


# TODAY ABROAD

by Joseph Clark

## Did Tito Blame the Socialist System?



**THEY** say a lie can travel around the world while the truth is just putting on its track shoes. We're reminded of that by the discussion of Tito's analysis of what produced the Stalinist pervasions of socialism.

According to Harry Schwartz in the Sunday N. Y. Times Tito "insisted that the Soviet system, and not merely Stalin's mistakes, was at the root of Soviet mistakes. . . ."

Tito said nothing of the kind. And a check with the text of his speech as published in the N. Y. Times will prove it.

Ever since Khrushchev made his report on Stalin to the closed session of the Soviet C.P.'s 20th Congress Marxists have been dissatisfied with an explanation of Stalin's misdeeds solely in terms of Stalin's responsibility.

It was impossible to square such an interpretation with the Marxist view that individuals, even great individuals, do not make history out of the whole cloth. To blame Stalin for everything that went wrong was as illogical as to credit him with everything that was achieved by the Soviet people—even basketball victories.

**FOR** a Marxist, or any kind of socialist, it would be absurd to think that the socialist system was responsible for what went wrong. Tito believed the failure was not one of socialism but that there was a bureaucratic distortion of socialist principles. For that matter no consistent Marxist could put the blame on the "Soviet system." Soviets mean councils. The Russian revolution was carried through under the slogan of "All power to the councils of workers, peasants, soldiers." The value of the Soviet regime in its early days was that these councils of the peo-

ple brought ordinary working men and women directly into government.

One of the achievements of the Yugoslav Communists that has been praised and emulated by Communists elsewhere is the emphasis on workers councils in control of factories and other establishments. Even the long Pravda editorial replying to Tito cites this as an achievement of the Yugoslav Communists. And the Kadar regime in Hungary is trying to base its support on workers councils.

**SO WHAT** was it Tito actually said about the causes of the Stalinist evils? What "system" was he referring to? He stated in his Pula speech:

"From the very beginning we said that it was not merely the question of the cult of personality, that made the creation of the cult but rather the question of a system that made the creation of the cult of personality possible; that it was necessary to strike at the roots unceasingly and persistently—and this is most difficult.

"What are these roots? In the bureaucratic apparatus, in the methods of leadership and the so-called one-man rule, in the disregard for the role and tendencies of the working masses. . . ."

It was Palmiro Togliatti, who was the first Communist leader after the 20th Congress to begin such a Marxist analysis of the evils of Stalinism. Togliatti showed that it was unworthy of Marxism to blame it all on one person because the errors of the Stalin era arose in "an atmosphere of consent and connivance reaching as far as the co-responsibility of those who today denounce those errors." Togliatti wrote of the development of bureaucracy and of a certain de-

generation that had taken place under Stalin.

**UNFORTUNATELY** THE study begun by Togliatti was not pursued very thoroughly, especially after the Soviet C.P. adopted a resolution rapping Togliatti for his analysis. It was unfortunate, in my opinion, that the Soviet press never printed Togliatti's report.

And it is equally sad, I think, that the Soviet press has not carried the text, or even summaries of Tito's Pula speech. Though Pravda printed a long criticism of Tito it did not give its readers the opportunity to read what was being criticized. This contrasted sharply with the publication by the Yugoslav press of the Pravda criticism.

Pravda also argues that Tito blamed the "Soviet social system" for the evils of Stalinism. If Soviet readers had the text of Tito's speech before them they could see that this accusation is not true. They could read that Tito blamed "the bureaucratic apparatus" and the "disregard for the role and tendencies of the working class. . . ."

With the materials of the 20th Congress before them can Marxists in the Soviet Union or anywhere else deny that a system of bureaucracy had developed under Stalin? And that the working class was being denied the role it had when Lenin put forward the slogan: All power to the Soviets?

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