

June 17, 1958

THE CASE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY IN YUGOSLAVIA (III)

The spectre of the trial and execution of Imre Nagy, for the past 28 months hovering over the entire "socialist camp", has now become an irreversible reality. Made inevitable by the inexorable logic of the "pure" ideology being propagated in the intensified campaign against revisionism in theory, forced reluctantly towards this verdict by the pressures of the geopolitical premises of the concept of the "irreversible nature of the camp of socialism" to an endless reiteration of the charge of "treason", the ultimate penalty inflicted upon the "National Communist" leader and his Party and military supporters closes the chapter on experimentation and innovations introduced into the Socialist control mechanism within the orbit,* more than two months after First Secretary Nikita S. Khrushchev, the head of the CPSU, assumed the role of chief of government, the previous policy of political trials and executions has been reinstated as the ghastly symbol of the mono-Party-State power.

The timing of the announcement, at the height of the current Soviet-Yugoslav controversy, places that atomic ideological dispute in its proper perspective. As a result of his acceptance of the second Soviet intervention in Hungary as necessary to correct the consequences of Nagy's practice of national communism (Pala speech, 11 November 1956), Tito has deprived himself of all convincing argumentation against the Soviet interpretation of the "unity of the Socialist Camp" (through the agreement of Kirova Djilas -- his analyses of Communist theory -- the Soviet as well as the Yugoslav content -- Tito has denied himself the chance of an unequivocal rejection of Soviet accusations. To preserve the national independence of the State he controls, Tito must nevertheless try to split the ideological lair of Party doctrine. The Soviet decision to order the execution of Nagy, which, as all also in Moscow now, must be attributed to Khrushchev personally, reduces Tito's protestations to the uncorroborated testimony of the national source of poisonous heresy (revisionism) and of the wrongfulness in political crimes (treason). As long as Khrushchev's tactics were directed at bringing Tito back into the bloc the postponement of the Nagy trial would, from the Soviet point of view, be justified; like the promise of safe conduct for Nagy given to the Yugoslavs in November, 1956, this delay would have been prolonged only until the Yugoslav participation in the Warsaw Pact and

* See Background Information, 1 February 1958; also General Desk Background Papers, 5 December 1956 and 30 April, 1957.

Concern would have made withdrawal impossible. As soon as the break with Yugoslavia had widened into an unbridgeable chasm, the fate of Imre Nagy was sealed; the first step was almost certainly the Yugoslav abstention from the conference of "Leading Parties" in November; the implementation decided (or announced) at the unreported meeting of Party secretaries and heads of government in Moscow a month ago. No less in ignorance than the Western journalists who are still disseminating Polish inspired versions of that conference was Tito unaware of that momentous decision. Utterly oblivious to the implications of the connection between the "traitor Nagy" and the Yugoslav being made in the Soviet campaign against revisionism, the Yugoslav leader in his speech only two days ago (Tanjug, 15 June 1956) had not seen fit to mention the most serious of the blood-wide, not only Chinese, accusations -- the Yugoslav complicity in the Hungarian uprising. Today Nikita Khrushchev has asked the cheek Marshal Tito wrote in November, 1956.

Within the Soviet Union the execution of Imre Nagy can hardly pass without repercussions. Although the victim of Khrushchev's need for a demonstration of the fate of anyone attempting to "disintegrate the Socialist Camp" made no distinction between any of the Soviet leaders in his treatise on Communism, (Frogger, New York, 1957), the chronology of his appointment (June, 1955) and dismissal (March, 1955) as Chairman of the Council of Ministers and his policy in industry coincide too closely with the tenorship of S.M. Malenkov not to be exploited by Khrushchev at some future date. Already associated by the First Secretary with the Yankovskhism (1952-54), held responsible for Berlin's crises in Leningrad (1949), publicly disgraced on the issues of industrial and agricultural policy, deprived of all State and Party posts as the result of defeat on internal issues in the intra-Party struggle for power, Malenkov can not be made the recipient in the consequences of Khrushchev's policy towards the bloc. In possession of a complete monopoly on political -- and police -- power at home, the First Secretary - Chairman of the Council of Ministers etc, is, 1956, in power, reviews the history of the past five years in order to justify his present actions.

¹² The case of Poland and Gomułka seems to be an exception; it should, however, be remembered that the possibilities of economic pressure, complete military integration, and geographical location exclude the possibility of Poland's leaving the camp. The key problem of Party and police relationships remains unclarified for the moment, the delay in convening the Party Congress is a measure of Gomułka's unwillingness to test his strength within the Party apparatus against those who might accept a return to the previous pattern of inter-Party dealings.