

TEAM 3:
INDEPENDENCE AND THE FATE OF MINORITIES
BULLET PAGE

- The minority issue in Yugoslavia developed because “democratic” leaders established national “ownership” over each republic. Meanwhile the leaders of Serbia and Croatia claimed leadership of those Serbs and Croats who lived as minorities in other entities.
- Tudjman, Milosevic, and Karadžić all chose particularly nationalistic agendas, which explain the resulting concerns for rights and security felt by the minority populations in their respective regions of the former Yugoslavia.
- The single most critical problem was the concern of Serb minorities for their rights and safety, which was exploited by the Serb nationalist leaders to justify armed rebellion and intervention.
- Alija Izetbegovic was much less divisive. Claims by Bosnian Serbs that Izetbegovic had a fundamentalist were unwarranted. Rather his agenda was to combine modernization with a commitment to basic Islamic values.
- Germany’s unilateral acceptance of Croatian independence undermined the Badinter Commission’s multilateralism, and ultimately forced the European Community’s hand.
- The Commission relied on the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution and the principle of *uti possidetis*, which provided a “quasi-legal” basis for the new system. Unfortunately, nationalist forces made “a difficult situation not only worse, but much worse.”