



TODAY ABROAD

by Joseph Clark

Yugoslav Communists And Internationalism

YOU CANNOT easily assign the policies of Yugoslav Communists to any particular pigeon-hole. One can understand more about those policies if they are examined for their diversity, or as some might claim, their contradictions.

Here are four examples of recent developments.

Last week the Yugoslav under-secretary for foreign affairs said in an interview with the Belgrade paper Borba that his government favors the Soviet proposal for halting all nuclear test explosions. The spokesman, Dr. M. Ivekovic, said the Yugoslav government believes that mistrust among the powers would be considerably lessened if they agreed to the Soviet plan. He also noted that such an agreement could lead to progress on disarmament.

Last week also the Yugoslav League of Communists concluded eight days of discussions with representatives of the French Communist Party. The latter has taken a distinctly more critical attitude toward the Yugoslav Communists than have the Italian Communists. Nevertheless, following the Belgrade talks a joint communique was issued saying the basis was laid for "re-establishment and development of normal, fraternal relations between the two parties."

THE FRENCH and Yugoslav Communists said that co-

operation among Communist parties and socialist countries was an immense force for peace and socialism. Their communique also declared such cooperation must take into account "different experiences in the building of Socialism and the national characteristics of individual countries."

Differences exist, the communique said, but these should be subjected to "sincere comradely criticism" on all questions arising out of the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

This week another joint communique was announced — this one between representatives of the Socialist Party of Italy, headed by Nenni, and the Yugoslav Communist League. The important idea in this communique was that the development of democracy requires socialism and at the same time socialism must be advanced through democracy.

This question of the relation between socialism and democracy has been subjected to considerable study and debate among Yugoslav Communists ever since they were expelled from the Cominform in 1948.

A key paragraph in the communique states:

"Experience and events in the workers' movement of the entire world prove that it is not possible to have real democracy if this democracy does not open the road to socialism and that it is

not possible to have a democratic development of socialism unless it is followed by development of democratic forms of society."

THE FOURTH development was the publication of an article in Borba on March 10, which took note of numerous comments, criticism and attacks on Yugoslav Communists which have appeared in Communist publications of other countries. The Borba roundup lists 17 such articles and speeches that appeared in Soviet, Bulgarian, Albanian, East German, Czech, Romanian publications almost simultaneously. Borba remarks wryly "one gets the impression that each newspaper is bound to print in every issue at least one 'theoretical' article against Yugoslavia, either its own article or one borrowed from another paper."

The Borba article points out that these same publications had all with equal fervor published favorable articles about Yugoslavia only a short time before. But, according to Borba, these favorable articles appeared only as long as "they had some illusions that Yugoslavia would one day join the 'socialist camp.'"

Borba says that for a time all these above-mentioned publications praised almost everything about Yugoslavia, including some very bad Yugoslav films, according to the author. During that period there was no criticism of the Yugoslav workers

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councils concept and their system of workers' self-management, Borba claims. But the article continues, "all of a sudden it was revealed that the policy of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia is 'revisionist' that it harms the cause of socialism and that it 'diverts from proletarian internationalism,' etc."

The Yugoslav Communists, however, followed up this article with the French and Italian agreements, noted above, and with their statement on the Soviet H-bomb proposals. The Yugoslav Communists object to a narrow definition of the "socialist camp." In their opinion socialism should not be confused with a bloc of nations. They hold that there are diverse and numerous streams that lead to socialism which cannot be officially contained in what is called the "socialist camp." And they often point to similar ideas on this very question which were expressed a little more than a year ago at the 20th congress of the Soviet Communist Party.