanced historical discussions of Croatian nationalism and positive portrayls of the hijackers. In the end, the tragic death of officer Murray and the hijackers' convictions in court overshadowed any sympathies for the hijackers.

## CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have placed the Croatian separatist movement and the hijacking of TWA 355 in multiple contexts to better illuminate the unique nature of the hijacking of TWA 355. By using the wave theory of David Rapoport, and the work of Bruce Hoffman and Brian Jenkins, I established the setting in which the goals and tactics of the Croatian separatist movement developed. The goal of national liberation for Croatia clearly originated in and echoed the sentiments of Rapoport's second wave of terrorism. Both Zvonko Bušić and the other actors of the Croatian separatist movement utilized the tactics and technologies of Rapoport's third wave of terrorism. Bušić differentiated his action from the broader Croatian separatist movement by attempting to harness the immense potential of an airplane hijacking to gain publicity for the Croatian national cause, in order to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the West. Other actors in the Croatian separatist movement lacked this goal of publicity and legitimacy in their actions, which focused on attacking symbols of the Yugoslav state. The application of Rapoport's wave theory to the Croatian separatist movement and the hijacking of TWA 355 also illuminated the difficulties in establishing clearly defined waves of terrorism. The Croatian separatist movement clearly represents a case in which a group and its actions cannot be placed neatly within a prescribed wave of activity.

Through my discussion of the historical development of Croatian nationalism, the clear choices by the hijackers to attempt to associate with a specific variant of Croatian nationalism became evident. The hijackers shunned the negative historical connotations of Starčević, Pavelić and the NDH, in favor of espousing ties to the legacy of Stjepan Radić and the Croatian Spring.

Pavelić and the NDH, and in turn Starčević, due to his legacy's co-optation during the NDH period, carry a strong negative historical connotation due to the wartime atrocities carried out in the NDH. The hijackers of TWA 355 chose to make no mention of these actors in their manifestos, instead invoking the legacies of Radić and the Croatian Spring, which carry significantly less historical baggage. The hijackers made this choice in hopes of gaining international legitimacy for the cause of Croatian independence. Other actors within the Croatian separatist movement did not share this goal of international legitimacy, nor did they attempt to distance themselves from the historical legacies of Starčević, Pavelić and the NDH.

The hijacking of TWA 355 was Zvonko Bušić's attempt to cement his historical legacy within Croatian nationalism. While Bušić did have ties to Croatian separatist organizations, the hijacking should be viewed as an individual action, carried out by a man who felt a strong desire to establish himself as a Croatian revolutionary. The hijacking was Bušić's answer to years of attempting to establish himself as a Croatian nationalist in both Europe and the United States. Bušić steadfastly believed that his fake bomb scheme and the two manifestos would enlighten the world to Croatia's plight within Tito's Yugoslavia. The reaction to the hijacking showed slight signs of sympathy towards Bušić's claims, but ultimately the tragic death of officer Brian Murray put to rest any hopes for sympathy for Bušić and his co-conspirators.

The final question that needs to be addressed is did Bušić's efforts have any effects on the realization of the re-creation of an independent Croatia? Ultimately, Bušić and the rest of the Croatian separatist movement fell victim to Cold War geopolitics. Yugoslavia's placement as a communist country in Europe, outside of the Soviet sphere of influence left neither the Soviet Union, nor the United States with any desire the change the status quo in Yugoslavia. Without

support from either of the two superpowers of the Cold War, there was little hope for substantive change for Croatia until the geopolitics of the Cold War shifted.

## APPENDIX 1: TEXT OF 'DECLARATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE CROATIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION FORCES',<sup>171</sup>

National self-determination is a basic human right, universal and fundamental, recognized by all members of the United Nations, a right which may not be denied or withheld any nation regardless of its territorial size or number of inhabitants. Only the inhabitants of an historically determined and limited territory can objectively and competently prescribe its future trends, and its own fate. Any force imposing itself against the desires of a nation can be termed nothing if not occupation, and, as is widely recognized, occupation is maintained exclusively by brutal force.

This universal, natural and human right is denied many nations, even from members of the United Nations, or, more appropriately, United Countries, which are obligated by their signatures to support and honor the principle of national self-determination. Croatia finds herself among these nations which are refused the right of self-determination.

In today's geopolitical terminology, and in the reality which this terminology represents, the name Croatia sounds strange, even disquieting. Wound around myths, fears, lies, and misunderstandings from the past, this name has either been pressed into intentional oblivion or forcefully denied. Consequently, today, in spite of its until recently uninterrupted thirteen century existence and legitimate continuity as a state, the Croatian state strikes one as being a legend, a fiction or a fantasy. Parallel with this intimidating world ignorance or silence, new peoples have appeared on the stage of contemporary history and new states have been established. From faraway places, where our journalists and scientists have written us of strange, wild tribes, new nations have arisen, native cultures have sprouted from virtually nothing. The independence of these newly created nations were extorted by force and established through a struggle for liberation. The awakening of national consciousness has currently become a deep spiritual process and the battle for freedom, which is a natural continuation of this process, has its basis in a fundamental moral principle and foundation.

Small nations know they are small, but rise up against the unjust consequences of this actuality: the ignoring of their significance, and the force applied to dictate their fates. Small nations affirm their national independence though fights for freedom, even with abductions, bombs and murders. The necessity for the acquisition of freedom is stronger and more just than the legality which powerful nations preach supporting their arguments for ruthless force and murderous weapons.

The actuality of national liberation, especially after World War II, has continually expressed itself through proportionate actions, on all sides. The Croatian nation, which is one of the oldest in Europe, cannot, nor desires, to further suppress its existence or to shirk its responsibility in the contemporary world, merely to preserve some vague imperialistic 'peace'. Thus, discarding all biases and all exclusivism, squaring accounts with the mistakes and misunderstandings of the past, conscious of the fact that there exists no value more sacred than freedom and faith in one's country, the Croatian nation commences once more its fight for freedom, emphasizing the following reasons for its active revival:

-After a full thirteen centuries of continuity as a legitimate state, Croatian state sovereignty was abolished. Through the artificial and forced Yugoslav-created state, the Croatian nation was subjected to the fascist-monarchy dictatorship of the Serbian kings. After the finish of the Second World War, unparalleled and unprecedented genocide was perpetrated upon the Croatian nation, under the banner of 'brotherhood and unity,' and in the name of integrationalistic Yugoslavism and gloomy, inhuman internationalism of the Hitler-Stalinistic caliber. The terror of the Serbian occupation subsided in 1966, only to be renewed in 1971 with an increasingly brutal countenance.

-Croats are oppressed, humiliated, and insulted because of their pride and national dignity. In their homes, as well as their homeland, they have no rights whatsoever, rather, are beset by difficult, unparalleled obligations. The Croatian moral and material possessions are disposed of in any way Belgrade deems appropriate. Through taxes and all resources from the land, Croats must support the very system for which they are being sacrifices.

-Besides the moral and historical obligations imposed, not, one rich, powerful country respects the recommendation of the General Committee of the United Nations to set apart 0.5% of its national income for use in under-developed countries. From the year 1945 and up until today, 8% of Croatian national income is extracted. According to evaluation by U.N. authorities, in every nation where 4% of its national income is systematically stripped, the biological and cultural growth of this nation is severely jeopardized.

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<sup>171</sup>Text printed as in "Text of 'Declaration' Issued by 'Headquarters of Croatian National Liberation Forces,'" *New York Times*, September 12, 1976.

-Through sheer force applied inside Yugoslav borders, and through material, military and intelligence support by the big powers of East and West, mismatched nations are held together in contradiction, coerced into an Serbian-dominated union, where mentalities, cultures, and systems are hostile to one another. Having already lived centuries of their distinct existences inside totally dissimilar states and cultural compounds, these nations have formulated their individual conceptions toward the world. Although they may utilize the same diction, the origin and basis of their intellectual expression renders these ideas incomprehensible to the other nations with which they live.

-The total command staff of the Yugoslav military forces, serving inside Croatin [sic] national territory, is composed of members of the Serbian nation. Serbians constitute the wide majority of the police force in Croatia. Key positions in judicial bodies, administration, law, the Party, and the economy are likewise occupied by Serbs. Croats who serve in these bodies are generally statistics without power, potency or influence. This unnatural and inhuman situation is maintained by force and cloaked in one motto: People's Unity. This motto, which is continually repeated, is believed by nobody, not by the occupiers, nor the few quislings, regardless of how low they have fallen in their crimes and treason.

-Croats [sic] are excluded from every decision; these decisions are merely related to them 'after the fact'.

-Today, when dialects of recently primitive tribes are being developed into new, modern languages, the Croatian grammar and orthography, which has been preserved on a monument from the year 1100, written in Croatian letters and language, is prohibited and burned. A frantic attack, unparalleled anytime or anyplace, is being waged against the Croatian language, resulting from the fact the language, among other values, is the center of moral instruction expanding dignity and freedom; the energy that resists and manipulations of one's fate and one's achievements.

-The bearing of the Croation [sic] coat-of-arms, which was engraved on a Croatian stone monument dating from the ninth century, is equated with evil.

-The singing of old patriotic, even sentimental Croatian songs is considered a conspiratorial, terroristic act, directed against the Yugoslav brotherhood of nations.

-In a contrived manner, the natural growth of the Croatian population is being systematically reduced. Simultaneously, the most vital part of the Croatian population is, through economic exploitation, political pressure, and police terror, compelled to emigrate. Through this new form of genocide, a sustained and intentional extermination of the Croatian nation is being committed.

-In all Yugoslav schools, the textbooks are represented as being the epitome of Serbian craftsmanship and historical-political reportage, the [sic] most authentic expression of the Serbian spirit, as appears in the canto by Peter Petrovic Njegos, where he sings of and praises the genocide upon the Muslim people, who have always been an integral part of the Croatian nation.

-In the name of brotherhood, unity and socialism, a whip is cracked over the head of suffering Croatia. The sustained colonialization [sic] of the Croatian national entity is enforced through tested fascist-stalinistic methods. According to statistics from Amnesty International, the most well-known world organization concerned with political prisoners, there are more political prisoners in Yugoslavia or, more accurately in Croatia and Albanian Kosinet, than in any other East European land, excluding the Soviet Union, whose population numbers 250 million people. This statistic was openly confirmed on a TV interview by the Yugoslav dictator, Josip Broz Tito, at the occasion of his state visit in Sweden this year. Sentences of hard labor extended to twenty years and are often even transformed later to death sentences. Sophisticated, diverse, and bloody forms of torture are habitually the means by which prisoners are terrorized and confessins [sic] extracted. When necessary, the arrested are simply killed.

-The reduction of freedom in the name of professed social aims is an everyday occurrence and reality. Disagreement, criticism; these are privileges which the occupying powers retain exclusively for themselves. This unnatural state of affairs is maintained and continued through use of court verdicts, abominations, self-criticisms, and liquidations, and, all too often, with the military and political assistance from western democratic lands.

-It must also be emphasized that, since the 1918 creation of imperialistic Yugoslavia in Versailles, Croats were, and remain, an undesirable element in Yugoslav diplomacy. As an illustration, let us consider the national composition of the Yugoslav embassy in Washington D.C. where the largest Yugoslav delegation in the world is stationed:

Of twelve accredited diplomatic Yugoslav ambassadors in Washington, from the year 1970, eight are Serbian nationality, two are Slovenian, one is a Jew, and one a Montenegrin, not one Croatian. Of nineteen employees of the Washington Embassy in 1970, fifteen are Serbians, one is a Montenegrin, one is without nationality, and two are Croatian. (Mr. Ivan Perich and Miss Mira Blazevic, the chambermaid of one of the ambassador's wives. Selecting chambermaids for ambassadors' wives from members of the occupied Croatian nation is not coincidental; it illustrates quite a bit).

All which we accomplish for ourselves is a question of duty, a question of active responsibility, a question of appealing to the United Nations and preserving in our fight for freedom and national independence. We raise the issue of Croatia as an issue of freedom. The world cannot be peaceful if the Croatian [sic] nation is denied rights which are acknowledged by all people and all nations. Croatia is indispensable in the world today, while Yugoslavia, as a state, has no right to exist for the following reasons:

-All large empires and multi-national state formations has sooner or later failed in their integrationalistic efforts regardless of whichever national ideologies or professed world missions are perpetuated or preached, simply because they offered no cultural or any other type of hypothesis for the harmonious evolution of those nations which they occupied or maintained by force of arms. Up to the present time, history has never recorded a single instance where a multi-national state entity has successfully and continuously solved a burning historical issue- the issue of acknowledging the independence and individual sovereignty [sic] of all its nations.

-The historical moral of all multi-national empires to the present time is: despotism fails, but never reforms itself. No democratic changes whatsoever are possible inside Yugoslavia, nor could these eventual changes be maintained. Yugoslavia can continue to exist for a certain time only as a police state, established on Serbian domination and fascist-stalinistic coercion.

-Yugoslavia is impossible to defend with any generally recognized cotemporary legal or socio-philosophical standpoint. Besides the fact that, inside Yugoslavia, a sustained genocidal politic is being perpetrated upon the Croatian nation, the Albanian nation is likewise biologically threatened. Belgrade holds, under its occupation, a large portion of Albanian national territory, on which virtually half of the Albanian population is settled. The Belgrade occupation forces also command a part of Bulgarian and Hungarian national territories.

-Relative to its population, the education and technological capabilities of the Serbian nation are insufficient to subordinate the position of other nations within Yugoslavia. The Serbian nation is also becoming increasingly dissatisfied with and opposed to the imperialistic politics of its ruling clique. Serving as policeman in a foreign country is no honor. The majority of the Serbian nation is aware that he who fails to honor the rights of others loses ultimately his own entitled rights; for there is no freedom for he who deprives others. Consequently, the Croatian nation is not opposed to the Serbian nation or Serbian freedom; rather, to the totalitarianistic, imperialistic brutality of Great Serbianism, which, cloaked in a banner of ostensible freedom and deceptive imperialism, denies Croatia her right of independent existence and entitled freedom.

-All Albanians, regardless of their individual political beliefs, desire and support consolidation with their homeland, Albania. In Yugoslavia, they are not only politically, but biologically threatened. In multi-national Yugoslavia, the Albanians are numerically the fourth, and, due to their high natality [sic] rate, will soon become the third largest nation.

-In the event of any foreign aggression toward Yugoslavia, not one hundred persons from the Croatian nation could be found to fight and die voluntarily for Yugoslavia.

-As Yugoslav history up to the present day clearly shows, and, as does the number of political prisoners in hard labor camps, Yugoslavia is materially and spiritually a great source of terrorism in Europe.

-In contrast to its predatory neighbors in the East and West, the Croatian nation has never expressed any type of imperialistic tendency, not even when, at the beginning of the tenth century, the Croatian state's number of inhabitants and military strength equaled England's at this period. Then, and even in times of its greatest misfortune, Croatia has, through her culture, demonstrated her existence. Croatians made a meaningful contribution in the formation of contemporary civilization. Already in the eighteenth century, three Croatians were names as members of the French Academy: Anselmo Banduri byzantologist, antiquary and numismatologist; Lujo Nikoloc, astronomer, and Rudjer Bokovic, mathematician, astronomer [sic], and philosopher. From the middle-fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth century, ten Croatian Muslims held the most responsible positions in the Turkish state government, military and foreign service, thus having a distinctive and powerful influence in the formation of Islam civilization and its universality. Croatia is the only nation in Europe having a large number of Islamic believers among its citizens and serves thus as the most natural and suitable bridge between the Eastern Byzantine world and the non-Islam European states.

-In spite of hundreds of battles with foreign occupiers, and the unequalled propaganda of genocidal Yugoslavism, the Croatian nation has succeeded in retaining eight percent of its entire population on its historical territory and, upon the return of millions of Croatian emigrants, this percentage will increase. The Croatian nation is not large but has earned, because of its participation in the formation and creation of contemporary civilization, its number of inhabitants, and its strategic geographical location, a meaningful place among other free, sovereign, and united nations of the world. From a total of 33 European states, 16 are smaller in their number of inhabitants than Croatia, and 18 are composed of smaller geographical areas. In Asia, 22 states have smaller populations, in Africa 35, in South America, 7, in Central America, 11, in North America, 2, and even in Oceania, 2.



-There is but one Croatian- Croats number in the millions. Dispersed in all continents, residing in virtually all states and countries, Croatian emigrants, regardless of which part of the world they find themselves in, and which societal position they have occupied, cannot relate to one single country which has provided them refuge, until that moment when Croatia becomes free and sovereign. As a result, against their desires, they bring unrest into the entire world. The necessity to fight for Croatia arises from an obligation and duty toward the world and a responsibility toward one's homeland. The Croatian nation is opposed to forced internationalism and state terror, but supports international human rights, freedom and responsibilities.

-The sustained and radical colonization of the Croatian national territory could not transpire without injurious consequences on the economic development, on freedom, spiritual life, and creativity of other nations in Yugoslavia, and the power-holding Serbian intellectuals comprehend and affirm this view:

The spiritual life of the Yugoslav nations is manipulated through the most banal issues of power, the national product is used up as soon as it is produced, and the historical reality of this land cannot be defined by any other perspective but an accumulation of crises, convenient for those in power, but very dangerous for the culture, without which we cannot survive. We possess a backward agriculture, an industry which cannot compete with others, a low productivity, which is daily decreasing, a poor, disorganized standard of hygiene, education which belongs to the nineteenth century, massive illiteracy, unemployment, export of work forces, and import of capital, sudden enrichment of a small number of individuals, and the widespread impoverishment of the national masses, hyperproduction of capital delinquency, prostitution, and corruption, the lie as a means of communication, a falsified system of information. This is not capitalism, this is not socialism, this is a deceptive vegetation from the dregs of a half-barbaric form of European civilization, with a propensity for the most savage repercussions.

We have stressed the principal reasons for our dissatisfaction with this imposed state unity and loss of freedom, and now we will carry out the fundamental designs of our struggle, in which we shall preserve to our last breath and ultimate victory, sharing the hopes and fears of the world, and accepting our part and responsibility in its destiny.

We are fighting for the united national Croatian state, in which Croatian sovereignty is indivisible, inalienable and in perpetual force. For the national minorities which live together with the Croatian nation in one union, and in one and the same homeland, the united, indivisible, inalienable sovereignty of the Croatian nation is the primary and inviolable basis of their common history, and political and legal constitution, which, understandably, assumes a correct and unavoidable recognition and guarantee of equality to all, in rights and in responsibilities, regardless of nationality, religion, race or political beliefs.

We present the Croatian issue as the issue of freedom, of a new form of cooperation. Croatia, in our conception, is a state of free people and a just society, outside of all ideological, political, economic and military blocs, a willing meeting-place of East and West. Croatia is not up for bids in an international auction block, but, rather, play an integral part in the destiny of the world, and, consequently, we fight for Croatia, which will be, for all people, either a cherished presence or a beloved homeland.

## APPENDIX 2: TEXT OF ‘APPEAL TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE’<sup>172</sup>

The American people, in 1776, proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence that every nation has a right to national self-determination and freedom, and this declaration, which inspired later the protagonists of the French Revolution in their formulation of the ‘Declaration of the Rights of Man,’ has served as a model to many other nations throughout the years, which have strived to free themselves from colonialistic or imperialistic forces.

“One can truly say world decolonization began when the original 13 colonies proclaimed independence from Great Britain. Later, Woodrow Wilson perpetuated this guiding principle in American policy, stating his support for national self-determination of nations at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, a position that America, in 1941, in the Atlantic Charter, continued to support and honor.

“According to various persons in influential government positions, this philosophy continues, theoretically, to be adhered to in questions of American policy. The Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, stated recently, as quoted in the *New York Times*, April 28, 1976, that ‘there can be no doubt that the United States remains committed to the principles of its Declaration of Independence. We support self-determination.

“These are the reigning principles included in the United Nations Charter, and provide the basis upon which the politics of the United Nations should rest.

“At the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary convention of the United Nations, this declaration, which succinctly detailed and formulated the inalienable right of national self-determination, was unanimously accepted. In principle, the inviolable right of nations who are legitimately entitled to, but denied self-determination, is upheld, even to the extent that an armed resistance is necessary.

“Unfortunately, memorandums sent all over the world reporting of the unbearable economic, cultural, and political exploitation in Croatia were, for the most part, ignored. Recently, however, the State Department replied to one of these. The reply read that the United States would in the future support and respect that “integrity and unity of the state of Yugoslavia.” We have also been informed that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger sent a letter, with these same constraints, to Yugoslavia.

“This letter was read aloud before the Yugoslav Presidium, providing this artificial government with additional support in the continuation of its oppressive policies, which are the epitome of “Great Serbianism,” totalitarianism, Stalinism, and Nazi terror.

“Thus, the United States supports the colonialistic enslavement of the non-Serbian nations within Yugoslavia. An ugly paradox arises when one realizes that the theoretical and practical applications of American support for self-determination are in direct opposition to one another.

“Democratic and Communist countries alike, or more accurately, their governments, often justify the use of force upon smaller nations with the same terminology, even utilizing the identical terminologies of Hitler, Mussolini, and other Nazi ideologues and theoreticians.

“It is difficult to criticize many American politicians, and especially the American people, for the fact that the official U.S. politics show no awareness of or sympathy for the desires of small, occupied nations. This is quite clear and comprehensible to those who have an understanding of American history, since America, in her entire 200-year history, has never once experienced any form of national problems, problems which Europe and other parts of the world have known and continue to encounter.

“As one illustration, which all who are familiar with the exact situation in Yugoslavia can comprehend, let us make an interesting and instructive analogy.

“Yugoslavia, or translated, South Slavia, is a product of forced consolidation; created by the Big Powers, of the southern Slav nations: Croatians, Serbians, Slovenians, Macedonians, and Montenegrins, and, thus, is the quintessence of terror, a continuing ideological and expansionist hoax.

“If the formation of South Slavia has solved the problems between the southern Slav nations, and created an “historical ideal” through this forced consolidation, why should not the Big Powers follow this glowing example, in the Middle East, as in South Slavia, a purportedly voluntary union of Syrians, Palestinians, Jews, Jordanians, Libyans, and Egyptians?

“Through the creation of a unified state, the Middle East section of the State Department would, then, to avoid further headaches in this area, merely appoint one of these nations as the ruling force, (as Serbs are in South Slavia), with supreme authority over all the other nations, and supply this chosen nation with all the weapons necessary to defend the new state from any opposition, or to impose its will on the others.

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<sup>172</sup>Text printed as in “Text of ‘Croatian Fighters,’” *New York Times*, September 11, 1976.

“This ludicrous idea would find no support from any faction or government whatsoever, but, nevertheless, total support for South Slavia is often all too apparent. If South Slavia is not a criminal and political absurdity, then the Middle East State would be even less!

“We decided to undertake this particular action for many reasons. First, our goal was to present an accurate picture of the brutal oppression taking place in Yugoslavia. When the eventual uprising against Serbian Imperialism begins, the American people will not, then, allow themselves to be further manipulated regarding the justifications of such an occurrence.

“Next, we decided on this method in order to illustrate the idea that there indeed exists, nobler values than the preservation of a bloody, totalitarianistic, and imperialistic creation. Is freedom for Croats less important, or necessary than the freedom of other nations?

“Croats have optimistically attempted, many times, to effect legal changes in the oppressive political climate of Yugoslavia. Stjepan Radich, founder of the Croatian Peasant Party and a confirmed pacifist, was assassinated in the Belgrade Parliament in 1928. In the spring of 1971, the Croatian Communist Central Committee, head by Miko Tripalo and Dr. Savka Dapcevic-Kucar, were, with the full support of Washington and Moscow, purged militarily from power by the Belgrade government.

“Thousands and thousands of Croats were imprisoned, without even attempting to calculate the number who emigrated as a result.

“We hold no illusions that Serbian imperialism will allow (as imperialism by its very nature prohibits this) the Croatian national self-determination: we hold no illusions that it shall understand in the future, as it has failed in the past, any methods of resistance excluding those it itself employed in the occupation of Croatia and in the maintenance of this occupation.

“The final question which comes to mind is then: Why was an American aircraft taken? The United States has systematically provided the Belgrade regime with billions of dollars of economic and military aid, as outright gifts, regardless of the fact that Yugoslavia is a multinational state, and the weapons intended to prevent outside invasion would not, in the event of internal unrest, be used against a foreign aggressor.

“The non-Serbian nations would, under no circumstances, defend Yugoslavia against any invader, from the East of the West, but, rather would use the first opportunity to obtain national independence.

“The United States, as recently stated in The New York Times, prohibits the selling of arms to states who do not support basic human rights. This is yet another striking example of the discrepancy between the theoretical and practical application of U.S. policy.

“This, then, was the only possible method to employ in appealing to the American people to protest the sending of any form of aid to the imperialistic Belgrade regime. The 3 million Americans of Croatian descent, who have fulfilled their obligations as U.S. citizens, militarily, economically and especially politically, have a moral right to demand a radical change in the American policies regarding occupied Croatia.

“We expect all ‘peace-loving’ forces in the world to describe us as terrorists, criminals and murderers. From the time of Caesar, through Hitler, Stalin, France and Salazar, as well as with numerous other colonial and neo-colonial governments, those fighting for national liberation have always been described in such terms.

“The point to be made here, obviously, is not to conclusively define “terrorism,” an impossible and unnecessary task, but, rather, to explain the ultimate necessity for our extreme decision and to ask others to judge this decision objectively and unemotionally.

“Recently, a U.N. diplomat expressed this idea, stating that today, only a small number of diplomats had never been imprisoned or convicted of terrorism or criminal acts. One man’s terrorist is another man’s patriot, depending solely on one’s national and political objectives and suitability.

“We must remember that today’s ‘terrorists’ are often tomorrow’s policy-makers, having participated in the formation of a new, independent state. Such was the position of the supporters of the Declaration of Independence, after the American colonies were freed from British subjugation. Thus, the unsuccessful continue to be ‘terrorists,’ but, upon success, are courted by all governments. With this reality reappearing dependably from one day to the next, all ethical and moral revulsions felt for so-called “terrorist” acts is necessarily irrational.

“Illegal actions against government take place in every country, regardless of the government system. However, where a possibility for constructive change through legal channels exists, a forum for discussion, and an opportunity to publicize one’s dissatisfaction, violence, and terror is rarely condoned, and groups practicing violence under such conditions rarely enjoy any popular base of support. Thus, fringe groups such as the S.L.A., [Sybionese Liberation Army] the New World Liberation Front, or the Red Guerrilla Family may succeed in getting publicity, but fail even to recruit enough members or sympathy to realize their aims.

“In countries where no opportunity for democratic change, peaceful lobbying, or publication of one’s views exists, another method must necessarily be utilized. Sean McBride, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, expressed this

idea well: "If oppression amounts to genocide... people are entitled to fight back. The framers of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized that in the Declaration, they pointed out that unless human rights are protected under the rule of law, people will be drive to violence."

"Aware of the fact that violence, even when justified, still temporarily evokes fear and revulsion in some of the populace, we shall use as little violence as possible to achieve our demands. As these demands are quite easily fulfilled and involve nothing more that disseminating accurate information; all should run smoothly and come to a satisfactory conclusion. If our goal is accomplished, we gladly accept all punishment and consider these ideas worthy of suffering for.

"The failure of our demands to be met would result in actions which would rightly lie not on our consciences, but on those of the people in a position to meet such trivial demands.

"We have undertaken this action in the utmost seriousness, conscious of all its possible consequences and far-reaching effect on world peace.

"Send all critiques or support to this address: Croatia Press POB 1767, Grand Central, New York, N.Y. 10017."

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