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Background Report
(General Desk)

TITO'S STRONG CRITICISM OF THE SOVIET ANTI-YUGOSLAV CAMPAIGN

Using unusually strong, although general terms, Marshal TITO today implied in a speech to the First Workers' Councils Congress in BELGRADE that MOSCOW's recent "conciliatory" tactics toward Yugoslavia at the official level had been accompanied by covert attempts to defame the country's system of "workers' self-management."

Speaking before nearly two-thousand cheering delegates from all over Yugoslavia, plus guests from all Communist countries except Albania, TITO said that the Yugoslavs could no longer tolerate the "malicious" and "uncomradely" criticism from the socialist bloc.

In a twenty-minute speech whose somber tone contrasted with the optimism TITO had expressed in his Macedonian address one month ago, almost ten minutes were devoted to strong attacks on the "apologists of one particular dogmatism". Criticism of the West took up only eleven insignificant sentences.

"There can be no talk of sincere and good relations between us and certain Eastern countries" TITO said, "if they only pay lip service while on the other hand internal directives are given to Party members and to the broad masses, stating that Yugoslavia is seething with revisionism, that our country is not socialist, that it cooperates with the imperialists thus endangering socialist countries, etc. etc.."

Extolling the workers' self-management system in Yugoslavia as one "of the greatest, indeed it may be said one of the historic acts in the development of Yugoslavia's socialist social order," Marshal TITO said that this system was introduced "to replace centralistic management which was showing production down more and more."

True, TITO said, the Yugoslav system has many weaknesses, but if they are compared with the enorm positive results achieved thus far, it is clear that "our workers have passed with flying colors their test in sharing in the socialist construction."

TITO continued:

"Today, however, apologists of one particular dogmatism...deny the value of our system of workers' self-management, calling it anarchism and the like. We have not the slightest need to use Marxist theories to justify the correctness and extraordinary efficiency of our system of workers' self-management. Our system

has proved its value in practice. The results speak for themselves. Our system has simultaneously shown its own vitality in practice and the correctness of Marxist theories on the socialization of the means of production, by allowing the producers themselves to manage them. In this way truly democratic socialist relations in production are realized.

"Of course, we do not intend -- as we are often accused of doing -- to compel anybody to accept our system; but we are forced to defend it against all those who are blind and deaf to the facts in front of them, those who do not want to see reality as it is in our country. I think that our practice with its positive results is the best confirmation of the correctness of our system. These results not only evident to the immediate participants in production, i.e. our workers who run it, but are also seen and felt by our whole people, as well as in places far distant from our frontiers..."

Marshal TITO added that the Yugoslavs "do not intend to compete as to whose system is better and more democratic, since the producers themselves in all the socialist countries can judge the issue best."

As far as the Yugoslav workers are concerned, TITO said that they "have arrived at the conviction that their self-management of factories and enterprises is a great achievement which offers the best prospects for the realization of happiness and prosperity."

TITO said that "if the Yugoslav working class is satisfied with such a system of self-management -- and I am deeply convinced that it is, that our workers are prepared at any time to defend even with their lives this great achievement of theirs -- then it is really very strange that some people outside our country should be so anxious as to whether our system of workers' self-management is a good one or not. Why do these people deny the socialist character of our system? I must say that some critics outside our country are very ready to pass judgement on whether a thing is socialist or not, although some of them, many of them, are not in the least qualified to do so. I do not wish to enumerate all the absurdities written and spoken about our workers' self-management; I do not propose to refute them because this Congress and the facts about our country will give the best answer to all these absurdities. However, on this occasion I would like to recommend all those who do not believe in the results achieved under workers' self-management to come to Yugoslavia and to see for themselves..."

Marshal TITO continued: "Speaking of foreign criticism of our internal development I must say that -- judging from experience to date -- this criticism is not always well-intended and objective, but on the contrary is in most cases highly malicious. This criticism usually exploits our own criticism of certain shortcomings and then bases generalizations on it; it refuses to see the causes of possible difficulties and weaknesses, it will not

admit that our greatest difficulties have indeed come from the country, it does not want to speak of the successes we have achieved in spite of certain weaknesses. If these critics had admitted our positive achievements too, achievements which put into the shade those few weaknesses which appeared during the past seven years, then it would have been much more difficult for them to declare our road to socialism to be revisionism.

"I think it is high time to stop such methods, for everybody should mind his own affairs; above all, everybody should build socialism in the way which he knows and which best suits him, according to his own capacity..."

Marshal TITO said that other socialist countries have their difficulties and weaknesses too. "We know that they have them in great numbers but we cannot rejoice at the fact; on the contrary, we hope they can overcome them as soon as possible. What is needed is mutual support rather than destructive criticism. Given this mutual support, it would be much easier to maintain not only normal but even friendly relations between socialist countries.

"But as it is," TITO continued, the "practice of certain countries building socialism is in this respect incompatible with our desire for good relations, a desire also expressed by many leaders in those same countries."

TITO said that "this new 'comradely' criticism, as it is called today, has a very uncomradely motive. It usually begins by stressing something positive and then comes the well-known 'but' after which follows the enumeration of some of our difficulties and errors, often exaggerated and even fictitious, and the article ends with a denial of everything constructive in Yugoslavia and presents our country as a mixture of anarchism and capitalism. Is this comradely criticism? Is this the way to create confidence and friendship? Of course it is not. This method must be stopped because it does not lead to anything good for countries sharing the same aim, i.e. the achievement of socialism.

"Good relations must be based on something realistic, comrades. They must be based on sincerity and confidence. We shall not allow ourselves to be seduced by mere words while other methods are used in practice. Where would it lead us if we began to enumerate and criticize everything that is not good in other countries? Or that we do not like? Yes, there are things which should be criticized. However, it is not difficult to distinguish constructive from unconstructive and malicious criticism. It is not indifferent to us, in what light Yugoslavia is shown to countries building socialism, i.e. to the People's Democracies and to the international workers' movement in general."

TITO continued: "We request that the truth be written and said

about us, instead of positive realities being hushed up and only negative things displayed, and that in a distorted manner. I think this is the least we can request of our comrades in the countries of People's Democracy and socialism, and in other countries too. If our mutual relations are understood in this light, I am sure that they will be not only good but also lasting and useful for the whole socialist world."

In the next eleven sentences, dealing with the West, TITO said that he could not approve of Western criticism of Yugoslavia either. Such critics imagined that democracy existed only where there were several political parties opposed to each other. Instead of such parties, Yugoslavia possesses the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia, "embracing the huge majority of our people."

In the conclusion of his speech TITO said that he was sure that "it is clear to all of you that this Congress should provide a new and still stronger incentive for the further development and perfection of the workers' self-management." This should bring about an increase of productivity and a higher living standard. The concluding sentence of TITO's speech reads:

"This, comrades, is, in brief, what I wanted to tell you in the firm conviction that this Congress of Workers' Councils will make important decisions."

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