

A. ROMANIA - YUGOSLAVIA. — Visit of Yugoslav Government Delegation to China. - Tension between Romania and Soviet Bloc. - Visit of Chinese Military Delegation to Romania. - Mr. Brezhnev's Visit to Yugoslavia.

The Romanian Government's contribution to arranging President Nixon's proposed visit to China, and the gradual improvement in Yugoslavia's relations with China and Albania, led to a period of tension in relations between Romania and Yugoslavia on the one hand and the Soviet bloc on the other. In reply to a Soviet *démarche* of Aug. 18 and a violent propaganda campaign in the Soviet, Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian Press, President Ceausescu of Romania reaffirmed on Aug. 20 Romania's determination to develop friendly relations with all the socialist countries and to pursue its own independent policy, and as a gesture of solidarity a Chinese military delegation visited Romania on Aug. 22-31. Soviet pressure on Romania and Yugoslavia was subsequently relaxed, and on Sept. 22-25 Mr. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, paid a visit to Yugoslavia, during which he recognized Yugoslavia's right to pursue an independent internal and foreign policy. Details of these and related developments are given below.

Mr. Tepavac's Visit to China. - Strained Relations between Yugoslavia and Soviet Bloc.

A Yugoslav Government delegation led by Mr. Mirko Tepavac, Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, visited Peking on June 9-15 at the Chinese Government's invitation, and on June 12 met the Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-lai, and the acting Foreign Minister, Mr. Chi Peng-fei.

At a banquet for the Yugoslav delegation, Mr. Li Hsien-nien (a Deputy Premier and a member of the Communist Party Politburo) said on June 9: "The Yugoslav people are a people with a glorious revolutionary tradition. In recent years they have withstood foreign pressure and waged resolute struggles against the interference, subversion and threats of aggression by the super-Powers. The Chinese people admire the Yugoslav people's spirit of defying brute force. . . . Our Yugoslav friends can rest assured that in your struggle to oppose foreign aggression and defend national independence and State sovereignty you can expect firm support from the Chinese people. . . . We are glad to see that in recent years the Yugoslav people have in international affairs firmly opposed imperialist armed aggression against and occupation of other countries. . . ."

Mr. Tepavac's visit marked an important stage in the improvement in Sino-Yugoslav relations which had been in progress for the past three years. Relations between the two countries were extremely strained from 1958 to 1968, throughout which period Yugoslavia was violently attacked in Chinese official statements as the extreme example of "revisionism". The opposition expressed by both countries to the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia and the "Brezhnev doctrine", however [see 22993 A; 23291 A; 23377 A; 24031 A], led to a *rapprochement* between them; Yugoslavia adopted a neutral attitude towards the Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969, and diplomatic relations, which had been at *chargé d'affaires* level since 1958, were raised to ambassadorial level in 1970 [see 24184 B].

Relations between Yugoslavia and Albania also showed a gradual improvement from 1968 onwards, culminating in an agreement to raise their respective diplomatic missions to ambassadorial level [see 24495 A]. Mr. Iowan Pechenovich, who was appointed Yugoslav Ambassador to Albania on June 14, comes from the Kosovo-Metohija autonomous region, the majority of the population of which is of Albanian origin.

Mr. Tepavac's visit to China coincided with a period of increased tension in relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet bloc [see page 24735]. The Yugoslav Government was reported to have made a verbal protest to the Soviet Ambassador at the beginning of June against the activities in Moscow of Yugoslav "Cominformists" who had taken refuge in the Soviet Union after the break between Yugoslavia and the Cominform in 1948. Yugoslav sources also suggested that the Soviet Government was encouraging the activities of extreme right-wing Croat nationalists in Western Europe, who had taken advantage of the controversy inside Yugoslavia over the amendment of the Constitution to launch a propaganda campaign in favour of Croatian independence.

Yugoslav Relations with Bulgaria. - The Macedonian Question.

The Yugoslav Government strongly protested in a Note of July 8 against two violations of Yugoslav airspace by Bulgarian military aircraft alleged to have occurred on July 4. In addition to the pressure to which Yugoslavia was being subjected at that time by the Soviet bloc, including Bulgaria, relations between the two countries were further complicated by the long-standing dispute over the Macedonian question.

Macedonia was overrun by Slavs in the seventh and eighth centuries and subsequently came under Turkish rule, remaining part of the Ottoman Empire for several centuries. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 the Treaty of San Stefano established a "Greater Bulgaria" which extended to the Aegean and the Adriatic and included the whole of Macedonia; the Treaty of Berlin, concluded in 1878, however, restored Macedonia to Turkey. It was partitioned between Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece after the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, and Bulgaria's unsatisfied claims led her to ally herself with Germany in the First and Second World Wars.

Since the establishment of the Federal Republic of Macedonia in 1944 the Macedonians have been recognized in Yugoslavia as a distinct nationality. In order to end dissension over this question President Tito proposed in the same year that Yugoslavia and Bulgaria should unite to form a Balkan Federation, in which Macedonia would be one of the constituent republics. Although this plan was supported by Mr. Georgi Dimitrov when Prime Minister of Bulgaria, it was abandoned as a result of the strong opposition it encountered from both the Soviet Union and the Western Powers. The Bulgarian Government subsequently adopted the view that the Macedonians were a part of the Bulgarian nation, and the number of Bulgarian citizens officially registered as Macedonians fell from 173,862 in 1958 to 3,750 in 1967. The Bulgarian Government's attitude aroused fears in Yugoslavia that it aimed to incorporate all Macedonians into a "Greater Bulgaria", which were increased by official celebrations of the 90th anniversary of the Treaty of San Stefano held in 1968. The Greek Government also refuses to recognize the Macedonians as a nationality, describing its own Macedonian minority as "Slav-speaking Greeks".

Attempts in recent years to reach agreement on this problem have all proved unsuccessful. At talks between Mr. Tepavac and Mr. Ivan Bashev (the Bulgarian Foreign Minister) in Belgrade on Dec. 8-13, 1969, the differences over the Macedonian question were so great that other aspects of relations between the two countries were not even dealt with in detail. Mr. Todor Zhivkov (then Bulgarian Prime Minister) proposed in a letter to President Tito in July 1970 that they should meet in order to settle the differences between them. President Tito accepted this suggestion in principle, but stipulated that agreement must first be reached on some essential points. At talks held in Sofia on Nov. 9-10 the Bulgarian delegation was reported to have insisted that the Macedonian community in Yugoslavia was ethnically Bulgarian, whilst giving assurances that Bulgaria had no territorial claims on Yugoslavia; in consequence the proposed meeting between President Tito and Mr. Zhivkov did not take place.

The Crimea Meeting. - Press Campaign against Romania by Soviet Bloc.

Relations between Romania and the Soviet bloc became extremely strained in August, following President Ceausescu's visit to China early in June and the announcement on July 15 of President Nixon's forthcoming visit to Peking [see 24745 A; 24765 A]. It had already been officially disclosed in April that Romania had acted as a diplomatic channel in attempting to promote improved relations between the United States and China [see page 24646], and it was generally assumed that President Ceausescu had helped to secure Chinese agreement to President Nixon's proposed visit, which was viewed with deep suspicion in Moscow as an attempt to bring pressure on the Soviet Union.

The Communist Party leaders of the Soviet Union, Mongolia, and all the Warsaw Pact countries except Romania met in the Crimea on Aug. 2. Among those present were Mr. Brezhnev, President Podgorny of the Soviet Union, President Zhivkov of Bulgaria, Dr. Husak (General Secretary of the Czechoslovak party), Herr Honecker (First Secretary of the East German Socialist Unity Party), Mr. Kádár (First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), Mr. Gierek (First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party) and Marshal Tsedenbal (the Mongolian Prime Minister). The meeting was the first between leaders of the Warsaw Pact countries from which Romania had been excluded since the Bratislava meeting in 1968, held shortly before the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia [see page 22891].

A communiqué, which described the talks as "a friendly meeting of leaders of the Communist and Workers' parties of several socialist States, now on holiday in the Soviet Union, and of Soviet statesmen, party and Government leaders", stated that it had "touched upon topical questions concerning the development of the world Communist movement and also upon foreign policy problems of mutual interest. It was stressed that the entire course of international development bears out the correctness of the appraisals and conclusions of the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of 1969. . . for further strengthening the unity of the world Communist and working-class movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and the struggle against right-wing and 'left-wing' opportunism" [see 23437 A].

Although the communiqué made no reference to China, the presence of Marshal Tsedenbal suggested that relations with China were one of the main subjects discussed. The reaffirmation of the statement adopted by the 1969 conference, which Romania had signed only with reservations, and the condemnation of "right-wing and left-wing opportunism"—terms