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AS-8
Tito Speaks His Mind

Birčaninova 28b
Belgrade, Yugoslavia
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Mr. Richard H. Nolte
Institute of Current World Affairs
366 Madison Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Nolte:

It has been several months since I last reported on Yugoslavia. They have been months of considerable interest:

+ There have been dramatic natural calamities: floods in Macedonia, then heavy snows and bitter cold, now new floods with winter only half-gone.

+ There has been an extensive three-month discussion of the draft for a new Federal Constitution, as well as drafts of new constitutions for the six national republics that make up the Federation.

+ There has been a considerable consolidation of local and especially district governments, with the obvious aim of paring down the country's out-size administrative-political machinery and channeling personnel and resources into production.

+ The economy has pulled out of a two-year slump. Industrial production and particularly exports rose sharply in the last few months of 1962; the net growth for the year was a cheering 7 per cent. According to the new social plan, real wages, which actually declined in 1962, are to rise about 4 per cent this year.

+ The clearing of the economic atmosphere has led to a spirited discussion of the causes of the 1961-62 recession, and of means of averting future setbacks. The old issues of centralism and decentralization figure largely in the debate; among economists at least, the decentralizers appear to have the edge at the moment.

+ There has been a drive to increase the "socialist sector" in agriculture -- both by expanding the area of socialist farms (mostly through land-buying and condemnation procedures) and by inducing more private peasants to sign cooperation pacts with socialist farms or urban enterprises. The results, in terms of production, remain to be seen.

+ Another recent social drive -- against private artisans and servicemen -- has misfired. Punitive taxation, political agitation and other pressures led tens of thousands of artisans to close their shops -- leaving their vital services unperformed and swelling the ranks of the unemployed. The regime, from Marshal Tito on down, is now in full retreat; but it is not yet clear whether many of the closed shops will reopen.

+ A "point-fixing" scandal has been exposed, involving players for various Yugoslav football (soccer) teams and betting rings in Zagreb, Belgrade and elsewhere.

+ In the field of foreign relations, Marshal Tito has spent eighteen days in the Soviet Union; Alexander Rankovic has accepted an invitation to visit Britain; Edvard Kardelj has toured the Far East; Svetozar Vukmanovic has just returned from North Africa. A Yugoslav diplomat, Momcilo Popovic, died as the result of the bombing by Croatian fascist emigres of his office in West Germany. Yugoslavia obtained a \$30 million credit from France, and has granted a \$10 million credit to Algeria.

These have been the main developments, as recorded in the press, official statements, the analyses and conversations of Western observers. Yet such is the nature of a Communist society that one cannot say that these developments accurately describe what has really been going on in the country, or what is on the minds of its leaders. A recent speech by Marshal Tito actually reveals a good deal more, both about the internal life of the country and about his own thinking. This was his address on January 23 to the Seventh Congress of the People's Youth.

This speech drew attention abroad, if at all, only because of Tito's denunciation of China's "Genghis Khan" policy and his assurances of continued good will toward the United States and other Western countries. Yet more than three-fourths of the speech was about domestic problems. The Marshal read from a prepared text, from which he departed only insignificantly once or twice; he was in no way affected by his youthful audience. (The only major interruption was set off by his mention that youth brigades would continue to build the Adriatic Highway through Montenegro; at this point a young enthusiast who was obviously a Montenegrin launched a demonstration which climaxed with the ritual singing of "Comrade Tito, we pledge unto you...") Thus, the speech to the Youth Congress must be considered a cool policy document, and an accurate reflection of Tito's state of mind in the nineteenth year of his reign as (to borrow Joseph Harsch's phrase) Yugoslavia's "king in all but title."

The greater part of the speech was devoted to two themes: the nationalities problem and culture. Tito linked the two right at the start by placing most of the blame for nationalist trends on the intellectuals:

"The phrase 'brotherhood and unity' should have outlived its usefulness by now, but it is still topical.... Among a considerable number of people socialist consciousness is developing slowly, or is hampered by external influences, by the introduction of alien conceptions into our social development.... Attempts are often made to justify such negative manifestations, to cloak various anti-socialist manifestations, under the veil and freedoms of democracy. These tendencies are particularly expressed by a small group of writers and artists; but not only by them, but also by some leaders who in their practicicism forget that they are Communists and as such have both obligations and duties to work in the

interest of the proper development of socialism in our country..."

Tito then states the official Communist theory on how the varying national traditions and capabilities are to be reconciled: "To begin to remove and finally to eliminate contradictions in a multi-national community, it is necessary to strive for the gradual development of the less-developed members of the socialist community, the achievement of the same level of development, and then the further even development of the community as a whole." Easy in theory, not so easy in practice (in Yugoslavia and many other countries since the war the gap between developed "north" and underdeveloped "south" has actually tended to increase). Tito is aware of this, and is here paying lipservice to the old formula only in order to "modify" it out of all recognition:

"This process must not develop to the detriment of the producers in the developed parts of the socialist community, which means that their standard must rise constantly. Therefore, since the development of undeveloped regions cannot go on only at the expense of producers in the developed regions, it is understood that the earnings of producers in undeveloped regions must be in keeping with their contribution to accumulation, with the principle of remuneration according to work and capability, and to the total product. Any leveling tendency here can have harmful consequences. It can bring about a loss of interest in increasing productivity, which is at a higher level in developed than in undeveloped regions.... Equalization of earnings, that is, of the standard, must go in harmony with the equalization of productivity. This process is not fast, and cannot be achieved in leaps but gradually...."

Two observations must be made about this statement. First, Tito's rhetorical style would seem to suggest that he is attempting to theorize not only for Yugoslavia but for the entire Communist movement; and indeed his argument would well serve the Russians in their original quarrel with the Chinese, which concerned whether the "socialist" countries would achieve "communism" one at a time or all together. Second, in purely Yugoslav terms, Tito is presenting in only slightly altered form the classic case which has been made by the Slovenes and Croats since the formation of the Yugoslav state, namely that the development of the "south" should not be at their expense. On the face of it, "to each according to his work" would seem an indubitably Communist formula; yet in Yugoslavia (unlike Russia) the Communist movement has derived its greatest support from the less-developed peoples. Moreover, although Tito has recognized in the last few years that the good will, skills and initiative of Ljubljana and Zagreb are essential to the proper functioning of the Yugoslav economy, he is also aware that the ultimate implication of their decentralizing position is an erosion of the role of the Communist party, the most centralized institution in the country. Therefore, after conceding the Slovenes and Croats the purely economic argument, he proceeds to chastise their political aspirations in the following manner:

"The opinion that integration is incompatible with the interests of individual republics, i.e. of nationalities, is as incorrect as

the concepts of those who consider that integration must liquidate nationalities.... Senseless, too, are the concepts of those who consider that every nation, every republic in a socialist community must have all the attributes of a single state.... There are even certain nationalist elements saying that a national republic should have its own army, currency and even foreign policy. Of course, such people have nothing in common with the socialist concept of the national question...."

So far as I can determine (and much here is simply rumor), the above reference is to (a) Slovenes, and apparently also others, who oppose Serbo-Croatian as the exclusive and uniform language of command in the armed services; (b) advocates in Slovenia and Croatia of a drastic decentralization of banking; and (c) economic and political personalities in Slovenia who have suggested that, if Austria associates with the Common Market, perhaps some of the ill effects for Yugoslavia might be mitigated by preferential arrangements between Slovenia and the Austrian border province of Carinthia.

Tito returns to the Slovenes after a disclaimer of pan-Serb hegemonism, as follows: "The hegemony of a more populous nation can also have a very negative effect on the correct development of a multinational socialist community. In a socialist society, such tendencies can have serious consequences, which are usually expressed in an aspiration for emancipation and separation. If it does not come to that, then negative tendencies can also be expressed in disinterestedness toward the community as a whole, in introspection, and the like. (These are clearly references to the Croats.--AS) Accordingly it is necessary, especially, to suppress such tendencies which have their roots in the past.... But hegemony can also be expressed in other forms, even in a nation with small population, if the nation is at a high level of economic development. Such economic hegemony has its roots in egoistic motives, in the desire to use its privileges at the expense of the less developed nations or areas.... Of course, we must energetically suppress and prevent such phenomena, not only administratively but with political work...."

Thus, the balance is drawn: "northern" economic policies, anti-"northern" rhetoric. What makes Tito so interesting a political figure is that one never knows which of the two lines is dictated by necessity, which reflects emotional conviction; the two may well be inextricably intertwined in his own mind.

Before leaving the national question, Tito attempts to calm down a long-standing controversy: "Let us take the question of Yugoslavism. There are not just a few people in the individual republics, and even among certain Communists, who find it difficult to pronounce the word Yugoslav, perhaps fearing that they would thus harm their own national or other rights. But what does the term Yugoslav mean, what in fact does it mean to be Yugoslav? Today, this means to be a citizen of socialist Yugoslavia. However, although that is clear, futile discussions occur among us, for example, on whether the Moslem people should decide on a nation-

ality. This is nonsense. Everybody can be what he feels like, and no one has the right to force a national label on him if he only feels himself a citizen of Yugoslavia. Nationality and citizenship do not contradict each other. Communists to whom this is not clear do not understand the most elementary terms of internationalism."

Tito's moderate tone and all-too-simple illustration (the old and not very serious question of Moslem "nationality") here conceal a graver controversy. Its latest eruption occurred more than a year ago, when Dobrica Cosic, a Serbian writer reputedly one of the President's intimates, argued for the subordination and eventual elimination of the national republics in the interest of creating "higher," "Yugoslav" loyalties. He aroused a storm of protest in Ljubljana, Zagreb and elsewhere, for such ideas smacked all too strongly of the pre-war Serbian hegemony. A Slovene writer answered that one was a Slovene (or Croat, etc.) first, through the heritage of centuries, and a Yugoslav only second; and that, although there was no inherent contradiction between the two identities, any attempt to do away with nationality, or create an artificial "Yugoslav" nationality, could only cause serious trouble. Cosic was forced to retreat into complicated explanations and qualifications, and his political sponsors (for everyone regarded his article as a sort of trial balloon) did not show themselves. Here Tito is trying to write finis to the controversy, abandoning the Cosic thesis while taking a dig at a few extremists on the other side -- namely, the Serb and Croat nationalists who would like the Bosnian Moslems to declare themselves one way or the other so that the territory could be partitioned between Serbia and Croatia.

One may, I think, sum up Tito's discussion of the national question in this manner: Either (1) national antagonisms in the country, and particularly in the Communist high command, are far more serious than official spokesmen and media pretend, or (2) Tito is amplifying what national antagonisms do exist in order to rally support to himself and the Communist party as guarantors of national unity. It is possible that both statements are true.

Before moving on to discuss culture, Tito referred briefly to "a tradition alien to us which has not yet disappeared... people addressing each other in a way alien to us." He declared: "I must say that I feel very hurt when a citizen addresses me with the word Gospodin (the equivalent of monsieur) because that word has a definite class meaning.... This practice must be alien to our young generation, although we do not mind at all if the older generation, from the old Belgrade circles, still use these names among themselves...." A word of explanation: Tito wants people to use the terms for "comrade," drug and drugarica. And two interesting side-lights: The official text next morning substituted "bourgeois circles" for "old Belgrade circles"; and Tito later in the speech, discussing the Cuban affair, referred to Comrade Khrushchev but could not avoid calling the U.S. President Gospodin Kennedy.

Tito began his discussion of culture by referring back to two previous remarks he had made on the subject at the turn of the year.

The more explicit of the two was his New Year message, in which he declared: "The situation in our cultural and moral-political life is not as we should like it to be.... Especially in literature and art generally there is much that is alien and incompatible with our socialist ethic, much that tries to turn the course of our development from the line defined by our revolution into another direction. These are various decadent phenomena introduced from without. We must fight against them, not always administratively but rather with political work...."

The New Year message had come, of course, barely ten days after the Marshal's return from Russia, where a new campaign against the intellectuals was already in full sway. In the period between the New Year message and the speech to the Youth Congress, a Yugoslav writer friend said: "Maybe he is just throwing some verbal crumbs to Khrushchev. Maybe he means business. But can you imagine what it is to sit and wait, when only one man really knows what will come?" In the same period, there appeared another essay by the same Dobrica Cosic which aroused great curiosity; the theme was the freedom and social responsibility of the artist, and although the piece was couched in cautious and abstract terms it was an unmistakable plea for intellectual freedom. ("I can comprehend only that art which denies and transcends existing human reality; which in the name of higher or different visions opposes any given social-historical situation; which... never assents to existing reality. For, in principle, there has never been nor will there ever be any social reality which deserves that we should perpetuate it as such.... Till this moment and at this moment there has not been and there is not in this world so much freedom, particularly not such freedom, that it is not necessary to ponder on freedom, to strive for it, to create it.... Representatives of the political system must not assume a monopoly of aesthetic and ideological intervention.... (Art) is not subject to social intervention...." The essay appeared in Telegram, January 11, and was reprinted elsewhere.)

It is difficult to see what effect, if any, this plea by Cosic had on Tito; for, amplifying his New Year remarks, he told the Youth Congress:

"I had in mind that very small number of barren intellectuals who, especially in the fields of literature, painting, the film and elsewhere, hover somewhere outside our socialist reality and who are, in the main, the carriers of negative influences from abroad. Such people are distinguished by their despondency and lack of prospects, even in a capitalist society.... These are usually people who withdraw into themselves. Everything is too vulgar and dull for them. They look upon everything from a height. They become ever more unsociable beings. They show no interest in anything but their own thoughts. They do not view matters critically, but criticize events in our social life. For them, Marxism is outdated. They want something 'new' and, if they decide to write something about a certain problem, the effect is often very harmful. They get excited about foreign, decadent art and literature.

"Moreover, never before have so many translations of various cheap writings been published in our country. This literature has

a very bad influence on young people, especially on those who are preparing to be, or already are, writers. Can we passively watch these modern comprachicoes distorting young human souls, as in the Middle Ages, in England and elsewhere, comprachicoes kidnapped small children, disfigured their faces, and turned them into grotesque cripples in order to help them beg?

"I could quote a number of examples of the harmful role of such intellectuals who, allegedly, create only what they themselves understand, and think that those who do not understand their works are backward and ignorant. Of course, there can be no word here of any administrative intervention (This disclaimer may have been a result of the Cosic plea, for the New Year message spoke of fighting decadent phenomena "not always administratively" --A.S.). But the public must not be passive in relation to these problems. Our young people especially should strive more actively against such phenomena....

"I am not opposed to the creative search for something new, for instance, in the field of painting, sculpture and other arts, because this is both necessary and good. But I am against the spending of public money on certain quasi-modernistic works of art which have nothing to do with artistic creation, to say nothing of our reality. From the point of view of art, there are many important works in the field of modern painting, of which some are of lasting value, while others are of decorative value; but there are those works, nevertheless, which are of no artistic value whatsoever. And precisely such works are most often exhibited at our art exhibitions, and are forced on various institutions which must buy them at very high prices....

"Does not our reality supply sufficient subject matter for creative artistic activities? But the majority of young artists have been paying the least amount of attention to this reality. They escape into the field of abstract art, instead of showing our reality. The same occurs in our film production, and many films have nothing at all to do with our reality. It is the same in other fields of our cultural activities....

"I have spoken about all this several times, and I think that there has been enough talk about it and that it is now time to turn to deeds. As we undertook appropriate measures last year because of weaknesses in the economy and certain moral-political weaknesses, so we should now also take action in the field of culture. Here again it cannot be a question of a campaign, but rather of incessant political and ideological work. In some places it will be necessary also to undertake certain other measures. But any kind of 'witch hunt' would only harm the whole matter.... I have discussed it here because I would like a bolder turn to be taken in the field of culture in the direction which must be pursued by a society building socialism."

What is one to make of this extraordinary performance? Official "non-official" spokesmen (anyone who has spent time in a Communist country will understand whom I mean) offer several explanations. One suggests that Tito is mainly disturbed lest the exhibitions of Yugoslav art which now go into the Soviet bloc be dominated by

"formalist" works which, in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, etc., would be considered downright treasonable; but surely inter-governmental cultural exchange can be controlled discreetly, without public agitation. Another source suggests that Tito is still mainly angry about the award of certain high public prizes to abstract works; but this, too, can be handled more delicately. Still another ventures the opinion that Tito was trying to relieve ordinary Yugoslavs of the alleged "moral pressure" placed on them to like abstract expressionist works; yet if this is so (and I do not think it at all the case), he has merely substituted for a vague and informal "moral pressure" on the public a more distinct and formidable "moral pressure" on the intellectual community. In any event, a perusal of Tito's public statements in recent months shows that he was after the intellectuals for some time before he focused on abstract painting; and my own view is that he did so focus because such art is the weakest point in the intellectuals' self-defense. In other words, he is really after the writers (among whom I would include critics, historians, educators and some journalists as well as novelists and poets), and abstract paintings, like Saganesque novels and films, simply serve as most vulnerable targets.

Why? Elements of personal anti-intellectualism certainly enter into it, as his remarks about the "old Belgrade circles" and other passages in the speech show plainly. Since the death of Mosa Pijade, the apostasy of Milovan Djilas and the self-banishment of Vladimir Dedijer -- all in the mid-Fifties -- there have been few in Tito's inner circle willing or able to restrain or temper his own anti-intellectual instincts. My own observations here suggest that the prevalent Western image of Tito as a rather generous and cosmopolitan person, an image that springs almost entirely from Dedijer's adroit 1952 biography, may tell us more about Dedijer than about Tito himself.

Worth noting, along the same lines, is an amusing episode in a generally telling play here, The Long Life of King Oswald, by a 26-year-old Belgrade writer, Velimir Lukic. At one point (richly appreciated by the audience), the author describes the creation of an official "anti-poet," a poet who has never in fact written a single line of verse. The King, however, resentful because his subjects talked more about real poets than about himself, had photographs of himself and the "anti-poet" regularly published in the press, along with notices that the "anti-poet's" latest work had already been sold out. This simultaneously gave the King a reputation for loving poetry, and put poetry out of business....

Yet one can, I think, overrate the role of personality in such matters. There are at least two very important reasons of state which compel the current campaign in the cultural field. The first, and more important, is that the intellectuals symbolize and express the gulf which now exists between the guiding principles, concerns and tastes of the party leadership and those of the public. There is always and everywhere, probably, a certain disharmony between the state and society at large; but in this

country now, despite all the measures ("administrative" and otherwise) of the past seventeen years, the discordance between official rhetoric and social-cultural reality has reached unbelievable proportions. When Tito talks about abstract painting, for example, one might think that a small clique of abstractionists were standing in the way of a large number of serious and/or popular artists of other styles. The fact is that nearly all Yugoslav painters and sculptors nowadays (including, by the way, the Federal Secretary for Public Health) incorporate elements of abstract expressionism, and that these are the very works art-lovers here or abroad care to see or buy. The one significant exception to this trend is the interesting group of Yugoslav naifs, or primitives; but the best of these, given the cultural heritage, inevitably turn to religious subject-matter, which could hardly be of comfort to the party. Moreover, for every public prize which has somehow fallen to an abstract artist, hundreds of commissions have been given for heroic and utterly undistinguished works in the "socialist realist" genre. (The sculptures may be seen in the public squares of almost every Yugoslav town.) Official exhortation over the years has had virtually no effect, and indeed how could it? How could Tito's views on art be considered "progressive" when a generation ago Prince Paul endowed the National Museum in Belgrade with the finest collection of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings between the Louvre and the Hermitage?

The situation is, if anything, even more serious in literature. Although all sorts of hacks have been officially encouraged, the nation has failed to develop a "socialist" writer of even the second rank. Yugoslavia's most respected novelist, the Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andric, is completely a creation of the old regime (which he served as a diplomat between the wars before turning to literature during the Nazi occupation). Croatia's most important writer, Miroslav Krleza, although a pre-war Communist, is in form and substance a modernist of a familiar Central European type -- a bit dated, perhaps, by contemporary Parisian standards, but very far indeed from "socialist realism." And the country's most widely-translated and perhaps most talented younger writer, Miodrag Bulatovic, a 32-year old Montenegrin who read his first book after the war, professes as his artistic models Breughel and Chagall--estimable models, surely, but in a sense opposite to Tito's. (In The Red Cockerel, recently translated into English, the influence of Beckett is also apparent; as is a strain of religious feeling, or at least of idealism.)

As with writers, so with their audience. In the theater, one sees Tennessee Williams, Beckett, Max Frisch's Andorra, Durrenmatt's Visit; in the bookstores, Natalie Sarraute, Marguerite Duras, Camus, Herman Hesse, Angus Wilson. Russians? Only the heretical ones: Doctor Zhivago, Ehrenburg's memoirs, Yevtushenko's verse. Political books? They are often surprisingly difficult to obtain; when a friend abroad asked me to obtain a treatise on Macedonia by its Communist leader, I could not get it in any of Belgrade's five leading bookstores. (One of the bookdealers actually made a face as if to ask how he could be expected even to carry such a work.)

In short, the cultural field is a stronghold of Western influence in Yugoslav society, and that influence is more powerful than I, for one, imagined it would be. I had been prepared for such influence in Dalmatia and Zagreb; I had heard all about the effects of Austrian and Italian television on Slovenia, Istria and northern Croatia; but I had expected to find in Serbia some pull from the East. Quite the contrary: in Belgrade at least, I have been continually surprised by the persistence and the intensity of the old emotional ties to Paris, and by the eagerness to forge new ones to New York. (The situation is sometimes comical, as when I have found myself disparaging J.D. Salinger in response to Yugoslav over-praise.)

I have also been unprepared for the continued existence and -- one might almost say -- ascendancy in Belgrade of a tightly-knit, older cultivated society which has doubtless played a large role in maintaining the traditional Westernizing and liberal strain in Serbian culture. These are the "old Belgrade circles" to whom Tito referred, and although they have ensured their survival by refraining from overt resistance to the government, few of them are Communists in spirit. (It should be said, on the other hand, that I have met among the officialdom kinfolk of some of the most famous names in pre-Communist Yugoslav history, lending some credence to the rather widespread notion here that more or less the same families dominate the real life of the country no matter what the regime.) Like the ancient Greeks with their various conquerors, the old Belgrade intelligentsia, for that is what is, has not lost its own identity but has rather imparted its own coloration to the new rulers. The very night that Tito made his remarks about calling one another "comrade," there was a dinner party at which nearly all the guests were Communists, and several of them were high officials -- all of whom, without exception, addressed one another as Gospodin and Gospodja. And one hears of one of the highest party leaders, an untutored man whom few in the West would probably judge as liberal, whose wife the Belgrade intellectuals consider remarkably sophisticated and whose son a quite Western-oriented writer describes as "absolutely one of us."

Tito is up against quite a problem here. He cannot destroy this intelligentsia, for it has done nothing against him; and, moreover, the Bolshevik experience in Russia has shown that, once an intelligentsia has been destroyed or dispersed, it cannot be so easily replaced. (How many Soviet-bred Russians can one compare with Bunin, Nabokov, Stravinsky, Chagall?) On the other hand, given Yugoslavia's increasing economic integration with the West (see AS-5), the existence and, in fact, the inexorable reinforcement of a Western-oriented intelligentsia tends unmistakably to commit the country's future after Tito's passing. And this can only imply a great disillusion for Tito himself, against which he must struggle with whatever means remain possible.

I have said that the divorce between the regime and society is one of two reasons compelling a cultural offensive. The other is the anomalous role, as Yugoslavia modernizes and stabilizes, of the huge political apparatus: the League of Communists, the Socialist Alliance of Working People, the People's Youth, etc.

What are the officials and militants of these organizations to do, when the day-to-day running of the government and the economy come increasingly into the hands of trained specialists, experts, managers, technocrats? (This process is not confined to Yugoslavia, as the Kennedy and de Gaulle cabinets show.) How many party meetings, after all, can be devoted to the necessity of improving ideological-political work and cadre selection? If the party does nothing significant that is not also done by the government or economic organizations, who needs it? In Russia, neither Stalin nor his successors have satisfactorily resolved the dilemma. In Yugoslavia a decade ago, Djilas saw the problem and suggested that the party become a small "debating society" and the mass Socialist Alliance (embracing half the nation's wage-earners) be the main vehicle for political action; but we know where that line of thought led him.

Plainly, the function of a Communist party, by history and by temperament, is to "struggle." But against whom and for what? Despite the handful of terrorists abroad, the regime has no active enemies to speak of. Those who do not approve of it seem quite confident that, sooner or later and partly through their own influence, it must evolve into something more to their liking. The country's non-aligned position in world affairs inhibits any great passion in "struggles" on the international front; it is difficult to work up much enthusiasm for the Angolan rebels or the cause of North Kalimantan. Can the party struggle for industrialization? Nothing to struggle about; it is proceeding almost on its own, with Western credit and material incentives key elements in the process. Collectivization of agriculture? This particular Communist party has been through that already, in the Stalin period, and has been burned. Although (as I have indicated) a new campaign for socialization in the countryside is under way, the forms this has taken are quite different from the old ones, and the leaders seem rather determined not to allow any "struggles" seriously to compromise agricultural production.

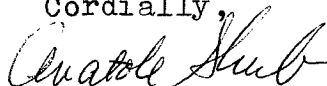
Yet the frustrated militancy of party-men must somehow be assuaged, their self-doubts removed, their energies employed; and what easier outlet than a campaign against the intellectuals who not so much by their actions as by their very existence question the need in this country for a regime very different from those of Austria or Italy? All sorts of puritan, philistine and autocratic impulses can easily be indulged with little danger to the country's position in the world.

Nevertheless, it is not at all certain that the campaign will go so easily, although it may result in a fewer imports of Western erotica, a few less Hollywoodish Yugoslav films, a few less official prizes for abstract painters, and the like. The "discussion" of Tito's speech has been on two weeks now, and although everyone is publicly expressing agreement in general terms, already the signs of resistance (expressed through "interpretation") are quite plain in rather high Communist circles. At a meeting of the Central Committee in Croatia, and in the newspaper Kommunist, there have been calls for more informed esthetic criticism coupled with reminders that the 1958 party program pledged freedom of artistic creation, that the new draft Constitution pledges full autonomy

for cultural institutions, etc. Komunist's article said flatly that "masterpieces in art have not been created as a result of any directives," and concluded that all these questions "are of such a nature that they require more thorough analysis.... Accordingly, the need should be borne in mind for a theoretical study of these problems which would avoid any tones of campaign-like superficiality." Or, as the Eisenhower Administration would have put it, let's appoint a commission.

It will be interesting to see, in the weeks ahead, how far this campaign goes, and how long it lasts. The "old Belgrade circles" do not yet seem very disturbed. As for the People's Youth, it will be interesting to see how much hostility to "alien, decadent influences" can be mustered among girls who model their dress and hairstyles on Brigitte Bardot and Jackie Kennedy, and among boys who like them just that way.

Cordially,


Anatole Shub