The following is a translation of an article published in the Zagreb daily Vjesnik of 26 October 1968 under the title "Continuing Attacks: A Relay Race." The author of the article is Lj. Djoric.

The [Soviet] Bloc's anti-Yugoslav propaganda machinery obviously works according to a well-thought-out plan. This is best seen from the fact that no day passes without Yugoslavia being attacked, but always from a different center. It appears as if one [Bloc country] gives the baton to the others.

The baton has now been taken up by certain leaders in the GDR. Within a short four-day period there has been a full-fledged avalanche of attacks against Yugoslav internal and foreign policies in East Berlin.

But it is precisely the East German offensive which has revealed several extremely important things. First of all, it confirms the systematization in the escalation of the [Soviet] Bloc's moral aggression against Yugoslavia. It seems that East Berlin has been allotted the role of lifting the "weight" of the attacks at the top level. As if the two month long daily smear of Yugoslavia in the [Soviet] Bloc press, radio and television were not enough, according to the appraisal of the instigators of this campaign. This is why the offensive has now been joined by top Party and state leaders -- such as Walter Ulbricht -- or the most authoritative Party forums -- such as the Politburo of the SED Central Committee.

However, precisely this fact, especially the concentration of attacks against the workers' self-management system and against Yugoslavia's energetic refusal to recognize anybody's right to use force, for whatever ideological or military reason, reveals several truths which the world has to see.
The anti-Yugoslav campaign — joined now by the East German offensive, in the course of which Ulbricht has branded workers' self-management as "an imperialist conspiracy against socialism" — is a newer and more dangerous manifestation of the hegemonistic policy of the Soviet Union resisted by Yugoslavia as far back as 1948. Therefore, it is not in the least an accident that the Bloc countries have, precisely of late, by their actions, begun to allow relations with Yugoslavia to deteriorate; in the past 20 years every worsening of relations with Yugoslavia has always been proof of the strengthening of the Greater-State ambitions of the Soviet Union; it has also always reflected the resistance against such Soviet tendencies, aimed at imposing upon other states foreign will and at turning socialist states into the extended state territory of the Soviet Union, by progressive forces within the international workers' movement.

If today the Politburo of the SED Central Committee, through its member Gerhard Grueneberg, attacks Yugoslavia by claiming that "the individual functionaries of the LCY have characterized the measures of armed intervention as interference in internal affairs, which amounts to nothing more than support for the revisionist and anti-socialist forces in the CSSR and an attack against the policies of the Soviet CP, the SED and other fraternal parties" — this is yet another attempt of the [Soviet] Bloc to react to the resistance by the international workers' movement against the doctrine of conditional sovereignty and the theory concerning the inevitable existence of the two blocs.

Apart from the task of justifying the aggression against Czechoslovakia, of calming the resistance of progressive and democratic forces throughout the world against the revival of Stalinism and of diminishing the negative consequences of eventual Soviet orientation toward bilateral agreements with the United States for the reputation and prestige of the Soviet Union — the propaganda offensive being waged in the DDR against Yugoslavia is also directed at the East German public.

Walter Ulbricht insists that workers' self-management is an imperialist plot and claims that centralism is the only method by which "a socialist state could survive;" he speaks so because East Berlin is becoming ever more rigorously opposed to all domestic forces advocating democratization and liberalization; these people [i.e., the liberals in East Germany] have become aware that the experience of even the most developed socialist countries with centralistic management of the economy and society in general has demonstrated that such a centralistic mechanism cannot solve many problems imposed by the development of society, sciences and technology.

For these reasons and because of the obvious efforts made by the bureaucratic forces in the GDR to stop the inevitable trend toward the democratization of socialism, Grueneberg also attacked Yugoslavia's foreign policy concepts. In doing so he
applied the well-known method of not explaining Yugoslavia’s principled attitudes. Had he done so, Gruenberg would have found himself in the role of an accuser of the methods of trampling down the independence of a socialist country.

In answering his claim that “the existence of the Warsaw Pact is a guarantee for socialism in Yugoslavia,” we may say the following: the readiness of Yugoslavia to defend her own socialism, her own independence and sovereignty is the only guarantee for the existence of Yugoslav socialism. Yugoslavia does not recognize anybody’s right to decide whether there is socialism in Yugoslavia or not. This is especially so if such an “appraisal” is to serve as a legal basis for the application of the theory of the socialist commonwealth, because this theory means the legalization of occupation.

Instead of the equitable dialogue on all problems — including relations among socialist countries — which Yugoslavia has constantly been proposing, the tactic of armed tanks has been applied. The fact that the whole world has condemned the aggression against Czechoslovakia is yet another piece of evidence of the unacceptable of such tactics for the whole socialist world and all progressive and democratic forces.

translated by Slobodan Stankovic