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Ethnic Bipolarism in Slovakia, 1989-1995

By David Lucas

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About this series

The *Donald W. Treadgold Papers* publication series was created to honor a great teacher and great scholar. Donald W. Treadgold was professor of history and international studies at the University of Washington from 1949 to 1993. During that time, he wrote seven books, one of which — *Twentieth Century Russia* — went into eight editions. He was twice editor of *Slavic Review*, the organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, and received the AAASS Award for Distinguished Contributions to Slavic Studies, as well as the AAASS Award for Distinguished Service. Professor Treadgold molded several generations of Russian historians and contributed enormously to the field of Russian history. He was, in other ways as well, an inspiration to all who knew him.

The *Treadgold Papers* series was created in 1993 on the occasion of Professor Treadgold's retirement, on the initiative of Professor Daniel Waugh. Professor Treadgold passed away in December 1994. The series is dedicated to the memory of a great man, publishing papers in those areas that were close to his heart.

Sabrina P. Ramet
Editor

ABBREVIATIONS

ASW	Association of Slovak Workers
CE	Council of Europe
CDM	Christian Democratic Movement
CDP	Civic Democratic Party
DU	Democratic Union
FIDESZ	Alliance of Free Democrats
FPS	Farmers' Party of Slovaks
HCDM	Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement
HCP	Hungarian Civic Party
HDF	Hungarian Democratic Forum
HPP	Hungarian People's Party
HSP	Hungarian Socialist Party
IHI	Independent Hungarian Initiative
MDS	Movement for a Democratic Slovakia
NDP	National Democratic Party
PAV	Public Against Violence
PDL	Party of the Democratic Left
SCDM	Slovak Christian Democratic Movement
SDPS	Social Democratic Party of Slovakia
SNP	Slovak National Party
UFD	Union of Free Democrats

Preface

Despite frequent assertions by Communist authorities that ethnic tensions would invariably decrease with the successful building of egalitarian societies, the decline of totalitarianism in East Central Europe in the late 1980s revealed that they not only persisted, but also constituted a major potential force for destabilization in the region. Three primary axes of ethnic tension afflicted Czechoslovakia. The Roma represented a large repressed minority which has so far been unable to effectively assert its interests in a political context. More significant in this respect have been tensions between Czechs and Slovaks on the one hand, and Slovaks and the Hungarian minority on the other.

While Slovak national sentiment targeted dissatisfaction with the present Czech-Slovak arrangement as its primary concern no later than mid-1991, this tension was largely abated by the peaceful dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation, which resulted in the formation of two new states—the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic—on 1 January 1993. This allowed for an invigorated and mobilized Slovak political elite to redirect its energies; and thus, by early 1993, the Hungarian minority became the new target of its national populist rhetoric and legislation.

In the context of post-totalitarian Slovak politics, a historically rooted anti-Hungarian bias among segments of the Slovak populace and electorate first presented itself in early 1990 in the form of protests in Bratislava and Nové Zámky against the alleged subversive designs of the Hungarian minority. The Slovak National Party (SNP), an extremist right-wing party which helped organize these demonstrations, subsequently performed well in the June 1990 elections, winning twenty-two seats in the Slovak National Council (out of one hundred fifty) and fifteen in the Federal Assembly (out of three hundred fifty). The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (MDS), formed in March 1991 and since the June 1992 elections the most powerful party in the country, adopted a similar stance toward the Hungarian minor-

ity. These two parties have governed together since the 1992 elections, notwithstanding the periods when the SNP left the government for part of 1993 and when both parties were in opposition during the period of the more moderate Moravčík government in 1994.

At the other end of the ethno-political spectrum, the Hungarian minority obtained its political representation in the form of three main political parties. The Independent Hungarian Initiative (IHI), later called the Hungarian Civic Party (HCP), was the first such party to coalesce. It was soon followed by the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (HCDM) and Együttélés [Coexistence]. Each of these parties embodied different political priorities and goals, and adopted distinct strategies to effect them. The Hungarian People's Party (HPP) formed in December 1991, thereby becoming the fourth political party in Slovakia representing the Hungarian minority. However, it did not become a significant contender in the Slovak political arena, and could be expected to remain in relative obscurity.

This study analyzes the effects of ethnic bipolarization in exacerbating or alleviating ethnic tension on a political level. My goal is to identify those systemic factors which have been conducive to escalating conflict. As documentation I rely on party documents, electoral programs, and press reports. I consider both intraethnic and interethnic relations between parties in the Slovak political arena. My general approach here is to examine ethnic politics first from the perspective of the individual minority parties, and then on the basis of individual issues. In the first section, I give an overview of Slovak political developments from the fall of totalitarianism to November 1995, with particular attention to ethnic issues. The second section outlines a framework for studying ethnic conflict in the context of an independent pluralistic Slovakia. Sections three and four describe the histories, goals, and tactics of the Hungarian and Slovak parties individually. In section five, I analyze post-totalitarian politics on an issue-by-issue basis. In my concluding section, I select examples with which to explore the theory on ethnic conflict elaborated in the second section. In my finding, I invert the direction of my study, considering the centrifugal tendencies of an ethnically bipolar party system in relation to the countervailing forces for dialogue, moderation, and compromise. It is hoped that by un-

derstanding the roots of ethnic conflict, we can begin to find ways to alleviate it, or at least its worst symptoms.

Political Overview

By the early 1990s, ethnic tension, in conjunction with widespread feelings of disillusionment and frustration over the complexities of economic reform, led to the break-up of two East European states with multi-national composition: Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. In both of these cases, national minorities estranged from a neighboring nationality became the focus of increasing political tension. In the case of Yugoslavia, tensions between Serbs and non-Serbs finally exploded into inter-ethnic war in mid-1991. The dissolution of Czechoslovakia, while relatively peaceful, nevertheless left a large Hungarian minority (numbering 567,296, or 10.76 per cent of Slovakia's total population according to the 1991 census¹) under the jurisdiction of Bratislava, which proved much less amenable to its demands than Prague had been.

In the wake of the Czechoslovak "velvet revolution" of November 1989, there ensued a period of revolutionary euphoria. Dozens of new political parties appeared in the political arena, most of which proved to be short-lived. In December, Václav Havel, dissident playwright and signer of Charter 77, became President. In the June 1990 elections, the Civic Forum, a unconventional political party striving for broadly based consensus and guided by dissident intellectuals, gained more votes than any other party in the Czech elections, whose results could be viewed as a plebiscite against Communism.

However, while Prague rejoiced in the fall of totalitarian rule, differences in the political situation in Bratislava quickly surfaced. In the early part of 1990, a debate over the official title of the country suggested the depth of the Czech-Slovak schism. What Czech representatives assumed would be a simple matter of deleting the word "Socialist" from the country's title exploded into the so-called "hyphen debate," where parliamentarians on both sides argued between "Czechoslovak Federal Republic," "Czecho-Slovak Federal Republic," and the "Czech and Slovak Federal Republic." Debate which began at this time over the con-

stitutional status of the two republics within the federation eventually became the irreparable point of contention leading to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

The dissolution was essentially the combined result of Czech-Slovak political, economic, and ethnic tension together with the inability of Czech and Slovak political leaders to agree upon the future status of the federation. Results of the June 1990 elections in Slovakia, where the Public Against Violence fared considerably worse than the Civic Forum, its Czech counterpart, had confirmed the divergent tracks of the two republics. Ominously, the Slovak National Party, which advocated complete independence and which had organized several anti-Hungarian demonstrations, received a surprising 13.9 per cent of the vote for the Slovak National Council (parliament), giving it twenty-two seats out of one hundred fifty, thereby making it the third largest party in parliament, and this despite the fact that polls taken several months prior to the election had cast doubt on whether or not the SNP would be able to pass the five per cent threshold at all.²

Following the June 1990 elections, pro-sovereignty (i.e. supporting greater autonomy though not necessarily complete independence) forces within Slovakia began to prevail over pro-federal ones. This very issue led to a split in the Public Against Violence, when a pro-sovereignty faction, led by Slovak Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, broke away from the party following Mečiar's ouster for nationalistic agitation in April 1991. This break-away faction, named Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, soon became the most powerful political force in the republic. In the Czech Republic, a parallel development unfolded when the Civic Democratic Party (CDP), led by Václav Klaus, broke away from the Civic Forum and formed a political party along more conventional lines. The Civic Democratic Party likewise came to dominate Czech politics, although its orientation was decidedly more supportive of rapid privatization and free-market reforms than was Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia.

In accordance with an agreement signed between the governing coalition partners, Ján Čarnogurský, leader of Slovakia's Christian Democratic Movement (CDM), replaced Mečiar as the Slovak Prime Minister in April 1991. Čarnogurský's efforts to appeal to Slovak national sympathies without ruling out a federal arrangement of the state failed to gain him popularity in either

parliament or among the Slovak electorate.

The results of the June 1992 elections further reinforced the centrifugal tendencies which ultimately tore the federation asunder. In the Czech Republic, Václav Klaus, ardent advocate of rapid privatization and leader of the right-of-center Civic Democratic Party, tightened his reins on the Czech Republic. In Slovakia, Vladimír Mečiar, who was granted quasi-martyr status as the perceived victim of a Prague-engineered coup in April 1991, led the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia to a victory at the polls, winning 74 out of 150 seats, thereby almost gaining a clear majority in the Slovak National Council. Although Mečiar himself ostensibly favored a more confederal arrangement with the Czech Republic, it quickly became clear that no compromise was possible between the positions of Prague and Bratislava. Consequently, the Slovak government declared the sovereignty of the Slovak Republic in July 1992; in October, the Slovak parliament ratified a draft of the republic's new constitution; and on 1 January 1993, Slovakia became an independent state.

These developments certainly did not augur well for relations between Slovak politicians and those of the Hungarian minority. Public opinion polls had shown that the dissolution of Czechoslovakia did not enjoy the support of the majority in either the Czech or the Slovak Republic.³ In the case of the Hungarian minority, the proportion of objectors approached unanimity. Hungarians were loath to see their interests directly subordinated to a Slovak-dominated state apparatus. Moreover, relations between Hungarians and Slovaks, which had been inflamed by decades of mutual recriminations, distrust, misunderstanding, and resentment and aggravated by periods of repression perpetrated at various times by each side against the other, had visibly worsened.

Hungarian fears soon proved to be justified. Slovak nationalism, having already built up a considerable head of steam, redirected the focus of its energies from anti-Czechoslovakism and anti-Bohemianism to anti-Hungarianism. This gave Slovak nationalist politicians, notably from the SNP and the MDS, a highly visible adversary to use as a target for their nationalistic and populist rhetoric; and thus, many of those same Slovak politicians who had led the charge for Slovak independence now adopted anti-Hungarianism as their *cause célèbre*. Those who had already

stood out in opposition to the Hungarian minority merely strengthened their stance. Historically based antagonism between Hungarians and Slovaks and popular Slovak apprehensions over Hungarian irredentism made anti-Hungarianism an especially powerful tool for those politicians shrewd enough to take full advantage of it. Soon after Slovakia formally attained independence, several proposals to gerrymander the regional administration of the country were tabled by Slovak politicians which would have reduced the percentage of Hungarians living in each of seven, or sometimes five, provinces, thereby diluting the Hungarians' political power at the regional level.

Although, fearful of international repercussions, Slovak political leaders balked at ratifying any of these proposals, the threat of their implementation prompted several thousand Hungarian leaders to attend a country-wide meeting at Komárno on 8 January 1994, at the invitation of the SMOŽO (the Association of Towns and Villages of Žitný Island). While the invitation included a proposal to create a one hundred-member Hungarian assembly, this plan was abandoned amidst protests by Slovak politicians that such an action would be unconstitutional. However, at the meeting Hungarian leaders suggested several alternative plans for the territorial reorganization of the country which would not be so detrimental to the minority's interests.

Open conflict between elements of the Slovak and Hungarian political elites became a determining factor in the segmentation of the Slovak political landscape into three main groupings. The first of these was composed of the four Hungarian political parties,⁴ hitherto splintered between the Együttélés-Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement coalition on the one hand, and the Hungarian Civic Party on the other, with the Hungarian People's Party then a less important ally of the coalition. The activities and objectives of these four parties tended to converge in opposition to the confrontational politics of the governing parties. The second of these groupings was the governing coalition of Mečiar's Movement and the Slovak National Party, with the Party of the Democratic Left (PDL) frequently lending its support in parliament. The realization of this grouping, formed of a left-wing (PDL), a centrist (MDS), and a right-wing (SNP) group, was made possible only through these parties' common proclivities toward statism and authoritarianism. The Slovak parties in op-

position comprised the third grouping. The Christian Democratic Movement was the most prominent of these, although the PDL should also be considered a member of this category. Despite its efforts to walk on both sides of the fence after the June 1992 elections, the PDL departed on a path of competition with the MDS soon after Slovakia's independence, and could certainly be considered as a member of the opposition from this time on. On the other hand, the resignation of Ľudovít Černák, then chairman of the SNP and the only member of that party with a portfolio, from his post as minister for the economy in early 1993 resulted from his dissatisfaction over the partnership between the SNP and the MDS. Negotiations between the MDS and the SNP, which resumed shortly thereafter, indicated a willingness on both sides to bridge the schism separating their two parties. This occurred in October 1993 with the formation of a governing coalition. The MDS' desire to maintain good relations with the SNP was certainly reinforced by defections from the MDS in early 1993.

In early 1994, the second major round of defections from the MDS since Slovakia gained independence led to the formation of the Alternative for Political Realism, led by Jozef Moravčík. This splinter group from the MDS, together with the Hungarian and Slovak opposition parties, voted to bring down Mečiar's government. The succeeding government, led by Moravčík himself, bargained for the parliamentary support of the HCDM-Együttélés coalition by promising them certain concessions, but without delegating to them any ministerial portfolios. The major concessions involved pledges to respect certain recommendations by the Council of Europe, provide for possibilities for the use of mother tongue in official use for names and surnames, post bilingual identifications of towns in mixed areas, work out a fair organization of regional administration, and abandon the notorious program of bilingual "alternative education,"⁵ which Hungarian minority leaders feared would undermine the existing Hungarian minority school system.

Moravčík's government made genuine, albeit limited, efforts to accommodate the demands made by leaders of the Hungarian minority. However, disagreement soon broke out between the HCDM and Együttélés as to whether the government was abiding by its earlier pledges. In the ensuing controversy, the HCDM

showed its inclination to work for limited, concrete goals through cooperation and accommodation. Együttélés adopted a more intransigent position, and even threatened to withdraw its support of the government if its pledges were not more fully respected. The most conspicuous issues related to the Hungarian minority which came to the fore during this period remained the possibilities for the official use of names and surnames in the citizen's own mother tongue and the bilingual naming of towns whose population included a certain percentage belonging to a national minority.

The fact that the Moravčík government attained parliamentary approval through the support of, and with concessions to, the Hungarian coalition had pronounced effects on Slovak parties, both in government and out. The governing parties clearly suffered losses in their popularity due to a generally perceived softness toward Hungarians. Indeed, fear of these unfavorable consequences was the initial reason why these former opposition parties hesitated to cooperate with the Hungarian coalition in the first place. In contrast, the MDS and the SNP found common cause in bashing the government, effectively capitalizing on the government's affiliation with the Hungarian parties. Another factor facilitating the convergence of the MDS and the SNP was their liberation from the responsibilities of governing, which had served to partially restrain them in the earlier period.

The 1994 parliamentary elections, which took place on 30 September and 1 October, saw the emergence of several new political formations. The Hungarian Civic Party, which had been in government from 1990 until 1992 and then lost its place in parliament due to its inability to find a suitable partner for an electoral coalition, was, understandably, interested in running with the other two major Hungarian parties in an electoral coalition in the 1994 elections. While this appeared to be acceptable to the HCDM, Együttélés still harbored suspicions, based on the HCP's earlier cooperation with Slovak parties, that the HCP did not place enough importance on ethnic concerns. Moreover, Együttélés did not want to see any further fragmentation of the Hungarian political leadership, and even proposed that the Hungarian parties join more closely to form a union.⁶ That these three parties joined together to form an electoral coalition for the 1994 elections represented a landmark achievement in intraethnic rela-

tions among the Hungarian minority leaders.

Other new parties and groupings appeared in the 1994 elections. The MDS, running in an electoral coalition with the small Farmers' Party of Slovakia (FPS), captured thirty-five per cent of the vote and sixty-one seats. While this was certainly not as high as the seventy-four seats in the June 1992 elections, it did indicate that the MDS still enjoyed the support of a substantial part of the electorate. Common Choice, an electoral coalition basically controlled by the PDL, but also with the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia, the Green Party of Slovakia, and the Movement of Farmers of the Slovak Republic, ran for the first time in the 1994 elections. With eighteen seats, Common Choice became the second-biggest party in parliament. The Hungarian coalition received seventeen seats, as did Čarnogurský's Christian Democratic Movement. The Democratic Union, composed primarily of MDS defectors, received fifteen seats. The Association of Slovak Workers, an extreme leftist organization running in parliamentary elections for the first time, captured a surprising thirteen seats, indicating a nostalgia for certain aspects of the previous Communist period, at least among a substantial portion of the voters. The Slovak National Party received the remaining nine seats.

Because of the wide range of ideologies, the significant number of personal and political animosities, and, except for the case of the MDS, the broad dispersal of votes, the coalition bargaining process was especially long and delicate. In the end, the MDS/Farmers' Party electoral coalition formed an odd government with the radical right-wing Slovak National Party and the radical left-wing Association of Slovak Workers. The fact that the strongest link between these parties was their inclination toward authoritarian leadership definitely indicated a non-standard axis of competition between parties in the Slovak political party system.

Nevertheless, Mečiar managed to sign a Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty with Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Horn, thereby prospectively removing a major obstacle for Slovakia's integration into Western European organizations. Although Mečiar could not rely on the support of the SNP for ratifying this treaty, other parties, including the ethnic Hungarian ones, which were not in government at the time of the treaty's signing sup-

ported its ratification. (The vote for ratification by the Slovak parliament was not scheduled to take place until later in 1996.)

Several other minority-related issues came to the fore of Slovak politics after the signing of the treaty. One of these was clerical concern over the status of Hungarian minorities in both Slovakia and Romania. A papal visit to East Central Europe over the summer gave weight to their grievances. Another issue was the status of Hungarian minority school system. In Slovakia, the decision by the SNP's Minister of Education to implement the program of "alternative education" met with opposition from leader of the Hungarian minority, who viewed the plan for bilingual education as a thinly-veiled attempt at assimilation, and argued that the plans implementation would have disastrous effects on the quality of education for national minorities. Finally, the passing of a new language law unfavorable to minorities in November 1995 indicated the persistence of serious ethnic tension in Slovak politics.

Theoretical Overview

Ethnic Political Parties

Given the high level of activity of ethnic political parties and their high profile in the press, it is clear that any analysis of ethnic conflict in a multi-party system must take into account the role of ethnic political parties. Horowitz writes,

The tendency to organize parties along ethnic lines is very strong in most deeply divided societies, particularly those in which a few major ethnic groups meet at the national level of politics. It is a tendency that is cumulative: once one party organizes along ethnic lines, others are inclined to follow suit.⁷

The idea that, in an ethnically segmented political party system, parties must identify exclusively with a particular ethnicity for their own survival raises the question of what mechanisms and forces compel the ethnically based crystallization of the political party system. Any analysis of this issue, of course, must take into account the internal structure of political parties, their tactics,

their policies, and especially the ways in which these three elements have changed over time.

The study of ethnic conflict through the lens of political parties is complicated by the question of whether political parties are thought to be the source, or merely the expression, of ethnic conflict. "Political parties," Giovanni Sartori reminds us, both "'presuppose' and 'produce', reflect and affect."⁸ If we accept this view, then we can regard ethnic conflict in multi-party political systems as both a cause and effect of ethnic conflict. According to Horowitz, then, one would expect ethnic conflict in societies deeply riven by ethnic cleavages to be both reflected in, and exacerbated by, the activities of political parties and politicians.

According to Horowitz, the organization of political parties along ethnic lines tends to foster rather than moderate competition between ethnic groups. This is for several reasons. The most obvious of these is that, in ethnically polarized political systems, the ethnic conflict axis takes precedence over alternating issues, which subsequently tend to be defined in ethnic terms as the ethnic parties take their individual stance on them. Another reason is that intragroup party competition creates a strong incentive for political parties to be diligent in advocating the particular interests of their own ethnic group. Finally, since ethnic affiliation is generally an ascriptive phenomenon, there is little possibility for ethnic parties to gain support across ethnic lines. Therefore, they have little incentive to moderate their policies on ethnic issues. Of course, while in office, the responsibilities associated with government may create some incentive for moderation of ethnic demands.

Horowitz points to a fundamental difference between two-party political systems whose parties are not ethnically based, such as that in the U.S., and those which are ethnically based. In the former case, competition for votes between the two parties makes their programs converge, resulting in a moderating, centripetal force. In the latter case, the party system exerts a centrifugal force, especially when the interests of one party are pursued through the negation of those of the other party.⁹ Lijphart writes, "If there are only two parties competing for the voters' favor, they will tend to concentrate their attention on the uncommitted voters in the middle of the left-right political spectrum."¹⁰ This tendency becomes stronger proportionally to the number of voters

located in the center.

Often, however, the interests of a given ethnic group are represented by more than one political party. This can result from either a split in the dominant party, or from the formation of an entirely new party. According to Horowitz, there are five main factors leading to the emergence of more than one party per ethnic group. The first of these results from the divisions within the ethnic group itself. The second is the strategic, collective consideration of how many political parties that a given ethnic group can have before its overall influence is weakened. The third factor is the divergence of opinion within the ethnic group on what should be the policy toward the other ethnic group or groups. The fourth refers to conflict resulting from competition between leading figures within the ethnic group itself. The fifth factor is "the effect of the formal incentive structure on party proliferation."¹¹

The entrance of other parties representing each ethnic group in an ethnically bipolar political system changes the dynamics of the two-party model already discussed. Like the two-party model, there are two ethnically distinct electoral groups. However, when there is more than one party representing a given ethnicity, there is a tendency for parties to attempt to outbid each other in advocating the interests of the minority. This adds another dimension to the centrifugal tendencies of an ethnically bipolar political system, especially around election time when parties are competing with each other for votes. On the other hand, the divisions between parties representing the same ethnicity introduces the possibility of interethnic coalitions, especially between parties of different ethnicities with more moderate ethnic policies. These have the potential to abate ethnic tension, since some consensus on ethnic policy would be a necessary condition to form such alliances.¹²

Ethnic Bipolarism in Slovakia

The crystallization of an ethnically segmented party system is a process that, in the case of Slovakia, had already superseded all other major axes of competition by the 1994 elections: the Christian democrats were represented by two distinct political parties, one for a Slovak constituency, the other a Hungarian one;

Slovak parties were similarly defined in ethnic terms, with only the Party of the Democratic Left retaining a small Hungarian contingent; meanwhile the three major Hungarian political parties formed an electoral coalition for the 1994 elections, despite serious ideological differences, especially between Együttélés and the Hungarian Civic Party.

Many observers of political events in Slovakia have commented, "Duray and Mečiar need each other."¹³ This comment refers to the fact, apparent to anyone exposed to the Slovak media, that many politicians on both sides of the ethnic divide have kept their names in the press and their political fortunes afloat by dramatizing and sensationalizing ethnic-related issues. This does not mean that indigenous ethnic tension did not previously exist; however, it does imply that such tension has been exacerbated in a political system where the manifestations of Slovak and Hungarian national sentiments have helped to justify each other's existence. While political, historical, and social causes for ethnic conflict exist in the case of Slovakia, the existence of the latter two elements have been evident for well over a century. On the other hand, the idea of politics as an instigator, and not merely a reflector, of ethnic conflict in Slovakia is something which has been suggested by journalists and scholars alike, but which has not yet been the subject of much serious inquiry.

Research Concerns

I analyze here the influence of the ethnically bipolar party system on the policies and strategies of the political parties from several angles: first, the ways in which parties influence the policies and strategies of fellow parties representing the same ethnicity; second, the effect of actions taken by parties of one ethnicity on the strategies and policies of parties representing the other ethnicity; third, the role of neighboring or nearby countries in influencing policies and strategies of domestic political parties; fourth, the role of international organizations such as the Council of Europe in abating—or exacerbating—ethnic tension; and, finally, the role of structural factors such as treaties, protocols, electoral laws, and procedures set forth in the constitution.

Ethnic political parties can affect the policies of fellow parties of the same ethnicity in a variety of ways. The most obvious

of these, as suggested by Horowitz's theories, is that ethnic parties usually compete with each other for votes in a sharply defined electorate. Since parties in an ethnically segmented party system have little or no chance of winning votes outside of their ethnicity, this makes them particularly vulnerable to suggestions or accusations that they are not representing the minority's interests vigorously enough. Other ways they can affect each other are through cooperation, especially, but not exclusively, by forming coalitions; or through ostracism, that is, deliberately refusing to form contacts. Another less apparent factor is the possibility or threat of a dominant party assimilating a less dominant one, or, similarly, the gravitational pull of one party might encourage dissent or defections in another party in its ideological proximity.

Since parties on both sides of the ethnic divide together comprise the whole political spectrum, the actions of parties of one ethnicity clearly have potential for affecting parties of a different ethnicity. In the case of Slovakia, mutual recriminations between parties across the ethnic divide have been the subject of much attention. However, periods of moderation and cooperation between parties of different ethnicities have also played an important role in abating ethnic tension. Thus patterns of confrontational and cooperative activity, and especially the reasons when and why one of these tendencies may predominate, could give clues about the essence of ethnic conflict.

The standpoint of political parties in neighboring states *vis-a-vis* the policies and strategies of domestic parties and, where appropriate, interparty relations between them, can certainly reverberate in international relations between the two countries concerned. In this research, the relations between kin-state parties in Hungary and host-state ethnic Hungarian parties in Slovakia have been highly influential in interstate relations. The Hungarian Democratic Forum, for a long time the most powerful party in Hungarian politics, has maintained very close relations with Együttélés, consulting with its leaders on policy issues, harmonizing its strategies with those of Együttélés, and giving it support in its election campaigns. Residual solidarity between formerly Communist parties has also played an important role in relations between political parties in Slovakia and Hungary. In the case of Slovak politics, the cordial attitudes of the Party of the Democratic Left, the former Communist Party of Slovakia, to-

ward the Hungarian Socialist Party, their formerly Communist colleagues in Hungary, became an important bridge in Slovak-Hungarian interstate relations.

The significance of these relations has been augmented by the desire of both Slovakia and Hungary to integrate themselves into Western organizations ("Euroatlantic integration"), and the reluctance of those organizations to import political contagion from new members. Concern by leaders of such organizations over the situation of minorities has been especially sharp, especially in the cases of Hungarian minorities in Romania and Slovakia. (The situation of minorities in states of the former Yugoslavia represents, of course, a crisis of a much higher order.) Therefore, political leaders have had strong incentives to reduce the symptoms of ethnic conflict in a timely manner, so as to ingratiate themselves with the West. Correspondence between representatives of the Hungarian minority and leaders of Western organizations have drawn international attention to the situation of minorities, and have even threatened to hinder the process of admission of their host-states to these organizations.

Another way political leaders of formerly Communist countries have tried to convince Western leaders of their commitment to effecting serious political reform has been to modify their legal, constitutional, electoral, and institutional structures to more closely resemble those of the West. Many of these transformations have had a direct impact on the political activity of minorities. The electoral law, for example, has been influential in decisions during the process of forming electoral coalitions, giving parties below the five per cent threshold a strong incentive to run with other parties in electoral coalitions, but also deterring the formation of coalitions which would be too large to meet higher minimum requirements for coalitions with more parties.

The study of an ethnically polarized party system as a source of ethnic conflict necessitates an understanding of patterns of political behavior of parties in the political system. The classic dilemma of political scientists—that is, whether to assume political parties to be *office-seekers* or *policy-seekers*—presents itself. A concomitant complication is that parties may advocate a certain position to gain votes, and thus office; or, conversely, parties may try to gain office in order to influence votes. While my reliance on electoral programs and other party documentation would

seem to indicate favoring the view of parties as *policy-seekers* (this approach could be justified by the well-documented superiority of policy-based analyses over office-based ones, at least in terms of predictive power¹⁴), it is important to note that my approach here is not quantitative; thus I am not compelled to choose between these two arbitrary and somewhat artificial assumptions.

Another problem is whether the stated policy of political parties corresponds to their policies in practice. As a starting point, I begin with the way that the parties represent their own views, especially through the medium of electoral programs. However, it is clear that no source can be completely accurate. Consequently, discrepancies between those policies advocated in documentation and those policies pursued in practice are investigated in this research.

Hungarian Minority Parties

The Hungarian Civic Party

The Independent Hungarian Initiative, precursor to the Hungarian Civic Party, was founded by a group of intellectuals in Šaľa, Czechoslovakia, on 18 November 1989, on the very eve of the "velvet revolution." Its chairman, Károly Tóth, together with many of the group's other founding members, had participated in the illegal Committee Protecting the Rights of the Hungarian Minority, a dissident organization formed of teachers, writers, and other intellectuals during the period of Communist government.

As the first legitimate political party concerned with the rights of the Hungarian minority working within Czechoslovakia (Slovakia) since 1939, the Independent Hungarian Initiative had as its main goals the support of the democratization process in Czechoslovakia, the safeguarding of individual freedoms, the rejection of any totalitarian and collectivistic ideologies, tolerance, solidarity, economic transformation to a western-compatible market system, and "the integration of Czechoslovakia into Europe, as a long-term guarantee of the enforcement and respectation [sic] of human, civic, and minority rights."¹⁵

Within a matter of days the movement had associated itself with the Civic Forum in Bohemia and with Public Against Violence, the Forum's Slovak counterpart. Although the Independent Hungarian Initiative gave precedence to the democratization process itself, it was also interested in finding ways to institutionalize safeguards protecting the rights of ethnic and national minorities. Like other political movements of the time, it shunned an organizational hierarchy, having its membership expand to about 1000 by the beginning of December. Due to its ideological and organizational similarity to the Civic Forum and Public Against Violence, it was able to issue joint declarations with these organizations proclaiming the right to one's own nationality as a basic human freedom, and called for tolerance and mutual respect between national and ethnic minorities in Czecho-Slovakia. In December 1989, it even proposed that the federal government should include a Ministry of Nationality Affairs, and nominated Miklós Duray, the well-known dissident and future leader of Együttélés, for the post, though this proposal was vetoed by the Czechoslovak Prime Minister Marián Čalfa.¹⁶ This cooperation between the Independent Hungarian Initiative and Slovak political parties and movements evoked a unfavorable reaction from some elements of the Hungarian minority, notably from CSEMADOK (the official cultural, social, and political organization of Hungarians living in Slovakia) and Együttélés. Later, the reluctance of the IHI to subordinate all other goals to those particular to those of the national minorities, were to cause it to lose a substantial part of its electoral support. Within the first few months, debate between leaders of the Hungarian minority over who was best capable of representing the minority's interests intensified. These early cracks in the Hungarian leadership were to become increasingly divisive as the political climate became more and more tense.

Partially as a result of these arguments, the Independent Hungarian Initiative made some efforts to more rigorously advocate minority rights. On 27 January 1990, it officially registered itself as an independent political movement, and then proclaimed its organizational autonomy from the Public Against Violence. Although it continued to support a host of non-minority goals related to the democratization of society and the liberalization of the economy, it requested, during a governmental session on 28 March 1990, proportional representation of national mi-

norities in parliamentary and administrative bodies, the publication of the most important laws in Hungarian, and the creation of a nationalities' commission in the Slovak National Council.¹⁷ The IHI also wanted to pass a law dealing with the use of native language in nationally mixed areas, questions of schooling for nationalities, culture, and publication of books in the nationalities' languages.

In March the Independent Hungarian Initiative also signed an electoral coalition agreement with the Public Against Violence for the June 1990 elections. Fear that this alliance would not adequately represent the interests of the Hungarian minority soon led to the defection of several leading members of the IHI to *Együttélés*. Although at the time leaders from all sides of the Hungarian minority publicly expressed regret over the lack of unity between them, arguments continued over pre-election campaign tactics and, especially, over the issue of who would be most capable of representing the interests of the Hungarian minority.

This squabbling continued even after the elections when the IHI, in coalition with the PAV, entered into government, getting five seats (out of one hundred fifty) in the Slovak National Council (Parliament), and five seats (out of three-hundred fifty) in the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia. *Együttélés*, in coalition with the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement, remained in opposition, despite the fact that they had received substantially more votes from the Hungarian community. After the elections, Károly Tóth, then Chairman of the IHI, clarified the issue, reasserting that the IHI was not an organization specifically dedicated to the defense of minority rights, but rather a political organization concerned with issues of nationality alongside other important national and social issues.¹⁸ In January 1991, as cracks began to deepen in the facade of the PAV, the IHI declared itself to be an independent member of the liberal-conservative government. At this time it also began to moderate its stance towards the HCDM, although it still regarded the tactics of *Együttélés* as confrontational.

As the Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence continued to break apart, the IHI was left without suitable political allies. At its party congress on 2 March 1991, as a result of the changing political climate and of its disassociation from the PAV, the IHI began to clarify the division of powers within its leader-

ship and to transform its organizational structure into something more closely resembling a civic party of the liberal type. This transformation also included making László Nagy the new chairperson of the movement (moving Károly Tóth to vice-chairperson), as well as the election of a new country-wide 30-member council. Interest was again expressed for closer cooperation with the HCDM and Együttélés.

The transformation of the party was made official on 25 January 1992, when the IHI changed its name to the Hungarian Civic Party at its Eighth Party Congress in Dunajská Streda. Chairperson Nagy justified the change from a movement to a political party with the argument that only an organization with the structure of a political party would be able to function effectively in the new political environment, a view supported by problems which had previously afflicted the Civic Forum and the PAV. The political agenda of the party remained essentially as before, though placing greater emphasis on concerns specific to national and ethnic minorities. The Hungarian Civic Party continued to call, at least publicly, for cooperation between Slovaks and Hungarians.

The HCP was unsuccessful in the June 1992 elections. Since the new electoral law, passed on 29 January 1992, put the minimum threshold of votes to get representation in parliament at five per cent for individual political subjects, seven per cent for double and triple coalitions, and ten per cent for quadruple coalitions, the HCP began negotiations for a new coalition arrangement. Slovak parties, however, were reluctant to cooperate with the HCP (association with the IHI had apparently cost the PAV a good deal of its electoral support), so the HCP began negotiations with the HCDM, Együttélés, and the newly formed Hungarian People's Party. Unfortunately for the HCP, these talks did not lead to the signing of a coalition agreement with the other Hungarian parties, since the demands made by Együttélés and the HCDM—that the HCP withdraw from government, renounce the governments' nationality policy, and announce its support for the opposition—were unacceptable to the HCP.¹⁹ Finally, the HCP entered the elections as an independent political subject, receiving only 2.29 per cent of the votes. Although this represented approximately one-quarter of the Hungarian minority, it did not reach the five per cent threshold, and thus the HCP functioned as

an extra-parliamentary entity until 1994.

While continuing to call for more cooperation between Slovaks and Hungarians, the HCP had clearly drifted closer to the other Hungarian political parties prior to the 1994 elections. This was also partly due to the dismal performance of several of its would-be partners—the Civic Democratic Union and the Democratic Party—in the elections of June 1992. In mid-1994, prompted to take a more defensive posture toward ethnic issues by the authoritarian and anti-Hungarian proclivities of some prominent Slovak politicians, the HCP entered into negotiations with representatives of the HCDM and Együttélés over the possibility of forming an electoral coalition. Lacking any potential Slovak allies, and faced with the certainty that they would not meet the five per cent threshold in the elections for parliamentary representation, the HCP's bargaining position was especially weak. Nevertheless an electoral coalition agreement between the HCP, the HCDM, and Együttélés was signed in June 1994.

The Hungarian Civic Party has maintained some important international contacts. In January 1993, the HCP was extended membership into the Liberal International, which was hailed as a victory for the party's liberal politics. Moreover, it has enjoyed close relations with both FIDESZ and the Alliance of Free Democrats in Hungary.

The HCP's 1992 program "Freedom and Responsibility" placed strong emphasis on Slovakia's integration into Europe. For the HCP, this meant making a serious effort to make Slovakia conform to European norms, though without forfeiting the country's cultural and historic traditions. The program also expressed the hope that integration into European structures might also help bridge the differences between the states of East Central Europe. On the other hand, the program, which considered the movements for self-determination in the region as potentially dangerous, stated,

The entire region is in a state of stormy changes; however, [some people are not satisfied with] attempts at changing the system and building a constitutional democratic state, but rather [emphasize] the slogan of national self-determination. . . . We consider to be especially dangerous the rise of new states accompanied by

the bloody violence of civil war. The HCP proclaims the principle that any problem can be solved through the democratic process, according to the norms of international law. . . . In the worst case, these trends could result in the Balkanization of the entire region.²⁰

Interestingly, the 1992 program of the Hungarian Civic Party contained no section specifically devoted to the status of minorities in the country, though the issue received mention in several other sections. However, the issue was directly addressed in another program, entitled "Economically Strong Minority," which stated,

We must keep in mind that petty national and nationalistic passions and arguments can only be overcome by an economically strong, mature, and open society of Hungarian citizens. . . . The Hungarian Civic Party is convinced that the problems of national minorities can only be resolved in a democratic system in which all minorities--be they of a national, ethnic, political, religious, or other nature--can pursue their interests in an atmosphere of mutual toleration.²¹

With respect to minority rights, the HCP has expressed support for the application of international norms, but not necessarily the imposition of Western models. Interestingly, the party has supported *pozitívna diskriminácia* [positive discrimination or affirmative action]. The program stated, "This does not mean offering extra rights, but rather the recognition of rights making possible compensation for natural disadvantages in relation to the majority nation."²² However, it was not specific as to exactly what these measures of "positive discrimination" should be. Essentially, the pillars of the HCP's minority policy since its inception have been:

- 1) Individual rights (including both civil and human rights)
- 2) Language rights
- 3) Minority rights (including autonomy in the spheres of education, especially at the university level, and culture)²³

The HCP has opposed the principle of "collective guilt," referring to the controversial "Beneš decrees," which, among other things, deprived Hungarians living in Slovakia of their citizenship and property rights at the end of World War Two.

The efforts of the Hungarian Civic Party could be viewed as an idealistic attempt to govern according to high, universal principles. From a tactical standpoint, this has been a difficult path to follow in the context of Slovak politics. The party's drift from cooperation with idealistic, consensus-seeking moderates in the 1990-92 period, to working more in tandem with other ethnically Hungarian parties since mid-1994, resulted from a combination of several factors. The first and most obvious of these was that the moderate Slovak parties suffered a resounding defeat in the 1992 elections. Shunned by other Hungarian minority parties, a pariah to Slovak parties, and unable to meet the five per cent threshold running by itself in the elections, the HCP spent the years 1992-94 as an extra-parliamentary party. Finally, its signing of an electoral coalition agreement with the HCDM and Együt-telés represented the final step in the ethnic polarization of the Slovak political scene.

The Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement

On 30 December 1989, an article entitled "Felhívás" ["Appeal" or "Invitation"] appeared in *Új Szó* [*The New Word*], a Hungarian-language daily published in Slovakia. The article called for the formation of Hungarian Christian-democratic clubs to complement existing Slovak ones.²⁴ In the next several months, however, after the clubs had formed and gained in membership, interest mounted in the ranks of these clubs for the formation of a conservative Christian political organization which, unlike the Independent Hungarian Initiative, would be devoted first and foremost to protecting the rights of the Hungarian minority. After this idea gained in popularity, the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement was registered with the Ministry of the Interior on 15 March 1990.²⁵ A meeting two days later led to the election of a 7-member executive committee. Kálmán Janics, known dissident from the Communist period and author of several works on the situation of the Hungarian minority, was named chairperson of the movement.

The movement's commitment to protect minority rights was confirmed on 30 March 1990, when it signed an agreement to enter into an electoral coalition with Együttélés. The agreement was concluded in spite of protests by the HCDM's otherwise more ideologically close partner, the Christian Democratic Movement. The decision to search for a partner on the basis of minority policy as opposed to a common Christian-democratic platform was justified by the HCDM's leadership on the grounds that the CDM lacked a satisfactory policy to protect the rights of national and ethnic minorities. Janics explained these concerns,

The spread of nationalism determined the events of the months of spring 1990 with protests and parliamentary threats; even the [ethnically] Slovak Christian Democratic Movement adopted tactics of careful withdrawal during parliamentary discussions.²⁶

Janics pointed out that, quickly thereafter, the CDM had come out in favor of making Slovak the official administrative and state language, while, paradoxically, emphasizing the importance of respecting such documents as the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Helsinki Accords with respect to nationalities' policy. As Čarnogurský tactfully put it, "In the wake of the rising national mood across the country we could not adequately encompass the interests of Slovakia's Hungarian Christian democrats."²⁷

The Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement called into question the IHI's commitment to representing the specific interests of the Hungarian minority, claiming that the IHI was too far assimilated into the ranks of the Slovak PAV.²⁸ The ensuing debate became a leading theme in the pre-election campaign, with both sides accusing the other of causing divisions within the Hungarian community. In the June 1990 elections, the HCDM-Együttélés coalition proved it had greater support from the Hungarian minority, gaining fourteen seats in the Slovak National Council and twelve seats in the Federal Parliament (five in the Lower and seven in the Upper House). Unlike the IHI, which found its way into the government on the basis of a coalition agreement with the PAV, the Hungarian coalition remained in the opposition. This, of course, led to further recriminations between the Hungarian parties.

Cooperation with Együttélés, however, prompted an identity crisis within the ranks of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement. In response to this, at the movement's Third State Assembly on 16 February 1991, which took place behind closed doors, the HCDM elected a new leadership, and confirmed its desire to continue to function independently from, though in cooperation with, Együttélés. An official party document circulated several months later explained the resolutions of this meeting: "We emphasize that, in the interests of our minority, all three Hungarian political movements must cooperate in such a way as to preserve their own identities."²⁹ For example, some of the goals for which the HCDM struggled at this early stage included the establishment of a Hungarian bishopric in Slovakia and the establishment and preservation of religious schools for the Hungarian minority.

Tension began to build within the movement on the basis of several policy issues, but especially over the question of whether the leadership's decision making process was sufficiently democratic. On 13 April 1991, at the Fourth State Assembly of the HCDM, this tension culminated in the departure of four leading members of the movement, although accounts varied on whether they left of their own volition or were expelled. A HCDM document circulated on 25 July 1991³⁰ gave a detailed account of these events:

Finally, the antipathy culminated in an unfortunate way at the Fourth State Assembly at Galanta on April 13th when the movement's four Prague deputies (Magyar, Noviczky, Szőcs, Varga) announced the formation of the Democratic Wing of the HCDM. The other delegates at the assembly formed a law for their exclusion, thereby precluding the possibility for disorder in the movement. Strictly speaking, the four deputies closed themselves out of the movement, since they walked out of the room before their expulsion (nobody sent them out).³¹

Regardless of whether the four representatives were expelled or left of their own volition, the split was far from amicable. On 22 April, Béla Bugár, the new HCDM Chairman (Kálmán Janics having been made honorary President of the Movement), together

with Pál Farkas, the party's vice-chairperson, even sent a letter to the former representatives demanding that they now function only as independent representatives of the Hungarian minority, and not as party members. The letter also stated, "Pursuant to the decision of the assembly, you may not make any statements in the name of the HCDM in any capacity."³² Later, in December 1991, a new political party, the Hungarian People's Party, emerged. Its leadership included many former members of other Hungarian political organizations, with Ferenc Szőcs, from the HCDM, as vice-chairperson, and Gyula Popély, historian and former member of Együttélés, as chairperson.

Although the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement had made great pains to assert its independence the previous year, this did not preclude it from continuing to cooperate with other Hungarian political parties. In February 1992, a coalition agreement was again concluded with Együttélés. This dual coalition was expanded to a triple coalition with the signing of another coalition agreement with the recently formed Hungarian People's Party. However, since this third party did not manage to get the 10,000 signatures to run for the Slovak National Council, it could not be part of the coalition in the elections for the Slovak National Council, though it was able to run with the other two parties in the federal elections. The coalition surpassed the seven per cent threshold for representation in the Slovak National Council (7.42 per cent), the Lower House (7.37 per cent), and the Upper House (7.39 per cent). The HCDM thus gained four seats out of the coalition's eleven in the Federal Assembly, and six seats out of the coalition's fourteen in the Slovak National Council. Members of the coalition occupied the posts of Chairman of the Commission for Environmental Protection, two seats in the parliament's Executive Committee, and representation in dozens of other parliamentary committees. Unlike before, however, the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Slovak National Council was not given to a representative of the Hungarian minority. At the end of June 1992, representatives from the HCDM and Együttélés in the Federal Assembly formed a parliamentary club, Coexistencia, whose membership consisted of eight representatives from Együttélés and four from the HCDM. Miklós Duray was elected chair of the club.

The HCDM has also made a good number of contacts with

international organizations. Since 1992 it has been an observer-member of the European Christian Democratic Union, as well as of the European Democratic Union since 1993. It also has links to the Council of Europe, the Organization of Security and Cooperation of Europe, and the European Union. It has maintained exemplary relations with Christian Democrats in the Czech Republic, and even received the "The Saint Ladislav Memorial Award" from József Antall, Hungary's Prime Minister, for service to the cause of "Hungarianism", in Budapest on 30 August 1993.

The HCDM's program, approved at its First Party Congress in Dunajská Streda on 26 February 1994, asserted the party's firm commitment to supporting democracy, especially through a rejuvenation of higher moral values in society. Fostering a feeling of responsibility between citizens perhaps came to represent the most important mission for the HCDM, and that is why the program put such great emphasis on such issues as social policy and environmental protection. The program supported the transition to a market economy, although with the stipulation that the lower echelons of society must be able to live at an acceptable level. It also favored legislation benefiting large families, especially those with three or more children.

The HCDM's international perspective has given further indication of its commitment to a peaceful transition to democracy. In addition to its links with international political organizations, the program expressed the hope for the integration of Slovakia into European institutions, especially the European Union and the UN Conference on Security and Cooperation. This could also help to contain the proliferation of nationalism and demagoguery, which represent potential obstacles to stability and reform in the region. The program stated,

Nationalism, the quest for power, and the concomitant individualistic and partisan interests appearing alongside reclaimed political freedom, together with economic and social problems, show the imperativeness of moral defense, tolerance, mutual respect, and dialogue, which would carry with them understanding between the majority and the minority.³³

Although the 1994 party program favored a strong "organic" (economic, social, and political) link between the Hungarian mi-

nority and the rest of Slovakia, it also asserted that the Hungarian minority should be free to express its cultural and linguistic connection with the Hungarian nation. The program stated, "The creation of the present state borders did not result in the rise of a new nation, but merely cut off a part or branch of a certain nation, whose citizens are Slovak, but whose people are Hungarian."³⁴ For this reason, the HCDM has supported cultural and educational autonomy for the Hungarian minority. According to the HCDM, this limited independence should be guaranteed by functionally autonomous regional and municipal organs representing the minority's specific concerns. The program called for the respect of European norms with respect to minority policy, especially as established by the Helsinki Accords and the Council of Europe's Recommendation 1201. It also supported changing or amending the constitution, and added that the Hungarian minority living in Slovakia has reached a stage where it should now be considered a *štátotvorný* [state-forming] element. The program stated,

Hungarians on the territory of Slovakia do not want to be mothered [*si nanárokujú na babuškovanie*] in political, economic, or social questions, or in cultural or educational ones. Therefore, the HCDM condemns any way of deciding for us but without us, and will direct all of its efforts so that Hungarians in Slovakia will have the constitutional right to decide upon their own affairs.³⁵

The goal of the HCDM has been to protect minority rights and Christian-democratic values while helping to guide Slovakia to a socially oriented market economy. It has faithfully tried to pursue these goals, though in a more cooperative and less confrontational manner than *Együttélés*. Having entered three parliamentary elections with *Együttélés* as its coalition partner, it has become a priority of the HCDM to maintain its own individual identity. This can explain its controversial decision to form its own parliamentary club in early 1995, not only in violation of the 1994 electoral coalition agreement, but also over the objections of both *Együttélés* and the HCP. In this light, its emphasis on Church-related issues and a moral regeneration of society, together with the forming of a plethora of international contacts, can be viewed as more than just programmatic goals; they have a

tactical motivation as well, insofar as the HCDM has attempted to safeguard its organizational independence from the other Hungarian minority parties.

Együttélés -Political Movement For Democracy and the Rights of the

National Minority

As the third political organization to form with the goal of protecting the rights of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia (Slovakia), Együttélés quickly became the most influential in terms of electoral support at the local, national, and federal levels, as well as in terms of recognition, both internationally and domestically. Five years after its inception, Miklós Duray, one of the movement's founders, wrote with some exaggeration,

The first five years of the Együttélés organization is not the history of a political party; but rather the political history of the Hungarian national community living in Slovakia, the history of reconstructing, the history of reviving European values, and hopefully the inauguration of a new era. The finest accomplishment of Együttélés' political activity is showing how to simultaneously pursue both local and universal politics.³⁶

The most influential, widely-known, and controversial member of Együttélés' founding committee was Miklós Duray, the well-known dissident, prolific writer, and signer of Charter 77. Through his work as a founding member of the organization Committee for the Protection of Hungarian Minority Rights (Legal Defense Community), Duray helped publicize the cause of the Hungarian minority abroad, thereby earning for himself disfavor with the Communist authorities at home. A geologist by profession, Duray had been active in the Hungarian community, both through official institutions, and in establishing underground contacts. He was followed and interrogated repeatedly by Communist authorities, and was put in prison twice for his underground activity: the first time from November 1982 to February 1983, and then again from May 1984 to May 1985. This persecution even earned him the respect of many other dissidents

who disagreed with his controversial ideas, some of whom protested against his persecution, only to resume their criticism of Duray's writings upon his release. One of Duray's most important actions prior to the formation of Együttélés was struggling against the closure of a Hungarian school in 1985.

At the beginning of January 1990, a work group was formed which had as its main goal finding the best way to advocate the interests of national minorities in the new democratic and pluralistic conditions.³⁷ It was this group that soon transformed itself into the Együttélés Political Movement. The political program of Együttélés was first published in the Hungarian-language Slovak daily *Új Szó* on 7 February 1990. Entitled "Együttélés Political Movement for Democracy and the Rights of the National Minority," the official name of the movement, the program called for the establishment of a movement to defend the rights of the Hungarian minority through cooperation with other national minorities, thereby making Együttélés an anomaly in East European politics among ethnically and nationally oriented parties. The 1990 program stated,

This, however, is not separable from the claims of other national minorities. Therefore, we believe that we must undertake this task with other national minorities, in tandem with the interests of the entire population of areas inhabited by national minorities, and this would include the Slovak population as well.³⁸

The program called for the defense of collective minority rights, collective representation for national minorities, civil and legal equality, and equal opportunity. It pledged to combat the rising tide of anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and any other form of discrimination, whether it be based on race, religion, nationality, or conviction. Regional autonomy was also one of the first goals set forth in the program, in order to help reverse the detrimental effects stemming from decades of centralized state power. It favored the transition to a market economy, and, especially, the return of land to private ownership, an issue particularly important for the Hungarian minority, with its heavy concentration in the agricultural sector. In its first program, Együttélés also advocated cultural and educational autonomy, and free use of the mother-tongue in areas populated by minorities, especially in of-

ficial and religious capacities. Hope was also expressed for cooperation with the Hungarian Civic Party and the Public Against Violence on a common platform, an idea which was quickly abandoned in the face of rising Slovak national sentiment.

On 27 February 1990, the movement *Együttélés* was officially registered with the Czech Republic's Ministry of the Interior, and, on 1 March with the Slovak Republic's Ministry of the Interior. On 31 March, *Együttélés* held its founding congress, where the participants accepted the movement's program and bylaws. At this meeting they also elected Miklós Duray as the movement's president, Gawlik Stanislav and György Gyimési as the vice-presidents, and Ivan Gyurcsík as the head secretary. *Együttélés* also signed an electoral coalition agreement with the HCDM.

Differences of opinion between *Együttélés* on the one hand, and the Independent Hungarian Initiative and the Public Against Violence on the other, erupted into a schism right before the June 1990 elections. On 26 May, PAV spokespersons accused *Együttélés*' leaders of disinformation and of radicalizing the political situation.³⁹ *Együttélés* denied these allegations, countering them with the claim that the PAV had been abusing its political power to benefit its own election campaign. Complaints lodged against Miklós Duray came from both Slovaks and Hungarians, alleging unnecessary incitement of unrest among national minorities.⁴⁰

The elections of 8–9 June 1990, seemed to justify the policies of the Hungarian coalition. In the elections for the Slovak National Council, the *Együttélés*-HCDM coalition received 292,636 votes, or 8.66 per cent of the total. This gave them fourteen representatives (out of one hundred fifty) in the national parliament. They achieved similar results in the federal elections, winning five seats in the lower house and seven in the upper (see the section on the HCDM). On 26 June, representatives of the Hungarian coalition in the Slovak parliament formed a parliamentary club, with Rezső Szabó as president. This was followed on 3 July by the formation of a parliamentary club in the federal parliament, with Miklós Duray elected as the club president.

At the Second Congress of *Együttélés* at Lučenec, representatives appraised the election results, modified some of the organization's bylaws, and elected members of the Central Affairs Body. At their Third Congress, which took place in Košice on

23--24 February 1991, Együttélés members made the decision that Együttélés should continue to function as a movement without a centrally registered membership base, and asked their deputies to sign a statement to the effect that they agree with the movement's goals and bylaws. This requirement seemed to anticipate the type of defection that was to afflict the HCDM leadership only a few weeks later.

Együttélés has maintained stronger contacts with political parties in Hungary than have the other Hungarian minority parties in Slovakia. Especially significant has been the link between Együttélés and the Hungarian Democratic Forum, which dominated the Hungarian political scene from 1990 until the rise in popularity and subsequent electoral victory of the Hungarian Socialist Party in 1994. The Hungarian Democratic Forum and Együttélés have worked together to exchange information and to harmonize their policies, particularly with regards to minorities' policies and the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros dam project. As the Hungarian Civic Party had previously done, Együttélés became a member of the Liberal International in 1993.

The division of the federation into the Czech and Slovak Republics, effective on 1 January 1993, prompted significant changes within Együttélés' internal organization. At the Fourth Congress of Együttélés, Duray stated that, due to the new conditions stemming from Slovakia's independence, the Együttélés organization needed to have more discipline, tighter structure, and greater accountability than had existed before. In the congress "Report," Duray stated, "Our solution offers a forward-looking model: Central Europe shall become a community of peoples based on a collegial partnership between nations [*'az itt élő népek partneri, társnemzeti viszonyon alapuló közössége'*]. This is the fundamental theme of Együttélés."⁴¹

One element of the movement's bylaws as passed at the Fourth Congress was the provision, established in Article 42, for the possibility of separate political platforms (factions) within the Együttélés organization. The provision for different factions became perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the Együttélés organizational structure, allowing for an incredible range of ideological diversity, all within the same movement. Of course, this tolerance indicated a strong willingness to subordinate other political concerns to those issues directly related to national and ethnic

minorities, as defined by Együttélés' goals and objectives. Article 43 of the bylaws even established the possibility for the establishment of "Nationality Departments," with a corporative structure to that of the political platforms.⁴²

In accordance with Article 42 of the Együttélés bylaws, three political platforms (factions) were founded within the movement. Their declarations were first heard by the Együttélés National Council at its meeting on 11 March 1995. They were also discussed at the Fifth Congress of Együttélés later the same month. The three platforms were of a liberal, conservative, and socialist orientation. These platforms dealt primarily with issues of social policy and reflect different attitudes toward the processes of political democratization and economic liberalization taking place in Slovakia. At the same time, none contradicted the Együttélés program, though each emphasized different aspects of it. The most noteworthy of these platforms was the socialist one. The "Founding Declaration of Coexistence's Social Platform" stated,

The social burdens of the switch to a market economy proved to be greater than expected for the majority of the population and the citizens must bear a large part of these burdens. At the same time, the loopholes in the legal regulation of the transition to a market economy and the attitude of the new owners who are attempting to amass a fortune quickly and without restraints have provoked displeasure among those living from wages, salaries, and low pensions, as well as among small and medium entrepreneurs.⁴³

The existence of a socialist faction at all is in some respects surprising from an avowedly "centrist" political organization. Explaining this tolerance of political diversity within the Együttélés organization, Duray wrote that the values espoused by the Együttélés movement shares with socialism its sense of compassion and social responsibility, with conservatism its defense of positive values in society, and with liberalism its tolerance of differences.⁴⁴

Együttélés had several reasons for allowing or promoting different factions within its inner ranks. It is axiomatic among political scientists that there is a correlation between increasing

party discipline on one hand and a higher propensity for defections from—or even the splintering of—parties on the other.⁴⁵ Therefore, the provisions for different factions within Együttélés will help to keep its support base by decreasing the probability that disgruntled members of Együttélés will search for solutions outside of the movement's structure.

It was also not a coincidence that each of these factions corresponded ideologically to one of the other political organizations competing for votes among the Hungarian minority (with the exception of the Hungarian People's Party, whose existence I later argue to be ephemeral). The conservative platform, for example, advocated policies very similar to those of the HCDM, albeit without the emphasis on religious matters. The liberal platform espoused ideals and goals resembling those of the HCP, but without mentioning cooperation with Slovak political organizations. The socialist platform most closely resembled the program of the Party of the Democratic Left. Significantly, none of Együttélés' factions challenged the supremacy of Együttélés' official policies.

As a tenet of its foreign policy, Együttélés defined the Hungarians residing in southern Slovakia as the northern sector of the Hungarian nation, cut off from Hungary by state borders.⁴⁶ In guiding its foreign policy, Együttélés has paid particular attention to the interests of *összmagyarság* [pan-Hungarianism or collective Hungarianism]. This strategy has included maintaining close contacts with Hungary, with international organizations such as the Council of Europe, the United Nations, and with any other state express genuine concern over the fate of ethnic minorities in Central Europe. Együttélés has also been willing to push the Slovak government to accept the goals of the European Union with regards to minority policy, and has so far been willing to use means outside the Slovak government to apply pressure for the realization of this goal. Együttélés has supported integration into Europe, since this could provide new incentives and new venues to resolve ethnic conflict. The program stated,

Only continually expanding cooperation—be it of an economic, political, social, or other nature, together with a Europe composed of trans-border regions, can abate escalating national tempers. For the solution of contemporary European problems, integration, by its own dynamic, makes nec-

essary consensus-based conflict resolution methods. . . . Our slogan: Integration and autonomy!⁴⁷

That Együttélés has viewed Slovakia's integration into Western Europe as an opportunity to counterbalance, or diminish, the role of the Slovak-controlled state in its affairs is an idea that has been fiercely resisted by more nationally oriented Slovak parties.

The 1994 program expressed support for the signing of a Slovak-Hungarian basic interstate treaty, provided it contained guarantees of minority rights—not only for Hungarians living in Slovakia, but also for Slovaks living in Hungary.

The Hungarian People's Party

The fourth and least significant Hungarian political party in Slovakia, both in terms of influence on the policy-making process and total votes received, is the Hungarian People's Party. It was registered with the Ministry of the Interior on 9 December 1991, and held its First Party Assembly on 18 January 1992, where it elected its twenty-five-member council and approved its party program. From the very inception of the HPP, the other Hungarian political organizations, in particular Együttélés and the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement, doubted that the existence of yet another Hungarian political party was justifiable. Whereas the leaders of the HPP claimed they wanted to attract those Hungarian voters who had not yet put their support behind one of the other political parties, it was not clear from what part of the political spectrum these new members might come; Hungarians of a conservative Christian-democratic orientation could support the HCDM, those of a liberal orientation had the Hungarian Civic Party, and those inclined to more vigorously champion the cause of the Hungarian minority could find expression through Együttélés.

In fact, the political program of the Hungarian People's Party did little to clear up these concerns. It based itself on the four pillars of Christian morality, national orientation, a free-market orientation with concern for the environment, and democracy⁴⁸—values that could easily be found in the other Hungarian political parties. The HPP's biggest distinction was that it became the first Hungarian political organization to officially label itself

a "party," the next to do so being the IHI upon the occasion of its redesignation of itself as the Hungarian Civic Party on 25 January 1992. Of all the ethnically Hungarian political parties, it can also be said that the HPP was the least resistant to the idea of Slovak independence, claiming to see some potential long-term advantages in the new arrangement, yet perhaps also motivated by a desire to differentiate itself from the other Hungarian minority parties.

Although the Hungarian People's Party wanted from the beginning to enter into an electoral coalition with Együttélés and the HCDM, it immediately encountered certain problems. In particular, four founding members of the HPP had in fact served as representatives of the HCDM in Prague before their unamicable departure (expulsion). The party's chairperson, Gyula Popély, a historian, had previously served as a member of Együttélés, although this had apparently caused less contention than the issue of the four former HCDM representatives.

After unsuccessful negotiations with the HCDM, Együttélés, and the HCP, in March 1992, the HPP decided to run independently of the other parties. However, since trilateral negotiations among the remaining three parties had also failed, leaders of the HCDM and Együttélés began to fear that excessive divisions might undermine the overall political influence of the Hungarian minority. Therefore, the three parties arrived at a compromise, where the HPP could run in the same electoral coalition with Együttélés and the HCDM, provided that they excluded the four former members of the HCDM from their list of candidates. After the signing of the coalition agreement, however, the leaders of Együttélés and the HCDM began to question the wisdom of the new alliance. The Hungarian People's Party did not manage to get the ten thousand signatures required in order to run for the Slovak National Council. As a result of this, the peculiar situation arose where the Hungarian parties all ran together as a triple coalition in the federal elections, and as a dual coalition in the Slovak elections. That is, without the HPP on the ballot, but with its representatives on the list of candidates.⁴⁹

Since the 1992 elections, the significance of the HPP has declined dramatically. In the 1994 elections, it was replaced by the HCP as the third party in the Hungarian coalition. One reason that the HPP was excluded from the coalition (in addition to its

low popularity) was that the electoral laws set a minimal threshold of seven per cent for dual or triple coalitions to win representation in parliament, but for quadruple coalitions the figure rises to 10 per cent (for single parties, the figure is five per cent). This provided a strong deterrent for the other parties to enter into coalition with the HPP, since the risks of losing all representation outweigh the limited potential benefits from the HPP's narrow support base. There would be no reason to expect a resurgence in the HPP's popularity.

Ethnically Slovak Parties

The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia

One of the most outspoken advocates of increasing Slovak autonomy has been Vladimír Mečiar, the Slovak Prime Minister and member of the Public Against Violence. In March 1991, he formed his own political party from the pro-independence wing of the PAV, calling it Movement for a Democratic Slovakia. However, attacks by disconcerted pro-federalist Czechs and Slovaks led to Mečiar's ouster from the office of prime minister in April 1991. As a result of this ouster, Mečiar's popularity in Slovakia soared, as he came to be seen as a victim of a coup engineered from Prague.

Since the June 1992 elections, where it almost gained an absolute majority with seventy-four out of one hundred fifty seats, the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (or MDS), with a political orientation that could best be described as national populist, has consistently dominated the Slovak political scene. In addition to independence for Slovakia, the 1992 program of the MDS called for a more moderate pace of privatization and economic reform, and placed an especially high premium on Slovak national concerns. In coalition with the Farmers' Party of Slovakia (FPS), the MDS gained sixty-one seats in parliament in the 1994 elections, indicating its continued popularity among the Slovak electorate, especially in the eastern regions. It is noteworthy that in the cities of Bratislava and Košice, as well as in the south, with its large concentration of ethnic Hungarians, support for the MDS/FPS was significantly lower. Generally echoing the orien-

tation of the 1992 program, the 1994 program, largely of propagandistic value, outlined a center-left nationalistic orientation, and stated the MDS' goals to support families, reduce unemployment, and initiate collective wage bargaining. As a long-term goal, the program advocated a socially and ecologically oriented market economy with a preponderance of private ownership.

The foreign policy of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia has focused on Euroatlantic integration; although Slovakia, under the direction of the MDS, has experienced difficulties gaining the confidence of Western organizations. The MDS' 1994 program supported entry in the European Union, and cooperation with NATO's Partnership for Peace program. It also called for greater participation in the United Nations, and good relations with its neighbors, especially the Czech Republic and Hungary. However, the actual policies of the MDS have cast doubt on the party's commitment in this regard. The 1994 program also advocated deepening the Slovak government's dialogue with the Council of Europe with regards to national minorities, with the goal of establishing European standards in this respect; however, the policies pursued by the MDS have radically diverged from this stance. The program advocated the principle of reciprocity with neighboring countries that have ethnically Slovak citizens with regard to policy, and rejected any attempt at assimilation in the Slovak Republic. It opposed any attempt at modification of borders, and qualified the territorial integrity of the Slovak Republic as the utmost demand of Slovak statehood.

In regard to minority policies, the MDS has called for extending carefully limited concessions; although its political activity has been manifestly hostile to the interests of minorities. The 1994 program of the MDS endorsed the respect for individual rights as guaranteed in the Slovak Constitution, but rejected the principle of collective rights as being outside European standards and thus unacceptable. The 1994 program stated,

Belonging to a national minority entails not only rights, but also responsibilities toward the state and its interests. We will create conditions for the inclusion of members of national minorities into the economic, social, and cultural life of the Slovak Republic. The natural precondition for this is recognition of the state language by members of a

national minority who want to actively participate in the economic, cultural, and social life on the entire territory of the state.⁵⁰

The 1994 program adamantly supported the rights of Slovaks living in mixed areas to proportional representation in municipal assemblies (not clarifying whether this right should apply to the national minorities as well), to guarantees of church services in Slovak, and to instruction in Slovak. It also stated that students belonging to a national minority should be taught a version of history which fosters loyalty to the Slovak state, with the history of the respective national minority becoming a supplementary part of instruction. A recommendation was even put forth in this program that students belonging to a national minority be required to pass tests in the Slovak language as part of their high school graduation requirement.

The political record of the MDS has been marked by a large discrepancy between its stated policies and those pursued in practice; moreover, its political activity has been inconsistent overall, thereby making it difficult to ascertain the political disposition of the MDS. The most marked consistency in the political behaviour of the MDS has been its tendency to continually seek to maximize its power bases in the economy, the government, parliament, the media, and other state institutions. As a result, when evaluating the MDS' policies, careful attention must be given to its actions as well as its rhetoric. The MDS, together with its leader, Vladimír Mečiar, has been the subject of more controversy than any other political party in Slovakia, both in the domestic and international media. Abroad, the depiction of the MDS has been especially negative, and at home it has been accused of trying to control domestic politics and the domestic media. Mečiar has been in a bitter and highly public conflict with President Kováč over a number of issues. President Kováč took a role in Mečiar's ouster in 1994, an event made possible by defections from the MDS in 1993 and 1994, partially in reaction to Mečiar's authoritarian leadership style. Moreover, the MDS' commitment to transforming the country into a socially and ecologically oriented market economy is questionable. The MDS has politicized the privatization process, with Mečiar even holding the chairmanship of the Slovak National Fund's presidium, giving him control of the privatization process. In early 1994, his privatization of at least thirteen different companies was clearly

marred by corruption.⁵¹

This makes the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia's commitment to pursuing its already highly qualified minority policy highly questionable. Mečiar has clearly targeted the Hungarian minority as a sounding board for his populist and nationally oriented rhetoric. This tactic has been partially vindicated by public opinion polls and by the elections; Mečiar has remained one of Slovakia's most powerful and popular politicians.⁵²

The Christian Democratic Movement

Because of the important role the Catholic Church played in Slovakia as a focus of anti-regime during the Communist era, it is not surprising that the Christian Democratic Movement was one of the first parties to arrive on the Slovak political scene after the fall of totalitarianism in November 1989. In the June 1990 elections, the Christian Democratic Movement fared extremely well, and entered the government at both the federal and republican (Slovak) levels. In Slovakia, the party entered government with the PAV, the Democratic Party, and the Independent Hungarian Initiative. In 1991, after Mečiar's ouster, Ján Čarnogurský became the Slovak Head of Government. This cabinet, which remained despite some personnel changes, continued until June 1992.

In February 1992, cracks in the CDM leadership began to appear during a dispute over differing conceptions of the ideal relationship between the Czech, Slovak, and federal governments. The CDM's more radical (pro-sovereignty) wing, led by Ján Klepáč, began to voice its dissent more forcefully and more publicly. The ensuing tension led to a split in the party's ranks, resulting in the establishment of a new party, the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement (SCDM). The Čarnogurský faction kept its original name, the CDM, and retained about two-thirds of the party's members. The biggest defections to the SCDM camp occurred in the central part of the country.⁵³ After the party's division, the CDM became free to consolidate power and prepare a more coherent campaign plan. However, in the June 1992 elections; because of its tarnished public image and the rising popularity of Mečiar's MDS, the CDM received only about 10 per cent of the votes in Slovakia (the SCDM getting only about three per cent). Of the four parties in government—the PAV, the CDM, the

IHI, and the Democratic Party—only the CDM managed to pass the five per cent threshold and get seats in parliament. Because of the changed political climate, however, the CDM began to function as an opposition party.

The CDM has consistently held to its conservative Christian-democratic political platform. According to its 1992 program, the basic values of the CDM were: a better state, a better economy, better places for living, and a better style of life. In regard to the fourth value, the program stated, "for the CDM, a better place to live means social security for the old and sick, an appropriate system of medical care, concern for the environment, and defense of the rights and safety of all citizens, which includes respect for the rights of minorities."⁵⁴

After 1992, the CDM continued to advocate these basic values, though placing more emphasis on national issues and less on minority rights. In February 1993, a draft CDM political program entitled "A Better Slovakia" appeared. It resembled the 1992 program in many ways though it used more patriotic rhetoric. For example, it emphasized the inviolability of state borders. In regard to minorities, the 1993 program stated,

We consider minorities—whether they be national, cultural, or religious—to be the wealth of a pluralistic society and the right of minorities to preserve their individuality to be the testing ground of democracy. We shall support the rights of minorities, but we shall also oppose the granting of privileges for minorities. We shall support the creation of a democratic constitutional order which guarantees the equality of all citizens before the law, and this would include members of minorities.⁵⁵

The 1994 electoral program supported the same basic values as the 1992 and 1993 political programs, though without ever mentioning specifically the status and rights of minorities. Nevertheless, the CDM did well in the 1994 elections, winning 10.08 per cent of the vote and gaining seventeen seats.

In practice, the CDM has not generally been a forceful advocate of minority rights. However, while it has been cautious not to appear overly compliant to concerns specific to the Hungarian minority, the CDM has shown somewhat greater sincerity in re-

specting minority rights than the Party of the Democratic Left or the Democratic Union. Moreover, its public and parliamentary opposition to the MDS and the SNP has been more pronounced than that of the PDL or the DU; the prospects for it to enter into cooperation with nationalistic forces have been correspondingly much lower; and its capacity to oppose overly nationalistic policies has been greater.

The Slovak National Party

The rise of the Slovak National Party signaled a new direction for Slovak politics. Established in February 1990, it immediately gained popularity—and notoriety—by expressing its discontent over Slovakia's position in the federation. In that same month, it also helped to organize several anti-Hungarian demonstrations in Bratislava and Nové Zámky.⁵⁶

The electoral performance of the Slovak National Party has generally declined since 1990. The SNP fared well in the June 1990 parliamentary elections, gaining twenty-two seats in the Slovak National Council, and fifteen in the Federal Assembly. Later the same year, however, due to internal conflicts and a shift in the PAV's platform toward a more nationalistic stance, the SNP did less well, rallying only three per cent of the vote in local elections.⁵⁷ The SNP's results in the June 1992 elections were less favorable than those of June 1990. It gained fifteen seats in the Slovak National Council, as well as one ministry in Slovakia's first independent government. In the 1994 elections, the SNP barely passed the five per cent threshold, receiving 5.4 per cent of the votes and getting nine seats in parliament.

Because it formed part of the governing coalition with the MDS following the June 1992 elections, the SNP's influence on policy-making has been proportionally greater than its allotment of parliamentary seats. However, its alliance with MDS has also caused some disputes in its already unstable leadership. Under the leadership of Ľudovít Černák, the SNP dissolved its alliance with the MDS in March 1993 only to rejoin it in October of the same year. However, dissatisfaction with this arrangement led to the breaking away of a more moderate faction, which formed itself under the name "National Democratic Party." An incidental result of these disputes was the radicalization of the rump SNP,

as reflected in its more anti-Hungarian campaign tactics.⁵⁸

Controversy has forced the SNP to clarify, but by no means mollify, its political platform. Its 1994 draft political program was the most specific of any party's in regard to the precision of its policy recommendations and the clarity of its ideological perspective. It articulated the party's nationalist right-wing perspective, while emphasizing the importance of forming and strengthening the Slovak nation-state, both at home and through international contacts and treaties. The program rebutted claims, based on observing Western democracies, that a nationalist right-wing party is unnecessary, pointing out that the process of self-determination in these countries had already been completed decades, or even centuries, ago. Moreover, it pointed to the existence of increasing attention to national issues among many parties in the West of both liberal and conservative persuasions.

An emphasis on promoting the values of Slovak nationhood has constituted a major aspect of the SNP's ideological perspective. In its 1994 draft program, the SNP portrayed itself as an organization willing to vigorously protect Slovak independence, as well as to work for the rejuvenation of national pride and spirit at home. According to the program, it has been precisely these values, putting the interests of the nation-state above others, that have often brought the SNP into confrontation with "supra-national pan-Europeanism and worldly cosmopolitanism."⁵⁹ The SNP draft program stated the SNP's opposition to the nation's demoralization, and to the effects of international capital, mafianism in the state apparatus and economy, and corruption; it also affirmed the party's Christian orientation. Moreover, indicating a clear willingness to capitalize on rising anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Slovakia, it added, "the SNP does not and will not support the selling away of any kind of wealth into the hands of anonymous supra-national subjects, who take advantage of their economic power to influence politics."⁶⁰

The Slovak National Party has placed a great deal of importance on the nation's educational system, not only for economic reasons, but also since this represents a potential means to fight apathy, and regenerate morality and national sentiment in the population. This was especially true at the level of elementary schools, where the SNP draft program recommended changing the name from *základná škola* [elementary school] to *národná škola*

[national school]. The school system should, according to the SNP program, stress the importance of Slovak as the official state language, even in the case of minorities. According to the program:

Elementary school must safeguard instruction in the state language for all citizens without distinction. To nationalities can be offered an appropriate amount of instruction for the partial use of their mother tongue, according to educational law and in conjunction with constitutional regulations on the use of Slovak as the state language.⁶¹

Both in its program and through its legislative activity, the SNP has sought to introduce a constitutional law to defend the status of Slovak as the official state language.

In addition to influencing its educational and language policies, the SNP's views on minorities have primarily consisted of concerns to safeguard Slovak independence and the inviolability of Slovak borders. According to its program, the SNP would like to work out a new model of resolving issues of minorities which would simultaneously include guarantees of independence for the Slovak Republic, and which would respect international standards of minority protection now in place in states associated with the Council of Europe. While this might at first seem to indicate support for the Council of Europe's Recommendation 1201, this protocol has never in fact been implemented in any of the Council's member countries, and the SNP has objected to pledges made in the Hungarian-Slovak Basic Treaty to respect it. In the event that the principle of bilingual signs for towns and villages would be implemented into law, titles in the language of the national minority should, according to the SNP program, retain an unofficial status and be direct translations of the official Slovak name. According to the SNP program, this renaming should only potentially apply to those towns and villages where, according to official census figures, the percentage of inhabitants belonging to national minorities exceeds fifty per cent. The SNP has consistently maintained that names signed into official registers be in their Slovak form, which would make compulsory the addition of the suffix "-ová" in the case of female Hungarian surnames. Moreover, the SNP has flatly rejected the principle of collective rights in the case of national minorities as a centrifugal

tendency with no basis in contemporary international law.

The SNP has placed a great deal of importance on state defense and internal security. Its 1994 draft program listed as the most serious risks in this respect:

- irredentism in the upper political echelons of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia
- Czechoslovakism, especially in culture and the armed forces
- internationalization of the Balkan conflict
- unstable situation in the Ukraine
- group-, regionally, or ethnically based terrorism.⁶²

In word the SNP has proposed cooperation with European security structures, but in deed it has refused to sign any state treaties with neighboring countries which fail to include guarantees of the inviolability of state borders. Otherwise, the political activities of the SNP have been generally consistent with its programmatic goals.

The Party of the Democratic Left

The Party of the Democratic Left originated directly from the Communist Party of Slovakia. The CPS, which throughout the cold-war period had, at various times, tried to assert its equality with and independence from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, finally saw its opportunity to realize its long-standing aspirations in late 1989 with the fall of totalitarianism. After November 1989, it became increasingly independent from the federal Communist party, and began to modify its internal organizational structure. The break became official at the CPS' party congress in October 1990, where the party changed its name to the CPS-PDL, later dropping the first part of this title.

The internal goal of the PDL was to become a more conventional political party with a social democratic platform, leading a unified left in the arena of multi-party elections. As late as 1993, it considered its closest allies to be the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia, whose name was closely associated with that of the late Alexander Dubček, and the Association of Slovak Workers, at the

time not yet a contender in national elections. In the process of forming more cooperative relations with other like-minded Slovak political entities, the PDL tried to purge its ranks of its overly conservative Communist elements. In January 1991, it required all of its members to register if they wanted to retain membership status. In March 1991, after the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia's break from the Public Against Violence revealed that Slovak national sentiment was reviving from its hitherto state of relative dormancy, the PDL began to adopt a slightly more patriotic stance. Differing postures towards the MDS have since been the source of tension among the ranks of the PDL's leadership.

Having been unsuccessful in its coalition-forming negotiations with the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia, the PDL ran alone in the June 1992 elections. Although it did not have any members in the MDS-SNP cabinet, the PDL frequently lent its parliamentary support to the governing coalition during the latter half of 1992, and can therefore be characterized as a state-forming party which participated in the drafting and adoption of the Slovak Constitution. Immediately following the June 1992 elections, the PDL wanted the Slovak Constitution to reflect the equal and independent status of the Slovak Republic with the Czech Republic.⁶³ However, its leadership expressed regret over the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation, especially since this was agreed upon by Czech and Slovak political elites and since this decision had not been taken on the basis of a public referendum.⁶⁴

The fact that the Party of the Democratic Left was formed from an organ of the formerly Communist state left it with several significant residual characteristics. Some of the language, policies, and ideologies from the previous period remained, albeit in modified form. For example, as late as 1993, Peter Weiss, the PDL's leader, still referred to his audience as "*súdržky a súdruhovie*" ["lady-comrades and gentlemen-comrades"] in his speeches.⁶⁵ The PDL program portrayed the new distribution of wealth in the country as fundamentally unjust, taking finances away from those who produced or needed it while allowing corrupt and unscrupulous profiteers to line their own pockets at the expense of others. It argued that collective rights should be respected—not only for national minorities and ethnic groups, but also for women, children, pensioners, and, of course, workers.

Common ideological outlook and previous affiliation also made it easier for the PDL to forge closer relations with fellow formerly Communist parties in neighboring states, especially with Gyula Horn's Hungarian Socialist Party.

Common Choice Coalition

At the PDL's 1993 meeting, interest was again expressed in cooperation with other groups: not only with the SDPS, but also with the Farmers' Movement as well as with independent intellectuals. These plans were realized in 1994 with the formation of Common Choice, which united the PDL, the SDPS, the Farmers' Movement, and the Green Party of Slovakia. From a tactical standpoint, the formation of the electoral coalition Common Choice represented an interesting—and probably unwise—move for the PDL. Judging from the ambivalent, and sometimes negative, reaction to the coalition among party cadres (especially since a politician from the Green Party of Slovakia was formerly with the SNP), this action was taken on the level of the party's elite, signifying the PDL leadership's desire to form a left bloc.

The coalition's electoral program, "The Hope of Slovakia: What Common Choice is striving for," proclaimed Common Choice's goal of moving toward a more socially and ecologically oriented market economy. The program expressed a quite liberal minority policy, and described respect for the Constitution and valid international conventions as an important factor for stability, justice, and democracy in the region. The program also supported cooperation with the Council of Europe in this respect. Moreover, Common Choice was the only parliamentary subject after the 1994 elections to have an electoral program mentioning the importance of helping to raise awareness, education, and a sense of identity among the Romani minority. As could be expected from such a broad coalition, Common Choice's program stressed similarities between the different parties, especially in the form of less controversial goals such as improving education and protecting the environment, and de-emphasized points of difference. For this reason, the representativeness of the electoral program *vis-a-vis* the coalition's policy orientation could be called into question.

The results of the 1994 elections served as the best litmus test for Common Choice's degree of success among the Slovak electorate. Gaining 10.41 per cent of the vote and eighteen seats, Common Choice became the second-largest parliamentary subject. However, the startling performance of another new entrant into the Slovak political arena, the Association of Slovak Workers, cast shadows on Common Choice's respectable achievement at the polls. That the ASW, a party on the extreme left, gained 7.34 per cent of the vote and thirteen seats suggested that Common Choice was losing its electoral base among workers. This represented a potentially serious dilemma for the PDL, since the long-term political prospects of any Socialist party would seem bleak without the support of the working-class, its most natural constituency.

The Association of Slovak Workers

The electoral program of the ASW, dated 12 August 1994 (only several months prior to the elections), outlined an extremist left-wing political orientation primarily concerned with reorienting the country's transformation away from the evils of demagoguery, economic parasitism, and corruption, and toward a more socially just economic development. The program concentrated primarily on social and economic policy; other aspects of its political orientation were less clearly defined. While the program articulated no specific minority policy, it did proclaim the ASW's goal to "prevent the proliferation of nationalistic, fascistic, and other destructive manifestations undermining the spirit of cooperation and civic, religious, and national tolerance in respect of the Declaration of Human Rights."⁶⁶

The entrance of the ASW into a governing coalition with the MDS and the SNP following the 1994 elections represented a peculiar step for this party, since the national populist MDS has been guilty of demagoguery and of corrupting the privatization process, while the goals of the extremist right-wing SNP have had almost nothing in common with those of the ASW. This would seem to make it difficult for the ASW to maintain the appearance of struggling for its goals against demagoguery, intolerance, corruption, and economic parasitism. Given its own priorities and those of its governing coalition partners, the ASW could be ex-

pected to make compromises on issues less central to its political objectives and only peripherally touching its constituency, such as minority rights, before it will yield on its socio-economic goals.

The Democratic Union of the Slovak Republic

The bulk of the Democratic Union's membership base came from two rounds of defections from the MDS. The first of these groups, the Alliance of Democrats of the Slovak Republic, was formed when eight defectors, led by Milan Kňažko, until then the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, left the MDS in the spring of 1993. In February 1994, Jozef Moravčík, another MDS Minister of Foreign Affairs, led a second round of defections. Together with seven other MDS deputies, he created Alternative for Political Realism. A third source of the Democratic Union's membership base came when a moderate faction of six SNP deputies, led by Ľudovít Černák, broke away and formed the National Democratic Party.

The fact that the Democratic Union was a relatively new party during the 1994 elections, being officially formed on 23 April 1994, did not mean that it had not yet established a track record in Slovak politics. The Democratic Union was composed of experienced, well-known politicians. Moreover, as the leading party in the Moravčík government, its political orientation can be ascertained from its actions as well as its words. For example, whereas it defined itself as a centrist party, the more liberal privatization program and relatively cozy relations with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank during the Moravčík period would place the DU to the right of the MDS, another self-proclaimed "centrist" party.

In regard to its foreign policy, the 1994 Democratic Union program emphasized building up a more professional diplomatic corps, developing closer ties to the European Union, and making a more concerted effort to cooperate with other Visegrad Four countries for integration into West European organizations. The 1994 program also asserted the importance of maintaining good relations with Hungary and the Czech Republic. The 1995 program, on the other hand, concentrated more on integration into the West, mentioning good relations with neighboring states only in passing. The 1995 program also proclaimed the Democratic Union's intention to join the Liberal International, as both the

Hungarian Civic Party and Együttélés had already done.

The Moravčík government's relations with the HCDDM and Együttélés were reasonably close, having had to gain its parliamentary support in exchange for pledges to enact legislation more favorable to minorities. A more moderate approach to minority issues was reflected in the 1994 electoral program, which stated, that "the state's minority policy also creates civic certainty. We all need for it to be successful. Neither Slovaks nor members of minorities want confrontation, extremism, or instability."⁶⁷ However, the 1994 program rejected demands for autonomy or collective rights for minorities, arguing that the rights of a national minority should not conflict with rights of Slovaks living in ethnically mixed areas.

Interestingly, the draft of the Democratic Union's 1995 program contained no specific mention of any minority policy at all. This was perhaps due to the fact that calls for the protection of minority rights have gained little support from the ethnically Slovak sector of the electorate. Moreover, cooperation between the HCDDM and Együttélés on the one hand, and the Moravčík government on the other, was unpopular with many Slovaks. In summary, the Democratic Union took a conciliatory stance toward the Hungarian minority when it needed to, and then abandoned this position as soon as it became politically expedient to do so.

Ethnic Politics 1989-95

Ethnic Politics in the Federation

Although the issue of Slovak sovereignty quickly overshadowed relations between Slovaks and the Hungarian minority, there was some significant legislative activity in the first two years after the fall of totalitarianism. During this period, a language law was passed on 25 October 1990 by the Slovak National Council. While the law stated its aim to establish Slovak as the official language in the Slovak Republic as a means of mutual understanding and communication in order to "support the development of democracy and the culture of the Slovak nation and of the national minorities,"⁶⁸ the passing of this law had quite the

opposite effect. It proclaimed Slovak to be the official language for state authorities, local authorities, and the denomination of towns, villages, and streets. It allowed citizens to use Czech in official contacts, or the language of the national minority in cities or villages where they constituted at least twenty per cent of the total population. Moreover, the law did not oblige employees of state authorities or local government to know or use the language of the national minority. This version of the law pleased neither more nationally oriented Slovak politicians, who felt that the law did not go far enough to safeguard the Slovak language, nor many leaders of the Hungarian minority, especially those of *Együttélés*, who labeled the new law as discriminatory in both spirit and substance.⁶⁹ An analysis by the Centre for the Study of Federalism and Ethnic Group Rights seconded *Együttélés*' interpretation, calling the law "a retrograde piece of legislation even in respect of the former legal order of the constitutional acts of 1968 and thus unworthy of a democratic member state of the Council of Europe."⁷⁰

The question of restitution became another issue of concern to leaders of the Hungarian minority. However, unlike the language law, which the Independent Hungarian Initiative, as a member of the governing coalition, implicitly supported, the Hungarian parties were united in their stance that the restitution law should not be limited to land seized after 1948, which would effectively exclude claims made by ethnic Hungarians whose land was seized in the 1945-48 period. While the law passed in May 1991 only dealt with restitution of land seized after 1948, this was modified in February 1992 to include land seized before 1948 in the event of forceful seizure.⁷¹

The Constitution of the Slovak Republic

The ratification of the Slovak Constitution in the second half of 1992 constituted a step in a complex chain of events that eventually led to the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federal state. While the primary motivations for drafting the constitution rested in the envisaged relationship between the Czech and Slovak republics in the federation, the formulation of the constitution and its ultimate role in dissolving the Czechoslovak federation were to significantly affect the status of the Hungarian mi-

nority in Slovakia.

The desire for a higher status for the Slovak Republic in the federation almost immediately exerted a centrifugal pull on the strings between federal and republican governments after 1989. The Official Language Law, promulgated by the Slovak National Council on 25 October 1990, confirmed the existence of this divergent trend by asserting that Slovak would be the official language in the Slovak republic. This tendency was reaffirmed by the proclamation by the Ministry of the Interior on 4 March 1991, ordering the names of towns, villages, and streets to be posted in the official (i.e. Slovak) language.

As centrifugal tendencies between Czech and Slovak politicians intensified, the writing of a new Slovak constitution became a prominent focus of controversy. Since the future status of the Czechoslovak federation had yet to be defined, the chronology of the drafting, passing, and going into effect of the Slovak constitution in relation to the drafting of the federal constitution and the possible inter- (intra-) state treaty was to help determine whether the future Czechoslovak state would resemble a federation, a confederation, or whether it would be dissolved completely. The passing of the "The Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms," a civil rights document including important guarantees for national minorities, by the Federal Assembly on 9 January 1991, did little to slow the divergence between federal, Czech, and Slovak governments, although its example helped to serve as a guide in the drafting of the Slovak Constitution. Many of the passages contained in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic very closely resembled parallel tracts found in the Charter.

The process of drafting a new constitution for the Slovak Republic had already been underway since mid-1991. Thus, it was not a great surprise when the quick ratification of a new Slovak constitution became an important campaign promise of the populist and nationalist Mečiar leading up to the June 1992 elections. After achieving a resounding victory at the polls, Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia was able to form a government with the separatist SNP. Significantly, this government enjoyed the parliamentary support of the PDL on many issues, until the latter slid into opposition in early 1993.

It soon became clear Mečiar intended to honor his campaign promise to pass a new Slovak constitution, albeit in a form which

tightly conformed to the MDS' political views, and despite objections that such a hasty timetable for drafting the constitution might result in the inclusion of ambiguities and other problematic formulations. However, aided by the existence of several earlier drafts which had been composed in the course of the preceding year, Mečiar was able to submit a draft constitution to parliament for debate as early as 29 July.

In the course of parliamentary debates taking place throughout August, deputies from the HCDM and Együttélés expressed concerns over the formulation of certain passages in the constitution, as well as disappointment over the omission of certain points which they felt would help safeguard the rights of national minorities. This led to some clashes between Hungarian representatives and those from the MDS, especially toward the end of the month. Finally, on 1 September 1992, after all of the proposals made by Hungarian deputies had been either ignored or rejected, the Slovak Constitution was passed, by far exceeding the three-fifths majority necessary for ratification. Out of one hundred fifty deputies in the Slovak National Council (parliament), one hundred fourteen voted in favor; four abstained (including a Hungarian deputy from the PDL); the sixteen deputies from the CDM voted against ratification, since they had not been included in the drafting process and because their proposal to submit the draft to public debate had been disregarded; and the fourteen deputies from the HCDM-Együttélés coalition ostentatiously walked out on the vote, believing that would express their discontent more forcefully and effectively than simply voting against ratification.⁷² Finally, the Slovak Constitution went into effect on 1 October 1992.

Slovak politicians had several key incentives to draft and ratify a new Slovak constitution. First, they, along with Czech politicians, were keenly aware of the advantages in (re-) entering Europe, and therefore wanted to better harmonize the constitutional status of their respective republics with those of their Western neighbors. Second, dissatisfaction with the status quo and the desire to improve social conditions made favorable conditions for the enactment of change, although differences in the objective conditions persisted between the two republics, especially with respect to the character of economic development and the presence of minorities. Finally, Slovak politicians saw the oppor-

tunity to realize a long-held dream of independent Slovak statehood.

The wording of the constitution evoked discontent among leaders of the Hungarian minority. One of their complaints was that, according to their interpretation, the Preamble of the Slovak Constitution designated the Slovak nation as the state-forming one, thereby placing the national principle over the civic one, and implying that the status of the other nationalities was secondary to that of the Slovak nation. The validity of this argument has since become the source of some debate. The preamble stated,

We the Slovak nation. . . together with members of national minorities and ethnic groups living on the territory of the Slovak Republic. . . thus we, citizens of the Slovak Republic recognize through our representatives this Constitution:⁷³

This passage, while stylistically favoring the Slovak nation in its state-forming capacity, did not exclude the role of the other nationalities from this process. Moreover, it ended with a reference to the citizens of the Slovak Republic as the ultimate state-forming entity. Thus, the preamble simultaneously gave deference to both the national and civic principles in the state-forming process, albeit stylistically emphasizing the former.

In regard to other parts of the constitution, however, grievances expressed by deputies of the HCDM-Együttélés coalition appeared to be more justified. Article 5 of the first section of the constitution established Slovak as the official state language, and stipulated that the use of languages other than Slovak in official relations would be regulated by law. This clearly implied a subordinate status for non-Slovak languages, and also opened the door to official discrimination to citizens of the Slovak Republic speaking a language other than Slovak as their first language.

From the standpoint of national minorities, however, the most objectionable part of the constitution could be found near the end of its Fourth Section, entitled "Rights of National Minorities and Ethnic Groups." Most parts of this section were actually quite favorable to national minorities. For example, Article 34 guaranteed to citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups the right to develop their own culture, to disseminate information in their own language, to associate with fellow members of their national minority, and to establish and maintain cul-

tural institutions. This article also extended to members of a national minority or ethnic group, under conditions to be determined by law, the right to education in their own language, the right to use their language in an official context, and the right to participate in the resolution of issues directly pertaining to their situation. However, this article finished with the statement,

The exercise of the rights of citizens belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups which are guaranteed in this Constitution may not lead to threatening the sovereignty or the territorial integrity of the Slovak Republic, or to discrimination toward its other inhabitants.⁷⁴

This quite clearly suggested that the national minorities and ethnic groups constituted a potentially destabilizing and subversive element, and that the pursuit of their interests could run contrary to the fulfillment of the rights of other citizens not belonging to that particular community. While state security and the equality of all citizens before the law are concerns to which it would be difficult to raise objections, their inclusion in a section of the constitution dealing with the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups clearly carried with it strong admonitory connotations.

In their "Draft of Fundamental Principles of a Constitutional Law of the National Council of the Slovak Republic about the legal status of national and ethnic minority communities in the Slovak Republic," HCDM and Együttélés deputies proposed, in June 1993, a list of principles which they wanted to see supplemented to the provisions in the Slovak Constitution dealing with national minorities. They suggested that, since more than 14.7 per cent of the citizens of the Slovak Republic are not part of the Slovak nation, they should be considered an equal constitutional element. Among those rights not explicitly guaranteed in the Slovak constitution but recommended in the draft proposals were the rights to self-government, to have "native land," to have "protection against the deliberate transformation of the demographic structure of the regions inhabited mainly by minority communities," to maintain international contacts, and to use names and surnames in the citizens' first language. They also suggested a more clearly defined criterion for administration of bilingual areas. The draft stated,

On the territories where the ratio of population belonging to a minority community exceeds 10 per cent, the state shall ensure the possibility of the usage of their mother tongue in offices and courts of justice both in written and spoken form. Prints, forms and bills shall be bilingual in those regions. The names of municipalities, streets, public institutions and public services shall be indicated in the language of the minority community, too.⁷⁵

This constitutional bill failed to find support even among the opposition Slovak parties. In January 1994, Béla Bugár (HCDM) claimed that the PDL's refusal to take a stand in support of the bill only showed its insincerity in dealing with minority issues. Weiss later denied that his party had declined to accept the law due to its legal shortcomings. He added that in its refusal to consult with other parties during the drafting process, the HCDM-Együttélés coalition displayed its own unwillingness to create conditions for cooperation between Hungarian and Slovak parties.⁷⁶

Slovak political parties expressed dissatisfaction with the constitution as well, albeit for different reasons. Even though the MDS constituted the most influential party in Slovakia at the time of the drafting and ratification of the constitution, leaders of the MDS have since complained that it contained some significant ambiguities, especially in its division of power between presidential and executive (governmental) branches. This conflict has taken the form of a protracted and often acrimonious public debate between Prime Minister Mečiar and his former ally, President Michael Kováč. The SNP, for its part, has expressed the desire for severe legislation against activities which it deemed to be a threat to the republic's security. Thus while the bulk of the SNP's criticism of the constitution focused on reforming the justice system, that party would also like to give the state the means, right, and duty to more actively pursue subversive elements within the republic, and this included the threat of "ethnic terrorism."

Because of substantial ambiguities and omissions, it became clear that the constitution would not be able to survive in its original form. Among other changes and alterations which would

have to be effected to establish a more stable constitutional order would be a more precise delineation of what rights members of a national minority or ethnic group should be entitled to, and under what circumstances. Both the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia and the Slovak National Party could be expected to resist any efforts to increase minority rights; the SNP would undoubtedly counter any such attempts with legislation to safeguard state security, possibly aimed—explicitly or implicitly—at minority groups. The related questions of whether the national principle should prevail over the civic one, and whether national minorities and ethnic groups should be considered equal partners with the Slovak nation in the state-forming process, would again become sources of complaint. However, it would be difficult to imagine significant improvement in the constitutional status of non-Slovak communities, especially given the potentially long-term control of the government by nationalistic Slovak political forces which have enjoyed the support of a massive Slovak majority.

Slovakia and the Council of Europe

After attaining independence, the Slovak state needed to concentrate its diplomatic efforts on reestablishing itself on a track towards Euroatlantic integration. While eventual admission to the European Union and NATO represented the biggest gems in this regard, the path to these goals was paved by links with other Western organizations. Following dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation, the most pressing of these for both the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic was readmission to the Council of Europe. Although the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic had been a member since 21 February 1991, the situation in 1993 was to prove more complicated than simply reapplying.

One reason for this was the shift in the international posture with regard to minority issues since 1991, and this shift was certainly evident in the Council of Europe. Since the fall of totalitarianism at the end of 1989, the Council of Europe showed an increasing awareness of the need to address minority issues; in 1990, the Council of Europe passed Recommendation 1134 on the rights of minorities, and this was followed by Recommendation 1177 in 1992. Thus, the promulgation of Recommendation 1201

by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 1 February 1993, seemed to anticipate the question of whether the issue of the Hungarian minority would surface in negotiations over Slovakia's readmission.

Although progressive in many ways, Recommendation 1201 contained ambiguities, and was conceptually flawed in certain crucial respects. For example, Article 7 guaranteed the right of persons belonging to a national minority the right to use their own language in official contacts, and in the posting of public signs; but qualifies this right with the imprecise phrase: "In regions in which substantial numbers of a national minority are settled. . . ." Needless to say, the precise figure for "substantial numbers" became the source of debate, with minority advocates arguing for the number ten per cent, and Slovak hegemonists favoring the figures thirty per cent, fifty per cent, or opposing 1201's implementation entirely. Article 13 allowed for the rights of the protocol to be extended to "persons belonging to the majority in the whole of the state but who constitute a minority in one of its several regions."⁷⁷ In the Slovak context, this would allow for the bizarre possibility that there might be a Slovak region with a "special status" within a Hungarian region with a "special status" in a state with a Slovak majority of nearly eighty-five per cent. It is noteworthy that the precise degree of autonomy, as well as the meaning of the term "special status" was left undefined.

There were several reasons for the protocol's shortcomings. In the first place, the Council of Europe is not a proper governing body, but rather an international organization whose influence is derived from its prestige and its function in interstate diplomacy and from certain juridic powers over member states; thus, the council would never be charged with implementing any of its own policy recommendations. In the second place, the protocol was meant for a wide range of countries with varying conditions and circumstances, which made it difficult to be overly precise. Finally, the council, whose mission since its inception in 1949 has been to strive for European unity, has functioned on a consensus-based decision-making process. This, in conjunction with the first two factors can lead to the formulation of distorted and lopsided policies. In sum, the Council of Europe was geared to the promotion of ethical ideals and moral standards, and not to the business of day-to-day governing. Nevertheless, Recommendation 1201 soon became a landmark document in establishing a

standard for minority rights.

Although leaders of Slovakia's Hungarian parties favored readmission, they nevertheless saw an opportunity to gain leverage against the Slovak government in advancing their goals. A memorandum, which was signed by the chairpersons of all four Hungarian minority parties and sent to the Council of Europe on 4 February 1993, questioned the very legitimacy of the new Slovak Republic, objected to the role of minorities in the Slovak Constitution, protested against violations of minority rights, and pointed to discrimination in economic policy and funding for minority culture and schooling. Before it would admit Slovakia, the memorandum called on the council to: bring the Slovak Constitution into harmony with Recommendation 1201; change the laws and legal norms accordingly; and nullify the discriminatory decrees and laws from the 1945-48 period, modifying the unfavorable restitution laws therewith.⁷⁸

However, Slovakia's readmission was a twig they only wanted to bend, not break. Despite the protests over their status in the new republic, the Hungarian minority parties consistently voiced support for Slovakia's entrance into the Council of Europe, provided it would fulfill certain conditions. The memorandum concluded,

It is our conviction that with the cessation of the occurrences protested in our memorandum, and with the acceptance of the conditions listed above, Slovakia's integration into Europe will continue unimpeded. This would benefit all of Slovakia, especially from the perspective of its democratic development.⁷⁹

Representatives from Hungary showed a more ambivalent position on Slovakia's admission to the Council of Europe. Hungary, which had been a Council of Europe member since 1990, had played an instrumental role in reinjecting the concept of collective rights into European diplomatic dialogue. Therefore, while stressing that it was not in Hungary's interest to obstruct Slovakia in regaining its membership in the Council of Europe, it nevertheless conditioned its support on the observance of minority rights, especially as defined in internationally oriented documents. For Hungarian politicians, the issue had important ramifications for domestic politics, since advocacy of the rights of

Hungarian minorities over the borders had been an prominent issue for both Hungary's electorate and the ruling HDF. On the other hand, Hungarian diplomats did not want to spoil Hungary's positive international image by appearing intransigent, unjust, or hostile in dealing with its neighbors. As Slovakia's admission had already been postponed in early May 1993 due to concern over the status of the Hungarian minority, the issue gained even more visibility, thereby raising the diplomatic stakes. However, the issue of whether Slovakia should fulfill requirements before admission, or whether to make its admission contingent on pledges to reform its minority policy afterwards, offered some room for diplomatic compromise.

On 25 May, as the issue came to a head, leaders of Együttélés and the HCDM drafted another letter to the Council of Europe. The letter, which was also signed by the respective chairs of the HCP and the HPP, listed conditions which the minority leaders felt should be met before Slovakia's acceptance, and added some conditions that should be met after Slovakia's acceptance. It praised the council's resolution on 12 May which held Slovakia to respect Recommendation 1201. Like the first letter, the second letter also included a statement expressing the desire for Slovakia's admission to the Council of Europe.⁸⁰

Despite the tense diplomatic environment and the distinct pressure from Hungary and from leaders of the Hungarian minority, Slovakia gained membership to the Council of Europe on 30 June 1993. It achieved this after pledges were made by the Slovak parliament to the Council of Europe on 23 June to reform its minority policies. Since Hungarian diplomats had simultaneously adopted a compromise-seeking strategy, while trying to maintain a firm policy supporting Hungarian minorities over the borders, Hungarian representatives in Strasbourg abstained in the voting, thereby expressing reservations without being obstructionist. The Slovak government was pleased with the vote, but added that pressure from Budapest had strained Slovak-Hungarian relations. Jozef Moravčík, then Slovak Foreign Minister, called the Hungarian abstention only partially justifiable.⁸¹ On 4 July, Slovak Parliamentary Chairman Ivan Gašparovič said that actions taken by Hungarian minority parties had raised a barrier in the Council of Europe, and this led him to doubt their assertions of loyalty to Slovak statehood.⁸² The fact that their "correspondence with Europe" delayed Slovakia's admission to

the council by well over a month confirmed this accusation in the eyes of many Slovaks. Oppositional parties, both Slovak and Hungarian, also expressed satisfaction with the vote. Ján Čarnogurský even dubbed Council of Europe admission as a significant moment in the history of the Slovak nation.⁸³ Hungarian minority parties were, however, less vocal in their support of the council's decision.

After a brief flirtation with compliance with the council's standards on minority rights, as evidenced by the drafting of a relatively liberal law on the use of minority languages with names and surnames on 7 July,⁸⁴ the Slovak government reverted to oppressive measures against the Hungarian minority in blatant and intentional disregard for Council of Europe standards. In early August, pursuant to a directive issued by Slovak Transport Minister Roman Hofbauer, bilingual road signs in ethnically mixed areas in southern Slovakia began to be removed. Political motivations for this included the government's desire to test the resolve of the council, and the governing Movement for a Democratic Slovakia's tactic of attracting the Slovak National Party back into its fold by implementing policies less favorable to minorities. The SNP's support of course, would have allowed the MDS to terminate its status as head of a minority government, and thereby help to consolidate its power base. The issue might have also served to distract public attention from fiscal and economic difficulties within Slovakia at the time.

The removal of bilingual signs evoked a sharp protest from the Hungarian minority. On 13 August 1993, László Sooky, Mayor of Marcelová, ordered a blockade of his town as a form of civil disobedience. Rezső Szabó, a leader of Együttélés, called the removal illegal.⁸⁵ On 27 August, the HCP, the HPP, and Együttélés organized a peaceful protest in Komárno against the Slovak government's minority policy, concentrating on the removal of bilingual road signs. Varying estimates put attendance at between one thousand and five thousand participants.⁸⁶

Near the end of August, leaders of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement and Együttélés drafted and sent a letter to the Council of Europe Expert Committee. This letter, which was again signed by the chairs of the Hungarian Civic Party and the Hungarian People's Party, protested against the Slovak government's disregard for promises made by the Slovak National

Council to the Council of Europe on 23 June to respect the principles embodied in Recommendation 1201. Specifically, the letter pointed to the removal of bilingual road signs; the endangered position of Hungarian language teacher training; complications arising from trying to pass an acceptable law on names and surnames; deliberate efforts to mistranslate the Slovak Constitution into English in order to conceal its anti-minority bias (for example, translating "národ slovenský" to "Slovak people" instead of the arguably more correct "Slovak nation"); and finally, difficulties getting the Slovak National Council to respect the principles embodied in Recommendation 1201.

More in response to domestic criticism over its tactic of gaining influence through correspondence with European institutions than to concerns within the Council of Europe itself, the letter concluded,

We have hitherto directed all of our efforts to the resolution of the above mentioned questions through negotiations with the country's constitutional organs. As a result of the fact that our efforts in this regard have not succeeded—they have categorically rejected all of our demands, and have violated the Council of Europe's recommendations—we turn to you with our letter.⁸⁷

The issue of Slovakia's admission to the Council of Europe revealed three incipient changes in the balance of Slovak political forces. First, the four Hungarian minority parties started to cooperate more closely. For the Hungarian Civic Party, the renegade among the minority parties, this marked not only a change in strategy, with the other Hungarian parties representing more suitable long-term allies, but also indicated a subtle shift in policy orientation toward greater emphasis on minority issues. A distinct anti-Hungarian bias in the Slovak government and its minority policies instigated this change. Second, because of the Hungarian minority parties' "correspondence with Europe," the international community started to play a much bigger role in Slovak politics, especially in regard to its minority policy. Slovak parties, not only the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia and the Slovak National Party, but also the more moderate ones, looked on this tactic of correspondence with disfavor. The Christian Democratic Movement and Party of the Democratic Left held the

view that, while not depriving Hungarians of this as a last recourse, they should first try to resolve their differences through legal, domestic means first. The MDS and SNP, were, of course, hostile to this tactic. Third, Hungary began to use a stronger diplomatic hand to improve the position of Hungarian minorities in both Slovakia and Romania. Although minorities had for a long time represented a top policy priority for the Hungarian Democratic Forum and its coalition partners, the dissolution of Czechoslovakia gave it a much smaller and more vulnerable adversary, in whose internal politics the issue of the Hungarian minority played a proportionally larger role; and, at the same time, the worsening situation of the Hungarian minority in a now independent Slovakia also gave Hungary greater cause for concern.

Komárno, 8 January 1994

The Komárno meeting of Hungarian minority leaders, which took place on 8 January 1994, revealed that profound divisions between and within political groupings in Slovakia persisted. Already, by the middle of 1993, the Slovak political scene was segmented into three distinct parts: first, there was the governing coalition of the MDS and the SNP, whose nationalistic tendencies were fully unleashed with the shifting of the PDL from parliamentary cooperation to parliamentary opposition; second, there were the Slovak oppositional parties, who, together with President Kováč, wanted to foster a milder, more Western political climate in Slovakia; and finally, the Hungarian political parties together constituted the third group, though only the HCDM-Együttélés coalition had deputies in the Slovak National Council at the time.

Since the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation, the governing Slovak coalition had redirected its nationalistic energies against the Hungarian minority, continually attacking demands made by its political representatives. While the MDS and the SNP could agree on opposing Hungarian demands for increased educational and cultural autonomy and more local self-government, Prime Minister Mečiar tactics included incessantly criticizing Hungarian politicians in public, and suggesting new proposals for the reorganization of regional administration unfavorable to Hungarian interests, while the SNP generally focused

more on linguistic and educational concerns as well as on national security issues. In early 1993 this government drafted several proposals to reorganize the territorial division of regional administration of the country in such a way as to prevent the Hungarian minority, concentrated in an east-west strip along the southern border, from reaching a majority in any of the administrative regions. Faced with the possibility of adverse reactions from the Council of Europe and other influential Western organizations, they ultimately balked at passing any of these proposals. However, the potential damage to Hungarians' strength in local self-government became a cause for concern among Hungarian politicians.

In early December 1993 this anxiety, fanned by frustration over the division of power between various layers of administrative organs, led to the circulation of an appeal by SMOŽO (The Association of Towns and Villages of Žitný Island) to local Hungarian politicians, mayors, and members of parliament to attend a meeting to discuss areas of common interest. A key question was to be the territorial organization of regional administration in Slovakia. Significantly, the invitation also called for the election of a one hundred-member council entrusted to carry out the resolutions of the meeting. Though this last point aroused a good deal of controversy, the letter did not explain the utility of establishing a political body that would have no legal authority.

The appeal made references to a propaganda campaign made by the political leadership which was designed to provoke unrest between Slovaks and Hungarians living in southern Slovakia. The appeal also idealized the spirit of neighborliness between these two communities somewhat, stating, "In contrast to the rest of the country, which is in a different mood, the good mutual relations of the Slovak and Hungarian populations, both tied to this area by historical roots create profitable social relations and opens up the basic conditions for a beneficial economic life."⁸⁸ While this perspective seemed to suggest that little or no anxiety or animosity existed in Slovakia's ethnically mixed areas, later events, especially in the form of local protests, were to cast some doubt on this frivolous simplification. That the main organizers of the 1994 Komárno meeting were mayors of southern Slovak towns was perhaps one reason why the drafters of the appeal would want to place the blame for ethnic tension outside of

the region.

News of the appeal by SMOŽO immediately provoked a backlash by Slovak politicians, both in government and out. Prime Minister Mečiar, Parliamentary Chairman Gašparovič, and President Kováč all condemned the program espoused in the appeal as unconstitutional and illegal. This view was seconded by the Slovak National Council, which adopted a resolution stating,

the establishment of political entities with political goals and demands which could be oriented against the territorial integrity of the state, and towards violating coexistence between citizens, between nations and nationalities contradicts the Slovak constitution and other Slovak laws as well as recommendations by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly.⁸⁹

Ján Čarnogurský also stated that provisions in the appeal by SMOŽO were unacceptable to Slovak parties.⁹⁰ Although President Kováč criticized the convocation of the meeting at Komárno as a thinly-veiled attempt by the Hungarian political leaders to promote their policies by exerting extra-parliamentary pressure, he nevertheless promised to accept his invitation to attend on the conditions that SMOŽO disassociate itself from the idea of regional autonomy, and that it postpone the meeting to a later date to allow the situation to calm down.⁹¹ Party of the Democratic Left Deputy Chairman Kanis took a somewhat more conciliatory stance, pointing to the lack of a clear policy by the Slovak government and parliament in their approach to ethnic issues, and expressing regret that the constitutional bill proposed by Hungarian deputies that summer had been swept off the table. He added that the PDL ranked among those forces which strove to reach a compromise on ethnic issues, as evidenced by their exemplary relations with the Hungarian Socialist Party.⁹²

The various reactions of the Hungarian political parties to the appeal by SMOŽO showed that sharp and significant ideological cleavages between their programs persisted, despite the fact that their positions had hitherto been on a track of convergence in opposition to the manifestly anti-Hungarian policies of the governing coalition. Denying that the election of a one hundred-member council would in any way contravene the constitution or laws of the country, Duray unreservedly praised the appeal, and

proclaimed the right of free assembly to be a fundamental human right. The HCDM also supported the appeal, albeit with certain reservations. On 14 December, Pál Csáky, Chairman of the HCDM, said that his party did not entirely identify itself with SMOŽO's intention to establish a Hungarian *tartomány* [province]. Csáky pointed out that on 25 July the HCDM floored a constitutional bill which would have "comprehensively solved" the ethnic minority issue. This bill included the demand of self-administration in education and culture, bilingualism in the administration of ethnically mixed areas, and an administrative set-up which would not artificially divide regions inhabited by ethnic minorities.⁹³ It is important to note that both Csáky and Duray had, at various times, stressed that territorial autonomy had never been one of their demands, though both supported the appeal by SMOŽO, which, among other things, endeavored to establish a region with a special status.

The Hungarian Civic Party, a non-parliamentary party at the time, distanced itself from the appeal. On 23 December, HCP Chairman László Nagy told Slovak Radio that he considered SMOŽO's assessment of the situation of minorities in Slovakia to be one-sided and rather confrontational.⁹⁴ He also expressed regret that many of the positive steps taken by Slovak politicians, especially round-table discussions organized by President Kováč, often led to escalating tensions. Although in the middle of December, Nagy announced his refusal to participate in the meeting, he had reversed his decision by the end of the month by announcing that the upper echelons of the HCP would attend.

On 2 January 1994, the *Matica slovenská*, a national Slovak literary, cultural, and political organization, hosted the sixth annual meeting of "Slovaks living in southern Slovakia" at the southwestern town of Šurany. The event was attended by five- to six-hundred participants, including prominent Slovak politicians from several different parties. Jozef Šutka, Šurany's mayor, denied that the rally was intended as a countermeasure to the planned Komárno meeting, and insisted that the Šurany meeting was planned long before the Komárno one. He stated his hope that the Hungarian population of southern Slovakia not get entangled in the "dirty game" of politicians like Duray. Participants at this meeting sent an appeal of their own to President Kováč, and to Slovak state bodies, asking them not to permit unconstitu-

tional activities at the Komárno meeting, and also called for laws on the protection of the republic and the state language, as well as guarantees for education in the Slovak language for all Slovaks living in the southern part of the country.⁹⁵

Another expression of popular Slovak anxiety leading up to the Komárno meeting found its target in the form of István Pásztor, Komárno's mayor and a chairman on the council of SMOŽO. A petition, started on 4 January by a group of Komárno citizens, called for Pásztor's dismissal. Then, a public rally held by the Matica slovenská the following day attracted several hundred participants. In response to the petition, which, in a few days, had collected roughly two thousand of the necessary five thousand signatures to get him removed from office, Pásztor said the campaign for his dismissal only showed the shortsightedness of his detractors, adding, "They believe that if I am no more [the mayor], there will be no more problems. And that is an error."⁹⁶

In contrast to the tumultuous events of the previous month, the Komárno meeting itself took place in a relatively calm and orderly manner. Aside from several instances of Slovak authorities stopping and sending back buses heading for the Komárno meeting, and the presence of some counter-demonstrators outside the meeting, there were no major incidents. The event took place as planned on 8 January 1994 and was attended by over three thousand participants, over four hundred journalists, and several prominent Slovak politicians, including President Kováč. While organizers succumbed to pressure and declined to elect the one hundred-member council, they did pass a vote on adopting a declaration on the situation of the Hungarian minority.

This declaration stated the assembly's views on three major issues. The first statement, entitled "On the constitutional status of Hungarians," called for the definition in the constitution of the Hungarian minority as a national community, and also the safeguarding of their collective rights, including the right of Hungarians to use their mother tongue in areas where their numbers exceed ten per cent of the total population, and greater proportionality in representation and budgetary allotments in local government.

The second statement, entitled "On the administrative and territorial reorganization of Slovakia," objected to the government's plan to gerrymander the organization of public adminis-

tration. It also supported the process of decentralization, which, it claimed, the government had reversed in order to serve its own interests. It quoted Article 11 of Recommendation 1201 adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which stated that in regions where the members of a national minority form a local majority, they should "have the right to have at their disposal appropriate local or autonomous authorities or to have a special status, matching the specific historical and territorial situation and in accordance with the domestic legislation of the state."⁹⁷

The statement divided areas inhabited by Hungarians into three categories. In the first classification, "Majority region," the percentage of Hungarians exceeds fifty per cent; in the second classification, "Minority region," the percentage of Hungarians exceeds ten per cent, but is less than fifty per cent; in the third classification, "Diaspora region," Hungarians form less than ten per cent of the overall population, but their numbers exceed one hundred in individual settlements.

The second statement also proposed two different solutions for organizing the second tier of public administration. The first of these would establish one administrative area composed of a continuous stretch of land from Bratislava to Košice, with an area of two non-contiguous districts in the southeast corner of the country. The second solution would be to divide the same area of the first solution into three smaller areas. The third statement, entitled "On the rights of self-government," dealt with the constitutional definition of the rights of self-government, calling for a clearer, more rational division of authority between various layers of administration, with an emphasis on decentralization.

In a short statement, Duray praised the Komárno document as a coherent and logical analysis of the situation, and added, that "between the lines of this resolution there is also a warning: insofar as the Slovak government in power does not take this suggestion seriously and is not inclined to strive for its realization, the result may be a rise in tension."⁹⁸

Although the Komárno meeting attracted a good deal of attention worldwide, the international response to the event, and to the resolution adopted at it, was not unreservedly positive. On 17 January, upon the invitation of Slovak Deputy Premier Roman Kováč, a group of European Union experts arrived in Bratislava

for a two-day visit, this being the second such visit since Slovakia's independence. The experts expressed enthusiasm over the Slovak government's basic approach to local government, which, at least according to what Slovak politicians had told them, had been characterized by the decentralization of public administration and the strengthening of regional autonomy. At the end of the visit the experts expressed criticism over some aspects of the Komárno proposal for public administration on the grounds that criteria other than exclusively the ethnic one should be taken into account when organizing public administration. This view was shared by many moderate Slovak politicians, as well. The experts also suggested that regular consultations between leaders of the Slovak majority and the Hungarian minority would be a more appropriate way to deal with minority issues than the passage of special laws as favored by many Hungarian politicians.⁹⁹

The Moravčík government

The fall of the MDS-SNP coalition's government by a vote of no confidence on 11 March 1994 could be attributed to factors both internal and external to the coalition parties. Internally, defections and expulsions from the MDS, combined with the breaking away of a splinter group from the SNP, weakened the coalition's numerical majority in parliament. The MDS, which almost enjoyed a clear majority after the June 1992 elections, gaining seventy-four out of one hundred fifty in the Slovak National Council, was whittled down by two major rounds of defections: the first occurring in March 1993 with the departure of eight MDS deputies to form the Alliance of Free Democrats, the second taking place in February 1994 leading to the formation of the Alternative of Political Realism by eight former MDS deputies. Among these deputies were the former MDS Deputy Prime Minister Román Kováč and the former MDS Foreign Minister Jozef Moravčík.

The SNP had temporarily dissolved its alliance with the MDS in March 1993. When it rejoined the MDS in October of the same year, it took with it into the government a more moderate, anti-Mečiar wing. Led by Ľudovít Černák, this faction broke away from the SNP in February 1994 to form the National Demo-

cratic Party (NDP), taking six former SNP deputies with him. This left the more radical rump SNP, now led by Ján Slota, in a minority coalition with the MDS.¹⁰⁰

Although the writing was on the wall for the government, the opposition moved slowly to exploit the weakness of the MDS-SNP coalition. The delay was primarily due to the reluctance of the PDL to support a vote of no confidence before the date of early elections had been agreed upon. In fact, the possibility for the PDL to govern in partnership with the MDS was the cause of their sluggishness, as evidenced by a last minute offer by the PDL to form a coalition with the MDS; however, their conditions were unacceptable to Mečiar. In addition to the fence-straddling of the PDL, another factor which delayed the taking of the vote of no confidence was reluctance on the part of all Slovak parties to be stigmatized with collaboration with the ethnic Hungarian parties (HCDM and Együttélés), whose support would be necessary if they wanted to form a new government.

The vote to oust Mečiar's government finally came on 11 March 1994, amidst indignation expressed by the MDS deputies within parliament, and by protests by Mečiar supporters outside of parliament. The new government, which was sworn in by President Kováč on the night of 16 March, was composed of representation from five parties: the PDL, the CDM, the Alliance of Slovak Democrats, Moravčík's Alternative for Political Realism, and Černák's National Democratic Party. This coalition enjoyed the parliamentary support of twenty-five PDL deputies, eighteen CDM deputies, eight ASD deputies, eight APR deputies, and five NDP deputies; it also had the support of the nine Együttélés deputies and the five HCDM deputies, since the ethnic Hungarian parties agreed to give the new government parliamentary support in exchange for certain promises. The fact that the coalition included parties at both the right end (CDM and NDP) and left end (PDL) of the socio-economic policy spectrum was made possible only by the crisis situation when it was formed, and could be viewed as an anti-Mečiar coalition, since this was the only salient characteristic which these parties shared.

In effect, the coalition's survival relied on the continued parliamentary support of the deputies from the Hungarian minority parties. The promises which they exacted from the Moravčík government in exchange for this support included pledges to re-

spect the Council of Europe's Recommendation 1201; to allow for bilingual identification of towns and villages; to sanction the use of the minority's mother tongue in official contexts; to find a more equitable way to organize public administration; and to take the plan of bilingual "alternative education," which many ethnic Hungarian leaders saw as a thinly-veiled attempt at assimilation, off the government's agenda. The Moravčík government honored the spirit of its agreement, though at times with reluctance. For example, in early June it passed a law allowing Hungarians to sign their names into official registers in their own language, without the suffix "-ová" for feminine surnames.

The issue of a bill on bilingual identification of towns and villages posed greater problems for the Moravčík government, especially since it had deep historical undertones, recalling periods of forcible "Magyarization" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as the Horthy-era reoccupation of the primarily Hungarian-inhabited area of southern Slovakia from 1938 to 1945. Although the *Matica slovenská* unilaterally opposed most demands made by the ethnic Hungarian parties, it was especially vocal in protesting this issue, going so far as to say that bilingual identification of towns and villages posed a threat to state security.¹⁰¹ When the law came to the floor in early June, it was debated for three days in parliament. Finally, the bill failed to pass by only one vote. The cause of this was not only the lack of discipline in the governing coalition, ten of whose deputies stayed out of parliament during the vote, but also the lack of support of three *Együttélés* deputies, who objected to certain parts of the bill which they found discriminatory.¹⁰²

The differences in the attitudes of the two ethnic Hungarian parties toward the Moravčík government began to reflect the gap between their political dispositions. Throughout this period, the HCDM generally expressed satisfaction with the efforts of the relatively moderate Moravčík government to abate ethnic tensions and to resolve ethnic issues gradually and through compromise. Deputies from *Együttélés*, on the other hand, complained that the government was not living up to its earlier pledges, or was fulfilling them in a slow and incomplete manner. Since the withdrawal of the support of the ethnic Hungarian parties would have brought down the government, the Hungarian coalition was in a good position to pressure the government—a fact which *Együt-*

téls politicians mentioned publicly on several occasions. This indicated that Együttélés maintained a more extreme position than the HCDM, was more intransigent, and more inclined to pursue its goals through pressure tactics. In the end, a bill on bilingual identification of towns and villages was signed into law, although the law in its final form left out some towns and villages for historical reasons. For the HCDM the approved law in its final form represented an acceptable compromise, but for Együttélés it was only a temporary solution.¹⁰³

The relations between Slovakia and Hungary became especially prominent during this period, and the urgency of signing a basic treaty was soon highlighted by French Premier Balladur's Security Pact plan. Already, as MDS Foreign Minister in Mečiar's cabinet, Moravčík had been saying that relations with Hungary represented the highest immediate priority in foreign policy. Contrary to what many politicians had wrongly assumed, treaty obligations and interstate relations were not automatically transferred over from the former Czechoslovakia to its successor states. Since Western European countries were loath to see their already fragile international organizations infected with imported disputes between newly entering countries, the signing of a basic treaty assumed critical importance in the process of integrating these countries into the West, a goal which was shared by Slovak and Hungarian politicians alike. Moreover, on the Slovak side, memories of Slovakia's admission to the Council of Europe being delayed by a month due to concern over the status of minorities lingered in the minds of many Slovak politicians.

On 1 April, Moravčík listed three specific problems which would have to be addressed if the political schisms between Slovakia and Hungary were to be bridged:

- 1) Inviolability of borders between Slovakia and Hungary. According to Moravčík, many Slovaks, with or without justification, were afraid of borders revisions which would be unfavorable to Slovakia.
- 2) Rights for national minorities. According to Moravčík, the crux of the matter was whether to adhere primarily to the principle *individual rights*, which were already guaranteed to members of

the Hungarian minority, or to the principle of *collective rights*, which from the Slovak point of view would be improper, since Hungarians lived in areas with mixed populations.

3) The construction of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric project. According to Moravčík, the best solution for this issue would be to increase the role of technical experts in the decision-making process, and thereby help to depoliticize the entire situation.¹⁰⁴

To this list, Hungarian politicians might have added the opening of border crossings, the closures of which represented a long-standing grievance of border communities. Hungary wanted to open these crossings, but Slovak concerns over maintaining current borders, combined with Hungarian suspicions the Slovakia might try to use the opening to repatriate refugees and other undesirables who had passed through Hungary on their way to Slovakia, made this politically difficult.

The Hungarian government, which had made the protection of the rights of Hungarian minorities abroad a prominent diplomatic imperative, reacted favorably to the attitude of the new Moravčík government in its treatment of the Hungarian minority. József Antall, the previous Hungarian Prime Minister and leader of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, the leading party in the government before losing to the socialists in the 1994 elections, was famous for comments he made expressing concern over the status of ethnic Hungarians living outside of Hungary's borders. Péter Boross, Antall's successor echoed this same policy, if somewhat less charismatically.

Interestingly, the initiative on opening a dialogue with the new government was taken by Gyula Horn, leader of the Hungarian Socialist Party. On 18 April 1994, at a meeting arranged by the PDL, with whom the HSP enjoyed extremely close relations, Moravčík made an unannounced appearance and spoke with Horn personally for about half an hour. During this discussion, Horn informed Moravčík of his intention to sign an interstate treaty with Slovakia in the likely event that his party would win the upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for May. The treaty would include both guarantees to protect minority rights, an important condition for the Hungarian side, and to respect the

inviolability of state borders, a paramount concern of the Slovak electorate.

Plans for a meeting between Moravčík and Boross soon bogged down because the Slovak side wanted to make the convocation of the meeting contingent upon the issuance of a joint communiqué guaranteeing the inviolability of state borders. Hungarian leaders flatly refused to agree to any preconditions for entering into talks. That this minor dilemma could have prevented constructive dialogue between the two governments indicated a definite halfheartedness on both sides to bridging the political differences which separated them. Fear of appearing overly compliant to either the other government or to their own respective constituencies could have only augmented this reluctance of the two governments to work out a compromise.

The relations between parties in Slovakia and those in Hungary played an influential role in the diplomatic process between the two states during this period. The Hungarian Democratic Forum, which had dominated Hungarian politics since the beginning of the political transformation until its defeat in the 1994 parliamentary elections, had maintained close relations with *Együttélés*, supporting them in election campaigns and occasionally using them as an intermediary in dealing with the Slovak government on ethnic issues. The Party of the Democratic Left, which remained critical of the HDF, comparing its populist style to that of Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, maintained close contacts with its fellow post-Communist HSP. The HSP's promise in April 1994 to sign an interstate treaty with Slovakia which both guaranteed the inviolability of state borders and the respected minority rights irritated leaders of the Hungarian government, who claimed that in making this pledge the HSP had undermined the process of rapprochement between Slovakia and Hungary.

Other parties had established international contacts as well. The forging of links between the Hungarian Civic Party and FIDESZ was predictable given the ideological similarity of the two parties. More surprisingly, Moravčík's own liberal party, the Democratic Union of Slovakia (formerly the Alternative for Political Realism), took some preliminary steps toward forming an alliance with Hungary's oppositional Union of Free Democrats (UFD), with Gábor Kuntz, the UFD's Chairman, attending the

DU's constituent assembly. The HCDM, for its part, has nurtured close relations with several West European organizations, and also has close relations with the HDF, receiving the Saint László Memorial Award for dedicated service to Hungarianism from Prime Minister József Antall in Budapest in August 1993. Of course, the HCDM has enjoyed a close affinity to the Slovak CDM, though relations here have often been strained due to the fact that each of these parties have placed a premium on the interests of their respective ethnic constituencies.

The lifting of the burdens and responsibilities of governing the country freed the MDS and the SNP to embark on an aggressive campaign against the government, the ethnic Hungarian parties, and, especially, the alliance between them. Since they did not have to formulate policies, the MDS and the SNP could join together in a chorus of criticism against those actions of the government to which they both objected, and at the same time they could set aside their points of difference. Unfettered, the MDS and the SNP adroitly played the "Hungarian card" against their opponents, repeatedly emphasizing, with a note of satisfaction, that, "the Moravčík government hangs on the strings of Duray's underpants."¹⁰⁵ This highly effective tactic of denigrating the government greatly complicated the already delicate task of maintaining a spirit of cooperation between the government and the Hungarian parties, since anti-Hungarian rhetoric resounded well in the Slovak electorate; and thus the governing parties feared losing votes.

Meanwhile, the governing parties had to play a balancing act between pursuing minority policies progressive enough to quiet *Együttélés*, to satisfy the West, and to mend fences with Hungary, while at the same time trying not to appear overly accommodating to the Hungarian minority in the eyes of the Slovak electorate. The existence of a significant discrepancy between the political orientation of the parties in the governing coalition contributed greatly to the difficulties in attaining and maintaining consensus on policy issues. Given the delicate situation, the Moravčík government made a surprising degree of progress in abating so much ethnic tension in such a short period of time.

The Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty

Talk of drafting a new basic treaty with Hungary started in 1991. However, the issue took on new importance with the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation and the subsequent rise of an independent Slovak state in 1993. In negotiating the provisions of the treaty, consideration had to be given to a wide variety of issues, including the guarantees of the sanctity of present borders, the reopening of certain border crossings, safeguards for the rights of minorities, and the official status of the controversial "Beneš decrees." Moreover, the question of the legal continuity of previous treaties between Czechoslovakia and Hungary became especially touchy, since part of the controversy over the joint Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric project was that it was based on a treaty signed in 1977 between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Four major political developments became decisive factors in the success of treaty negotiations between Slovakia and Hungary. First, the Moravčík government had made genuine progress in improving ethnic relations in Slovakia, and this was reflected in warmer relations between Bratislava and Budapest. Second, the new governing coalition of the MDS, the SNP, and the Association of Slovak Workers, while not truly committed to abating ethnic tensions, put entry into the European Union and NATO as top priorities in its program, and this necessitated closer relations with Hungary. Third, the victory of the Hungarian Socialist Party in Hungary led to the formation of a government sincerely committed to signing an interstate treaty with Slovakia. Fourth, the conference on the Stability Pact's concluding session, scheduled to take place in Paris on 20-21 March 1995, provided a concrete deadline to sign the treaty.

The decisive impetus for the Slovak government to sign a basic treaty with Hungary came in the form of a deadline determined by the dates of the concluding conference of a project on stability and good neighborly relations in Europe, which was scheduled to take place in Paris on 20-21 March. Work on the Stability Pact project began in May 1994, when the plan, proposed by Edouard Balladur, then the Prime Minister of France, was accepted by the European Union. Although the purported aim of the conference was to provide a launching pad for Baltic

and East European countries to enter the European Union, the motivation for the project was, from its very inception, more political than substantive: by organizing this pact, Balladur hoped to gain credibility as an international peace-maker in the eyes of the French electorate, whose support he needed to win the upcoming presidential elections. Nevertheless, the presence of representatives from the OSCE's fifty-two states (rump Yugoslavia, the OSCE's fifty-third state had its membership suspended in 1992 at the outbreak of hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina) helped make the signing of the interstate treaty between Hungary and Slovakia a diplomatic imperative. Balladur invited the prime ministers of Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania to attend the conference, but only invited the foreign ministers of the other forty-nine countries.

The heavy emphasis on integration into the European Union and NATO in the program of Mečiar's third government, which was promulgated in January 1995, clearly resulted from the initiative of the MDS. The Slovak National Party, while in principle inclined toward further integration into the West, has not been willing to achieve this goal at the expense of losing direct control over Slovakia's internal politics. Moreover, it has maintained a high premium on the sovereignty and security of the Slovak state, and the status of the Slovak nation as the leading nation in that state. Consequently, the SNP has harbored suspicions toward international political organizations, and, referring to the disastrous results of the notorious Vienna awards, has remained resolutely opposed to any form of international arbitration empowered with decisions over Slovakia's fate. In the 1994 elections, the Association of Slovak Workers promoted itself as an advocate of working-class interests, and did not give high priority of matters of foreign policy. The MDS, on the other hand, has been eager to reverse its negative image abroad, and has given recognition to the long-term significance of Euroatlantic integration for Slovakia's prosperity and security. On 9 February 1994, Mečiar personally signed NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. His government intended to apply for membership in the European Union in late June 1995, with 2000 as the target year for full membership. Improving relations with Hungary was correctly identified as a necessary step toward the realization of European Union membership.

A crescendo of political activity followed the 1994 parliamentary elections. This activity could be described as a struggle between two opposing views on the role of leaders of the Hungarian minority in the treaty bargaining process. The Hungarian minority leaders wanted to be considered an equal third partner in the bargaining process, or at least to serve as a bridge between the Slovak and Hungarian governments, a role reminiscent of that which they played during Hungary's previous HDF government. The Slovak government, on the other hand, considered the treaty to be an essentially inter-governmental affair, and was thus prepared to allow leaders of the Hungarian minority to play a consultative role at best.

On 13 December 1994, Slovak and Hungarian experts met to start working out the details of a basic treaty. Three days later, representatives of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and of the Slovak minority in Hungary met in Vienna. Both parties agreed that the proposed treaty should include guarantees of minority rights. On 12 January a visiting delegation of 3 right-leaning opposition parties, FIDESZ, the Hungarian Democratic Forum, and the Christian Democratic People's Party, arrived in Slovakia for a two-day visit. On the first day, they met with leaders of Együttélés, the HCP, and the HCDM; the following day's agenda included discussions with representatives from the CDM, the DU, and the MDS. On 24 January 1995, Árpád Göncz, the President of Hungary, received a delegation which included representatives from Együttélés, the HCP, and the HCDM. Göncz reiterated that the basic treaty should include guarantees for the rights of minorities, both for the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and the Slovak minority in Hungary.

Meanwhile, on 20 January, after the promulgation of the governing coalition's new program had aroused a big debate in parliament, Mečiar announced his intention to sign a basic treaty with Hungary before the Paris conference on 20-21 March 1995. He said that he wanted to close the door on the two countries' difficult past relations. He added that, while he did not rule out consulting with ethnically Hungarian parties, he did not consider them to be equal partners in the diplomatic process leading to the conclusion of a basic treaty.¹⁰⁶ Before departing to Hungary for a two-day visit, Mečiar questioned whether the fact that his visit was preceded by the visit by representatives of the Hungarian

minority actually helped the situation. Later, on 1 February, Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Schenk signed the "Framework Agreement" on the protection of ethnic minority rights. While the provisions of this agreement were not enough to satisfy all the demands made by leaders of the Hungarian minority, its signing did indicate a willingness to resolve ethnic tension through the auspices of international diplomacy.

Leaders of the Hungarian coalition remained skeptical over the intentions of the new government. On 29 January 1995, in response to fears arising from provisions in the new program, Béla Bugár, Miklós Duray, and László Nagy sent a letter to the governments of the Visegrad Four countries which listed grievances over the status of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and aired protests over the new governmental program. Among other things, the letter described the government's "alternative education" program as an attempt to destroy the system of Hungarian schools; it pointed to bias in the distribution of state support for cultural institutions; it warned of attempts to restrict the official use of the Hungarian language; it expressed dissatisfaction over the proposed reorganization of public administration, which would have negative consequences for the Hungarian minority; and it also expressed skepticism over the proposed formation of a military home guard to defend the Slovak nation against internal enemies, since this would represent a case of protecting the majority against the minority (Slovaks make up over eighty-five per cent of the population of Slovakia). The letter concluded: "We call attention to these political and legal distortions since their existence is now causing tension in the Slovak Republic; it is clear that the new government is also aware of this."¹⁰⁷ This letter was followed by another on 22 February to the Council of Europe, drawing attention to the discriminatory measures being prepared by the Slovak government against the Hungarian minority.¹⁰⁸

On 1 March, Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Horn received representatives of Hungarian political organizations and parties from neighboring countries. The signing of interstate agreements with Slovakia and Romania ranked first on the discussions' agenda. Representatives from the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania and from the Hungarian coalition in Slovakia basically agreed with Horn on what guarantees for minor-

ity rights they wanted to see in the treaty, and there was also talk of including international documents.¹⁰⁹

Negotiations culminated in a meeting on 16 March in Bratislava between Horn and Mečiar. Earlier, the refusal of Romanian leaders to include Recommendation 1201 in the proposed Romanian-Hungarian treaty cast a shadow over these talks. However, after five hours of what both Prime Ministers dubbed tough negotiations, the two sides reached a "last-minute agreement."¹¹⁰ The signing of the treaty, to take place on 19 March, was preceded by a protest in Budapest by opponents of the treaty on 18 March. The rally, which attracted four thousand people, was organized by several right-wing organizations and two right-leaning oppositional parties: the Smallholders and the Christian Democrats. Protesters labeled the treaty a "second Trianon."¹¹¹

Finally, on the eve of the concluding conference on the Stability Pact in Paris, the Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty was signed as planned by Horn and Mečiar. The lengthy document included guarantees of common state borders, promises of regular consultation on matters of joint concern, and cooperation in matters of economics, transportation, communication, and the environment. Not surprisingly, the treaty also devoted a good deal of attention to the rights of individuals belonging to national minorities. Article 15 of the treaty explicitly spelled out individual rights for members of national minorities. This article also included commitments to respect the validity of several international documents, specifically: the document from the Copenhagen assembly of the CSCE from 29 June 1990; the statement of the United Nations General Assembly on the rights of persons belonging to a national, ethnic, religious, or linguistic minority; and Recommendation 1201 of the Council of Europe.

The treaty was not specific on ways to ensure that its provisions be implemented. Section 6 of Article 15 dealt with the issue of control and enforcement. It suggested that cooperation, mutual consultation, and the possibility for the formation of a joint commission ensure that the minority rights guaranteed in the treaty be respected in practice. Article 21 recommended that differences in interpretation of the treaty be resolved through mutual consultation, or, in the event no agreement is reached, through means in accordance with international law. The Basic Treaty did not mention the validity of previous Czechoslovak-

Hungarian treaties, since this could have had repercussions on the case of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric project, which had been passed to the Hague International Court of Justice in 1993.

In spite of the fact that the treaty itself had not yet been made public, debate over its interpretation surfaced even before it was signed. Ten minutes before the official signing, Juraj Schenk handed a diplomatic note to his Hungarian counterpart making it clear that the Slovak side and the Hungarian side interpreted the treaty differently.¹¹² Specifically, the Slovak government objected to any interpretation of the treaty allowing for autonomous bodies to be formed on an ethnic basis. According to the Slovak interpretation, the inclusion of Recommendation 1201 was qualified by a phrase restricting its application to individual, and hence not collective, criteria. Article 15, Section 4 of the treaty stated,

(4) Contractual parties will, without affecting the content of the previous section. . .

a) in the interest of defending the rights of individuals belonging to the Hungarian minority in the Slovak Republic and to Slovak minority in the Hungarian Republic, implement the norms and political obligations set forth in the following documents as legal obligations:

Recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 1201 (1993), respecting individual human and civil rights, including the rights of individuals belonging to national minorities.¹¹³

The final phrase of the above passage could be interpreted as restricting the application of Recommendation 1201 to individual rights, thereby supporting the MDS' restrictive interpretation. Several other aspects of the treaty would support this interpretation: first, none of the other international documents were listed with any such qualifying statements; second, if the phrase was intended to be descriptive, it would have been borrowed from the preamble Recommendation 1201 itself, which read, "RECOMMENDATION 1201 (1993) on an additional protocol on the rights of national minorities to the European Convention on Human Rights;" and finally, it can be assumed that all sentences

in the body of the treaty were intended to serve some function, and thus the idea that the drafters would include a superfluous descriptive sentence, especially on such a controversial issue as this, could be called into question.

Among the ethnically Hungarian parties in Slovakia, the Hungarian Civic Party reacted the most favorably to the signing of the treaty. In a statement entitled "Standpoint of the Magyar Polgári Párt of Slovakia on the Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty," the HCP hailed it as a step toward greater Euroatlantic integration, more stability, and a more effective system for the protection of minority rights. The statement added that the treaty could lead to a historic Slovak-Hungarian reconciliation, and more economic, cultural, and regional cooperation. It also mentioned the HCP's appreciation of the engagement of international communities in the preparation of the treaty, and expressed the hope that they will play an active role in the monitoring and supervision of the treaty's implementation. However, the statement noted disappointment over the fact that the treaty did not deal with a number of important issues, including the completion of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros dam, the question of collective guilt and its lasting consequences, and the problem of effective control over the treaty's implementation.¹¹⁴

At its Fifth Congress in Dunajská Streda on 26 March 1995, *Együttélés* issued a similar statement on the Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty. It described the signing as a pioneering effort to advance the two countries' bilateral relations in the fields of economy, industry, agriculture, and transportation. It praised the inclusion of international documents, especially Recommendation 1201, and stated that the only limitation to the realization of the rights articulated therein were when they endangered the sovereignty or integrity of the state. Optimistically appraising the potential for international attention to have a positive influence on Slovak minority policy, the letter stated, "The treaty for the first time spells out, excluding any doubt in the relations between the two states, the fact that the protections of minority rights is not the domestic affair of a state but the object of international scrutiny."¹¹⁵ Responding to the controversy over various interpretations of the treaty, the statement asserted the validity of the *Együttélés* interpretation definitively and unambiguously. In reference to Schenk's note, the statement argued against Slovak

attempts to add a restrictive explanation to the treaty from the time of its signature, and added, "it cannot be denied that the treaty spells out as a right: local or autonomous administration; the right to a special status."¹¹⁶ Regarding enforcement of the treaty's provisions, the statement concluded that it would be a long and arduous process to realize the rights contained therein.

In spite of the fact that there had been two conflicting interpretations of the treaty in regard to whether or not it contained guarantees of collective rights for national minorities, the SNP refused to support its ratification. Publicly, the SNP attributed this to the inclusion of Recommendation 1201, which would indicate it interpreted the treaty as guaranteeing collective rights for national minorities. Possibly, the SNP feared that the interpretation of the treaty asserting that it guarantees collective rights would become a convention. More likely, the SNP would be adverse to any rapprochement with Hungary, which the SNP has considered to be a historical nemesis of the Slovak nation; and thus, insisting that the treaty upholds collective rights for national minorities gave them a clearer basis for objecting to it.

On the other hand, all Slovak oppositional parties supported the treaty. The PDL hailed it as a monumental step toward reconciliation between nations. The CDM reacted similarly, noting that the government even went above valid international norms regarding rights for national minorities, adding that the signing of the treaty represented a watershed in the MDS' politics.¹¹⁷

After the Basic Treaty was signed on 19 March, it still awaited ratification by the two countries' parliaments. On 13 June, the Hungarian parliament passed the treaty by a large majority: two hundred forty-four representatives voted for ratification; forty-nine representatives, including the former Prime Minister Péter Boross, voted against it; and a group of fifty-three deputies, led by the former Foreign Minister Géza Jeszenszky, abstained.¹¹⁸

The situation in Slovakia was more delicate due to a more precarious balance of opinions on the treaty and to various interpretations of it. From a tactical point of view, Schenk's handing a note over to a Hungarian diplomat immediately before the signing of the treaty appeared suspicious, regardless of whether or not the MDS' interpretation of the treaty articulated in the note had some justification. Együttélés exploited this *faux pas* bril-

liantly. Using the incident of the note as a wedge, and public statements as a hammer, they managed to turn a crack into a chasm. It appeared as though their particular interpretation of the treaty had prevailed. That the SNP rejected the treaty because of its alleged guarantees of collective rights to the Hungarian minority would support the view that it was in the interests of both polar extremes of Slovakia's political spectrum to perpetuate a certain interpretation of the treaty, albeit for diametrically opposed reasons (i.e. for the Hungarian minority parties to support ratification, and for the SNP to oppose it). Slovak oppositional parties were more malleable; thus the passing of laws on official language, the new territorial administrative division of the country, and on local elections would help to secure their parliamentary support for the treaty. On the other hand, the fact that leaders of the Hungarian minority ranked among the treaty's most ardent supporters became a source of embarrassment for the MDS.

From Reconciliation back to Conflict

The signing of the Basic Treaty represented a landmark in Slovak-Hungarian interstate relations. However, three other developments in particular boded ill for relations between the Slovak majority and the Hungarian minority: first, momentum to introduce the program of "alternative education" into the Hungarian minority school system accelerated; second, the issue of the ratification of the Hungarian Slovak Basic Treaty, to be debated by the Slovak National Council in December, began to appear increasingly divisive; finally, a new, more extreme language law was passed by an overwhelming majority in the Slovak parliament.

Early in 1995, Eva Slavkovská, a former Communist historian who became the SNP's Minister of Education in the new government, announced her intention to impose the plan of bilingual "alternative education" on the Hungarian minority school system. This prompted concern that the teaching of subjects in Slovak would undermine the quality of Hungarian minority education, a hypothesis supported by several timely scholarly studies on the issue.¹¹⁹ Moreover, the fact that Slavkovská had not been forthcoming with details on the plan's implementation fanned

suspicions that it would operate in the framework of the already under-funded minority educational system. As a result, a second Komárno meeting was held, this time calling for civil disobedience should the plan of "alternative education" be enacted. Although peaceful demonstrations were held in several locations in southern Slovakia in September, attention to this issue was soon diverted by the upcoming talks on the Basic Treaty and a new language law.

As the December neared, the MDS reacted to uncertainty over the ratification of the treaty and dissatisfaction within its own ranks over some of the its provisions by suggesting in October that the treaty be passed with a resolution restricting its application *vis-a-vis* minority policy. This not only evoked sharp protests from Gyula Horn, who stated that the treaty's signed version was formulated entirely unambiguously and warned that the European countries would not want to admit fiercely quarrelling states,¹²⁰ but also appeared to be an unsatisfactory bone to Slovak nationalists, who wanted more resolute guarantees that their capacity to formulate minority policy would not be hindered by ratification of the Basic Treaty.

In order to placate nationalistic elements in the government and to draw attention away from Slovakia's socio-economic problems, the MDS supported the passing of a new, more extreme language law which had been proposed by the Matica slovenská in early November. This piece of legislation promised to have highly detrimental effects for the status of the Hungarian minority, especially in regard to the Hungarian-language media and school systems. Hungarian minority leaders protested sharply against the new law, and West European organizations such as the European Union echoed their objections. On 9 November, Horn sent a letter to Mečiar, his Slovak counterpart, which complained that leaders of the Hungarian minority had not been given the opportunity to express their views on the bill, and that the advice of the Council of Europe had not been taken into due consideration when drafting the bill. He noted that the law was at variance with provisions in the Basic Treaty and other international documents signed by Slovakia.¹²¹ On 14 November, some deputies from the MDS met with some from the Hungarian minority, though the meeting did not produce any results.

Finally, on 15 November, the Slovak National Council

passed the new language law by an overwhelming majority. Deputies from both the PDL and the DU voted in favor of the law,¹²² raising concern that they had been cowed into adopting more nationalistic policies. Both of these parties had several strong incentives to vote in favor of the law: first, neither wanted to be the losers in a contest of ethnic bidding; second, each saw future prospects as a coalition partner with the MDS, and could have been maneuvering themselves into a more conciliatory position.

Conclusion

Summary

I have described the effects of ethnic bipolarization on the Slovak party system from two different perspectives. First, I traced the histories of the various political parties on an individual basis in order to gain insight into their strategies, tactics, and goals. In this way, I showed changes and continuities over time, especially in relation to their minority policy. Second, I dealt with events related to the Hungarian minority on an issue-by-issue basis. By taking a cross-section of opinion and policy at isolated points in time I showed the relations of political subjects to one another, as well as the practical effects of their tactics and rhetoric. Special attention was paid to the ways in which parties of one ethnicity influence each other, how they affect parties of the other ethnicity, the role of foreign countries and international organizations, and the impact of structural factors such as electoral laws and the role of the Slovak Constitution. In this section, I outline several of these mechanisms with the use of selected examples. This is not intended to be a comprehensive summary of the information contained in previous sections, but rather a discussion of the effects of ethnic bipolarization itself on reproducing, exacerbating, or abating ethnic tension.

Hungarian minority parties influenced their fellow parties in several ways. *Együttélés* consistently took the most extreme position on issues affecting the Hungarian minority. This often prompted the other parties to follow suit, lest they be viewed as a less than enthusiastic advocate of minority interests. A good

example of this was Együttélés' immediate and resolute approval of the SMOŽO appeal. The HCP initially expressed disagreement with some aspects of the planned meeting, but as the controversy gained momentum, the HCP capitulated and in the end sent representatives to the meeting. In such situations, there was an obvious pressure towards policy convergence, strengthened in this case by a siege mentality arising from the fears held by a smaller, less powerful ethnic group of domination by the larger one.

Hungarian minority parties competed with each other not only through differentiation of policy, but also in the composition of the parties' internal structure. The formation of three platforms within Együttélés clearly represented an attempt to attract voters from a wider ideological spectrum. In a less obvious way, however, it was also designed to deter defections from the party which might otherwise occur were the party to have a more rigidly articulated socio-economic policy. In this case, the emphasis on ethnic issues, which made the existence of widely diverse factions possible, could conceivably be augmented as the only common thread between platforms in much the same way that the programs of governing coalitions typically emphasize similarities between parties, while side-stepping contentious points. Whether or not this could occur would depend on the role the platforms eventually play in the party's policy-forming process.

The forming of electoral coalitions, or the refusal to do so, represented another means through which parties exerted pressure on one another. The clearest example of this was the failure of the Hungarian Civic Party to sign an electoral coalition agreement with Együttélés and the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement in 1992. The fact that Együttélés held reservations about the HCP's passivity *vis-a-vis* minority issues when it was in the governing coalition with the Public Against Violence during the 1990-92 period, and that it wanted to exact a renunciation from the HCP of its previous parliamentary activities, indicated that Együttélés viewed the coalition-forming negotiations as an opportunity to exert pressure on the HCP. Conversely, the success of the 1994 negotiations between the three primary Hungarian minority parties marked an important turning point in intraethnic political relations. The possibility for this arose from a significant policy convergence among the three parties, the un-

significant policy convergence among the three parties, the unwillingness to split the vote of the Hungarian minority (thereby losing those for the HCP, since it would not have met the five per cent threshold alone), and the likelihood that Együttélés foresaw that it would play the dominant role in the coalition. The high level of cooperation inherent in such a coalition, of course, enabled the coalition partners to act more quickly and decisively. In this case, the Hungarian coalition was able to function as a more effective counterweight to the more nationally oriented Slovak forces.

Cooperation between Hungarian minority parties also had noteworthy side-effects on their policies and internal organizational structures, and this is especially true in the case of the HCDM. Ideological proximity with Együttélés, its coalition partner, became one of the reasons why the HCDM suffered a round of defections in early 1991, and this subsequently led to some organizational consolidation. On a long-term basis, fear of assimilation has also influenced the HCDM's policies. While the HCDM has tended to support Együttélés on most issues directly affecting the Hungarian minority, it has also emphasized certain differences, notably on Church-related issues, in order to maintain an interstice between itself and its more dominant partner.

Periods of cooperation between Hungarian minority and Slovak parties have also played an important role in Slovak politics. The first of these, when the Independent Hungarian Initiative (later the HCP) entered into the Slovak government on the basis of an electoral coalition with the PAV in 1990-92, should be considered an anomaly, since this interethnic electoral alliance was only possible under the unique circumstances of immediate post-totalitarianism, that is, before the political party system had crystallized along ethnic lines. During the second major period of interethnic cooperation, the Együttélés-HCDM coalition managed to make substantial progress on reforming minority policies by exacting certain promises from the Moravčík government in exchange for giving it the Hungarian coalition's parliamentary support. That interethnic cooperation here resulted from necessity and not principle is evidenced by the immediate abandonment of the Hungarian minority parties by their erstwhile partners, most strikingly by the Democratic Union and the PDL, after the 1994 elections put the MDS back on top. Disdain by the Slo-

vak electorate for the interethnic cooperation certainly played a role in convincing moderate Slovak political parties to distance themselves from their Hungarian partners when it became convenient and profitable to do so.

Conflictual relations between Hungarian minority parties, especially *Együttélés*, on the one hand, and Slovak parties, especially the SNP and the MDS, on the other, became an integral part of Slovak politics. The most obvious reason for this was that Slovak and Hungarian national sentiment have been feeding off each other, and many politicians on both sides of the ethnic divide have used this to help keep themselves in the public eye. However, there has also been an ideological dimension to this. For example, the SNP has primarily viewed Slovakia as the home of the Slovak nation, and would in no event be willing to consider the Hungarian minority as an equal partner and state-forming entity, as many Hungarian minority politicians would like to see.

On a practical level, the disposition of Slovak parties toward those representing the Hungarian minority ranged from general passivity in the case of moderates, to animosity and confrontation in the case of the MDS and the SNP. In the latter case, the two parties have, deliberately or not, divided their oppositional efforts against the Hungarian minority on a task-by-task basis. The MDS has focused on such issues as the territorial reorganization of regional administration, while the SNP has concentrated on education, cultural, and state security issues. There were some important tactical differences, as well. The MDS has attacked leaders of the Hungarian minority in the press, while the SNP has tended to counterbalance demands for autonomy for the Hungarian minority with proposals of legislation protecting state security. However, this division of labor should be viewed as complementary, since both parties have generally supported the activities of the other in this regard.

The MDS/SNP alliance, however, has by no means been monolithic. Problems maintaining their cooperative arrangement in 1993 indicated a certain reluctance within the SNP, and division within this alliance persisted even after the defection from the ranks of the SNP led to the formation of the National Democratic Party in early 1994. The SNP's refusal to endorse the Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty represented the most prominent exception to MDS/SNP cooperation. Here, the deep ideological

differences between the SNP and the MDS came to the fore. By rejecting the treaty, the SNP showed its willingness to oppose collective rights for the Hungarian minority even at the expense of postponing, or reversing, Slovakia's progress on Euroatlantic integration. The MDS, on the other hand, has attacked the Hungarian minority when politically profitable or expedient to do so, but at times has given other issues a higher priority.

Diplomatic relations between Slovakia and Hungary also played an important role in the empowerment of—and animosity toward—the Hungarian minority parties. Until its defeat in the 1994 elections, the HDF, together with its governmental coalition partners, endeavored to give the Hungarian minority parties a greater role in interstate relations. The results of this became evident in 1993, when Slovakia's admission to the EC was postponed by well over a month primarily due to concern over the status of minorities. Hungary's reservations toward Slovakia's admission, highlighted by its subsequent abstention from the vote for admission, darkened interstate relations between the two countries. Claims by leaders of the Hungarian minority that they supported admission—but only under certain conditions—irritated many Slovak politicians, who rightfully viewed the activities of Hungarian minority leaders as their biggest hurdle to Council of Europe membership. The tactic of the Hungarian minority leaders of going over the Slovak government's head with their "correspondence with Europe" did little to reassure Slovak politicians of their loyalty, but certainly gave them a target for public criticism. This, of course, further strained ethnic relations.

On the other hand, international organizations have helped set standards for minority policy; give incentives for Slovakia to respect these standards; and provide deadlines in the form of conferences, meetings, and other events. In the process of applying for membership in the Council of Europe, Slovakia made certain pledges to respect minority rights, including the principles embodied in the Council of Europe's Recommendation 1201, which despite its ambiguities, set a standard for minority policies. This established an important precedent for the involvement of the international community in Slovakia's minority policy. At the same time, for example, the blatant and willful disregard for these agreements by Slovak politicians, especially with the removal of bilingual signs in August 1993, brought the ques-

international organizations have also served as a forum for Hungarian minority parties to air grievances to a less partial, but nevertheless powerful, audience. The introduction of this external factor in the internal balance of Slovak politics generated resistance on behalf of Slovak politicians. Generally, this has increased interethnic tension between political leaders, but the public expression of this tension has been limited to, or at least moderated by, the bounds of international permissibility. The SNP, which represented an exception here, has been especially public in its criticism of what it perceived as undue interventionism by these organizations. Its refusal to endorse the Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty, universally hailed as a historic reconciliation between the Slovak and Hungarian nations, is a case in point here.

Structural factors have had important effects on ethnic politics. The electoral law, which placed a minimum threshold of votes at five per cent for single parties, seven per cent for double or triple coalitions, and ten per cent for quadruple coalitions, created important incentives for Hungarian parties to form electoral coalitions. However, this not only induced the HCP to run with Együttélés and the HCDM in the 1994 elections, but also provided an important disincentive for including the Hungarian People's Party on the same ballot, since the entire coalition would then risk losing parliamentary support entirely were the ten per cent threshold not met. The resultant consolidation of Hungarian political forces had the triple effect of strengthening their collective voice, making them more impregnable to divide-and-conquer tactics, and eliminating (save for breaches in the electoral coalition agreement) the possibility for interethnic alliances that did not include all Hungarian minority parties in the coalition.

The Constitution of the Slovak Republic had several aspects unfavorable to the Hungarian minority. From a legal point of view, one of the most problematic elements was the insistence on Slovak as the state language. This provided a framework, and some legitimation, for discriminatory legislation on matters of culture and education, culminating in the passing of the 1995 language law. Another problem was that it implied that the respect of the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups represented a potential detriment to the rights of others (i.e. Slovaks). This helped to justify the tactic of counterbalancing demands for minority rights with legislation ostensibly defending the Slovak

nority rights with legislation ostensibly defending the Slovak state, Slovak language, and Slovak culture. This tendency was reflected in the electoral programs of many Slovak parties, including the SNP, the MDS and the Democratic Union, which all qualified their minority policies with the stipulation that minority rights should not be realized at the expense of other groups.

In regard to the Slovak political party system, it is clear that ethnically oriented political activity has been taking place on two distinct levels—the domestic and the international—and that the different dispositions of the various political groupings at each of these levels have resulted in a precarious and sometimes contradictory balance of political interests and political forces. This has had an especially significant effect on those political parties concerned with effectively functioning in both arenas simultaneously. The MDS, for example, has been driven by the need to maintain a certain image abroad in order to facilitate the process of Euroatlantic integration, while at the same time it has adopted a severe posture towards the Hungarian minority in the context of domestic politics. The minority policies practiced by the MDS have been, moreover, one of the reasons for the spectacular failure of the MDS to foster a positive image of political developments in Slovakia on the part of Western political formations. International concerns also had an impact on political activity of the Moravčík government; although this government clearly met with more success in presenting a positive image of Slovak political developments to the world.

In contrast, the SNP has shown through both its program and its political activity that it is much more concerned with defending what it perceives as Slovak national interests at home than in a favorable image abroad, and has placed less emphasis on issues related to Euroatlantic integration. The discrepancy between the SNP and the MDS in regard to their attitudes towards Western political formations has given the SNP a certain coercive power over the MDS. This has helped to give the SNP far greater political influence than its mere proportion of parliamentary seats.

The overall lack of direct influence of the Hungarian minority parties on domestic parliamentary politics (except for during the period of the Moravčík government) has made their successes in the international arena all the more striking. Yet the pursuit of

Hungarian minority interests through international organizations has had some significant negative side-effects: by going over the head of the Slovak government, Hungarian minority leaders have provoked a certain degree of resentment, even among moderate Slovak political leaders; they have thus also seemed to confirm doubts about the Hungarian minority's inclination to respect independent Slovak statehood. However, given the lack of other venues through which to wield political power, the potential benefits to Hungarian minority parties of keeping Slovak minority policies at least partially accountable to international standards have seemed to outweighed the detriment caused by the divisive effect of their international political activity.

Findings

The fall of totalitarianism in East Central Europe opened the doors to pluralism and political liberalization. These changes, however, also made possible the pursuit of nationalistic policies and programs, especially, but not exclusively, by the SNP and the MDS. In reaction to the rising tide of ethnocentrism in Slovakia, three main Hungarian minority political parties sprang into existence. Each one embodied different priorities and ideals, and endeavored to realize them through distinct tactics and strategies; and each has had its particular successes and setbacks. First, the IHI/HCP embarked on a path toward the promotion of systemic liberalization and democratization (to use their term). On the premise that through the democratic evolution of the entire country the status of the Hungarian minority would invariably improve, the IHI/HCP initially allowed minority policy to play a secondary role in its political agenda. Frustrated by the passivity of the IHI, the PAV, and the CDM in regard to minority policy, the HCDM was formed with a goal of more rigorously defending the rights of the Hungarian minority while simultaneously pursuing a Christian-democratic platform. Yet, for the HCDM, minority policy represented the top priority, and it was willing to pursue it through either confrontation or cooperation, as the case presented itself. *Együttélés* became the most forceful advocate for the rights of the Hungarian minority. Its ultimate goal was to achieve some form of autonomy for the Hungarian minority, and

ostensibly sought a collegial partnership between the Slovak and Hungarian national communities. To that end it adopted largely confrontational and unyielding tactics.

The course of the three Hungarian minority parties has been instructive. The IHI/HCP, whose idealism came to fruition in the 1990-92 period when it found itself in government with the PAV and the Civic Forum, fell between two stools in the 1992 elections, finding neither Slovak nor Hungarian minority allies to run with. Political necessity, combined with a more inhospitable political environment, compelled it to join ranks with the other Hungarian minority parties in the 1994 elections. While this did not discount the moral validity of its platform and tactics, it did indicate their unfeasibility in an ethnically polarized party system. Although programmatically similar to *Együttélés*, the HCDM has been more inclined to cooperate and make compromises with the moderate Slovak parties than its dominant partner has been, as evidenced by the HCDM's cordial relations with the Moravčík government. *Együttélés* has had mixed results: by forcefully and visibly pursuing its political goals, it, more than any other Hungarian minority party, has helped stoke the fires of Slovak nationalism.

While my research has shown the tendency of ethnic bipolarism to exacerbate ethnic tension on several levels, such an analysis would be incomplete without mentioning some of the countervailing forces for moderation, dialogue, and compromise. The most apparent of these was the spirit of reconciliation which prevailed, though not unchallenged, during the period of the Moravčík government. Similarly, the PDL, the Democratic Union, the CDM, and President Kováč have all shown inclinations toward moderation and dialogue at certain points in time. Another factor helping to resolve ethnic conflict in Slovakia has been the role of international institutions and organizations in monitoring developments, providing a forum for the airing of grievances by Hungarian minority leaders, and setting standards for minority policies. The latter could perform a function analogous to that of the 1975 Helsinki Accords, which set a standard for human rights to which state authorities could be held accountable, while at the same time institutionalizing these standards, thereby giving them added weight. In drafting, signing, and ratifying the Slovak-Hungarian Basic Treaty, Hungary

proved that it can express concern for the status of Hungarian minorities in a non-threatening way. As East Central European states move ever closer toward Euroatlantic integration, this factor could gain significance. Finally, the electoral support base of some of the more nationalistic Slovak parties, notably the SNP and the MDS, decreased between the 1992 and the 1994 parliamentary elections. If the SNP were to prove unable to meet the five per cent threshold, as nearly happened in the 1994 elections, one of two results could be that the MDS would be forced to look to one or more of the moderate Slovak parties to form a government; the other possibility would be the formation of a government of moderates, perhaps with the support of the Hungarian minority parties. In either of these eventualities, the objective status of the Hungarian minority could be expected to improve, though, of course, more in the former case than in the latter.

At the same time, in assessing of the potential for abating ethnic tension in the Slovak political party system, particular attention must be paid to the bifurcation between the domestic and international political activity of the various coalitions, alliances, and groupings. In particular, the record of the MDS could be characterized as a spectacularly unsuccessful attempt at presenting an image of the Slovak political scene abroad commensurate with its desire to continue or hasten Slovakia's integration into Western political formations while simultaneously flouting the standards, ideals, and policies of these very organizations. The programs and political activities of both the PDL and the Democratic Union have been a mixed record in this regard, and the contrast between their relatively good images abroad and their potential to cooperate with the MDS makes these two parties perhaps the most important unknown factors affecting the future status of the Hungarian minority on the level of parliamentary politics. This would be especially true in the event of a significant change in the allotment of parliamentary representation to the detriment of either the MDS or the SNP.

It is important to note, however, that my research has shown ethnic tension to be a systemic, and hence probably long-term, feature of Slovak parliamentary politics. Conflictual relations between political parties has been entrenched in a political party system crystallized along ethnic lines, and this situation has shown strong self-reinforcing tendencies on both sides of the eth-

tension on both domestic and international levels, it would be premature to be overly optimistic for the prospects of peaceful political relations between these two ethnic groups anytime soon.

NOTES

¹ For an in-depth discussion of the demographic composition of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, see: László Gyurgyík, *Magyar Mérleg: A szlovákiai magyarság a népszámlási és a népmozgalmi adatok tükrében* (Bratislava: Kalligram könyvkiadó, 1994).

² Ondrej Dostál, "Od konfrontácie k rezervanosti: Pokrok v slovensko-maďarských vzťahoch za roky 1992-1994," in *Quo Vadis Slovensko? Revue o človeku, spoločnosti a politike 1/95* (Bratislava: RaPaMan, 1995), p. 120.

³ For several analyses of public opinion polls and the dissolution of the federation, see: Rüdiger Kipke, Karel Vodička (eds.), *Rozlúčenie s Československem: Príčiny a dôsledky Česko-Slovenského rozchodu* (Prague: Český Spisovatel Praha, 1993).

⁴ One of these political parties, Együttélés, officially labels itself as multi-ethnic, and thus not specifically Hungarian.

⁵ Dostál, "Od konfrontácie," p. 117.

⁶ Dostál, *ibid.*, p. 122.

⁷ Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 306.

⁸ Cited in *ibid.*, p. 291.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 346-349.

¹⁰ Arend Lijphart, *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 107-108.

¹¹ Horowitz, *Ethnic Conflict* pp. 350.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 358-360.

¹³ Dostál, "Od konfrontácie," p. 121.

¹⁴ For an overview of this, see Michael Laver and Norman

Schofield, *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), especially pp. 89-144.

¹⁵ László Nagy, "Three Years of the Hungarian Civic Party," *Polgári Párt Newsletter* 1/93 (Bratislava), p. 1.

¹⁶ Bugajski, *Ethnic Politics* p. 345.

¹⁷ Mária Homišinová and Štefan Šutaj, "Maďarská menšina v procesoch spoločenskej transformácie," in *Minoritné etnické spoločenstva na Slovensku v procesoch spoločenských premien* (Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo slovenskej akadémie vied, 1994), p. 76.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

²⁰ HCP, "Sloboda a zodpovednosť: Program Maďarskej občianskej strany," (Bratislava: Maďarská občianská strana, 1992), p. 22.

²¹ HCP, "Ekonomicky silná menšina," (Bratislava Maďarská občianská strana: 1993), p. 1.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁴ Kálmán Janics, "Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Mozgalmak Csehszlovákiában és Szlovákiában," in *Közöségünk Szolgálatában: A Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Mozgalom öt esztendeje* (Bratislava: Magyar Kereszténydemokrata Mozgalom, 1995), p. 13

²⁵ The title of this party is reminiscent of that of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Party, a popular party which represented its ethnically Hungarian constituency in Czechoslovakia from its inception in 1920 to its fusion with the Hungarian National Party in 1936, resulting in the formation of the United Party.

²⁶ Janics, *ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁷ Ján Čarnogurský, "A Kereszténydemokrácia Szlovákiában a Kommunizmus bukása után," in *Közöségünk szolgálatában* pp. 17-20.

²⁸ Homišinová, Šutaj, "Maďarská menšina," p. 80.

²⁹ HCDM, "Az MKDM-ben történet," *Kereszténydemokrata Híradó* (Bratislava), 25 July 1991, No. 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³² HCDM, Letter to Ferenc Magyar, Béla Noviczky, Ferenc Szőcs,

Olivér Varga, Bratislava, 22 July 1991.

³³ HCDM, "Program Maďarského kresťanskodemokratického hnutia," (Bratislava: Magyar Kereszténzdemokrata Mozgalom, 1994), p. 1.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 20.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 22.

³⁶ Miklós Duray, "Az elgondolkodtató évforduló öt éves az Együttélés," in *Az Együttélés öt éve Eseménynaptár és dokumentumgyűjtemény 1990-1994* (Bratislava: Együttélés, 1995), p. 8.

³⁷ Homišinová, Šutaj, "Maďarská menšina," p. 82.

³⁸ Együttélés, "Együttélés politikai mozgalom a demokráciáért és a nemzeti kisebbségek jogaiért," (Bratislava: Együttélés, 1990), p. 1.

³⁹ Homišinová, Šutaj, "Maďarská menšina," p. 83.

⁴⁰ Homišinová, Šutaj, *ibid*, p. 83.

⁴¹ Miklós Duray, "Elnöli Beszámolója," in *Az Együttélés kézikönyve: Az Együttélés IV. országos kongresszusának programértékű dokumentumai* (Bratislava: Együttélés Politikai Mozgalom, 1993), p. 10.

⁴² Együttélés, "Az Együttélés alapszabálya," *ibid*, p. 34.

⁴³ Együttélés, "Founding Declaration of Coexistence's Social Platform," (Bratislava: Együttélés, 1995).

⁴⁴ Miklós Duray, "Az elgondolkodtató évforduló Öt éves az Együttélés," in *Az Együttélés öt éve: Eseménynaptár és dokumentumgyűjtemény* (Bratislava: Együttélés Politikai Mozgalom, 1995), p. 5-6.

⁴⁵ See Michael Laver, Norman Schofield, *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 24.

⁴⁶ Együttélés, "Az Együttélés politikai mozgalom választási programja," (Bratislava: Az Együttélés Központi Irodája, 1994), p. 9.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 10.

⁴⁸ Homišinová, Šutaj, "Maďarská menšina," p. 86.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 86.

⁵⁰ "Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko," p. 83.

- ⁵¹ See for example *The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Forecast: Czech Republic* (London : Economist Intelligence Unit, 199u) 1st quarter 1994.
- ⁵² SME (Bratislava), "Confidence in President, Prime Minister Declines," 21 June 1994, p. 3 on FBIS-EEU-94-1-21, 23 June 1994.
- ⁵³ For a more detailed description of these events, see CDM, "Kresťansko demokratické hnutie," (Bratislava: KDM, 1993), pp. 4-5.
- ⁵⁴ CDM, "Politický program KDH," (Bratislava: Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, 1992), p.2.
- ⁵⁵ CDM, "Lepšie Slovensko: Východiská politického programu KDH," (Bratislava: Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, 1993), p. 14.
- ⁵⁶ Bugajski, *Ethnic Politics* p. 337.
- ⁵⁷ Bugajski, *ibid*, p. 337.
- ⁵⁸ Dušan Leška, Viera Koganová, "Voľby a profilovanie politických strán a hnutí na Slovensku," in Soňa Szomolányi, Grigorij Mesežnikov, ed., *Slovensko: voľby 1994 príčiny-dôsledky-perspektívy* (Bratislava: Slovenské združenie pre politické vedy, 1994), p. 96.
- ⁵⁹ SNP, "Program Slovenskej národnej strany 1994 (pracovný návrh)," (Bratislava: Slovenská národná strana, 1994), p. 2.
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