

TITO MEETS WITH EAST GERMAN COMMUNISTS

Nov. 18 (IPS)--President Tito of Yugoslavia visited the German Democratic Republic in the past week for talks on economic cooperation. During his visit, the GDR Communist Party (SED) paper Neues Deutschland carried articles featuring some of the best aspects of the Yugoslav League of Communists' (LCY) Tenth Congress in May 1974, which was the occasion of outstandingly cogent arguments for socialism in the advanced sector by Tito and the LCY.

Neues Deutschland in recent weeks has been a forum for the militant hard line taken by SED leaders who fear that the Soviet Union views them as already expendable for the sake of detente with capitalists.

Yugoslavia, suffering from over 20 per cent inflation, high unemployment, and disastrously accelerating debts arising from Rockefeller's oil hoax, is wisely interested in cooperation with the Soviet bloc countries. Besides the repeated stress on economic and scientific-technological cooperation at the Tito-SEC talks, Yugoslav representatives are negotiating closer ties with other East bloc countries and their organization Comecon, especially for the important common energy supply lines.

The statements of Tito and SED head Erich Honnecker emphasizing inter-party relations gained in importance because East German press discussion repeatedly identified the Tenth Congress as representative of LCY views. A guest article in Neues Deutschland by Milka Planinc, leader of the Croatian LCY branch, reviewed Tito's notion of workers' self-management as "a continuation of the revolutionary struggle of the working class" for control over allocation of social wealth. Neues Deutschland further welcomed Planinc's attack on nationalist, technocratic, and bureaucratic tendencies within the LCY.

In the context of the SED hardliners' necessary fight against the Russian-chauvinist tendency in the Soviet leadership to do business with Rockefeller regardless of the cost to Soviet allies, the LCY struggle indicated by Planinc is an important example for the hardliners to consider. This--and not the rhetoric about Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policies which dominated Western press coverage of the visit--is the crucial possibility opened up by the Tito-SED talks.

KISSINGER SPEECH ON ENERGY PROVOKES FRENCH FEARS

Nov. 18 (IPS)--French capitalist layers who are not aligned with the Rockefeller forces are reacting with horror to the speech on energy allocation among oil-consuming countries which Secretary of State Kissinger gave in Chicago Nov. 14.

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While clamoring that they are ready to help their friends in the "free world" solve the problems generated by the energy crisis, they balk at the idea of surrendering the dream of "independence" which President Giscard d'Estaing dredged up from the De Gaulle era to publicize his idea of a "tripartite conference" grouping oil-producers, oil-consumers, and Third World countries.

To these capitalists, the International Energy Agency (IEA) proposed by Kissinger threatens completely to isolate France if Giscard sticks to his "tripartite," supposedly "anti-imperialist" policy. On the other hand, joining the 16 nations in the IEA would be tantamount to a repudiation of the national honor.

Journalist Alain Vernay expresses this predicament eloquently in his Nov. 16-17 column in the daily newspaper Le Figaro:

"Paris would be in a difficult situation if [her partners] pledged to bring to the oil fund a participation in proportion to their national revenue, their foreign trade and their energy deficit.

"If that were the situation, it would be equivalent to an economic and financial quarantine for France, thus creating an intolerable situation within the Common Market and possibly leading to schisms or disintegration. Is it in the interest of the U.S. to weaken its trans-Atlantic allies at a time when Northern Europe tends to distance itself from Southern Europe, the most threatened with inflation and a lack of political consensus? It is doubtful....

"On the other hand, France has nothing to gain from staying on her own....What is the weight of secondary quarrels in the apocalyptic perspective evoked by the French president?"

Thus, the French will crawl for Rockefeller's favors, but grudgingly. The indignant Vernay concludes: "The way votes are weighted in the IEA [U.S.: 51 per cent; Japan: 18 per cent; West Germany: 11 per cent--i.e., the 80 per cent needed to constitute a "majority" of the 16!] retrospectively justifies the most extensive criticisms of M. Jobert."

Former French Foreign Minister Michel Jobert opposed the formation of IEA during the Washington Energy Conference last February.