



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on January 6, 2014

Killers on the Loose: Croatia Arrests Communist Spy Chief in 1983 Murder Case

Croatian officials, responding to pressure from Germany and the European Union, ordered the arrest, on January 1, of Josip Perkovic (shown), the former head of the Croatian branch of the Communist Yugoslavia's secret police. The 68-year-old Perkovic is accused of masterminding the 1983 assassination of Croatian nationalist Stjepan Djurekovic, in the Bavarian town of Wolfrathausen near Munich, Germany. Djurekovic was one of many Yugoslavian emigrants around the world who were hunted down and murdered by the Yugoslav State Security Service (UDBA), both during the reign of Josip Broz Tito (1943-1980) and after.



The Republic of Croatia, which achieved sovereign status following its 1991 War for Independence from Yugoslavia, became the 28th member state of the European Union on July 1, 2013. However, the matter of Perkovic and other UDBA criminals has been a sticking point from the beginning of Croatia's application for accession to the EU. On June 28, three days before it was to begin its EU membership, the Croatian Parliament, dominated by "former" communists and their allies, rushed to pass a law stipulating that EU arrest/extradition warrants would not be applicable to crimes committed before August 7, 2002. Critics dubbed the new law "Lex Perkovic," and rightfully decried it as a blatant effort to protect infamous criminals responsible for some of the worst offences of the former regime. Facing legal action from the EU, as well as the threat of loss of EU funds, the Croatian government amended the law to remove the time limitation. In addition to Perkovic, Croatian authorities executed arrest warrants on January 1 for former UDBA chief Zdravko Mustac and eight others. Perkovic is fighting his extradition to Germany, and a Croatian court may decide the issue as early as this week. It is likely the court may rule that Perkovic cannot be extradited due to the statute of limitations.

Dr. John R. Schindler, professor of national security affairs at the U.S. Naval War College, has written extensively on the Balkans and the Yugoslavia UDBA. He is the author of *Agents Provocateurs: Terrorism, Espionage, and the Secret Struggle for Yugoslavia, 1945-1990*.

In a 2010 [interview with Studia Croatica](#), Professor Schindler explained:

After the fall of Yugoslavia, UDBA disappeared, yet it didn't. No ex-Yugoslav republic has really come to terms with UDBA crimes at home and abroad, and none of their secret services was cleansed of UDBA operatives with blood on their hands. To cite just one example, witness the indictment of Josip Perkovic by German authorities in 2005 for his role in the 1983 Djurekovic murder — but Perkovic was Tudjman's right-hand-man on security matters in the early 1990s, and his son Sasa has been a senior advisor to President Mesic! Across ex-Yugoslavia, Udbasi simply



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became servants of new states and regimes, without many questions being asked. It is clearly in no one's interest that UDBA crimes be really investigated and solved. For years Croatian authorities half-heartedly tried to prosecute Vinko Sindicic, the most prolific UDBA assassin, probably responsible for more than a dozen murders in the West (he was convicted by British authorities for the 1988 attempted murder of Croatian émigré Nikola Stedul in Scotland, and served a decade in prison), and got nowhere, and Sindicic lives openly in Croatia today. In Serbia, the situation is even worse, and the UDBA infrastructure, the vital nexus of spies and criminals and dirty money, has been only partially dismantled. Milosevic was happy to use it for his own purposes, and few people in Serbia seem to want to know the truth about UDBA crimes.

Immunity and Impunity

The French author and expert on Croatia and Cold War espionage Chrisophe Dolbeau has written extensively on the viciousness and brutality of Tito's UDBA killer squads. In an August 2013 piece for Polemia.com entitled "[Croatia and the Malodorous UDBA Ghosts,](#)" Dolbeau wrote:

Skimming through the large list of UDBA's crimes and notably the murders that were committed abroad by the 2nd Section, one cannot but notice the viciousness which characterized the killers. Often enough Croatian victims were betrayed by pseudo friends and they were either shot or pulverized by a bomb, or had their throats cut, or their head smashed with an axe. (This is the terrible way Jozo Orec, a Croatian emigrant, was killed in Johannesburg, South Africa, in December 1977.) On several occasions, relatives and even children of the targets were hacked to pieces.

In August 1972 when (Steve) Stipe Sevo was shot (in the back of course) by his "friend" Vinko Sindicic, the killer Sindicic also murdered Sevo's wife and his little daughter, Rosemarie, aged 9. Although he is suspected of having killed a dozen emigrants, Sindicic is currently free of any charge and swaggering around in Croatia, with a decent pension plan.

Sindicic, one of the most notorious UDBA assassins with a "license to kill," can be seen in a news photo in the Dolbeau story smiling for the cameras and looking very dapper and James Bondish in a white tuxedo and bow tie. The UDBA killers carried out their trade in throughout Europe, as well as in Australia, Argentina, the United Kingdom, Canada — and the United States.

One of the most gruesome UDBA murders took place in Chicago in 1977. Anti-Tito Serbia journalist Dragisa Kasikovic and Ivanka Milosevic, his nine-year-old stepdaughter, were both murdered by knife. Kasikovic was stabbed 64 times. "Little Ivanka was stabbed more than fifty times, her body barely recognizable from the butchery," [wrote Dr. Schindler](#).

A few months after those terrible murders on U.S. soil, the man who ordered them was welcomed here by America's president. On March 7, 1978, Marshall Tito came to the United States and was lavished with great honors by President Jimmy Carter. Carter declared:

This morning the people of the United States are honored by the presence of a great world leader, President Tito of Yugoslavia.

This is his third visit to the United States. The last time he was here was in 1971. One of the first actions that I took as President was to ask Vice President Mondale to go to Yugoslavia to present my own respects and admiration to President Tito.

He is indeed a remarkable man who has exhibited in his own life tremendous personal courage in battle, in times of severe testing of his strength as a human being and as a patriot.



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But Carter was not unique in in this regard; both Republicans and Democrats in the White House before him likewise praised and honored him, turning a blind eye to his totalitarian ways and willfully overlooking his assassins here in the United States. Presidents Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon, and Ford not only acclaimed him as an ally and a great statesman, but showered him with foreign aid.

Another target of Tito's UDBA in the United States was Slovenian Catholic priest Fr. Vladimir Kozina, author of the book *Communism as I Know It*. Fr. Kozina's mother and father and two of his brothers were murdered by the communists in his native Slovenia in 1942. Fr. Kozina escaped to Austria, and then to the United States, where he served as a parish priest for decades in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Now retired and in his 90s, Fr. Kozina told this writer, in a 2012 interview, that he had been warned in the 1970s by the FBI that Tito's assassins were here and were trying to get him.

Fr. Kozina told *The New American* that in Slovenia today, as with virtually all of the former East Bloc states, the "former" communists still hold power, controlling the government, the press, the banks, and most of the major businesses. One of many examples he pointed to demonstrating the continuing communist control was the naming of a major street in Slovenia's capital, Ljubljana, after Tito, in 2009, by the mayor and city council. "Can you imagine the worldwide furor it would cause — and rightly so — if Berlin, Bonn, or some other German city were to name a boulevard in honor of Adolf Hitler?" Fr. Kozina asked. "And yet there was very little outcry — other than in Slovenia — over naming a street for the mass-murderer Tito. There have been no trials for the communist butchers. After World War II, in Germany you had the de-Nazification — the expulsion of Nazis from all government posts, the stripping of Nazi symbols from every public building, etc. — but we have not seen anything similar in Yugoslavia or any of the former territories of the Soviet Union or the Warsaw Pact."

"Today, the malodorous UDBA ghosts and other Yugoslavian cloak and dagger circles are still haunting Croatia," writes Christophe Dolbeau. "Twenty years after its independence scores of former UDBA hit men of the former Yugoslav regime have not yet been held to account, nor have they ever atoned for their crimes. The brainiest ones have even retained important positions, or passed them on to their offspring. Most murderers today in Croatia benefit from a comfortable material situation; they are not bothered by the police and quietly enjoy their ill-gotten wealth."

Dolbeau continues:

Some of them have chosen to settle down in France where they spend happy days under the palm trees of the Riviera. Publicly accused (in Croatia) for having prepared or committed five or six murders of emigrants on behalf of the UDBA, the brothers J., aka "Simun" (or "Sime") and "Djordje," obtained French nationality; their case is subject to the statute of limitations dating from the end of criminal proceedings (10 years after a homicide was committed), assuring them of impunity. These two criminals have clearly nothing to feel sorry about.

The ruling Social Democratic Party (SDP) of President Ivo Josipovic and Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic was formed from Yugoslavia's League of Communists, which was the name for Tito's old Communist Party. Josipovic, like many other SDP officials, was a member of the League of Communists. Moreover, Josipovic appointed Josip Perkovic's son, Sasa Perkovic, as his national security advisor. Josip Perkovic had served as intelligence chief and national security advisor to President Franjo Tudjman, who had also been a member of Tito's League of Communists, and then became the first president of the newly independent Croatia.

The ruling of Croatia's judiciary on the extradition of Perkovic, Mustac, and the others will prove



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interesting, regardless which way it goes. However, even if the UDBA agents are extradited and eventually go on trial, the decades of delaying tactics by the ruling communists has permitted the trail to grow cold and many witnesses to die. It will be difficult to get a conviction.

The “Lex Perkovic” case underscores the importance of the revelations of Soviet KGB defector Anatoliy Golitsyn, whose prophetic books, [New Lies for Old](#) and [The Perestroika Deception](#) provide a detailed explanation of the long-range disinformation and deception strategy of the Kremlin in bringing about a fake “collapse” that would allow the communists to stay in power as “reformers,” while pursuing a program of economic and political “convergence” with the West. Golitsyn, arguably the most important Soviet agent ever to defect to the West, was an operative of the “inner KGB” — a super-secret strategic planning department of which not even ordinary KGB officers were aware — that developed and implemented the Kremlin’s global grand strategy. The refusal of successive U.S. administrations and America’s foreign policy elites to heed Golitsyn’s warnings have led America and the West on a suicidal course *vis à vis* Russia, China, and the “former” communist countries of the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe. In a series of [three interviews](#) with *The New American* conducted at the Gorbachev Foundation’s 1995 State of the World Forum in San Francisco, the late Christopher Story, editor/publisher of the British publication *Soviet Analyst*, provided a comprehensive overview of Golitsyn’s unique stature and unparalleled prescience and accuracy — and why continued ignoring of his message would prove fatal for the freedom of everyone on our planet.

Photo of Josip Perkovic: AP Images

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