

June 22, 1954

**Letter from Nikita S. Khrushchev, First Secretary of
the Central Committee of the Communist Party of
the Soviet Union, to Josip Broz Tito and the Central
Committee of the League of Communists Of
Yugoslavia**

Citation:

"Letter from Nikita S. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to Josip Broz Tito and the Central Committee of the League of Communists Of Yugoslavia", June 22, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Arhiv Jugoslavije [National Archives of Yugoslavia], Arhiv CK SKJ [Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia Collection], 507 / IX, 119/I-48. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Svetozar Rajak.

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Summary:

Letter from Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev to Yugoslav leader Josep B. Tito suggesting that the time is ripe for a rapprochement between the two states and parties. Blaming former NKVD chief Lavrenty Beria and former Yugoslav leadership member Milovan Djilas for doing the work of the imperialists by attempting to drive a wedge between the Soviet and Yugoslav people and parties, Khrushchev suggests that the ousting of both will increase rapprochement between the two countries and be the catalyst for a summit between the two leaders.

Original Language:

Serbo-Croatian

Contents:

Translation - English

Letter from Nikita S. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to Josip Broz Tito and the Central Committee of the League of Communists Of Yugoslavia

To the Central Committee,
League of Communists of Yugoslavia
To Comrade Tito

The Central Committee [CC] of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [CPSU] discussed questions on the relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia, and additionally analyzed the circumstances that brought about the break between the CPSU and the CPY [Communist Party of Yugoslavia][1] and the rapid deterioration of relations between our countries.

As a result, the CC CPSU concluded that there exist some conditions for the improvement of relations between our countries and for the establishment of contacts between the CC of the Communist Party of Soviet Union and the leadership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia [LCY].

The CC CPSU proceeds from the fact that unfriendly relations that developed between our countries create certain damage both to the interests of Yugoslavia and to those of the Soviet Union, and to the interests of the peoples of our countries, linked by centuries of friendship and joint struggle for liberation. However, from the point of view of essential interests of both countries, it is evident that there exist no serious contradictions that could become a source of hostility and constant acrimony between our countries and peoples.

The CC CPSU proceeds also from the fact that the governments of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have recently undertaken certain steps towards normalization of relations between our countries.[2]

President of Yugoslavia Tito and other leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the government of FNRJ [Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia][3] have in their speeches on numerous occasions expressed their desire for improved relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. This fully coincides with the wishes of the Soviet leaders.

With the existence of these shared ambitions, not only diplomatic relations but also balanced economic and cultural ties between our countries could be improved, based on full equality and mutual gain.

In light of new facts that have emerged, the CC of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union considers it feasible for us to reconsider also the issue of relations between our Parties.

From our side, we deem regrettable the circumstance that at the time, both sides did not use all available opportunities in an effort to regulate all contentious issues and grievances that emerged in 1948, all the more so as some facts, which were the immediate causes for the break between the CC CPSU and the CC CPY, now look different.

For example, as it is now exposed with regard to the position of Soviet advisors in Yugoslavia and the availability to them of various pieces of information, there were no valid foundations for the resulting dispute and accusations against Yugoslavia.

As the investigation against the agent of international imperialism, [former secret police chief Lavrenty] Beria, demonstrated, it is important to accentuate explicitly that his associates from the intelligence apparatus, without the knowledge of the CC and the government of the USSR, and for the purpose of provoking, have allowed themselves [to perform] inexcusable acts of recruiting individual citizens of Yugoslavia for intelligence purposes. Such a provocation of the enemy, now uncovered, inflicted huge damage to relations between our parties and countries.

On the other side, the CC CPSU is of the opinion that the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia did not take advantage of all opportunities to avoid conflict with the CC CPSU either. Thus, for example, non-Marxist statements and anti-Soviet outbursts by [Milovan] Djilas did not, at the time, meet with resistance from the leadership of the CC CPY. Djilas, this pseudo-Marxist, a man estranged from the cause of Communism, who propagated the liquidation of the party, has abundantly contributed to the deterioration of Yugoslav-Soviet relations. The exclusion of Djilas from the CC LCY and condemnation of his views hostile to Marxism-Leninism facilitate the improvement of relations between the CC CPSU and the CC LCY.

The CC CPSU takes into account the fact that leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia have stated and continue to assert that communists of Yugoslavia are guided by teachings of Marxism-Leninism, that they are intent on continuing the building of socialism in their country, and regard preservation and strengthening of peace as indispensable. In light of this, there can be no excuse for the existence of a state of rift and acrimony between parties whose endeavors must be based on principles of Marxism-Leninism and the principle of noninterference into the affairs of others.

In such case, there truly exist objective conditions, not only for the improvement of political, economic, and cultural relations between our governments, but also for the establishment of contacts between the CC of the Communist Party of Soviet Union and the CC of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

It is thoroughly understandable that elements of mistrust and prejudice, accumulated in previous years, cannot disappear overnight. Time will be needed, as well as patience and mutual good will, for an understanding to be reached. However, the shared fundamental interests of our countries, our peoples, and of the grand cause of peace and socialism must overcome various subjective moments and opinions.

We would like to know the opinion of the CC of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia on the above addressed issues.

From its side, the CC CPSU is ready to hear and discuss the view of the CC of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia on issues regarding relations between our governments, as well as those regarding relations between the CPSU and the LCY.

To this end, we would regard as constructive a meeting of leading representatives of the CC CPSU and the CC LCY aimed at exchanging views on the above-mentioned issues. If you are in agreement with this proposal, the meeting could take place in the nearest future either in Moscow or in Yugoslavia, according to your convenience.

Secretary of the CC CPSU

N. Khrushchev

22 June 1954

[1] Communist Party of Yugoslavia, renamed as League of Communists of Yugoslavia, at its Sixth Congress in 1952.

[2] In summer and autumn 1953, the USSR and Yugoslavia exchanged ambassadors.

[3] FNR—Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavija [Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia], the official name of Yugoslavia at the time.