

cations of El Salvador and Nicaragua—flying its new flag as a defender of freedom.

ALL IN ALL, THEREFORE, the “Iberian” difficulties are easily explicable. Felipe Gonzales wants to be known as a friend of Portugal, and wants to build new roads to join the countries. But this is what he was told by General Eanes, the Portuguese President (who himself comes from the *Raia* along the Spanish border): “. . . I know you’re not having an easy time of it with us Portuguese. When Spaniards talk badly about us, we get angry. When you talk nicely about us we, or at least many of us, suspect that behind the mask of hypocrisy one can spot an evil glint in the Spanish eye. And if you don’t talk about us at all, then obviously we have yet another example of old Spanish arrogance and negligence. . . .”

Indifference in Spain is the main response to the Portuguese question. One hears so often remarks to the effect that the “nice little Portuguese” shouldn’t be taken too seriously. Are opportunities here being lost? Both Soares and his predecessor, Francisco Balsemão, are constructive international-minded democrats; but doubtless the enlightened élite is not quite representative. In foreign affairs, now conducted by Minister Gama, there is the traditional cultivation of “non-Iberian distance”, which occasionally breaks out in argumentation and polemics between Madrid and Lisbon (as in the case of the Gama-Moran exchanges over a few unfortunate rhetorical phrases). Suddenly editors start recalling that one of Gama’s predecessors—this during the dictatorship—had written an inflammatory book (an utterly absurd pamphlet) which warned against allegedly imminent plans for a Spanish invasion of Portugal.

MUCH OF THIS MUTUALLY reinforcing resentment can be put down to the “great game of politics” as conducted by two traditionally wary establishments. My feeling is that it is true when liberal critics claim that the “common people”, Portugal’s poor, etc., are relatively free from such conventional mistrust and are indeed “Spain-friendly.” If I may refer to yet another public-opinion poll (this time *Expresso*’s) without fear of being contradicted by a rival poll of a rival newspaper, it would appear that a majority consider the two peoples to be “very much alike”, and the friendly cooperation between the two Iberian nations “could only bring advantages.” This is a rare burst of popular common sense. For the rest, at the moment, there are quarrels, suspicions, fears. Will not the more powerful Spanish economy “over-protect” the Portuguese? How can the Portuguese fishermen cope with the size and power of the Spanish fishery fleet? And, as I write, how can one trust the other when one (or the other) is so dependent on the United States and its arms supplies? Each claims, fatuously, to be “more independent” than the other. Neither is, really.

One day, soon perhaps, there will be an outburst of “Iberian” realism. But Iberia does not yet exist.

Report from Yugoslavia

Of Theory & “Praxis”



IT has been a long time—some nine years—since the sociologists of Yugoslavia last convened themselves in an academic congress. Why has there been such a long pause?

SUPEK: We last met in 1974, and within a year a scandal broke. I was at that time President of the association of social scientists, and I was summarily removed—at the order of the Yugoslav Com-

munist Party’s director of the central committee, Todo Kurtovic. This was ascribed to a certain work I had prepared for our philosophy summer-school at Korcula. The *Praxis* group’s members of the Belgrade faculty were also removed from office. It was clearly an intervention of the politicians into the academy, into science. The association thereafter was in the hands of characters (like Fuad Muhic from Bosnia) who weren’t sociologists at all but only carriers of political instructions and actually operated against the interests of research and social studies. Under such conditions, Yugoslavia’s sociologists couldn’t, and wouldn’t, work.

It was at the time a kind of re-Stalinisation of our political life. The ideological line is, accordingly, always more important than academic qualifications and scientific results. And today there are indeed politicians who want to sharpen the line—although there are to be sure others who feel that, in the present critical situation of the nation, we ought to be dealt with more reasonably. The result was that we could meet in Portorz recently in a rather good atmosphere, and I can only hope that we will be able to get together in a similar spirit in the future.

—The theme of your Congress was “Integration and Disinte-

RUDI SUPEK (who is now 70) is the veteran Yugoslav leader of the so-called “Praxis” group which has been trying valiantly to reform, revise, liberalise. We met him in the 1960s when he was hopeful, in the ’70s when he was despondent (and on the verge of arrest); now he looks back on the struggle with a mixture of optimism and pessimism. The vital question remains: Is a totalitarian system, especially a “Titoist” one (which has the special advantages of having been born in heresy, nurtured on anti-Stalinism sentiments, and benefiting from Western aid), capable of real and lasting regeneration from within? . . .

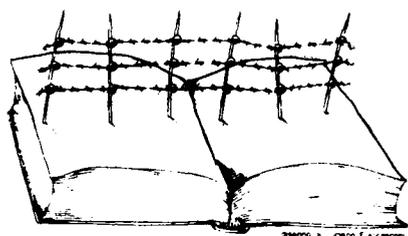
CARL GUSTAF STROEHM (who conducted this interview with Professor Supek) lives in Vienna and reports on Eastern Europe and the Balkans, writing regularly for “Die Welt” (Bonn).

gration in Yugoslav Society." Which disintegrative forces did you mean?

SUPEK: We are part of a conflict, an antagonism between the functions of power and the functions of participation. Power increasingly becomes a disintegrative factor. As a matter of fact we have in Yugoslavia the same difficulties as the countries of "real socialism" in Communist Eastern Europe, although their "model of organisation" happens to be rather different from ours. Theirs is an *étatiste* system, and we are trying to live and

work according to the principles of self-administration. But what has come about is the development of a kind of "decentralised Statism." The centres of state power are increasingly remote from the will of the people, and a *Nomenklatura* has grown up which nullifies any kind of democratic mechanism. In the matter of leaders and leadership, the so-called cadres, a species of "negative selection" has been at work. The politicians were eager to make use of precisely those persons who were ready and willing to function against the interests of their own professional groups and associations. At our recent

Poet in Prison: A Report from Belgrade



Belgrade

ACCORDING to the official Yugoslav terminology they are all "enemies of the socialist system", "opportunists", and sometimes "anarcho-liberals." They have been meeting every Monday (today for the seventh time) and crowd themselves into the rooms of the Serbian Writers Club in Belgrade's "French Street." They have been numbering about 200, and the meetings last some two hours—up to about 40 authors have come forward to speak or to read from their works.

THE POINT WAS TO MAKE a protest against the imprisonment of one of their colleagues, the poet Gojko Djogo, who was first sentenced to two, and then on appeal, to one year, because he (at least in the eyes of the Party) had published in his book "Woolly Times", a collection of his poems, lines which denigrated Tito.

FOR A WHILE it had appeared that the authorities would not go ahead with the carrying-out of the sentence. The controversy has been raging for two years now (since he was first arrested in May 1981), but on 28 March Djogo's sentence was official and final; and since then the Writers Club has been the scene of the Monday protest meetings. Djogo himself, following a nervous breakdown, was put into the Padinskoy Skeli prison near Belgrade. Last Monday the rumours were that the poet was suffering from bleeding ulcers, a consequence of the excitements and nervous tensions, and had been placed in an intensive ward of a Belgrade surgical clinic. He was still being guarded by uniformed police—until the chief doctor of the clinic also protested, and they changed into civilian clothes. The latest bulletin is that his general situation is too weak to allow for an operation.

THESE MONDAY MEETINGS in the Serbian Writers Club seem to have been of special concern to the authorities. What usually happened when somebody was considered by the Party to be an "oppositionist" was a quiet case of house arrest, a confinement to quarters where, at best, a few academic-scientific discussions were allowed to take place. The fate of the poet Djogo has taken the dissidents out of their isolation; into the open came the deputy director of the Academy of Science, Antonije Isaković, the professor of philosophy, Mihailo Marković, and the writer Slobodan Selenić. What they and their colleagues have achieved is a certain public consolidation of "oppositionists." One of the group of philosophers, Vojislav Stojanović, charged that the Yugoslav judiciary was a dependency of the Party, and that the real punishment for "political" misdemeanours was controlled by a small circle of high Party functionaries.

In another contribution to the Monday meetings, a lawyer (Ivan Janković) who had spent a month in jail for having taken part in an open demonstration in support of Polish Solidarity, reported on his experience behind bars. He spoke of the systematic degradation of human dignity, of the beatings and the corruption, of fear and violence, all taken together forming the basis of prison "discipline." A poet (Draguljub Ignjatović) recited a poem entitled "The Great Magician", making direct reference to Djogo's poem, "The Great Black God", which was taken by certain Party functionaries to be a slur against the late Marshal Tito.

Djogo himself wrote, when first arrested, an essay about his own poetry in which he said that his theme was "fear" and his verse infected with "the worst disease of the epoch. . . . Ask the philosophers, psychiatrists, sociologists, priests, ask yourselves, and you'll see: No period in history has induced so much fear as has ours. Angst, of gas-chambers, of Hiroshima. . . . I too am afraid, and I speak out in order to free myself from fear."

THE ALLEGED SLUR has had one surprising result: namely, raising the ideological question of how long the Tito Cult is to be maintained. Each year, for example,

there is still the old Tito-inspired "Youth Relay" which tours all the regions of the country for several months. It is an expensive spectacle, costing unbelievable millions; and critics bemoan its "low level" ("no longer really representative", they say, "of the cultural level we've now reached"). Serbian intellectuals have drawn up a petition to abolish the whole affair.

The public protests in Serbia may cause one to overlook the situation in Croatia where the "oppositionists" were dealt with massively—in order, indeed, to prevent the emergence in the post-Tito period of just such a permissive atmosphere as reigns in Belgrade these days. Recent sentences have been severe; on the poet Vlado Gotovac, the student Dobroslav Paraga, the scientist Marko Veselica. (The 28-year-old sociologist, Milan Soklič, has, according to an official statement in the Tanjug press agency, been sentenced to five years for "anti-State activity." The court found him guilty of appealing for the overthrow of the régime; among other incriminating quotes were that Yugoslavia is ruled with an iron hand, that elementary human rights are denied, and that a capitalist system would be better for Yugoslavia.) A note of relaxation was struck in the case of the historian and ex-Partisan General Franjo Tudjman, who was too ill to be incarcerated. If Djogo's health declines further the popular protests may well become disorderly.

IN THE SERBIAN LEADERSHIP there seems to be no unanimity about the tough attitude against Djogo, even though the hard-liners (as in the dismissal of the Politika editor-in-chief, Trajlović) have got their way. Among them is the old Tito loyalist, General Nikolai Ljubicić, formerly Defence Minister and Serbian President. It is well known that he often interfered with a censor's blue-pencil in the editing of Politika; and he remains a defender of the Tito Cult.

Some joy for the "opposition" comes with the resignation of the Court judge in the Djogo case. Venijamin Pejović has expressed his "shame" at having followed Party orders to sentence the poet to two years. He intends to return to private law practice.

H.F.

Congress we could spot several of these types, although none of them came forward to speak during the proceedings.

So we now have an absolutely negative approach to cadres, to representative leadership. Yugoslavia, which in the 1950s showed so many positive signs of healthy development, has retrogressed, and has fallen back into very low productivity and perhaps the highest inflation rate in Europe.

—*How serious a problem is it, this failure of communication between politicians and the academic élite, the scientists, sociologists, et al.?*

SUPEK: There was a time when relations were pretty good. We would receive subventions for our research institutes and our scientific work. In the 1970s a certain wave of Nationalism hit a high point and the time of reckoning came for whatever forces of liberalism there were. How liberal had we become? Well, the first big step had been the dissolution of the Party schools and the creation of faculties for political science at the universities. This meant a general strengthening of the tendency that the scientists should help create opportunities for socialism—and not be at the service of a dogmatic ideology. Now the tide is, as I say, flowing in the opposite direction. The academic faculties for social studies are being purged and liquidated, and Party schools are being re-established. There are now special efforts being made to enable these Party schools to award Master's degrees and even PhDs, although their edu-

cational programme is below any proper academic standard.

This amounts to a negative course of a new ideologisation. Not even in the Soviet-Communist East have such directions been taken, for they know very well that without science there can be no flourishing technology, and without technology no industry (and without industry no armament). With us in Yugoslavia both science and technology are suffering from absolute neglect. What we do is to import our technology: which is to say that a commercial mentality is at work, not a creative scientific one.

—*Do you see a way out of the troubles?*

SUPEK: We will simply have to return to the normal criteria of a functioning society. Which is to say that we must guarantee a working basis for the normal role of science, technology, and the professional associations. The selection of our cadres, our leaders and representatives, must be a positive process—and that is only possible with an increasing democratisation of our society. Surely this must begin in the Yugoslav Communist Party itself. When elections are held for Party leaders there must be secret ballots which include several candidates for the various posts. If this were to be instituted, certain politicians who speak loudly and make big decisions would fall by the wayside. These are the negative personalities who make their way constantly to the top, not only in the Party but throughout the powerful positions of all our social organisations.

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Happiness (1983).

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