

TODAY ABROAD

by Joseph Clark

Belgrade and Moscow Answer the Skeptics

JUST A YEAR AGO this newspaper suggested that it was the cement of socialism which strengthened relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Both from the Right and from the Left this opinion was received with great skepticism.

In Washington the bird brains of the State Department said there could be no ideological reconciliation between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. This short-sighted view was to be expected. After all both the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations had poured millions of dollars into the unworthy effort to prevent a Yugoslav-Soviet reconciliation.

But there were also many good friends of this column who expressed amazement at the idea that there could be reconciliation between the Yugoslav and Soviet leaders based on Marxism-Leninism. They could not see how developments in Yugoslavia could come under the heading of socialism.

RELUCTANCE by many on the Left to see Yugoslavia as a socialist country, reflected a narrow, dogmatic view of the whole question of the various paths to socialism. Actually, these paths are as varied as the number of countries there are in the world. This has always been a Marxist premise. But it has been much easier to accept the premise in words than to understand its es-

sense.

The tragic split between Yugoslavia and the other socialist countries showed that Soviet communists themselves had lost sight of this fundamental Marxist idea. It is a tribute to their power of self-correction that they have healed the breach with Yugoslavia. And how profound has been the correction is indicated in Tito's speech when he arrived in Moscow. Tito said:

"The arrival of comrades Khrushchev, Bulganin, Mikoyan and others in Belgrade, the talks with them, the declaration which was drawn up on that occasion, and afterward the courageous and far-sighted foreign policy of the collective leadership of the Soviet Union are, in my profound conviction, a guarantee that nothing of the kind will ever happen again between the two countries marching along the path of Marx, Engels and Lenin."

THERE has been a good deal of speculation in the press about the connection between the arrival of Tito in Moscow and the resignation of Molotov as Soviet foreign minister. The first intimations of the press that Molotov was being "purged" came to naught when Molotov was among those greeting Tito. This turned out to be a "purge" similar to the one carried out in the U.S. press of Mikoyan, a little more than a year ago, and of

Malenkov last year.

But there is no doubt that some of the older Soviet leaders—Molotov is 66—are giving way to younger people. It is also timely to recall the criticism that Molotov himself made of his foreign ministry in his speech at the 20th Soviet C. P. Congress. Molotov was most directly involved, together with Stalin, in the exchanges that took place with Tito back in 1948, which led to the break. But it is also apparent that the Soviet leaders have ruled out the "purge" as a method for dealing with past errors in which they shared responsibility.

A VERY IMPORTANT stage has been reached in relations among Communists of various countries. Based in part on the bitter lessons of the breach with Yugoslavia comes a renewed emphasis on the independence of Marxists everywhere.

The link that binds working people everywhere is a natural one. Abraham Lincoln once spoke of this bond as the strongest relationship among people, second only to the family relationship. And it is therefore natural that worker's organizations will seek international connections. But under no conditions can such connections be based on the interference of one organization or one party into the affairs of others. It must be a relationship based on equality no matter how different the size and authority of the various or-

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ganizations.

Furthermore, solidarity is strengthened when Marxists are frank and free also in criticizing what they deem mistakes made elsewhere. Each can learn from the experience of the other. But no one worthy of Marxism as a scientific outlook, not as a catechism, can think he will find his own path to socialism in the experiences of others. He can learn from those experiences, but only the definite, even peculiar and exceptional conditions in his own country can be the basis for a national path to socialism.