

### TITO MOVES TO STRENGTHEN PARTY

May 31 (IPS) — At the 10th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), which met in Belgrade May 27 — 30, Yugoslav leader Josip Tito capped an extended vigorous campaign to ensure the lasting unity of his party and country. For the 82-year-old president, it is probably the last chance to provide stability for Yugoslavia after his own death.

Since 1971-72, when unrest focusing on Croatian nationalism tore the LCY into violently opposed factions and threatened to erupt into civil conflict in major cities, Tito has initiated a series of moves toward this goal. Somewhere on the order of 10 percent of the membership has been expelled from the LCY (which totalled 1,076,700 members at the end of 1973) — 50,000 for deviating from the party line, which in Yugoslavia generally means adhering to nationalist positions. The remainder were ousted for inactivity, indicating failure to take on the formidable task of dealing with the nationalist tendencies which exist to some degree in every regional LCY organization.

In the same period, a new constitution of the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was developed and finally promulgated in February. Most important, the constitution provides for increased LCY party control throughout the political and economic life of the country. Previous decentralization, on top of the chronic nationalist fervor of unintegrated sections of the Yugoslav working class, sometimes led to economic disaster when diverse sectors of the country competed for limited investment funds and resources. Tito calls for direct working-class participation in economic and political decision-making through self-management associations in which the LCY participates. The increased centralization of the party is therefore accompanied by a massive campaign to recruit workers into the party and intensify the party's anti-nationalist campaign.

#### Economic Tremors

The Yugoslav economy is more deeply penetrated by western capital than the Soviet bloc countries and so immediately affected by the capitalist crisis. With a 1.82 billion kilowatt/hr electrical energy shortage already projected for 1974, Yugoslavia finds a large portion of its funds for domestic development gobbled up by the increased price of necessary oil and raw materials imports.

The Italian import restrictions forced last month by Euro-traitor Helmut Schmidt's refusal to support the Italian economy hit hard at Yugoslav agriculture and light industry. Beef and dairy exports from Croatia especially go largely to Italy. At the same time, on-and-off manipulation of American Export-Import Bank

credits to the Soviet bloc spilled over against Yugoslavia; loans to Yugoslavia account for about 50 per cent of the bank's Eastern European dealings. Yugoslav trade officials lamely protested that this damage was unwarranted, since Yugoslavia is "not a communist country." These severe economic tremors, however, provoked some panic, followed by shallow expression of confidence that Yugoslavia will become self-sufficient: "...in case the world market becomes...less favorable, Yugoslavia will have to be more organized and efficient in her internal business operations. Through the affirmations of associated labor [self-management — Ed.] this will be possible" (Croatian League of Communists Conference, April 1973). Not only Yugoslavia's resource limitations (she has bauxite, some oil, and small amounts of other rare ores), but her indebtedness to the capitalist sector makes fantasy out of such a proposal, as Tito himself remarks in his address to the LCY 10th congress. He debunked the possible claim that he was opting for isolationism and autarky. At the same time, Tito showed that he is sensitive to this problem; he called for a reorientation from foreign trade, which was eating up too much of the working-class' surplus labor, to internal industrial, resource, and infrastructure development.

Any Yugoslav wish to be left alone must be frustrated also because of the strategic position it occupies on the European continent. The Adriatic coast is important to the Soviet Union in any comprehensive military assessment, providing a last resort in the event of Baltic and Black Sea blockades against the Soviet Navy. Moreover, northwest Yugoslavia verges on the Brenner-Trieste area, which is the key to control of the whole Balkan peninsula and the Northern Italian industrial region. NATO emphasized its importance in strategic considerations with a series of land and naval maneuvers in the area and in the Adriatic Sea this spring. The timing of these provocations, the phony "Zone B" border dispute between Italy and Yugoslavia and a slanderous psywar campaign in the western press (IPS No. 3) concerning alleged Soviet plans for invading Yugoslavia, which coincided with the period of elections and conferences leading up to the 10th LCY congress indicates that NATO intelligence and the CIA are following the Yugoslav domestic situation carefully and hungrily seeking opportunities to aggravate tensions there. The effect of the Zone B controversy and the accompanying rumors of military maneuvers on the Yugoslav tourist industry, crucial in meeting the country's foreign exchange payments, cannot be estimated at this time.

#### Soviet-Yugoslav Rapprochement

Western press reports notwithstanding, there is every indication that Tito is in fact moving to improve ties with the Soviet Union, approving greater integration into the

Comecon economic community. He understands, probably better than the now-predominant Breshnev faction in the Soviet leadership does, that Yugoslav economic and social collapse and Soviet loss of a strategically crucial area would come in one blow — though he does not understand the nature of the Rockefeller-CIA cabal which threatens to hurl the blow.

USSR Defense Minister Andrei Grechko, whose military faction is key in the hardline anti-NATO lineup in the Soviet Union received the Yugoslav Defense Minister Liubicic in Moscow last week, reflecting his sensitivity to NATO developments in the Balkans and eastern Mediterranean area. CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) politburo member A. P. Kirilenko, head of the Soviet delegation to the 10th LCY congress, met with Tito May 29. These contacts are backed up in the Soviet press by the most positive coverage of the SFRY since the Tito-Stalin break in the late 1940's. May 15 *Pravda's* Belgrade correspondent praised the LCY's pre-congress campaign for increasing the working-class composition of the party. He spoke of the "Yugoslav comrades" and referred to Yugoslavia as a "many-peopled state," a phrase used by the Soviet press for the USSR itself. This warm recognition indicates that the Soviets realize they must not let Yugoslavia slip away to the West. *But at the moment the Soviets have no strategy for Yugoslavia.* They would have to develop such a strategy in the context of the entire European situation; it must be located in the golden snake and fusion power plan for European integration, outlined in the European Labour Committee's united front proposal to all Communist and workers' parties.

For Tito, drawing closer to the Soviets may bring domestic difficulties, to the extent that he must maintain the "non-aligned" policy which now dominates his foreign policy statements.

It is understandable that the USSR should take this opportunity to reactivate its undercover contacts and old Cominform sympathizers to bolster its influence against the nationalists and the counterrevolutionary "socialist humanist" liberals, who operate out of the Belgrade and Zagreb universities. There have already been reports that "a high Croatian official" (*Le Figaro*, May 15) has accused the Soviets of recouping old agents

in Yugoslavia. While no one would dare attack Tito himself for allowing this to happen, the remaining nationalist forces in the LCY can use such allegations to sabotage Tito's policy and ruin his attempt for a unified party. Hence the regional party organizations direct their polemics not only against the nationalists, but against an alleged "bureaucratic centralist" faction. The Croatian leader Milka Planinc attacked "Stalinists" in her pre-congress conference speech.

The newspaper *Borba* has also been campaigning against the efforts of western operatives to intervene in Yugoslav affairs. In this they are absolutely correct. A look at the itineraries of several of the renegade liberal professors (the so-called Belgrade 8) demonstrates that they are not independent operators, but enjoy the support and funding of the Ford Foundation, under whose auspices some of them have studied in the United States and at the notorious London School of Economics (IPS).

British and American secret service penetration of Yugoslavia dates from World War II. Abroad, potential anti-Tito formations exist, such as the suspect "Croatian Communist Party" in Frankfurt, which has had reported contact with the West German intelligence service (BND), and the international Croatian fascist network — the Ustasht. The Catholic Church, which is still influential among the Croatian and Slovene population, also will tend to exacerbate national and religious frictions (Yugoslavia includes Catholics, Orthodox, and Moslems, as well as its five principal nationalities).

It is clear that the 10th LCY congress has mobilized the party to resolve the stormy internal crises of Yugoslavia. Two weeks ago, in forming the collective presidency which would rule in the event of his death, Tito bypassed several outstanding young LCY leaders in favor of men drawn from the ranks of his World War II partisan comrades. He has attempted to unite the country around practically its only point of emotional unity — the World War II partisan fight against the fascists. But the ability of these old men to hold the party together against the Rockefeller-CIA-NATO forces depends on the mobilization of the international working class, with the support of the Soviet leadership.