

RADIO FREE EUROPE *Research*

COMMUNIST AREA

2

• Soviet-Czechoslovak
relations

Yugoslavia: Foreign
relations

18 July 1968

"BORBA" WARNS AGAINST "DIRECT INTERFERENCE" IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Summary: In an editorial comment published on July 17 Borba said that any form of direct interference in Czechoslovakian internal affairs by other Communist countries "would deal an irreparable blow to progress and peace and would strongly compromise the socialist countries." Borba advised Communist leaders in East European countries to free themselves from ideas which preach the justification of direct interference in the affairs of other countries. Any such interference would be a major blow to the international Communist movement and to socialism in general.

No Communist country is allowed to violate "principles of socialist internationalism" and interfere in internal affairs of other countries. This is the gist of an editorial comment published recently by the Belgrade daily Borba.¹ The author of the article, Vlada Teslic, highly praises Tito, who has given his full support to the Czechoslovak leaders. Tito's line is the line of the Yugoslav Party, working class and people, Teslic says. He reminds his readers of the fact that "Comrade Tito recently told Comrade Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders in Moscow what our views have been concerning the events taking

¹ Borba, Belgrade, 17 July 1968.

place in Czechoslovakia; Tito emphasized that we regard with confidence the efforts made by the Czechoslovak Communist Party, working class, and people aimed at further developing socialism in their own country."

Teslic adds that past events have proven "how correct Tito has been" to support Czechoslovakia. The recent days of the so-called "Czechoslovak crisis" have demonstrated that "such support has not only been essential, but also most urgent." Now it is up to other Communist countries to demonstrate how much they accept the principle of socialist internationalism. After stressing that the present Czechoslovak leaders are quite capable of resisting all alien attempts to undermine socialism, Teslic continues:

The socialist internationalists must especially be on guard against the idea that it is permitted and justified to take measures which would have the character of direct interference in the internal affairs of other countries, regardless of whether this is done with the excuse that the interests of socialism are being defended, in the name of socialist solidarity or unity, or in the name of alleged common defense. Was it not in the past a theme of bourgeois propaganda to ascribe to socialist countries and to the Communists in general a kind of a mania for interference?

Teslic warns that such interference has of late become a characteristic of imperialism. He adds that "any form of direct interference with and pressure upon Czechoslovakia would deal an irreparable blow to progress and peace and would strongly compromise the socialist countries, thus dealing another major blow to the international workers and Communist movement and to socialism in general." He adds:

Such interference would have extremely serious consequences for the Czechoslovak people, for great masses of progressive people in that country, for the working class and the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and eventually for the further development of socialism in that country. It is clear that this would also deal a serious blow to all other socialist countries.

The only course of action, according to Teslic, is the one which "respects the right of the working class and people to pursue their own independent course, and which shows confidence in the Czechoslovak Communist Party and in all of the socialist forces in this country."

Slobodan Stankovic