

YUGOSLAVIA'S RETURN TO LENINISM

Notes on the Tenth Congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists

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After more than two years of major and often dramatic changes in leaderships and policies, a Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia assembled in Belgrade May 27-30, 1974. Its object was to survey and endorse the results and to declare *urbi et orbi* that what a Belgrade newspaper in 1971 called "Yugoslavia's most serious postwar political crisis" is over and that the regime and system are stable and back on their still different but again course-corrected high-road to socialism.

Personally initiated by President Josip Broz Tito himself in December 1971,¹ the purges and policy changes which have now been approved by the Party in Congress are tantamount to a Titoist coup against the system which the Western world calls "Titoism" but which had lately evolved in directions that seemed to him and others of its guardians to be undermining both the unity and the socialist character of the Yugoslav community of nations.

The Tenth Congress of the League of Communists thus signifies more than a merely chronological transition from the third to the fourth decade of Yugoslavia's restored existence as a state, of its Communist regime, and of the reign of Tito, at 82 the doyen of world communism, head of the Yugoslav Party since 1937, and father of the country that he and his Partisans refounded during

the Second World War. It also marks the end of a clearly definable historic chapter, coincident in duration with socialist Yugoslavia's third decade, which began with a series of bold experiments in further economic and political liberalization and ended with serious economic problems and a political crisis.

The basic outline of the new course is clear enough, both in the proclamations of the Congress and in a new state Constitution adopted three months earlier.

Yugoslavia is to return to stricter control by a re-centralized and once again disciplined Party. The Party's right to "intervene" in decision-making and selection of officers by enterprise and communities, which was denied and called outdated and pernicious by many of those purged since 1971, has been explicitly reaffirmed. Within the Party itself, whether or not there will be more genuine participation "from the bottom upward" in making policy and more genuine workers at all levels, both of which have once again been promised, the other and more commonly observed side of "democratic centralism," which is obligatory, unqualified acceptance and active implementation of policies and directives issued by higher Party bodies, is to be strictly enforced again, with passivity as punishable as opposition. "Liberalism," "spontaneity," "pluralism," and "the federalization of the Party" are categorically condemned. The advantages of an almost uncontrolled market economy, so uncritically accepted in the later 1960s that one was reminded of nineteenth century Manchester school liberalism, are being subjected to critical re-evaluation. The state may continue to "wither away," as

1. For this beginning and its background, see the present writer's four-part series, *Crisis in Croatia* [DIR-4,5,6,7-'72], Fieldstaff Reports, Southeast Europe Series, Vol. XIX, Nos. 4-7, 1972.

more of its functions are transferred to the sector described as "direct social self-management" by "organizations of associated labor" in collaboration with "self-managing interest communities," but the Party will not. In brief, Yugoslav socialism will continue to be based on autonomous enterprises and communes and "social self-management," but with firm Party direction and more economic planning.

It is noteworthy that the name of Vladimir Ilich Lenin has been invoked more frequently at the Tenth Congress and during the months that preceded it than has been customary in Yugoslavia for many years. This, to use a popular Marxist phrase, "is not coincidental." What is happening here represents a conscious and explicit attempt to return to Leninist principles of Party organization and Leninist doctrines concerning the role of the Party during the transitional period called socialism.

Therewith the wheel of Yugoslav Marxist theory in at least one key sector has come, if not full circle, most of the way around. In the beginning, which for Yugoslavia means 1945, there was Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism. By 1950 Stalinism had been forcibly ejected from this original ideological trilogy. Lenin remained and was important, but primarily and almost exclusively for one work, which was and still is largely ignored in the Soviet Union: his *State and Revolution*, the central thesis of which provided workers' councils and other early Yugoslav deviations from the Soviet pattern with justification. Meanwhile, although it was never said so openly and while icons of Lenin remained obligatory, the new Yugoslav concept of the Party as an ideological and moral mentor but no longer a political monopoly, a concept formally accepted at the Yugoslavs' Sixth Congress in 1952 and taken seriously in the later 1960s by some of those who have now been purged, was an implicit rejection of the central doctrine of Leninism as a political methodology. So too, was a less premeditated transition from a "cadre" to a mass party. For the Yugoslavs, Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism as a set of normative principles had in effect if not declaratively lost both its hyphenations and only an eclectic variant of Marxism remained.

Now the Tenth Congress has officially sanctified what Tito has been trying to do by *coup de main*

since the end of 1971, which is to restore the first of these hyphens. It is in this context that particular significance should be attached to Tito's statement, on three separate occasions since that watershed date, that the "rot" in Yugoslavia is not of recent origin but began with the 1952 Congress.

"The League of Communists," Tito said as he opened the first plenary session of the Tenth Congress on May 27, "has once again demonstrated its strength by overcoming, in the struggle for the unity, the monolithic character, and the purity of the Party, all those elements which had denied the leading role of the League of Communists in Yugoslavia."

"The leading role of the Party" is a key phrase, to which recent events have ascribed a new—or more accurately an older—and stricter meaning.

This, however, is not the whole story, and what precisely the new course will mean for Yugoslav worker-managers, intellectuals, and socialist entrepreneurs thus remains unclear, both in intent and in outcome. Authoritative speakers and documents at the Tenth Congress and during preparations for it repeatedly insisted that there will be no return to the bad old days of absolute Party dictatorship, centralism, and a command economy. Such a return, it is said, would not only be ideologically and politically undesirable—since the rationale and purpose of the return to Party rule is more self-management, not less—but also impossible at the present, relatively advanced stage of socioeconomic and political development and diffused decision-making. In any case, while Tito, his new lieutenants, and the Congress may propose, a more complex equation of social forces will dispose, and even the Party is not as united about the quantity and quality of optimal intervention as the carefully prepared performance at the Tenth Congress was designed to demonstrate.

At the Congress

The scene, like the event, was in part familiar and in part different.

Jamming the parking lot were the same serried ranks of well-polished Mercedes, mostly black and mostly new, which have characterized at least the last four quinquennial congresses, bringing cynical

smiles or puzzled frowns to the faces of foreign observers still naive enough to imagine that communist ethics or discretion should discourage such ostentation. The physical setting itself, however, was new. In place of the pretentiously austere "early-socialist" trade union hall on Marx-Engels Square in downtown Belgrade, site of all previous postwar Party congresses in the federal capital, the 1974 meeting was held in a strikingly modern sports center out near the Pančevo bridge, a polychromatic building of prefabricated and precast concrete structural elements completed last year for a world boxing championship. An official hand-out describes the "Pionir Sports Palace" as "lavish architectural sculpture...[which] marks the reaffirmation of colour as an element which had been virtually neglected in Belgrade architecture since the era of the Art Nouveau or Sezession style." Whether moving the Party Congress to such a structure has symbolic significance is a matter of conjecture, but the explanation offered by press spokesmen was that the sports palace has a far larger parking lot. There are apparently even more Mercedes than there used to be.

The delegates milling about in the corridors presented the usual picture of the usual mixture of self-confident professional politicians (metropolitan easily distinguishable from provincial), self-important intellectuals and managers, and self-conscious members of the working class, including the obligatory half-dozen peasants in homespun shirts and *opanke*, traditional Serbian shoes with turned-up toes. Published statistics on the social composition of the Congress proudly noted, however, that this time there were fewer representatives of the first two and more of the last of these socialist estates. In addition, it seemed to some of us that there were more uniforms of the Yugoslav People's Army than at earlier congresses, reflecting the more powerful role of the Army in politics which has now been formalized in amendments to the Statutes adopted at the Congress and in the new Constitution.

Congressional procedures and rituals also followed traditional patterns, beginning with the ceremonial entrance of Tito and his "closest collaborators," while the delegates applauded and chanted "Tito-Party," and the singing of "The International" by the Branko Krsmanović and Ivo-Lola

Ribar Youth Choruses, 150 voices from a high balcony creating an incongruous impression of a heavenly choir. (This time, however, we did not have the Young Pioneers, school children in white with red neckerchiefs, who swarmed down the aisles during the singing of "The International" at the Ninth Congress, throwing red carnations to the delegates.) The opening plenary session then continued in time-honoured sequence: greetings to visiting delegations (representatives this year of 98 "communist, workers", and other progressive parties and national liberation movements"), routine appointment of a "working presidency" and other Congress committees (no additions, discussion, or dissent), nonreading of book-length reports on the work of the Presidency and other Federal Party bodies since the last Congress (texts already distributed), and keynote speech by Party President Tito (only excerpts lasting about an hour read this time, a token of respect either to his age or to our patience; the text of 82 pages had already been distributed). The rest of the first day, after lunch, was devoted to a plenary discussion based on the reports and Tito's speech.

Then came two days of discussion in five commissions, where rank-and-file delegates judiciously interspersed with more authoritative spokesmen have their say and are often outspokenly critical of political and economic performance and even of the details, if never the principles, of policies. The last day, as always, was devoted to another plenary session following a prescribed ritual: reports from the commissions are heard and approved, resolutions are adopted, and new "leading bodies" are elected—all unanimously and this year invariably without further discussion. Finally, the procedure repeatedly interrupted by enthusiastic acclamations and the singing of wartime songs swearing fealty to his person and ideas, Tito was re-elected President of the Party. This time it was "without limitation of mandate" (i.e., for life), which had also happened, equally for the first time, at his re-election as President of the Republic two weeks earlier, on May 16. He then had the last, brief word of summary and thanks, and the Congress ended.

Tito's own display of energy throughout the four days was a forceful and no doubt in part calculated answer to rumors, circulated in the Western press in March and April when he postponed an official visit to Hungary and took a prolonged rest after

strenuous state visits to the Middle East, India, and Nepal, that he had suffered a serious stroke and was partly incapacitated or dying. On the first day he disdained a stool placed by the podium for the reading of his long keynote speech and then sat out the entire eight hours of plenary routine and discussion, listening intently and smoking the thin cigars which have replaced the cigarettes in pipe-shaped holders that were once his trademark. (No one else ever presumed to smoke on the floor of the Congress, an observation which led Associated Press correspondent Borislav Bošković to file a story light-heartedly suggesting that all the delegates, except Tito, were impressed by the data on lung cancer which have been front page news during an antismoking campaign currently being waged by a Belgrade newspaper.) During the next two days he granted nonstop audiences to the more important of the foreign guest delegations, and on Thursday he was back to sit through and participate in the closing plenary sessions with apparently undiminished energy. He visibly faltered only once. After the Congress adjourned, the newly elected Central Committee stayed behind for its first session, at which the new Presidium and Executive Committee are named. Tito, chairing the meeting in a more relaxed, informal atmosphere, picked up the wrong script, began reading from it, belatedly and confusedly muttered "something's wrong here," and was rescued by Executive Committee Secretary Stane Dolanc, who rushed to his side and remained there.

Novelties at the Tenth Congress included the presence of guest delegations from the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and all the East European states, only the second time in postwar Yugoslav Party history that they have come.² The Soviet delegation, headed by Politburo member A.P. Kirilenko, was honored by being listed first among the 98 guest delegations and by a decibel level of applause otherwise offered only to representatives of the Chilean and Portuguese Commu-

nist and Socialist Parties and the Italian Communist Party. But the Russian visitors were also pointedly reminded by Tito and other speakers that the Yugoslav Party's earnest desire for comradely relations was still conditional, presupposing mutual respect for the legitimacy of separate roads to socialism, the independence of each Party and each socialist state's foreign and domestic policies, the right to disagree, and noninterference.

The keynote of the Congress in foreign policy was therefore continuity, with Yugoslavia's traditional nonalignment and precarious defiance of both superpowers apparently intact. Frequent critical references to "imperialism," which means the United States, were carefully balanced by equally critical references to "hegemonism," the Yugoslav code word for the Soviet Union's behavior toward other communist regimes and parties. This could be construed as an answer to the continuing debate between those observers who speculate about links between tighter Party control in Belgrade and a swing toward the Soviet bloc and those who see the new line as at least partly inspired by a desire to preclude any appearance of instability which could be used as an excuse for foreign intervention in Yugoslav domestic affairs after Tito's departure.

Another novelty was the ubiquity of Tito's picture (which appeared even on Congress documents and the lapel badges which we all wore), of slogans referring to him, and of often hagiographic references to his person and accomplishments. To be sure, there has always been a considerable "cult of the personality" surrounding the man who is simultaneously the father of the revolution and the ultimate and sometimes apparently only guarantor of the unity and continuity of both state and system. At least since the early 1950s, however, Titoist myths and symbols have never been as exaggerated and omnipresent as they are this year, and not only at the Congress. Several explanations are possible and all may be true: competitive sycophancy designed to flatter an old man who has recently demonstrated his continuing ability to behead courtiers who displease him; deliberate manipulation of the chief symbol of Yugoslav and Party unity as part of the present campaign of reunification and retreat from confederation. It may also be a kind of unconscious reversion to magic in the face of terrifying uncertainties, a parading of icons with their intimations of immortality and divine protection and a

2. The first time was at the Eighth Congress in 1964. The ambassadors of the Soviet bloc states appeared at (and, in protest, walked out of) the Seventh Congress in 1958. All of the bloc parties were invited and the Rumanian Party demonstratively sent a delegation to the Ninth Congress of 1969, but the rest registered their disapproval of Yugoslavia's condemnation of the occupation of Czechoslovakia by staying away.

conjuring with the personification of unity and stability to frighten away the demons of divisive ethnic nationalisms, political pluralism, and foreign intrigues.

Belgradology: Missing Faces and New Ones

If Tito was omnipresent, both live and in effigy, many other familiar faces of the past decade of Yugoslav politics were missing from the Working Presidency of the Congress and from the "leading bodies" elected or confirmed at its end, although some of them were still to be seen among the delegates on the floor and occasionally at the podium during the debates. Their places have been taken either by entirely new and until recently unknown faces, often from a younger generation, or by familiar ones from an earlier period, men and women who had faded into the wings of the Yugoslav political stage sometime before 1969 and who in some cases did not imagine even six months ago that they would ever find themselves in leading posts again.

The missing included recent heads of Party and/or state from four of the six federal republics and the last three Yugoslav Foreign Ministers. The first to be removed were Miko Tripalo, Savka Dabčević-Kučar, and other Croatian leaders who resigned their posts in December 1971 and were purged from the Party three months later, accused of "rotten liberalism" in the face of separatist Croatian nationalism and a "counter-revolution." Then came the turn of Serbian Party President Marko Nikezić and Secretary Latinka Perović, their Vojvodina protégées like Provincial Party President, Mirko Čanadanović and Foreign Minister Mirko Tepavac, and others from the Party and state apparatuses of the Republic of Serbia. All of these were forced out of office beginning in October 1972, but were purged from the Party—except for Tepavac, who is still a member—only some time later, in the case of Nikezić and Mrs. Perović only at a Serbian Party Congress in April 1974, a month before the Yugoslav Tenth Congress was to meet and a delay of some significance. The principal charges in the political indictment filed against this group were "anarcho-liberalism," a preference for "technocrats" rather than workers and Party forums as primary decision-makers, and "factionalism," which in this context means what American political argot calls "cronyism," the politically

purposeful placing of political friends and protégées in key positions. Also missing for similar reasons were Slovenian and Macedonian chieftains like Stane Kavčič and Krsto Crvenkovski, tarred with both anarcho-liberalism and nationalism. Another kind of conspicuous absentee was represented by the redoubtable Koča Popović, millionaire's son and sometime *rive gauche* surrealist poet, hero of the Spanish Civil War and of the Yugoslav Partisan struggle, for many years Tito's Foreign Minister, and once the Vice-President of Yugoslavia, who resigned his official posts voluntarily after the disgrace of Nikezić, his deputy and then personal nominee and successor as Foreign Minister from 1965 to 1968.

In all, according to statistics presented to the Congress, some 143,756 persons left the Party as a result of expulsion or "deletion from the records" between December 1968 and December 1973, reducing total membership by 35,000 in the past four years, to 1,076,711. The magnitude of the decimation at the top is indicated by the fact that of 52 members of the Party Presidency whose election was confirmed at the Ninth Congress in 1969, 21 had ceased to be members by the time the Tenth Congress convened. Two of these had died. Eight had resigned under attack for serious deviations, and seven of them had lost their Party memberships. The remaining eleven left the Presidency for what can be called technical reasons, including a 1972 decision that members of Yugoslavia's collective State Presidency should not at the same time be members of the Party Presidency, a change of rules affecting six of them, and other appointments, like ambassadorships abroad, which are not formally incompatible with membership in the Presidency. None of this last group was formally disgraced and many are certainly still in favor, but changed rules for dual appointments or an ambassadorship did provide a convenient device for getting rid of men like Crvenkovski, who were for some reason not quite purgeworthy but whose presence in a powerful place was no longer desirable.

Those who have replaced the banished leaders are a significantly mixed lot, in background, in age, in previous ideological-political position insofar as this is known, and in ability. Only two generalizations can be made. The first is that the median level of native political talent which they have so far displayed is lower than that of their predecessors,

although many have considerable ability as specialists, for example in economics. The second is that almost all, including the most talented, are considered by their fellow Yugoslavs to be *poslužni ljudi* (retainers, or "in-service people" in the British idiom) and not "their own men" with an autonomous power base, which their predecessors often were. In age and previous experience they tend to fall into two groups, as already noted: young and entirely new to Federal politics or to senior decision-making posts in general, or over 55 and veterans of an earlier period whose political lives were considered finished some years ago. The average age of the new, 12-member Executive Committee, for example, is 51 years. Its youngest member is 40 and its oldest is 56. Three of them did not participate in the 1941-45 Partisan struggle and only four were in the Party and the Partisans in 1941, which used to be a kind of union card for jobs at the top of the state or Party hierarchies.

From Zagreb come people like Jure Bilić and Milka Planinc, selected from the internal Croatian opposition to Tripalo, Dabčević-Kučar, and the Croatian "national movement" before the purges of December 1971. Although they had opposed those they replaced on questions of political strategy and on the key issue of Croatian nationalism, the new Croatian team's record on the subject of economic and political reforms was just as liberal, and there are few signs beyond dutiful repetition of the new rhetoric that they have changed their minds since 1971 about anything except the again admittedly key subject of the Party's "leading role." Meanwhile, at least some of them have shown considerable finesse in handling an awkward political situation in Zagreb since the purge of genuinely popular leaders.

In Serbia the postpurge replacements consist almost entirely of an extraordinary collection of new or resuscitated nonentities. The new ones are represented by Tihomir Vlaškalić, a worthy Belgrade University professor of economics who succeeded Nikezić as Serbian Party President. (Vlaškalić's first partner as Party Secretary, succeeding Latinka Perović, was a skilled worker and thereby a symbol of the Party's new working-class image. He was soon dismissed, reportedly for simple incompetence.) The leading representative of the old ones is Petar Stambolić, 62, Serbia's representative on

the new eight-member State Presidency of Yugoslavia created this year and Federal Prime Minister from 1963 to 1967. He is a colorless old prewar and Partisan revolutionary and postwar functionary, with an undistinguished record in a series of senior but often titular posts, who had been retired into the shadows by 1969 and discounted as an important figure because he was mildly tainted by long association with Aleksandar Ranković and the latter's "Serbian nationalist and centralist unitarism" and communist conservatism.

Ostensibly the most important of the new team, as Secretary of the Yugoslav Party's Executive Committee since the end of 1971, re-elected to that post at the Tenth Congress, is Stane Dolanc. Forty-nine years old, he was virtually unknown outside his native Slovenia until chance made him, then by rotation, the presiding officer of the Executive Committee when the purges began. He handled a difficult job extremely well and with candor, demonstrating in addition his independence of and relative acceptability to all factions, both Slovenian and Yugoslav, and his apparent total loyalty to Tito. For these virtues he has been catapulted into his present role as *primus inter pares* in Tito's new collective lieutenantcy.

Finally, there are those who are still there but no longer in positions of importance. Representative and probably the most significant of this group is Mijalko Todorović, 61, a National Hero during the war, one of Serbia's and Yugoslavia's leading and most widely respected political figures until the purges began, generally ranked on the "liberal" side during the political struggles of the 1960s, and allegedly one of the Serbian leaders who in Tito's presence dared to oppose the purge of Nikezić and Latinka Perović in October 1972. Formally Todorović was still President of the Federal Assembly until twelve days before the Tenth Congress opened, when a new Yugoslav parliament elected under the new Constitution was installed, and a member of the Party Presidency until a new one was approved on the last day of the Congress; he was Secretary of the Party Executive Committee, the post now held by Dolanc, from October 1966, when the Party summit was reorganized after the fall of Ranković and his conservative faction, until the Ninth Congress in March 1969. At the Tenth Congress he appeared as an *ex officio* delegate, by virtue of his membership in the outgoing Party

Presidency, and was one of 45 members of the Commission for the Preparation of Draft Resolutions of the Congress, appointed on the first day and including many of the top hierarchy under Dolanc's chairmanship. At the end of the Congress, and no surprise to any competent observer, he was not on any of the Party's "leading bodies," nor is he expected to get an important state post, as others dropped from the Presidency but still in favor have done. Todorović has been gently relegated to the sidelines, without formal disgrace. The same thing happened in 1969 to many moderate and not seriously compromised "conservatives," some of whom have now returned to center stage, like Stambolić and his Macedonian colleague on the State Presidency, Lazar Koliševski. This is therefore a position, unlike that of the "liberals" and "nationalists" who have been anathematized and deprived of Party membership since 1971, which makes such a return possible without the embarrassment and difficulty of formal rehabilitation. It may also be shared, in different degrees, by men like Crvenkovski and Koča Popović, who were not seen at the Congress but who remain Party members technically in good standing.

(Another interesting personality who went into limbo in 1969 and who has remained there with little prospect of returning to favor is Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo. Also a wartime leader, in postwar years he was successively Party plenipotentiary in the Army, an incompetent boss of the whole Yugoslav economy, and then President of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Trade Union Federation from 1958 until 1967. In this last post he played, like Todorović, an important role in the 1962-1966 coalition against conservatism without becoming compromised by direct association with what is now known as "the liberal faction." His fall from grace was in part because his irrepressible bluntness and administrative incompetence made enemies on all sides—he particularly suffered from lack of support from his home base in Montenegro. But it was also because, taking his formal trade union role as tribune of the working class with characteristic seriousness, he quarreled with the "liberals" and their "technocrat" friends after 1966 about the latter group's growing power in economic decision-making, splitting the anticonservative coalition. On this issue the official line, without giving him credit, now agrees with him. Tempo, too, appeared at the Tenth Congress as a simple

delegate and took the podium on the first day to make the general debate's most candid, interesting, and only obviously unscheduled speech. In it, true to form, he bluntly warned the delegates that the new line will also not guarantee genuine workers' power and that the proudly acclaimed new device of "basic organizations of associated labor"—a further evolution of the "work units" which he himself enthusiastically sponsored a decade ago—is unlikely as presently envisaged to do the job of dishing the technocrats while producing an efficient and integrated economy.)

All of this does not mean that all Yugoslav leaders associated with the great experiment in economic and political liberalization of the past decade are out or on the sidelines. In fact, the two men most frequently held to have been the key figures in bringing about the economic reform of 1965, the fall of Ranković in 1966, and subsequent reforms of the Party and of the structure of the Federation are still at the top, members simultaneously of the Party and state Presidencies and conspicuously more intimate with Tito at recent public occasions than any other leaders except Dolanc. They are Edvard Kardelj, 64, the only political survivor of the Djilas-Ranković-Kardelj triumvirate, Tito's closest collaborators during the war and the first postwar decade, and Vladimir Bakarić, 62, direct or indirect boss of Croatia ever since the war and erstwhile mentor of the Croatian leaders who were purged for "rotten liberalism" in 1971 and whom he disagreed with and disavowed in the nick of time. Several other members of the new, 39-member Party Presidency, including Sergej Krajgher (otherwise Slovenian head of state as President of the Republic's Presidency) and Kiro Gligorov (A Macedonian, otherwise Todorović's successor as President of the Federal Assembly), also played important and apparently enthusiastic roles in designing and implementing the reforms of the 1960s.

Gligorov, long considered a leading economic expert in the Federal apparatus and emerging as a major figure in the restructured leadership, made one of the most important addresses of the Congress, the keynote to the Commission for the Development of Socialist Self-Managing Socio-Economic Relations and Problems of Economic and Social Development (sic!). What he said there was essentially what he had said in an interview with the

present writer in the spring of 1971, before purges and policy changes began. His message on both occasions was a spirited if now somewhat more defensive apologia for the continuing necessity and virtues of a market economy in Yugoslavia. Its operation must be subject to more controls and more planning than in recent years, he argued then and now, but these should still employ only indirect means of the type developed and used in the West to compensate for imperfect competition or to induce the fulfillment of indicative plans or the optimization of social as well as economic values. This is a central issue: in one sense the whole complex economic debate and political struggle of the past fifteen years has revolved around the question of the right mix of market and planning in allocating investment funds, structuring output, and distributing income in a developing socialist society. Statements like Gligorov's, if they really represent the majority view of influential persons who still enjoy Tito's confidence, seem to mean that the market's role as primary allocator will remain and may even be made more efficient by more effective indicative planning and judicious use of modern countercyclical, antimonopoly, and other economic tools (adding Keynes and the post-Keynesians to Adam Smith, as a Yugoslav economist put it with conscious irony several years ago).

Gligorov's advocacy is important but apparently not unchallenged. In the two days of debate in the Commission for Socio-Economic Relations, while everyone ostensibly agreed with the keynote speech, as usual on such occasions, there was in fact both genuine support for and disguised criticism of this basically pro-market stance. The former was by economists in particular and the latter usually by delegates from enterprises or economic sectors whose difficulties can in some way be blamed on the imperfect functioning of an imperfect market.

Debates of this kind, like the mixed composition of the Party's new leading bodies, provided further evidence that many vital questions are still open, and that it is premature to conclude that a recentralization of authority within the Party and a verbal reassertion of its ubiquitous "leading role" must and will mean a thoroughgoing recentralization of decision-making in Yugoslavia's still highly decentralized economic and political system.

The question is therefore how far Tito and the leadership endorsed by the Tenth Congress intend to go and how far they will be able to go in reimposing the Party's authority, and whether they will thereby solve, merely suppress, or even aggravate the problems which led to Tito's coup.

That pre-Congress documents and speeches, the resolutions of the Republican and Provincial congresses which preceded the Yugoslav one, and those of the Tenth Congress itself all expressly declare that there will be no return to a Stalinist Party dictatorship, or even to the quasi-centralist, quasi-Stalinist one of the 1950s, can of course be discounted as politically necessary rhetoric, self-delusion, or wishful thinking. Atmospheric indicators that it could happen or is happening include the significant revival, constant repetition, and tendentious use of certain Marxist terms and arguments which in other times and places have been employed to rationalize Stalinism and which had been purposefully neglected, differently construed, or seldom and usually only ritualistically used by Yugoslav Party ideologists in recent years. Even Yugoslavia's own Stalinist epoch, 1945-1950, is now described as "the period of revolutionary étatism," in Marxian language an ominously more positive euphemism than "the administrative period," heretofore the authorized label. The turn to the terminology of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" and "the struggle of the working class with the Communist Party at its head" is meanwhile accompanied by an escalation of that hyperbole of accusations against a defeated line or faction which has always remained one of the more ominous features of communist political style even in Yugoslavia, where at least so far the consequences have usually been purely political, occasionally economic, and only rarely judicially punitive.

While these changes in political style and cadres generally affect only Party members and intra-Party life, there are other indications that a harder line affecting all Yugoslav citizens is seriously meant. The muzzling of a press which by 1971 had achieved a remarkable level of freedom, liveliness, and occasional irresponsibility and the associated dismissal of a score of editors is only one harbinger. There is also the arrest of actively dissident students, intense pressure on university

councils to fire faculty accused of propagating ideas contrary to the Party line (so far almost invariably unsuccessful, which is also significant), and directives calling for more Marxist education and the ideological purification of teaching staff at all levels. Newspaper stories describing with approval the successful intervention of a local Party committee to secure the dismissal of a factory director or a change in enterprise policy are also indicative; such a story would have been reported disapprovingly three years ago.

To discount even partially these specific restrictions of existing freedoms and approval of political interventions in "social self-management" is more questionable than discounting a change in style or rhetoric or even leaders, and may be an unwarranted concession. It is nevertheless worth noting that what is now happening represents a rescinding of a recent and marginal extension of the previously existing limits of freedom of expression, association, and participation in decision-making, and that what remains is still (so far) more than what Western liberals considered remarkable and praiseworthy only seven or eight years ago. Bearing this, too, in mind, it is presumably not irrelevant to ask whether the clock is only being turned back an hour or two, and why, or whether such happenings are only the first installment of the reimposition of a total dictatorship.

Some suggestive if contradictory and inconclusive clues are discernible. They lurk in that significant segment of pre-Congress and Congressional documents and speeches which abjured the simplistic slogans and anathemas that usually characterize Marxist polemics and "settlings of accounts," and which attempted to analyze the crisis and to justify the purges and the new line in the detached, sophisticated, and tentative style of the amalgam of Marxist and post-Marxian social sciences that the Yugoslav Party establishment professes to admire and certainly holds in awe.

The Post-Purge Party's Perspective

The central message of the Tenth Congress was that a newly reunited, recentralized, and redisciplined League of Communists must and will reassume the effective control over the country's political and economic life which it had virtually abdicated when and because it became disoriented and

disunited by politically unrealistic and ideologically unacceptable theories that are now scathingly described as "anarcho-liberal," or sometimes simply as "liberal." These theories were espoused in varying degrees and forms by key political leaders in four of the six federal republics. In the language of the indictment accepted by the Congress, they held that the further development of "social self-management" now could and should be characterized by more "spontaneity" and "pluralism"—and therefore by a decreasing political or "interventionist" role for the Party—if Yugoslavia is to move on toward a genuine "direct socialist democracy without political intermediaries" in which "self-managers" and those elected by them would freely decide about the distribution of national income and all other public choices.

The theories and policies of the "liberals" were ideologically faulty. They overlooked the "class content" of socialism, specifically in assuming that, in what is not yet a classless society, the working class could already be equated with Yugoslavs as a whole (which they liked to call "the working people," an ideological obfuscation now gingerly blamed on Kardelj himself). Of more immediate, practical importance, but for sound Marxist dialectics inherent in that basic ideological error, they assumed that the present level of economic and social development and of "social consciousness" was adequate as a support and guarantor of "spontaneous" democracy and genuine "self-management" without the protection of a powerful and active Party. What happened instead was that "liberalism," with its insistence that the Party could warn and advise but must not otherwise interfere in self-management and that the Party center was no longer entitled to dictate to subordinate Party organs, permitted and encouraged the revival of centrifugal or hegemonistic nationalisms in the multinational state and the rise of a "technocratic-managerial elite" controlling and "reprivatizing" the economy. Both drew their strength from under- and asynchronous development and from the class distinctions which assume altered forms but still exist during the transitional stage called socialism.

Therefore, instead of the further development and expansion of that "direct social self-management with political intermediaries" which is still

the proclaimed goal of the Yugoslav system, the gradual relaxation of firm Party control and of centralized Party authority led to power being grabbed by local politicians who were often more nationalist than communist, and by "technocrats" in industry, commerce, and banking who admired Western managerial techniques more than they did the Yugoslav working class. The "liberals" who countenanced these developments were consequently either "objectively" (unwittingly) or "subjectively" (consciously and deliberately) promoting the restoration of a bourgeois-type economy and multiparty democracy and undermining the unity of a state in which multiple parties have always been ethnic parties.

It follows, in the argument endorsed by the Tenth Congress, that a reassertion of Party authority in all sectors of public life and of strict observance of the rules of "democratic centralism" in Party life is necessary for the sake of unity. It is similarly crucial to the protection of the Yugoslav worker against continuing usurpations of his right to control the results of his labor and his own destiny and against nationalism in classical, "bourgeois" alliance with those who control the means of production and commerce and who seek the support of the state to protect and expand their control and their markets.

To this declared necessity a corollary has been added during the agonizing reappraisal of these pre-Congress months of purge: the social structure of the Party itself must also be altered until a "workers' majority" is achieved—membership at the time was less than one-quarter working class—in order to guarantee its own "class character" and responsiveness to working class interests. There-with the weak point in the entire argument is implicitly recognized if not adequately answered. One does not have to take impassioned talk about "direct democracy," "self-management," and "working class rule" more seriously here than one does analogous political ideals in other societies. Nor must one assume that Yugoslav political leaders are either more or less hypocritical in making claims for their practice than those of other countries, to ask the obvious question. What is there in this return to autocratic Party interference in decision-making in all spheres and to the rigidly enforced hierarchic Party discipline called "democratic centralism" that will make the system more

equitable, more efficient, and more honest—not to mention more democratic and socialist—or less replete with "alienated" power and responsibility? And, in the struggle for an equitable share of politically redistributed values, what will make it less likely to breed factionalism and nationalism than the confused and inchoate polycentric polyarchy of the past decade? Yugoslav skeptics, who include many at all levels in the Party who are often as troubled as Tito himself by nationalism, by the growing significance of "alienated centers of economic and financial power" in industry, commerce, and the banks, and by the less desirable consequences of a laissez-faire market economy, are also asking it. At the moment, however, they are not doing so in public without cautious circumlocution.

Meanwhile, the ideological essence of the new line has been summarized in a Yugoslav Marxist neologism, constantly repeated at the Tenth Congress and worthy of more careful exegesis than it has yet received. What Yugoslavia has now, we are told, is "self-management democracy as a specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat appropriate to the present stage of social development." Superficially reminiscent of Orwellian "double-think," the new coinage, in this specific form an innovation of the past 18 months, is also a subtle ideological device for reconciling ideals and reality by again shoving the former into the future while construing the latter as a step toward its realization. Until recently the Yugoslav concept of self-management has been described as though it were a satisfactory end system, at the moment still imperfectly developed. Now authoritative documents and speakers are reminding the deputies and the Party that communism remains a distant goal and that socialism, including "self-management socialism," is a process, a transition full of contradictions and imperfections which only a "conscious guiding force" like the Party, instructed in scientific Marxism, can resolve and remove in ways that move a society on certainly toward the goal.

Stalin once argued that the state, instead of beginning to wither away, must in fact become stronger to protect the revolution during the traumas of socialist transition. The official Yugoslav view, while still insisting that the *state* must begin withering away at once to avoid a

Soviet-type stagnation at the stage of "state socialism" and retrogression to "state capitalism," now holds with similar logic that the *Party* must remain powerful and active to protect socialism throughout the transition. This is not actually new: Tito, Kardelj, and the rest said the same thing in answer to Djilas in 1954. It was, however, deliberately or incidentally forgotten by those, now condemned as "anarcho-liberals," who came to see a powerful, intervening, and internally undemocratic Party as a brake rather than an accelerator in the process of economic and political modernization.

With due allowance for cynics and ideological illiterates in the League of Communists, ideology is not unimportant or merely a disguise and rationalization of practice in Yugoslavia. The argument presented here is a distilled version, based on pre-Congress and Congress documents, of a serious attempt to understand what did happen, what is now happening, and what should happen. It was and continues to be made by men who are intimately involved in picking up the pieces after the purge, who are not always defending precisely the same values and interests, and who happen to be Marxists by training and often by conviction.

Some (Optimistic?) Speculations

The picture that emerges from these official perceptions is of a system which was producing social and economic consequences too much at variance with official or socially accepted norms and expectations and with its own legitimizing myths to be tolerable for long. It was shaking itself apart as well. Many outside observers, including non-Marxists, would agree to the accuracy of much of this picture: the dangers to the social fabric inherent in the revival of active interethnic feuds, quasi-institutionalized in the growing and otherwise laudably beneficial independence of the federal republics after 1966; the negative economic and social consequences of a curious mixture of a laissez-faire market, centralized funds, and burgeoning monopolies; and a "self-management" which, in ceasing to be state and Party management, was becoming management by managers, not workers, and a form of "reprivatization" as "group property," moderately efficient but in dangerous contradiction to official, socialist values and expectations endorsed by social groups whose political power or supportive role placed them

among the final arbiters.³ Equally credible, although marred by unsubstantiated and unlikely accusations of bad faith and antisocialist intentions on the part of some of the leaders who have since been purged, is the description which these more thoughtful and less polemical Party documents and speakers offer of patient but vain attempts to find a constitutional and orderly solution to this state of affairs during the last years before the purges began.

If this picture is accepted as a reasonable approximation of reality, then one must also recognize the strength of the argument that there was a pressing need for a major change of strategy and policy, and that, given the critical impasse reached by 1971, this could only come about through some kind of *coup de main*. This, too, seems to be the honest as well as politically necessary appraisal of those who attempted a serious analysis of the recent past for the Tenth Congress. They do not add that the only available alternatives to Tito as the initiator of such a coup were the Army, which has never played such a role in a communist-ruled state but was mooted as a candidate by Yugoslavs as well as outsiders during 1971, or a Party or ethnic faction too weak to undertake it without outside support, raising the specter of civil war and a dangerous East-West confrontation in the Balkans.

Tito did it. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the solution which he is now attempting to impose is particularly relevant or that it will solve the problems it is supposed to in the way that the author intended. Tito's answer, reduced to its

3. Of particular interest on this last point is a book by an American economist, Deborah Milenkovitch, *Plan and Market in Yugoslav Economic Thought* (Yale, 1971), which pointed out the "group property" tendency in the Yugoslav system of autonomous enterprises and ever less planning and control before many Yugoslavs had done so. This thesis, presented to scholarly conferences and in an article some two years before the book was published, was understandably not well received by the then predominantly liberal Yugoslav establishment, who saw how such arguments could be used against them and who seem particularly to have resented their being put so cogently by an economist from the West, where they expected and otherwise generally received, from both socialist and "bourgeois" commentators, support and applause for their experiment in "market socialism."

essential core, is in fact little more than a rather simplistic attempt to return to the purity of first principles, to the old myth of a Marxist-Leninist Party's paternalistic and enlightened despotism as the surest diviner and confounder of counter-revolutionaries and the somehow ultimately infallible guardian of socialism, of the interests of the working class, and of the brotherhood and unity of the Yugoslav people.

There is a transparently obvious inherent flaw in this proposition, one involving well-tested clichés about wise and benevolent philosopher-kings, which the one million members of the League of Communists or even their "leading cadres" are not, and about the corruptive power of power, "new classes," and a necessary connection between responsive and responsible government. What is interesting is that once again the flaw is implicitly and at times explicitly recognized by authoritative Party documents and by some important speakers at the Congress, who apparently do not include Tito himself, the more sycophantic delegates, and true or calculating believers in the magically incorruptible wisdom of the Party. The recognition is there, for example, in the caveats about a "workers majority," referred to above, and in amendments to the Party Statutes requiring in significantly firmer and more specific terms than ever before that higher Party organs must respond to initiatives from below.

This is not to say that that such recognition is the same thing as a solution, or even that one exists. Nor do party platforms and declarations of principle produced by Communist Party congresses have more significance than those of other parties and politicians of another persuasion. But it does seem to mean that some of the reconstructed Yugoslav Party leadership, strong enough to insert their views into the Party's most authoritative declarations and have them endorsed by the Congress, have accepted Tito's coup in the name of the Party with reservations and for pragmatic reasons. These include recognition that it was the least-risk way out of an impasse and associated crisis which were threatening the stability of the regime, their own positions, and political or socialist values that at least some senior Yugoslav Communists really seem to believe in. The post-purge establishment is apparently still divided between those who see the reassertion of hierarchical discipline and the

Party's "leading role" as a return to principles of permanent validity and those who see it as a *reculer pour mieux sauter* which must be carefully limited in scope if it is not to become permanent. Both groups are instructed in their respective perceptions by the interests and roles they feel closest to, by their reading of what is acceptable to those social strata, organized interests, and individuals whose at least passive support is perceived as essential to their own and the system's survival, and also by ideological preferences.

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Yugoslav Party congresses do not make decisions in the sense of openly debating and voting on disputed issues or electing officers from competing slates or among individuals representing different currents, social forces, or factions within the Party. They do, however, provide a deadline for a more invisible and subtle form of debate and decision-making. A congress must have policies and people to endorse, and these will be influential if not unchangeable in the years immediately ahead. In addition, Party rules and traditions, inherited from the necessities of a period of revolutionary and often underground struggle and kept alive by the paranoid mythology of a continuing, merciless struggle with tirelessly encircling and infiltrating "class enemies" and "alien ideas," require an appearance and preferably the reality of monolithic unity and its public display at a congress, when friends and enemies are watching. If there are disagreements within the leadership, the approach of a congress therefore lends urgency to their resolution. This may be through the triumph of one group (or coalition) and their ideas, in which case the losers will be silenced or removed to avoid the risk of an awkward display of disunity or indecisiveness at the congress. Alternatively, if no one view has prevailed in time, the same imperatives of unity and decisiveness will produce a program and slate of officers which experienced observers promptly identify as a compromise, which sometimes only transparently papers over continuing differences, and which is therefore far less desirable to all concerned for both political and ideological reasons. The former type of resolution is, roughly speaking, what happened at the Ninth Congress in 1969, when a liberal policy was clearly endorsed, while the latter represents a reasonably accurate picture of the Eighth Congress in 1964. In either case, the

nuances of speeches made and the composition of the leading bodies endorsed at a Party congress always provide useful clues to the balance of political forces at the Party center after the clarification, reordering, and polarization which have been accelerated by the approach of the deadline that the congress represents.

The Tenth Congress, on first reading, resembled the Eighth. Declaratively a "congress of stabilization" after the traumas, crises, and purges of the past three years, it has really caught a continuing disagreement *in media res* and produced another

compromise. Again as in 1964, the details of agreement and dispute, the precise line-up of protagonists, and hence the consequences of the compromise are temporarily obscure, but the overall balance is clearly lopsided. The difference is that the balance which emerged from the Eighth Congress was weighted in favor of Yugoslavia's Communist Whigs, while the Tenth leaves the Party Tories in by far the stronger position. It is in this sense that the political chapter which opened with preparations for the Eighth Congress has closed with the pronouncements of the Tenth.

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