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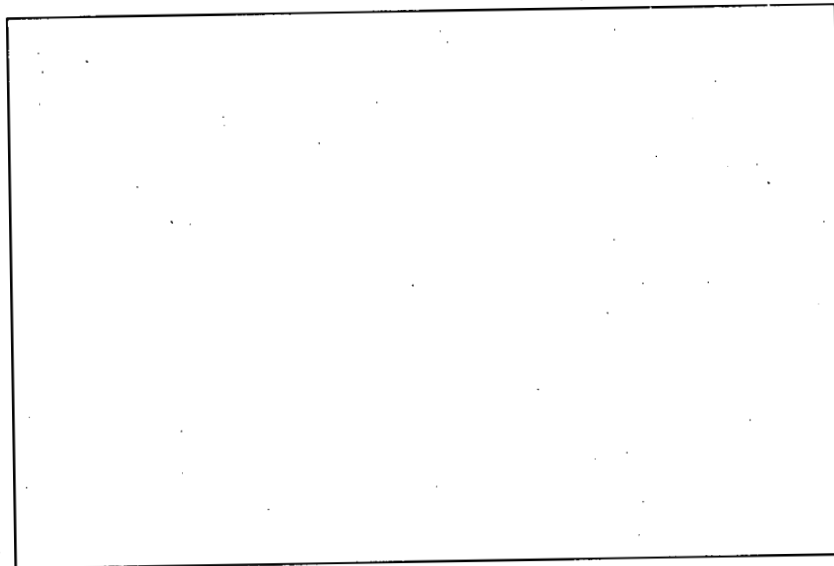
SOVIET STAFF STUDY

THE FAILURE OF THE SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RAPPROCHEMENT
(Reference Titles: CAESAR V-B and VI-A-58)

Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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THE FAILURE OF THE SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RAPPROCHEMENT

This study is a working paper circulated to analysts of Soviet affairs as a contribution to current interpretation of Soviet policy. This particular study is part of a series prepared under the general title "Project CAESAR," designed to ensure the systematic examination of information on the leading members of the Soviet hierarchy, their political associations, and the policies with which they have been identified.

--30 September 1958


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THE FAILURE OF THE SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RAPPROCHEMENT

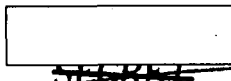
The breakdown of Soviet-Yugoslav relations in recent months can best be approached by a review of Moscow's expectations when the rapprochement began and the uneven course of relations since that time. The difficulties that beset the rapprochement and that have led to its failure resulted from Nikita Khrushchev's policy of trying to establish party relations with and to integrate Yugoslavia into the bloc. If Moscow had been content to accept Yugoslavia as an independent neutral, and the Yugoslavs had refrained from meddling too actively in satellite affairs, Belgrade's demonstrated willingness to pursue a foreign policy close to that of the USSR would have precluded serious conflicts between the two states.

For over three years, even before Khrushchev led a Soviet delegation to Belgrade in May 1955, the aim of restoring it to the bloc underlay Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia. Essentially, this was Khrushchev's policy, apparently originated by him and publicly associated with him ever since his visit to Belgrade. It contrasted with the views of Molotov, and perhaps other Soviet leaders: to treat Yugoslavia simply as a neutral and thus to avoid the risks of seeking its re-entry into "the Soviet camp."

After the party break in 1958, Khrushchev, in a speech on 3 June at the Bulgarian party congress, gave a clear description of these two different objectives.

It is not disputed that those who struggle for socialism consistently struggle for the cause of peace. But many leaders who do not support the principles of socialism also struggle for peace.... Thus in the struggle for peace, forces and organizations of various views and political opinions can be united. It is another question when we speak of the struggle for the victory of socialism.... It is necessary to strengthen in every way cooperation between all states in the struggle for peace and for the security of nations. We want to maintain such relations with the Yugoslav Federal Republic. But we, as Communists, would like more. We would like to reach mutual understanding and cooperation on the party plane.

Although when Khrushchev spoke he had in fact given up the hope of party ties with Tito, this is a good description of the views he had held in 1955.


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The fact that Khrushchev was closely identified with the policy toward Yugoslavia was probably a major reason why that policy remained unchanged for so long despite the evidence that Tito would not associate himself with the bloc on Moscow's terms. There was speculation that Soviet criticism of Yugoslavia after the Hungarian revolution indicated that for a time Khrushchev did not have complete control over this aspect of policy, but, on the other hand, the improvement in Yugoslav-Soviet relations later in 1957 was attributed to his efforts.

Therefore, the change in Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia in April and May 1958 inevitably raised speculation that Khrushchev's leadership was again being challenged or that he was under heavy pressure from other leaders to shift his policy. A review of Soviet-Yugoslav relations suggests, however, that while such pressure on Khrushchev is a possibility it is not necessary as an explanation for the reversal of Soviet policy. Khrushchev on a number of occasions in the last three years has expressed views concerning relations with Belgrade that were clearly in conflict with Yugoslav concepts.

The break with Yugoslavia was a by-product of the decision to impose much stricter standards of conformity on the bloc. A major step in that direction was the meeting in Moscow in November 1957 on the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution and the resulting 12-party declaration, a document not signed by the Yugoslav party. Soviet-Yugoslav relations cooled noticeably after that.

The break was precipitated by the Yugoslav party congress in May 1958 and the party program drawn up for approval by the congress. The USSR was forced to decide whether or not to send delegates. It felt that a justification of its negative decision was necessary, particularly in order to assure complete bloc conformity with the decision. Moreover, it felt that the Yugoslav party program was an ideological threat to the bloc. When negotiations on the program failed to move the Yugoslavs significantly, the Soviet leaders finally recognized that Belgrade could not be shaken from its insistence on independence. Moscow then decided that Belgrade must be discredited to destroy its influence, existing or potential, in the bloc. While Soviet dissatisfaction with Yugoslavia and concern over bloc discipline had been growing for a long time, the Yugoslav party congress forced a firm decision regarding relations with Yugoslavia.

The Genesis of Party Rapprochement: The normalization of Soviet-Yugoslav governmental relations started soon after Stalin's death and gained momentum in the last half of 1954. Although

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public Soviet statements in this period centered on the need for improving state relations, there were indications that in private talks the Russians were already urging a party rapprochement. Yugoslav Vice President Kardelj told a Western journalist that, in numerous secret talks in 1954, Soviet officials had sounded the Yugoslavs out on the prospect for renewed party relations, had recognized the Yugoslav principle of "many roads to socialism," and had sought ways of drawing Yugoslavia back into the bloc. Tito said privately in April 1955 that the Russians wanted Yugoslavia back in the Cominform. The Yugoslavs insisted to Westerners that they were rebuffing such approaches.

The Soviet interest in a party accord with Yugoslavia was made public in May 1955, when Khrushchev arrived at Belgrade airport to make a plea for the "re-establishment of mutual understanding" between the two parties. Placing primary blame on Beria*, he went as far as could have been expected in admitting Soviet responsibility for the breakdown in relations. Khrushchev apparently considered that this apology was the major prerequisite to re-establishing party contacts. How much this subject was discussed during the visit is not known. The Yugoslavs, who emphasized to Westerners that they had resisted Soviet approaches for party contacts, were probably overstating their case. The Russians accepted an important Yugoslav thesis by agreeing in the joint communiqué that "different forms of development of socialism are the exclusive business of the peoples of the respective countries." The communiqué said nothing specifically, however, about establishing party relations although there was a reference to cooperation between "social organizations."

During the Belgrade meeting, outstanding Soviet-Yugoslav differences were not settled but appear to have been ignored by mutual agreement. Khrushchev told the Bulgarian party congress on 3 June 1958 that Tito agreed to forget past differences and establish a new basis for relations between Moscow and Belgrade. Khrushchev said that the Soviet party was willing to do this even though it recognized that there remained "ideological differences on a number of important questions." His statement makes it clear that he expected the Yugoslavs gradually to conform to the Soviet viewpoint on these issues.

* Subsequently it has been reported that Khrushchev originally proposed that both Djilas and Beria be blamed for the break.

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Khrushchev has claimed (in a speech to the East German party congress in Berlin on 11 July 1958) that during the Belgrade meeting the Soviet leaders made it clear that they felt the 1948 Cominform criticisms of Yugoslavia had been correct. There is other evidence that within the Soviet party at least, this position was maintained at that time. In accord with the agreement to ignore past differences, however, this question was apparently not stressed and was ignored in public statements. The Soviet leadership does appear to have been concerned at the Belgrade meeting with the problem of American aid to Yugoslavia and is believed to have asked unsuccessfully for Yugoslav assurances that this would soon end.

Yugoslavia's Role in New Soviet Bloc: Khrushchev's decision openly to seek Yugoslav membership in "the socialist camp" was a bold move and perhaps an impetuous one which he had not thoroughly considered in all its implications. Khrushchev recognized that Tito did not want to become dependent on the West and did not feel comfortable in his Western alignment. He seems, however, to have underestimated Yugoslavia's passion for independence. He overestimated the attractions for Yugoslavia to return to the "socialist" fold. An optimistic and militant Communist, Khrushchev believed there was no place for "socialist" states outside "the socialist camp." A Pravda editorial on 16 July 1955 reflected his views.

Adherence to the necessary socialist foreign and domestic policy, the expansion and strengthening of political and economic ties, and cooperation on the part of Yugoslavia with the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies are of great importance to the further development of Yugoslavia along the road of socialism.

Khrushchev's aims with regard to Yugoslavia cannot be understood except in the context of his plans for replacing the Stalinist methods of control over the satellites. He intended to develop a more loosely knit bloc, with control based less on force and economic exploitation. He apparently had not carefully thought out his plans, however, or clarified his intentions enough so that other bloc leaders knew what to expect. He had certainly not fully appreciated the risks of the new policy.

Khrushchev's plan for the Soviet bloc both permitted and necessitated the reincorporation of Yugoslavia. In a more loosely knit bloc, it would be possible to permit Yugoslavia--at least temporarily--an extraordinary degree of freedom of action. Conversely, in a period of liberalization, Yugoslavia

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might be a source of dissension if it were permitted to remain as an independent center of Communism. Khrushchev was taking the risk that Yugoslavia might have a greater unsettling effect if it were encouraged to expand its contacts with the satellites while the party rapprochement was in process and Yugoslavia was still largely independent. Parenthetically, it should be noted that Khrushchev's revised concept of the bloc was not only intended to accommodate Yugoslavia but to recognize the fact of China's more independent position. The trip to Belgrade in May 1955 followed Khrushchev's and Bulganin's visit to Peiping in the autumn of 1954.

The Soviet leaders had other reasons for seeking a rapprochement with Tito. Their action, showing that Stalinism was dead, contributed to the general Soviet campaign for reduced tensions and improved relations with the West. This had an important, but only temporary, effect on world opinion. As the Soviet objective became more clearly one of drawing Yugoslavia back into the bloc, it appeared menacing rather than reassuring to the West. The entire campaign stimulated Western distrust of Yugoslavia and consequently weakened Yugoslavia's ties with the West, making Belgrade more dependent on the USSR.

Achievements and Obstacles in the First Year: In the year that followed the Belgrade visit in May 1955, Soviet-Yugoslav governmental relations boomed. There were agreements on trade, loans, and nuclear cooperation. Ideological differences were not apparent in the press. Although Yugoslavia sent no delegation to the 20th party congress, Tito did dispatch a cordial message. While informal talks may have occurred, there were no formal contacts or discussions at the party level during this first year. The Yugoslavs warmly welcomed the decisions of the party congress which pointed to further liberalization in Soviet policies and seemed to cater to Yugoslav principles. The attack on Stalin revealed later was especially welcome to Belgrade. The dissolution of the Cominform in April 1956 was also considered to be a concession to Tito.

The first year was climaxed by Tito's visit to the Soviet Union in early June 1956. Khrushchev and Tito signed a communiqué calling for the "further development of relations and cooperation" between the two parties, implying there had been some previous unpublicized relations. The communiqué listed some specific forms of contact--delegations, exchange of literature, and meetings of party leaders--and it spelled out in more detail the principles of the Belgrade declaration drawn up a year earlier which were dear to the Yugoslavs.

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The ways of socialist development vary in different countries and conditions, the wealth of forms of the development of socialism contributes to its strength.... Cooperation should be based on complete voluntariness and equality, friendly criticism, and comradely exchange of views on the contentious issues between our parties.

Behind this facade of agreement, however, certain major disagreements continued to exist between Tito and Khrushchev, some of which were suggested by events during the Moscow meeting. The fundamental difference involved the question of Yugoslav participation in the bloc. In the final speeches in Moscow, Khrushchev spoke of a "monolithic closing of ranks and unity among the socialist countries." He stressed the paramount importance of unity among the bloc states and the role that inter-party cooperation played in creating such unity; he implied that Yugoslav-Soviet party relations were essential in order to achieve a similar unity between the two states. He asserted that Western "friendship" for Yugoslavia was false; intended only for the malicious purpose of winning Yugoslavia away from "socialism." Tito, by contrast, emphasized that there were different "roads to socialism" and that "our way, too, differs somewhat from the road you traversed." He stressed Yugoslavia's interest in continued good relations with nonbloc countries.

There were numerous reports, some of them not received until later, of specific differences that underlay these contrasting speeches. The USSR was critical of Yugoslav dependence on trade and aid from the West. There were sharp ideological debates in Moscow. The USSR allegedly pressed Yugoslavia to join a new international Communist organization. Moscow also reportedly criticized Yugoslavia's failure to recognize East Germany.

Tito disclosed later in his Pula speech on 11 November 1956 that differences over formulations on party relations in the Moscow declaration were

a little difficult to settle. Here we could not completely agree but, nevertheless, the declaration was issued which, in our opinion, is intended for a wider circle than Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. We warned that those tendencies which once provoked such strong resistance in Yugoslavia existed in all countries, and that one day they might find expression in other countries, too, when this would be far more difficult to correct.

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Tito also claimed to have argued that

Rakosi's regime and Rakosi himself had no qualifications whatever to lead the Hungarian state and to bring about inner unity, but that, on the contrary, their actions could only bring about grave consequences. Unfortunately, the Soviet comrades did not believe us.... The Soviet comrades said he (Rakosi) was prudent, that he was going to succeed, and that they knew of no one else on whom they could rely in that country.

Mounting Crisis in the Satellites: In the last half of 1956, while Yugoslavia was resisting Soviet efforts to curb its independence and avoiding incorporation in "the socialist camp," Tito also increased his pressure on Moscow for liberalization in the satellites. Yugoslavia did not want to be bound by the obligations of a bloc member, but it was eager to assert the privilege of advising Moscow on satellite problems. This conflict over the satellites was a very serious obstacle to improving Soviet-Yugoslav relations.

Tito later charged that Moscow had failed to apply the principles of the Belgrade and Moscow declarations to its relations with the satellites. It is certain that Moscow had no intention of extending to the satellites the degree of freedom of action it was willing to extend, at least temporarily, to Yugoslavia. Yugoslav demands for liberalization in Eastern Europe coincided with the first spark of revolt in the satellites, the Poznan riots in Poland late in June 1956. These and other signs of unrest in the satellites, and to a lesser extent the chaos in Western Communist parties following the denigration of Stalin, inspired a series of impassioned edicts by Moscow for unity in the Communist ranks.

A central committee resolution issued in Moscow on 30 June 1956 warned that bourgeois ideologists were seeking to sow confusion in international Communist ranks. On 16 July, Pravda denounced "national Communism." Bulganin, speaking in Warsaw on 21 July, warned that opportunists in some "socialist" countries were aiding the imperialists in attempts to weaken international "socialism under the banner of so-called 'national peculiarities.'" Moscow realized that it had underestimated the centrifugal forces at work within the bloc and consequently the dangerous results both of its own steps to relax controls and of the theories advocated by Yugoslavia and given some lip service by Moscow.

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The repeated Soviet attacks on national Communism and the stern demands for unity and uniformity were viewed in Belgrade with serious concern. The final straw was a secret circular letter which the Russians sent to the satellites in early September warning them against following the Yugoslav example and citing the USSR as the proper model.

These difficulties precipitated a two-stage meeting between Khrushchev and Tito in September 1956, first in Yugoslavia and then in the Crimea. The satellites were presumably the main subject of conversation. Tito later said publicly that Yugoslavia was advocating further liberalization while the Soviet leaders resisted. The serious differences which had led to the meeting clearly persisted at its end. Tito suggested in his Pula speech that during this meeting "Stalinist elements"--presumably not Khrushchev--were influential in the Soviet leadership. There is no evidence, however, that Khrushchev had lost control of policy toward Yugoslavia at that date. On the contrary, it seems evident that Khrushchev was just as concerned over developments in the satellites and just as reluctant to take Tito's advice as were other Soviet leaders.

The Effect of Hungary: The upheaval in Poland and especially the revolution in Hungary at the end of October shook the foundations of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. There followed several months of polemics, primarily in the press, between the two countries. These arguments revealed more clearly the underlying differences between Moscow and Belgrade which had been aggravated by the upheavals in Eastern Europe.

Tito's frank speech at Pula on 11 November 1956 laid bare the disputes over conditions in the satellites that had preceded the Polish and Hungarian upheavals. He charged Soviet and satellite leaders with timidity in making reforms, continued subservience to Stalinist principles, and consequently responsibility for the upheavals. He claimed that changes in the Soviet system itself were necessary if a revival of Stalinism was to be prevented. He questioned Soviet willingness to carry out the principles of the Belgrade and Moscow declarations as they applied to the satellites. Other Yugoslav leaders emphasized that the primary issue was the Soviet insistence on bringing Yugoslavia into "the socialist camp" and Belgrade's determination to remain independent.

In a series of newspaper editorials and high-level statements during the winter of 1956-1957, the Soviet leadership spelled out its policies toward the bloc and Yugoslavia. Moscow elaborated a formula which recognized both the principles of unity among "socialist" countries and "national variations," but it gave greater emphasis to the former aim.

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Given unity of purpose with a view to securing the victory of socialism, varying forms and methods of the solution of the concrete problems of socialism may be applied in various countries, in accordance with historic and national peculiarities. (Pravda, 23 November 1956).

He who, like Rakosi and Gero, cannot and will not correctly and creatively apply the basic principles of Communism to national state conditions inflicts great harm on our cause. He who puts national state differences in first place forgets the basic principles of the dictatorship of the proletariat and inflicts no less harm on the cause of socialism. (Pravda, 18 December 1956).

Concrete and objective conditions determine the creative variety of the only road to socialist progress in different countries. (Pravda, 23 November 1956).

Pravda denied that the USSR demanded submission from anyone and it asserted that mistakes in relations with the satellites and Yugoslavia had been corrected. But unity remained the strongest theme in the Soviet argument.

Moscow emphasized occasionally the leading role of the USSR in the bloc. Kommunist said that all Communist parties looked to the historical experience of the Soviet Union as an example to follow but that some Yugoslavs took just the opposite attitude. According to Pravda of 11 March 1957,

in the mutual relations of socialist countries, relations with the Soviet Union as the first country of victorious socialism, as a state which has accumulated the richest experience in socialist building during 40 years of its history, are of no small significance.

Moscow's few references to "national Communism" were in critical terms. In January 1957 Khrushchev called it a divisive tool used by the enemies of the working class. He warned that the legitimate variations in socialism in different countries must not be given priority and could not invalidate the "basic laws of the Socialist Revolution." The communiqué signed in

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Budapest on 6 January by leaders of the USSR and four satellites (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Bulgaria) warned that the "false slogan of the so-called 'national Communism'" was being used by imperialists to undermine international Communist unity.

In addition to these general pronouncements with obvious implications for the Yugoslavs, Moscow directed some attacks specifically at Belgrade. In November 1956, Pravda charged Yugoslavia with claiming that its "road to socialism" was the correct one, interfering in the internal affairs of other "socialist" states, and trying to divide "the socialist camp." Pravda criticized some aspects of the "Yugoslav road," particularly its dependence on Western aid, which Moscow claimed was an unstable basis on which to "build socialism." The newspaper also said that some Yugoslav leaders were guilty of deviations from Marxist-Leninist theory and the principles of proletarian internationalism but said that Moscow would be tolerant and patient in reaching agreement on such questions.

The line that Moscow was developing publicly during the winter of 1956-1957 was not a new one. But as long as these principles had not been made explicit, they did not have a divisive effect on Soviet-Yugoslav relations. When the Hungarian revolt split the USSR and Yugoslavia, these underlying issues rose to the surface and made it difficult to repair the break. The views expressed in Moscow endorsing unity and criticizing "national" Communism probably reflected rather accurately Khrushchev's views in that period. All of the Soviet leaders obviously thought it necessary to discredit Yugoslavia in the Communist world and to isolate it from the East European satellites as much as possible. At the same time governmental relations cooled, and in February 1957 promised Soviet loans were indefinitely postponed.

Although it seems likely that Khrushchev agreed with the direction of this policy as a temporary tactic, it seems doubtful that he was responsible for the full intensity of the anti-Yugoslav campaign. This was a time when there were reports that Khrushchev was under fire within the Soviet leadership from such men as Molotov because of the apparent failure of his policy toward the satellites and Yugoslavia. Khrushchev's later policy suggests he was probably still determined to heal the breach with Yugoslavia and make another attempt to restore it to the bloc. Some of the Soviet tactics after the Hungarian revolt, however, seemed calculated to destroy the prospects for a reconciliation between Moscow and Belgrade. The polemics against Yugoslavia lasted as long as Moscow appeared seriously worried about re-establishing stability in the bloc and nearly as long

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as Molotov retained a place on the presidium. With the easing of the crisis in the bloc, Khrushchev began again to talk of better relations with Yugoslavia.

A Pragmatic Rapprochement: During the visit of Albanian leaders to Moscow in mid-April 1957, Khrushchev emphasized the Soviet desire for a restoration of good relations with Yugoslavia. He thought this could be accomplished by emphasizing points of agreement rather than differences; the latter he thought were greatest in the ideological field. Pravda echoed this theme on 2 June. This was the principle that was to guide the revival of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. Theoretical differences were ignored rather than resolved. Polemics in the newspapers of both countries came to a virtual halt. In mid-May Moscow allegedly sent a directive to the satellites advising them for the time being to improve their relations with Yugoslavia despite ideological differences.

The dismissal of Molotov from the party presidium in June 1957 was a new spur to the rapprochement. The central committee statement on the June purge of the "anti-party group" of Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich in Moscow cited Molotov's mistakes in policy toward Yugoslavia. Shortly afterward, Khrushchev made an impromptu speech in Czechoslovakia that provided a clear description of Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia.

Marxist convictions demand that we advance with all revolutionary forces. The front of the revolutionary working class must be broadened, and Yugoslavia must not be deprived of this front. So we did everything to achieve that. I consider that at present conditions are forming between us and Yugoslavia that will improve relations both between our countries and between our parties, and we will make every effort to reach complete, so to say, unity and ideological understanding and unanimity of action of the revolutionary force and Communist parties of the whole world, including Yugoslavia!... What do we want? We want unity, closed ranks, and rallied forces. We acknowledge different paths, comrades. But among the different paths, there is one general path, and the others are, as you know, like a big river with tributaries.... We must develop friendly relations between the socialist countries, between our Communist and workers' parties,

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and strengthen our socialist camp in every way. Of course, it is true that our friends, the Yugoslavs, somehow badly pronounce the words "socialist camp." However, Yugoslavia is a socialist country and this fact remains.

Khrushchev warned that the two countries should avoid criticism of each other's internal policies and he again cautioned Yugoslavia about its dependence on American aid.

The next major step in the rapprochement was the meeting between Khrushchev and Tito in Rumania early in August 1957. How much agreement resulted from this meeting is not clear; the press statement following it was vague, shedding no light on the outcome of the talks. Soviet propaganda concerning the meeting stressed the importance of the unity of aims and interests between the two countries and said that the prospects for cooperation had been improved by the ouster of Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich. The frequently well-informed Italian Communist paper L'Unita said that the two leaders discussed Yugoslavia's relations with "the socialist camp" and Belgrade's economic ties with the West. Yugoslav officials confirmed to Westerners that Yugoslavia's relations with the bloc were a subject of debate and also said that there were differences over the statement issued at the conclusion of the meeting.

Later, Khrushchev (in a 3 June 1958 speech in Sofia) claimed that the Bucharest meeting left certain ideological questions unsettled. He asserted, however, that the Yugoslavs agreed to attend the November 1957 party meeting in Moscow and to participate in drawing up the party declaration there. It also appears likely that the Yugoslav agreement to recognize East Germany, announced in mid-October, was reached at the Bucharest meeting. There have been reports that the two sides agreed to avoid polemics and keep any future disagreements from becoming public. Khrushchev said in his Sofia speech that he warned the Yugoslavs that Moscow would reply to any Yugoslav criticisms of bloc countries or parties. For a considerable time after the Bucharest meeting, the two sides did avoid bitter public exchanges.

Moscow's Satellite Policy: Soviet policy toward the Eastern European satellites has been a major determinant of Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia. Khrushchev's liberalization of controls over the satellites made possible the original rapprochement with Tito; the Hungarian revolt caused the first breakdown in relations with Belgrade; and the effort to intensify controls in the satellites has been a primary cause of the most recent breakdown.

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While the USSR had been trying to establish stability and unity in the satellites ever since the Hungarian revolt, the most formal and important step taken in that direction was the November 1957 conference in Moscow. On this occasion, the USSR succeeded in winning bloc-wide acknowledgment of the necessity of bloc unity. Moreover, it created the precedent for similar meetings in the future--such as that held in May 1958--as a technique for ensuring unity. At that time, also, the preliminary decision was taken to publish a theoretical journal--although it did not appear until August 1958. While the USSR would probably have preferred a more formal organization, this apparently was resisted by some Communist parties; a series of ad hoc meetings, however, should serve most of Moscow's purposes.

Marshal Tito's decision not to attend the November conference in Moscow and the Yugoslav refusal to participate in talks on the 12-party declaration or to sign it undermined the newly reborn Moscow-Belgrade rapprochement. At the East German party congress in Berlin (on 11 July 1958) Khrushchev said the Yugoslavs had seen an advance copy of the party declaration. The Yugoslavs have recently confided that this draft was so bitterly anti-Western that at the time they realized they could not possibly sign it, since this would commit them completely to the bloc. There is some evidence that the Soviet Union subsequently modified certain formulations for the benefit of the Yugoslavs, but these modifications were nullified by Mao's proposals at the November meeting which were unacceptable to the Yugoslavs. There were also rumors that Soviet leaders had revised a speech Tito proposed to make in Moscow, which so provoked the Yugoslav leader that he refused to attend. Whatever the reason for the Yugoslav abstention, the apparent lack of Soviet interest in negotiating revisions in the declaration to suit Yugoslavia indicates how much greater was the priority Moscow attached to solidifying bloc unity. The dismissal of Marshal Zhukov on his return from Yugoslavia shortly before the Moscow conference had also increased the friction between Moscow and Belgrade.

The Soviet position on intrabloc relations was spelled out in Khrushchev's speech on 6 November and in the 12-party declaration of 22 November: unity and agreement on fundamentals are essential within the bloc. The variations to be permitted are in the details of executing policy. The Soviet Union, with the help of "other socialist" countries, has already established the "high road to socialism." For each country to start looking for "some kind of completely new, artificial road to socialism" would play into the hands of the imperialists who are trying to promote divisive theories of "national Communism." "Revisionism" is the greatest danger in the bloc, although in some bloc parties dogmatism may be a more pressing problem at a given time. Intrabloc

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relations are based on equality, independence, noninterference in internal affairs, and mutual aid. All "socialist" countries must accept certain basic laws, including the leadership of the Communist party, public ownership of the basic means of production, gradual socialization of agriculture, and "proletarian internationalism." All the signers of the Moscow Declaration also accepted the pre-eminence of the USSR in "the socialist camp."

Following the November 1957 meeting in Moscow the USSR intensified its efforts to keep the satellites in line, and its propaganda line reflected strong concern with the problem of "revisionism." Several of the satellites stepped up their efforts to collectivize agriculture, and in April Kommunist urged that these efforts be further intensified, especially in those satellites which are furthest advanced in socialization. The Soviet bloc Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA) met in December and held a high-level meeting in May as the USSR sought to effect an increase in economic integration and industrial specialization in the bloc that would serve political as well as economic ends. A meeting in May of bloc party and governmental leaders also appeared aimed at achieving greater political unity in the bloc. There were a series of visits within the bloc by various bloc leaders, including Khrushchev-- who went to Hungary in April, to Bulgaria in June, and to East Germany in July. In June the execution of Nagy et al and reports of subsequent trials in Hungary provided even stronger evidence of Soviet intentions to impose conformity on the bloc. Even if the Hungarian trials are not duplicated elsewhere, they have served as a stern warning to other Eastern European states. The bloc is likely to continue holding more frequent consultations, as the USSR seeks to minimize political and economic controversy among the satellites and to obtain recognition of Soviet hegemony in principle.

Period of Watchful Waiting: From the November 1957 conference in Moscow until the Yugoslav party platform was published in mid-March 1958, Soviet-Yugoslav relations appeared to be at a standstill. There were no major steps toward improving relations, such as high-level visits or publicly announced agreements-- although on international questions the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry appeared to echo every Soviet position. On the other hand, there were no outbursts of polemics. The Soviet press and radio studiously ignored Yugoslavia's--a tactic which Tito finally complained of in mid-March.

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Khrushchev's remark, however, at the East German party congress, that the bloc parties "drew their own conclusions" from the Yugoslav behavior at the time of the November conference is supported by other reports*. Khrushchev clearly set great store by the November conference, and by Yugoslav participation in it. He had tried patiently but unsuccessfully for well over two years to bring Tito back into the bloc, even to the point of risking the unity of "the socialist camp." The November meeting accordingly represented the culmination of all his long-drawn-out efforts, and he apparently had had reason to believe from Tito's assurances in Bucharest three months earlier that Yugoslavia would participate in some way in the bloc declaration. Thus, his disappointment was the more extreme and, as indicated by his reported remark to Kardelj, his attitude toward Yugoslavia perceptibly hardened. Tito's unwillingness to abandon his independence and either join the bloc on favorable terms or break his links with the West was not clear. Tito's reluctance to forego Western aid was particularly offensive to Khrushchev, and Pravda's emphasis on it as an issue when the break occurred in May 1958 suggests that it was one of the major reasons for Soviet frustration with Yugoslavia. The announcement in December that Yugoslavia would not receive further military aid was only a limited concession because it did not apply to economic aid.

Despite the hardening in the Soviet attitude toward Tito which resulted from the events in November, the Soviet leaders were determined to learn from Stalin's mistake of 1948 and avoid making a martyr of Tito. Soviet-Yugoslav relations were to continue with correct but cool formality until some Yugoslav initiative should present the Soviet leaders with a suitable excuse to make an open break.

The Yugoslav Party Congress: The party congress and particularly its preliminary draft program provided the chance for which the Soviet leaders had been waiting. Moscow could not ignore the congress; it was forced to either send a delegation or boycott it. Moreover, if it decided on a boycott, other members of the bloc must be prevented from attending in order to maintain bloc unity. Moscow therefore criticized the Yugoslav draft party program, not only because it challenged the Soviet gospel but because a public justification of the boycott was required.

* According to [redacted] when Kardelj and Rankovic went to Moscow without Tito and were unwilling to sign, despite earlier assurances they were cold-shouldered by the other delegates. Finally, Khrushchev saw Kardelj alone and told him "All right, it's your decision, but if that is your decision then we are going to attack you."

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Yugoslavia released the party program on 13 March. On 5 April Moscow privately informed Belgrade that no Soviet delegation would attend the party congress, but not until 18 April did the Soviet Kommunist article criticizing the Yugoslav party program appear. Prior to that date there was no public Soviet comment. In the interim, however, Moscow, and some of the Eastern European parties engaged in private negotiations supposedly aimed at obtaining modifications in the Yugoslav program. Khrushchev met with the Yugoslav ambassador on 15 April apparently to discuss the program. On 17 April the Yugoslavs announced some modifications, apparently intended to meet some of the Soviet party's objections and perhaps those of other Communist parties, particularly in the area of foreign policy and in references to the Soviet and Western blocs. Some of the points Kommunist criticized had been revised by the Yugoslavs on the previous day. Kommunist had gone to press on 15 April. Possibly the Yugoslavs had already offered these revisions in private talks with the Russians, only to have them rejected as inadequate. The Kommunist article did include expressions of hope that the Yugoslav congress would make changes in the program, but it is unlikely that Moscow at that point expected Belgrade to retreat.

Intensification of the Controversy: In order to estimate the present objectives of Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia, it is necessary to survey briefly the developments following the Belgrade congress in May 1958. On 5 May the Chinese Communist party newspaper, People's Daily, printed a sharp personal attack on Tito, echoed verbatim the following day in Pravda, that labeled the Yugoslavs reactionaries and called the 1948 Cominform resolution basically correct. The Soviet party central committee probably discussed Yugoslavia during a plenary meeting on 6 and 7 May, although this was never admitted publicly. On 9 May Pravda sharpened the attack, clearly threatening to stop aid to Yugoslavia and warning that state relations could not improve if party relations deteriorated. The Soviet party reportedly sent a letter to the Yugoslav party stating that it was up to Yugoslavia to change its independent policies if relations were to be improved. On 11 May Belgrade announced that Voroshilov had canceled a previously scheduled visit to Yugoslavia, and on 27 May the USSR announced a five-year postponement of its program of credits for Yugoslavia.

On 3 June in a speech to the Bulgarian party congress Khrushchev broke his curiously long silence on the Yugoslav dispute and for the first time savagely attacked the Yugoslav regime. Seeking to overcome any impressions of intrabloc differences on Yugoslav policy, he called the Chinese and other

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bloc criticisms of Yugoslavia fully justified. He echoed Peiping's description of the 1948 Cominform resolution as fundamentally correct and maintained that the Yugoslav party platform represented a fundamental revision of Marxist-Leninist theory containing insulting appraisals of bloc parties. Khrushchev asserted, however, Moscow's continued interest in party contacts with Belgrade if the Yugoslavs yielded on points of ideology, and if party relations were impossible, the USSR would still "develop normal relations with Yugoslavia on the state plane."

In speeches on 11 and 12 July in Berlin and Moscow, Khrushchev again emphasized that the dispute with Yugoslavia was an ideological one involving Belgrade's attempt to split "the socialist camp" with its "revisionist" theories. He avoided any threat of breaking state relations and tried to rebut the charge that Moscow had used the withdrawal of aid as pressure on Belgrade. He insisted that the suspension of aid followed naturally and necessarily from what was in effect Yugoslavia's formal withdrawal from "the socialist camp." Except for certain underdeveloped areas, the USSR could not afford to aid nonbloc countries, although it always welcomed mutually profitable trade.

In the light of the evidence of the Soviet attitude toward Yugoslavia, Soviet sensitivity to the Yugoslav party platform, which was in effect an indictment of much of Soviet policy and practice, is not difficult to explain, particularly when the Soviet party had failed to come up with a new program of its own since 1919. The Kremlin's initial criticism was much more restrained, however, than what subsequently appeared in the USSR and other bloc countries, and it avoided threats to damage state relations. Moreover, Moscow had originally announced Voroshilov's visit to Yugoslavia, apparently as evidence of its desire to maintain good state relations, shortly after informing Belgrade privately that it could not send delegations to the Yugoslav party congress. Many theories have been developed to explain why later bloc attacks on Yugoslavia became so intense and embittered and why Moscow then extended the party dispute into the area of state relations. While these theories have been and may yet be extensively debated, a few observations here may be pertinent.

It is possible, although extremely unlikely in view of previous events, that Moscow felt its public and private criticisms would lead to a reversal of Yugoslav policy at the party congress. When this did not occur, Moscow abandoned its restraint. It may have been that the initial restraint was merely a tactical pose of reasonableness and that Moscow intended to intensify the attack later. The USSR could have been waiting for other bloc

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members, such as China, to take the lead in order to avoid the impression that this was just a bilateral dispute. It may, in addition, have anticipated the sharp Yugoslav reaction at the party congress and felt that this would then justify a stronger Soviet line of attack. It is also possible that this dispute began to snowball into a major break because a more violent Yugoslav reaction materialized than Moscow had anticipated.

These explanations all contain some logic. While Moscow may have believed that its original criticisms would be sufficient to discredit Yugoslavia in Communist eyes and to isolate it from the satellites, there are other possible explanations for the intensification of the dispute that could have far-reaching implications.

One possibility is that Khrushchev was under pressure from other Soviet leaders to break more completely with Tito. Khrushchev was personally associated with the policy of rapprochement with Yugoslavia from the beginning. It seems likely that this fact accounts in large part for the persistence of Soviet attempts to salvage the rapprochement even after the Hungarian revolt and repeated Yugoslav refusals to join the bloc had demonstrated the failure of Khrushchev's policy. This paper has also sought to demonstrate, however, that Khrushchev's views on Yugoslavia's relations with the bloc were sharply at variance with Tito's and that Khrushchev became increasingly disillusioned with Yugoslav policies. It seems probable, and his subsequent statements reinforce the view, that Khrushchev himself considered it necessary to attack the Yugoslav party platform and to brand Tito as an ideological heretic. He may have been reluctant to make a complete shift in his policy, however, and to force any more of a break with Yugoslavia than was necessary to save the satellites from contamination by Belgrade. Some of the shifts in Moscow's tactics during this period could have resulted from differences inside the Kremlin, not over the basic direction of policy toward Belgrade but over how far it should be carried. Khrushchev's more recent speeches, which have avoided some of the clear implications of a break in state relations evident earlier, may mean that Khrushchev won a victory for a compromise position. It certainly appears that, whatever disagreements he may have encountered over Yugoslav policy, Khrushchev maintained political authority in Moscow.

The harshness of Chinese attacks on Yugoslavia and the fact that several specific charges against Belgrade were made by Moscow only after they had been made by Peiping have led to speculation that Chinese pressure resulted in the intensification of the Soviet attack on Belgrade. Here again, there is so much evidence

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of growing Soviet disillusionment with Yugoslavia that Chinese pressure is not necessary to explain the original Soviet decision to attack the Yugoslav party platform. It can be argued that the promptness with which Moscow reprinted Chinese criticisms of Tito, and Khrushchev's public endorsement of the Chinese attacks as just, indicate some coordination of Sino-Soviet treatment of the dispute with Tito. It is possible, that Moscow preferred to have the sharpest attacks come from other members of the bloc. However, the Soviet leaders may not have anticipated the degree of savagery of the Chinese attack, which seems most plausibly prompted by Peiping's own domestic concern since the spring of 1957, with the dangers of "revisionism." To preserve appearances of unity, then, the Kremlin may have had to intensify its own position but, after the point had been made and it was possible to discuss the situation at length and with calmness, again obtained agreement for its more restrained line.

Even though some such Chinese pressure is plausible it does not seem reasonable to assign to China a major role in changing Soviet policy in this area of concern. Even less likely is a combination of theories in reports emanating largely from Warsaw: that Chinese leaders plotted jointly with Khrushchev's opponents in the Soviet leadership to force a change in his policy toward Yugoslavia. The Chinese went out of their way in November 1957 to praise a cluster of Khrushchev's policies, and in the following May to approve his past efforts (with which they had been associated) to effect a rapprochement with Yugoslavia.

One further explanation is that the reluctance of some East European parties, particularly the Polish and to some extent Hungarian parties, to join in the attack on Yugoslavia led Khrushchev to believe that he must intensify his attack on Belgrade in order to accomplish his purposes in the satellites. This paper has sought to demonstrate that Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia is inextricably tied to Soviet policy toward the satellites and that the decision to condemn the Yugoslav party platform was originally taken to undermine Tito's standing in Eastern Europe and to assure that the satellite parties would boycott the Yugoslav congress as well as cut party ties with Belgrade. The condemnation of Yugoslavia represented, above all, an increase in pressure on Poland. Poland was slow and cautious in joining the criticism of Yugoslavia. Moscow and Peiping may both have felt that, as a result, it was necessary to take a more rigid stand, and to make the condemnation of Yugoslavia so strong that Poland would not dare to try to find a middle ground on which to stand.

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In this connection, too, the harsher line adopted by the Chinese against Tito would demonstrate once and for all to the Poles that they could not hope to play off China against the USSR in order to get support for their own position within "the socialist camp."

The USSR did not begin to break with Yugoslavia until it was evident that the policy of winning that country back into the bloc had failed. The criticisms of Yugoslavia were not made with the primary hope of winning Yugoslavia back, therefore, nor in the hope of crushing the Yugoslav party. Rather they were designed to preserve intact what Moscow still had in the bloc. There were probably private debates between Moscow and Warsaw that revealed more clearly to Khrushchev than any public disputes how necessary it had become to tighten discipline in the bloc. (The substance of his talks with Gomulka in January are still not known.) The Hungarian executions are the strongest proof that such discipline seemed necessary to Moscow. If the Yugoslav situation is placed in proper perspective as part of the broader satellite problem, and the dangers of Polish non-conformity are kept in mind, the intensification of the attacks on Yugoslavia appears to have been motivated primarily by an increasing struggle to assert Soviet authority over the satellites.

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CONCLUSION

At the end of July Khrushchev traveled to Peiping for talks with Mao Tse-tung and on 3 August 1958 the two issued a joint communiqué which proclaimed that

The unshakable unity of the two Marxist-Leninist parties will forever be the reliable guarantee of the triumph of our common cause.

The Communist party of the Soviet Union and the Communist party of China will unflaggingly guard this sacred unity, will fight for the purity of Marxism-Leninism, will uphold the principles of the Moscow Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties and will wage an irreconcilable struggle against the chief danger of the Communist movement, revisionism. This revisionism has found clear expression in the program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

Following this statement of common purpose by the leading members, and despite its emphasis on ideology, i.e., "revisionism," bloc policy toward Tito soon began to shift from ideological attack to criticism in general of Yugoslavia and its policies. By the end of the summer of 1958 the Sino-Soviet leaders may well have felt that their ideological attacks were becoming counterproductive. Rather than direct attention specifically to Yugoslav theory, they decided to move into the next phase of the campaign: coordinated political and economic pressure on Tito for the purpose of further weakening his position and influence at home and abroad.

The USSR, Communist China, and Albania undertook the initial moves. Moscow restricted the distribution of Yugoslav publications in the USSR, vacillated regarding promised shipments of wheat and coal to Yugoslavia, and attacked Belgrade for alleged discrimination against Soviet citizens in customs procedures. The Chinese "relieved" their ambassador in Belgrade, and, according to the Yugoslavs, began to boycott Yugoslav ships and ports. Albania renewed its old tactics of diplomatic protests and retaliation for alleged mistreatment of its nationals in Yugoslavia. Bulgaria joined Albania by reopening attacks on Yugoslavia's "chauvinistic" policy in Macedonia. The other satellites, except for Poland which was relatively inactive, have contributed varyingly to the anti-Yugoslav campaign.

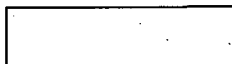
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Thus the lines were drawn again for isolating Yugoslavia from any participation in the affairs of "the socialist camp:" But in 1958 there was to be none of the 1948 Stalinist heavyhandedness. Khrushchev had told the East German party congress in Berlin on 11 July that "we must not devote more attention to Yugoslav revisionists than they are worth," but he wished to "preserve some spark of hope and to search for acceptable forms of making contact on certain questions" with the Yugoslavs. Subsequently, however, while maintaining that they wished to conduct correct state relations with Belgrade, the USSR and other bloc countries were trying to impose an effective quarantine on Tito by a campaign of harassment and irritation.

The Yugoslavs, in the meantime, sought to give the impression of a reasonable attitude, commenting publicly and quickly on bloc discriminatory practices and stoutly asserting the correctness of their own policies.

By the end of September 1958 it appeared that this stalemate could continue indefinitely. Each side had its own reasons for avoiding an open break: Moscow and Peiping wished to destroy the influence of Titoism in the satellites but did not care to make Tito a martyr again; Tito did not wish to lose whatever influence he still had in Eastern Europe and, as a Communist, was not anxious to cut himself off from the bloc. Perhaps the best commentary on contemporary Yugoslav - Soviet bloc relations was the 29 September Borba report that the Chinese Communist Embassy in Prague had recently asked the Yugoslav ambassador there to return his invitation to a Chinese party for "correction." The only correction made, according to the Yugoslav newspaper, was to change the address from "comrade" to "mister." "And so," concluded Borba, "at the last minute, a dangerous rightist deviation was avoided and at the same time another decisive blow was delivered to revisionism."



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