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News Background

Euro - TITO-MOSCOW FIGHT -- FIRST ROUND OVER

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MUNICH, July 7 (STANKOVIC) -- The present stage in relations between TITO and the Soviet bloc may be taken as the end of the first round in their fight. With the Soviet bloc's untiring anti-Yugoslav attacks (especially by the Chinese and Albanians) and the Yugoslav stubborn refusal to yield an inch, one can claim that the first round has ended in a draw.

Both the anti-Titoist attacks and the Yugoslav counter-attacks have turned, at least for the time being, into a "routine operation" with no new arguments in evidence. One almost gains the impression that both sides are eager to put a limit to the struggle while waiting to see what the opposite side will do next. Incidentally it appears that such a situation is more advantageous to the Soviets than to the Yugoslavs.

Why KARDELJ Is Silent?

The Yugoslav leaders have every reason to keep the "show" going so as to have the "whole world" speaking and writing about Yugoslavia. Hence it is likely that the Yugoslavs have not yet come out with all their weapons. It is enough to mention that Edvard KARDELJ has so far made no open contribution to the Yugoslav counter-offensive. Since his important April 24 speech at the seventh Congress of the Yugoslav CP in LJUBLJANA KARDELJ has neither made a single public speech nor written any articles.

(It has been assumed that at least one of the articles against the Soviet bloc published in the Yugoslav press in the course of May was written by KARDELJ, although there is so far no confirmation that the assumption is right.)

KARDELJ is without doubt Yugoslavia's number one theoretician. In the period from 1948 to 1955, with the late Moshe Pijade and the now imprisoned Milovan DJILAS, Edvard KARDELJ possessed the sharpest Yugoslav pen in the struggle against MOSCOW. This gifted pen has not yet been used by TITO this time. Why? KARDELJ is an ideologist and his articles or speeches have always been of an ideological nature. The Yugoslav leaders, however, have claimed that the conflict with the Soviet bloc is a political rather than an ideological one. Consequently KARDELJ's polemics with the Soviet bloc writers and speakers would probably create the impression that the struggle was of an ideological nature.

Yugoslavia Physically Endangered

In this connection it is significant that in the first round of the TITO-MOSCOW fight the Yugoslavs have been attempting

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directly or by implication to prove that, as was the case from 1948 on, Yugoslavia and TITO have been physically endangered and that the ideological arguments used by the Soviet bloc leaders have only been a "smoke-screen". This is, for instance, the wording used by an article in the BELGRADE weekly "Ekonomika politika" (see CNR items F-3, F-4, F-5 of July 5) which was reproduced by "Borba" of the same date. F-176

On the other hand, it is notable that even the sharpest anti-Titoist articles by the Chinese and the Albanians usually end with the claim that "in spite of everything" State relations with Yugoslavia "will remain normal".

In his July 4 speech in LENINGRAD, Nikita KHRUSHCHEV himself claimed that only a "principled struggle" against Yugoslavia would be waged. He said:

"(The Yugoslav leaders) raised a noise about alleged inference in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia, about pressure on the League of Communists of Yugoslavia on the part of Communist and workers' Parties. The Yugoslav leaders are using clumsy maneuvers and trying to prove that the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist camp are waging an organized campaign against Yugoslavia and speaking against the Yugoslav people.

"Such assertions can only be made by those who, as a Russian saying goes, 'wish to throw a shadow upon a clear day'. We have said more than once, and we are saying it again, that nobody has waged or intends to wage a campaign against Yugoslavia and its people..."

As said the Yugoslav leaders are at pains to prove that the opposite is true: that there is an "organized campaign" aimed at physical endangering Yugoslavia and the Communist regime in that country. The Yugoslav CP weekly "Komunist" was quite specific on this point in its July 3 article dealing with the 10th anniversary of the Cominform resolution of 28 June 1948.

KHRUSHCHEV's Tactic

After implying that in BELGRADE in May 1955 KHRUSHCHEV had indirectly denounced the Cominform resolution by saying that the "materials on which the serious accusations and offenses directed at that time against the leaders of Yugoslavia were based... were fabricated by the enemies of the people...", the unnamed author of the article in "Komunist" went on:

"There is little need to make a careful comparison to note the differences between two statements made by KHRUSHCHEV, i.e. between his statement made in 1955 (in BELGRADE) and the present one made in 1958 (in SOFIA). What at that time was described as 'hostile fabrications' has now become 'just criticism'. And if we bear in mind the fact that the essence of the Cominform resolution was an appeal to overthrow the leadership of the Yugoslav CP, then the claim that it was 'basically right

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cannot be understood otherwise than as approval of the practice of interference in Yugoslavia's internal affairs and Stalin's attempt to bring about a forcible liquidation of the leaders of our country..."

It was precisely this physical threat that Stalin had wielded against Yugoslavia which not only pushed the Yugoslav people completely behind TITO but also persuaded the free world to stand solidly behind Yugoslavia. Stalin, in TITO's own words (see DEDIJER's book "Tito Speaks"), had converted the Yugoslav question into a "world problem". This is exactly what TITO has now attempted to do, and this is exactly what KHRUSHCHEV would like to avoid.

The fact that Albania (the smallest satellite) and China (the largest Communist country) have gone much farther in their attacks than any other Communist country, can be explained by the fact that in the case of neither of these countries can TITO claim that they are physically endangering Yugoslavia and his regime. Albania is too small; China is too far away. Thus we see that the Yugoslav papers have not yet counter-attacked the Albanians at all, and as far as Chinese are concerned, they claim that the Chinese would like to "smoke-screen" their domestic difficulties by attacking Yugoslavia. To this official attitude the former Yugoslav ambassador in PEKING, Vladimir POPOVIC, added his own that the Chinese attacks were "an organized action which means to make pressure on Yugoslavia because of her independent, non-bloc, peaceful policy". It is well known that TITO in his LABIN speech (June 15) implied that the Chinese were "war-mongers" on a world scale.

Bulgarian-Yugoslav Border Opened

For the whole day (Sunday July 6) the frontier between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria was opened near the small town of KRIVA PALANKA, at DEVE BAIR and at CRNI KAMEN near DELCEVA with about 45,000 Bulgarians and Yugoslavs meeting on open ground without passports and visas, Radio BELGRADE and Radio ZAGREB reported. Relatives and friends got together after having not seen each other for years. Cultural and artistic programs with participants from both countries were organized, the Yugoslav radio said. It added: "Yugoslav frontier authorities were offered lunch by the Bulgarian authorities in DEVE BAIR, at which functionaries of the local Yugoslav council, of the Yugoslav Communist League and the Yugoslav Socialist Alliance, as well as of Bulgarian Government and Party representatives from SOFIA and the CHUSTENDIL districts participated. Yugoslav frontier functionaries also offered lunch to the guests from the other side of the border."

In 1957 the Bulgarian-Yugoslav border was opened for two days on August 3 and 4, only a few days after the BELGRADE daily "Borba" (27 July 1957) had resolutely rejected Bulgarian accusations that the Yugoslav leaders were "agents of imperialism within the world workers' and socialist movement aimed at liquidating Communism", as claimed by the Bulgarian High Party School Professor Petar AVROMOV in the Bulgarian youth paper "Mladezh". On the other hand, on 3 August 1957, KHRUSHCHEV met TITO in BUCHAREST.

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The present one-day opening of the Bulgarian-Yugoslav border may be explained by the new Soviet bloc tactic of trying not to worsen the State relations between the Soviet bloc countries and Yugoslavia but insisting that the conflict is of a purely ideological nature. In this way the Yugoslav thesis of Yugoslavia being physically endangered by the Soviet bloc loses its propaganda point. In other words it seems as if KHRUSHCHEV is doing his utmost to compel TITO to accept the fight as an ideological struggle. But this is all to be seen in the next round.

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