

July 9, 1955

Central Committee Plenum of the CPSU Ninth Session, Evening

Citation:

"Central Committee Plenum of the CPSU Ninth Session, Evening", July 9, 1955, Wilson Center Digital Archive, TsKhSD, f.2, op.1, d.173, ll.1-11. Translated by Benjamin Aldrich-Moodie <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/117088>

Summary:

The situation in Yugoslavia is discussed, in terms of keeping Yugoslavia in close relations with the USSR and reducing its political and economic dependence on capitalist countries.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Bulganin. (Chairman) Com. Molotov has the floor.

Molotov. [Ed. note: Molotov presents the development of Soviet-Yugoslav relations since World War Two for about twenty minutes.] Comrades, the issue of Yugoslavia has great political significance. Obviously, the complex nature of the Yugoslav issue is clear to us all...

If one were to judge by this statement, it would appear that the main reason for the rupture in relations between the CPSU and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) in 1948 was some "materials" which were fabricated by the enemies of the people Beria and Abakumov, and the rest is not worthy of attention.

From what I have said and from a real acquaintance with the materials, one can, however, establish that this statement, which tries to explain the reason for the rupture in relations with the CPY in large part by the hostile intrigues of Beria and Abakumov, does not fit with the factual situation. Beria and Abakumov's intrigues, without a doubt, played a certain role here, but this was not of chief importance.

The groundlessness of that explanation, it seems to me, is visible from the following: First, it was incorrect to place the blame for the rupture in relations between the CPSU and the CPY only on our party, while keeping silent about the responsibility of the CPY. This falsely exonerates [obeliaet] the leadership of the CPY, for which there are no grounds.

Secondly-and this is the important point-it should not be ignored that as the basis of the disagreement between our party and the leadership of the CPY, there was the fact that the Yugoslav leaders distanced themselves from the principled international positions for which they had stood in the previous period.

In a discussion of this issue in the CC Presidium, some doubt was expressed in relation to the awkwardness and incorrectness of the given explanation. However, the following arguments followed in defense of the given explanation of the reasons for the rupture: that if we did not say that the main reason was Beria's and Abakumov's intrigues, then the responsibility for the rupture would fall on Stalin, and that was impermissible.

These arguments should not be accepted.

Khrushchev. On Stalin and Molotov.

Molotov. That's new.

Khrushchev. Why is it new?

Molotov. We signed the letter on behalf of the party CC.

Khrushchev. Without asking the CC.

Molotov. That is not true.

Khrushchev. That is exactly true [tochno].

Molotov. Now you can say whatever comes into your head

.
Khrushchev. Without even asking the members of the Politburo. I am a member of the Politburo, but no one asked my opinion.

Molotov. Com. Khrushchev is speaking imprecisely [netochno].

Khrushchev. I want once again to repeat: I was not asked, although I [was] a member of the Politburo.

Molotov. You must not forget that the basic and real reason for the rupture was the move of the leadership of the CPY from a position of communism to a position of nationalism, and not just someone's intrigues which, of course, also played their role.

Did such a departure by the Yugoslav leaders from communism occur or not? We must give an answer to that question...

Does this mean that there are no grounds for rapprochement between the USSR and Yugoslavia? No, it does not.

If a rapprochement and an improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and this or that country which does not belong to the socialist camp (for instance, India or Finland) is possible, then, consequently, an improvement in relations and a rapprochement between the USSR and Yugoslavia is also possible, if Yugoslavia shows, along with the USSR, an aspiration to this. In the present conditions such a rapprochement is possible chiefly along intergovernmental [Ed. note: i.e., non-party] lines.

In our relations with Yugoslavia, we cannot forget the fact that Yugoslavia left the people's democratic countries with which it was together from 1945-1947. But, on the other hand, we must reckon with and appreciate the fact that Yugoslavia, although it drew closer to the imperialist camp, is trying in some capacity to preserve its sovereignty and national independence, although in recent years its ties with countries like the USA, England and others, and together with this, its dependence on these countries, have become stronger and stronger. It [Yugoslavia] is between two camps, tilting towards the capitalist countries. In view of this, it is completely clear that it is our task to weaken Yugoslavia's ties with the capitalist countries which are pulling it into the imperialist camp, be they commercial, economic, or military-political ties, which are putting Yugoslavia in a position of dependence on imperialism. For this, it is necessary to increase and strengthen Yugoslavia's ties with the USSR and the people's democratic countries, showing all possible vigilance in relation to the remaining ties that Yugoslavia has with the capitalist countries. Such a policy will strengthen our socialist camp and at the same time will weaken the camp of the imperialist countries. Such a policy is correct, let's say, in relation to India (or Finland), and is all the more correct in relation to Yugoslavia, where the revolutionary traditions of partisan struggle against fascist occupiers are alive and sympathies for the USSR are great in the people, and where such post-war revolutionary victories as the nationalization of large industry and others, which were accomplished when Yugoslavia marched in the same ranks as the people's democratic states which had arisen at that time, have been preserved. However, it should not be forgotten that in recent years (1949-1955), Yugoslavia has made a series of steps backward both in the city (the weakening of state planning authority in relation to nationalized industry), as well as especially in the countryside, where in recent years a line of renouncing the collectivization of agriculture has been followed.

We must make sure that Yugoslavia does not enter the North Atlantic bloc, or any of its international affiliates, and that Yugoslavia leaves the Balkan union, [since] two of the three participants (Turkey and Greece) are members of the North-Atlantic bloc. It is also in our interest to help Yugoslavia reduce its economic dependence on the USA and other capitalist countries. We must expand and strengthen cooperation with Yugoslavia, above all in the international arena, in the struggle to strengthen peace in

Europe and in the whole world. The same can be said in relation to possible international cooperation in the economic sphere, insofar as joint steps with Yugoslavia and other countries in the interest of normalizing international trade and against discrimination and other aggressive actions by capitalist countries headed by the USA, are possible and desirable.

However, appropriate caution and a critical approach should be shown toward Yugoslavia's political steps, bearing in mind that in recent years Yugoslavia's position on a series of issues (for instance, on the German issue) has been closer to the position of the Western powers than to the position of the USSR and the people's democratic countries. It should not be forgotten that in accusing the Soviet Union of imperialist tendencies and of the so-called policy of "hegemony," the Yugoslav government has untied its hands to speak out against the USSR at any time on all and sundry issues of international relations.

The government of Yugoslavia has not yet once said that it has revised these views, or even that its foreign policy is closer to the position of the USSR and the people's democratic countries than to the position of the powers in the imperialist camp...