

1958

News Background

EURO

YUGOSLAV-SOVIET BLOC RELATIONS --- SIDELIGHTS

X MUNICH, June 19 -- (STANKOVIC) -- Following are a few minor items concerning Yugoslav-Soviet bloc relations.

Soviet Central Committee Rehabilitates Composers

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+70 The well-known Yugoslav writer, Marko RISTIC, deals in his regular Sunday column in "Borba" (of June 15) with the rehabilitation of several Soviet composers who ten years ago were damned by Stalin thanks to the "bad influence of MOLOTOV, MALENKOV and Beria on Stalin".

"In my (heretical) opinion", said RISTIC, "if one discusses the problem of musical criticism on the one hand, and the correction of injustices done to people on the other -- in regard to the development of music in general and the artistic standards of Soviet music in particular -- the problem is not whether Stalin had a 'subjective approach' (?) 'in appraising individual works of music works', i.e. whether this 'linguist' was a subjectivist as a musical critic; nor is it whether 'in solving these questions' Stalin was wrongly influenced by MOLOTOV, MALENKOV and Beria. The point is that it was possible for this 'subjectivist approach' of Stalin's to play such a decisive role in the development of Soviet art and in the life of Soviet artists.

"The problem is that the above-mentioned bad influence on Stalin by such 'prominent' musical critics, aesthetes and ideologists as MOLOTOV, MALENKOV and 'unforgettable' Beria, could be such a decisive factor in the solution of these problems..."

RISTIC condemns the "administrative-bureaucratic" interference of the State in the arts and rejects even Party decisions by which any artistic works is "allowed or forbidden". RISTIC then quotes a passage from the Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia stating that the State must not interfere in the cultural life of a country. For while "correcting" a previous decision and rehabilitating several composers, the Soviet leaders have not removed the root of the evil, i.e. the fact that the State and Party leaders were in a position to decide whether a musical work was good or not.

"So long as it is possible in a country", RISTIC said, "for the arts to be given 'instructions on how to develop', so long as the possibility exists of ordering whether an artistic work is to be allowed or not... the conditions for free and happy artistic creativity cannot exist..."

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Rumanians Taken as Example

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In order to prove how bad it is when State and Party authorities interfere in the cultural life of a country, RISTIC quoted recent "sharp criticism" by the Rumanian Party organ "Scinteia" of the "appearance of apolitical trends and bourgeois and cosmopolitan tendencies" of certain Rumanian writers.

Said RISTIC: "(Rumanian) poets are criticized for publishing verses in which they 'do not care about the desires of the Rumanian people'. Among these criticized poets I saw also the name of my friend of BUCHAREST, the nostalgic, gifted and loyal Geo BOGZA. Apparently BOGZA has, in vain, done his utmost, by trying to adapt himself to the circumstances, not to betray himself, even in the period when Stalin alone -- and now we have learned that it was under the influence of MOLOTOV, MALENKOV and Beria -- was solving esthetic problems, appraising artistic works and giving the tone in his well-known method. Poor Geo BOGZA! We should pray for the salvation of his sinful, apolitical, cosmopolitan, formalistic and tormented, poetic soul".

On KHRUSHCHEV's and Stalin's Methods

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The ZAGREB weekly "Vjesnik u Srijedu" (Wednesday Herald) of June 11 discussed -- under the title "The Platoon and the Soldiers" -- KHRUSHCHEV's speech in SOFIA on June 3. The author of the article, Frane BARBIERI, said that "it seems that the Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party was selected to mount a rostrum on which to show that allegedly there are no large internal problems in Bulgaria itself and to co-ordinate attacks on Yugoslavia".

After quoting what KHRUSHCHEV said in SOFIA against Yugoslavia, BARBIERI said that "the difference between (Stalin's) and KHRUSHCHEV's statements made in SOFIA perhaps lies exclusively in the epithets used. Those from 1948 were completely adjusted to the vocabulary of Stalin's theory: 'A spy gang', 'Yugoslav imperialism', etc. According to the speech made in SOFIA by the Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Nikita KHRUSHCHEV, the workers' movement is only 'a platoon of soldiers' in which 'every soldier should follow the company line'. Following this logic that platoon should have at its head a sole unimpeachable commander whom the soldiers must obey and implicitly follow. Consequently the representatives of other Parties at the Bulgarian Congress uniformly followed the platoon line' and, holding the Cominform Resolution in their hands, attacked 'revisionism' of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the 7th Congress".

BARBIERI added that to call the Yugoslav way "'defense of capitalism' and 'revisionism', as was done by certain participants at the SOFIA Congress, can be done only by somebody who wishes to subject the general growth of socialism and its moving forces operating in all countries throughout the world to outdated and limited structures and interests which have grown in the workers' movement during the last decades". In BARBIERI's opinion "nothing can better and more fully stress the value of the seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia" than the attacks made against it at the Bulgarian Party Congress.

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