

THE BALKAN COOPERATION IN PERSPECTIVE*

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During the last two or three years the Balkan relations have seemed to enter a new phase of cooperation. This is largely due to Rumania's independent course within the Eastern bloc, giving way to better relations between Yugoslavia and Rumania, and partly to Turkey's policy of establishing close relations with the Eastern European countries as a result of her need for friends in the Cyprus dispute with Greece. Bulgaria, on the other hand, is proud of being the champion of regional cooperation attempts she has been showing since 1964 for the purpose of forming a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans. Greece, for her part, is quite satisfied with her improved relations with Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. The Macedonian question, the "powder-keg" of the Balkans, seems to create no great conflict, except some occasional angry notes among Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece.

For an optimistic observer this scene proves to be an excellent material for regional cooperation. This may be so. But the ingredients of this material must be carefully examined under the magnifying glass of half a century of Balkan history before an opinion is expressed on the nature and extent of such a cooperation.

I

The Balkans is one of the few regions in the world where so many attempts have been made for the purpose of creating understanding and solidarity among the nations. But nearly all the attempts have failed on account of some important regional characteristics. These can be summarized as follows:

* This article is largely based upon my doctoral dissertation, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye, 1945-1965* (The Balkan Developments and Turkey, 1945-1965), Ankara, Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1969.

From the historical point of view, the Balkans have always been a subject of conflict among the great powers of Europe because of its strategic importance. After having established bases in the Balkans, the Goths, Huns, Mongols, Turks and the Germans invaded Eastern and Western Europe;¹ the convenient communication routes and passes to and from the region have facilitated the process. Unlike the Iberian and Italian Peninsulas, separated from the continent by such geographic barriers as the Pyrenees and the Alps, the Balkan Peninsula is, geographically, not separated from Europe. The Balkan mountains easily give passage from Asia to Europe and vice versa. Throughout the 19th Century in which the Balkan peoples gained their independence from the Ottoman Empire, the region had been a ground of conflict among Russia, Britain, Austria-Hungary and Germany; the powers were fully aware of the motto: "Who rules the Balkans from outside the Balkans has power to threaten Europe to West and Russia to the East."² Thus, it proved to be very difficult for the regional states to come together as the peninsula has become a scene of big power politics.

Secondly, apart from the fact that the Balkan states, pressed together in a relatively small area, have not had the means of forming a defensive bloc, they have also been unable to create a mutual understanding among themselves. A number of geographical, historical, ethnic, and religious causes had brought about regional enmities, territorial conflicts and finally the fragmentation of the peninsula. The Balkan mountains, though not a natural barrier to the invaders, had separated the Balkan peoples, and prevented communication among them. And this lack of communication, besides hindering the establishment of mutual understanding among the Balkan nations, had also generated strong nationalism which in turn aggravated regional conflicts.

In view of these characteristics let us now trace the attempts for Balkan cooperation.

1 Frederick L. Schuman, "East Europe and Two Worlds," *Current History*, Vol. XI, No. 63 (November, 1963), p. 358.

2 *Ibid.*

II

The first noteworthy attempt was the *Balkan League* of 1912. Until 1911 the Balkan developments had clearly shown that the big powers of Europe wanted to play with the Balkan states as if with pawns on a chessboard. The Balkan statesmen realizing this and the fact that any attempt aiming at a big-power alliance against the Ottoman Empire would lead them to nowhere, had united among themselves and after having formed the Balkan League succeeded in defeating the Ottoman armies in 1912.³ This victory could have materialized the Balkan Federation which the Balkan diplomats had been planning to establish since the middle of the 19th Century. But the territorial conflicts among the victors, interference on the part of the big powers of Europe, and the military nature of the League had proved a durable understanding impossible. After the military victory the Balkan states had no other choice than fighting among themselves for a solution which each state alleged to be just and workable, and thus the Balkan League had collapsed in a traditional Balkan way.

After the First World War the Balkan states entered into a series of internal and external disorders. The reasons for internal disorders can be summarized as the struggle for power, the weakness of the Balkan economy and the fascist dictatorships while the fundamental source of external disorders was the conflict between the "revisionist" Bulgaria and the other "anti-revisionist" Balkan countries. To this we add big powers' interference in the Balkan affairs. It is impossible to overlook the fact that any attempt at international cooperation among the Balkan states has been frustrated by international conflicts among the great European powers.

Despite these hardships, the Balkan countries endeavoured to form a Balkan union in the inter-war period. This is the *Balkan Entente* (the Pact of Mutual Understanding) of 1934 between Greece, Turkey, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. Bulgaria's revisionist foreign policy and the friction between Turkey and Greece over the population-exchange scheme laid down at the Lausanne

³ For a detailed study on the First Balkan League, see: Doros Alastos, *The Balkan and Europe, A Study of Peace and Forces of War*, London, John Lane the Bodley Head, 1937, pp. 17-30.

Treaty of 1923, were the factors hindering a general *rapprochement* among the Balkan countries. But, after the Greco-Turkish *détente* in 1930 the way was cleared to the Balkan Conference that took place between 1930–1933 in which Bulgaria had also participated.⁴ Although an improvement was recorded in the field of mutual understanding at these conferences, nothing was accomplished on economic and political issues, as the protection of minority rights and a Bulgarian outlet to the Aegean. Thus, Bulgaria and Albania, which were within the sphere of influence of the revisionist Italy, withdrew from the conferences at the end of which the above-stated four powers, taking into consideration the revisionist policies of Bulgaria and Albania, and the necessity of maintaining the *status-quo* in the Balkans formed the Balkan Entente.⁵ Under the provisions of this treaty, the four states guaranteed one another's Balkan frontiers and undertook to consult together should any threat to their common interests arise.

I do not want to go into details about the later developments of the Entente, but it is of great importance from the viewpoint of Balkan cooperation to lay down the principal objectives of the Entente and the factors which prepared the ground for its total collapse. If one of the objectives of the grouping was Bulgarian revisionism, the other and equally important one was the often overlooked aim of preventing a possible *rapprochement* between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the two Slavic nations of the Balkans, by way of drawing the latter into an "anti-revisionist" grouping. This would serve to eliminate the danger of the establishment of a powerful Slavic bloc in the region. In view of this aspect of the Balkan Entente, let us now summarize the reasons for its collapse.

First of all, the Balkan Entente was a combination of small states with a limited military objective which was to guarantee their Balkan frontiers against an aggression from a small state, namely Bulgaria. There was no guarantee against an aggression from big European powers, for instance, the revisionist Italy

4 For the resolutions of these conferences, see: Robert Lee Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Time*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1956, pp. 157–158; Alastos, *op. cit.*, ss. 47–57.

5 For the text of the Balkan Entente, see: *Düstur* (A government digest of treaties, laws and regulations), III· Tertip, Cilt 15, s. 185.

and Germany. Taking this fact into consideration, Turkey wanted from the very start to form a strong bloc capable of defending the region against the big predatory powers, but her endeavours proved to be of no avail.

Secondly, the mistake of pre-war diplomacy was repeated by dividing the Balkan states into two hostile blocs. The Entente was hastily formed before exhausting the possible ways of gaining Bulgaria into the grouping by territorial arrangements that would not endanger the vital interest of the other powers and by holding conferences on the minority rights Bulgaria was so eager to negotiate. It was stated then that a Balkan union excluding Bulgaria and Albania could not be considered as a real Balkan grouping.⁶ As we shall see, this mistake will be repeated even after the Second World War by an effort to draw Yugoslavia into a new grouping that would again divide the region into two hostile blocs, the outcome of which would again be a complete failure.

Thirdly, the Balkan Entente was not a real *entente*, but a military alliance like the Balkan League of 1912. When the circumstances necessitating a military alliance changes or disappears, the maintenance of the grouping appears to be meaningless. Accordingly, Yugoslavia sought to find a way of normalizing her relations with Bulgaria, the country that could well provoke 600,000 Macedonians against this fragile multiracial state encircled by such revisionist countries as Hungary, Italy and Albania. The Yugoslav-Bulgarian *détente* took place in 1937, a move contrary to the spirit of the Balkan alliance. Greece, fearful of arising Italian susceptibility, was reluctant to defend Yugoslavia in the event of a joint Italian-Albanian aggression. Turkey, for her part, could do nothing to foster the Balkan Entente, however hard she tried.⁷

As a result partly of these weaknesses and partly of the invincible *Drang-nach-Osten* policy of the Axis Powers, the whole

⁶ Alastos, *op. cit.*, 70.

⁷ For Turkey's endeavours especially during the World War II to strengthen the Balkan defensive system, see: Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," *International Affairs*, Vol. XXIII, No. 4 (October 1947); A.C. Edwards, "The Impact of the War on Turkey," *International Affairs*, Vol. XXII, No. 3 (July, 1946).

defensive system disintegrated, and the Balkan countries fell, one after the other, under the Nazi invasion with the sole exception of Turkey.

After the Second World War, the Balkan scene changed rapidly and fundamentally. As a result of the establishment of Communist régimes in four of the Balkan countries, the old national antagonisms seemed, on the surface at least, to disappear from the Balkans. The region, having a disorderly political scene before and during the war, was divided into two solid antagonistic camps. This was the period when an unusual alliance of the Yugoslavs, the Bulgarians, and the Albanians was trying to establish a Communist régime in Greece, which in return sought, together with Turkey, American assistance by way of the Truman Doctrine in 1947.

Immediately after the Second World War, at a time when Communist régimes were being established, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union tried hard to create a Communist bloc in South-eastern Europe by uniting the Southern Slavs. This was supposed to be the "real" South Slav Federation, the age-long idealistic dream of the former Balkan diplomats. Up to 1948, the scheme, sponsored by Marshall Tito and supported by the Soviet Union, seemed to unite the Communist Parties of the region, and a Communist monolithic bloc was partly realized after the conclusion of treaties of alliance among the Communist Balkan countries in 1947. Greece and Turkey were highly suspicious of these arrangements, and both countries considered the Greek civil war as part of a grand design, namely the establishment of a Communist bloc in the Balkans. This was an important factor which forced the two countries to seek for American assistance which was rendered by the Truman Doctrine. Attempts at the creation of a South Slav Federation and the Truman Doctrine clearly shaped the two-bloc appearance of the Balkans, and initiated the cold war in the region. The peninsula was again divided between two hostile blocs, one trying to enlarge its sphere of influence by such ways as diplomatic pressure on Turkey,⁸ and material and moral aid to the insurgents

⁸ After World War II the Soviet Union had followed an openly hostile policy against Turkey, and after abolishing the Turco-Soviet Treaty of Non-aggression and Neutrality of 1925 in 1945, demanded military bases on the Turkish Straits and some territories from the north-eastern parts of Turkey.

in Greece, and the other trying to contain the Communist drive in Greece and Turkey. This situation in the Balkans continued until 1948, when Tito's Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform.

Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform was an important event in view of its far-reaching effects on the Balkan developments. This event not only gave the Western Powers an opportunity to counterbalance the Communist pressure in the Balkans by trying to win Yugoslavia to the Western bloc, but also put an end to the idea of creating a South Slav Federation which, if realized, would greatly effect the balance of power in the Balkans. This failure to bring Yugoslavia and Bulgaria closer together restored a more familiar pattern in the Balkans. The unusual alliance of Serbs and Bulgars against Greeks was dissolved,⁹ at the end of which Tito's refusal to aid insurgents in Greece greatly helped the Greek government to cope with the civil war which ended in 1950. This new Balkan grouping with Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia on the one side and the remaining countries on the other bears close resemblance to the alignment of forces in the interwar period. Just as the inter-war alignment had given way to the Balkan Entente of 1934, so the new Balkan alignment prepared the ground for a new Balkan cooperation, namely the Balkan Pact of 1953.

The *Balkan Pact* was established on the short-termed interests of the three powers. After the expulsion from the Cominform, the Soviet Union and her satellites applied military and economic blockade against Yugoslavia, and this was an opportunity for the Yugoslavs to form new and more friendly relations with the West. Indeed, their isolated situation required that they lose no time in reaching with the Western powers an understanding that would offer them protection against an attack, annihilation and economic collapse.¹⁰ The possibility of a Soviet or satellite attack was very large. This threat led Yugoslavia to form an understanding with Greece and Turkey. Other factors effecting Yugoslavia's new course were the rapid deterioration of relations between Yugoslavia and Italy over the Trieste ques-

9 "The Russian Riposte in Eastern Europe," *Survey of International Affairs*, 1947-1948, p. 176.

10 Wolff, *op. cit.*, s. 410.

tion, and the fear that the Italian politicians were following a policy for the eventual return of Italy into the Balkans. This forced the Yugoslav leaders to seek alignment with Greece and Turkey; they wanted to make it quite clear to Rome that the Balkans were reserved for the Balkan peoples.¹¹

The Soviet and satellite threat, and moreover Bulgaria's expulsion of 250,000 Turks from Bulgaria in 1950 were equally menacing to Turkey. In the face of an aggression from Bulgaria the Eastern Thrace and Istanbul would be very vulnerable due to the fact that the Turkish Thrace could not be held and that the Turkish forces would have to retire to the Straits to cover Istanbul.¹² Moreover, Turkey, under the impact of repeated Russian provocation, sought entrance into the NATO and now the Turkish leaders were very eager to play a key role as a "catalytic agent between various groupings and attitudes in the free world."¹³ Therefore, Turkey took the initiative in developing closer relations with Yugoslavia, the country which would be equally menaced if the forces of the satellites were to move in the Balkans.

Greece had just come out of a civil war supported by her northern neighbours. Between Bulgaria and Greece there was a long frontier which Greece had found it very difficult to protect since 1946; the Greek leaders were anxious of a possible threat from Albania, the country which was militarily supported by the Soviet Union. Accordingly, an alliance with Yugoslavia and Turkey against Albania and Bulgaria would give Greece security in the event of an attack like the one in the inter-war period.

Upon these interests and considerations the Balkan Pact was formed between Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey on April, 28, 1953.¹⁴ Under the provisions of the pact, the three govern-

11 *The New York Times*, September 7, 1952.

12 Sir Knox Helm, "Turkey and Her Defence Problems," *International Affairs*, Vol. XXX, No. 4 (October 1954), pp. 438-439.

13 Ellen D. Ellis, "Turkey, 1955," *Current History*, Vol. XXIX, No. 168 (August, 1955), p. 96.

14 For the text, see: *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, C. 34, p. 1348. It must be noted that the Western powers wholeheartedly supported the creation of such a grouping, because in this way the Yugoslavian gap in the Western defence system stretching from the North Atlantic area to the Eastern Turkey would be filled.

ments agreed to consult each other on all problems of mutual interest; to hold at least annual conferences of foreign ministers; to consider their problems of security in concert; to continue cooperation among the three general staffs; to cooperate in the economic, technical, and cultural fields; not to conclude any agreement which might run counter to this one and so forth. It is beyond our subject to trace the developments of the pact, but it is necessary to note that the Balkan Pact was developed into a military alliance on August 9, 1954. With this military alliance which was signed in Bled (Yugoslavia), the signatories agreed to regard an act of aggression against any of them as an act of aggression against all of them. Individually or collectively, they would help the party attacked with all the means at their disposal, including armed resistance. Consultation among the three powers would take place if the international situation should deteriorate, or if another power, with whom any of the three had an alliance, should be attacked.

This last Balkan cooperation ceased to operate in the second year of its existence, and was tacitly abolished by Greece and Yugoslavia in 1959 and 1960, respectively. The reasons for its collapse are not far to seek. The two principal factors which favoured a *rapprochement* among Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey, were the common threat of Communism, and the absence of any basic conflict. Since June 1955, when a Soviet delegation headed by Bulgarin and Khrushchev visited Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav - Soviet relations have developed markedly. Tito, having regarded the threat of the Soviet Union as diminished, began to minimize the Balkan Pact's military aspects and emphasized its economic and social importance, a view which was not shared by her allies. On the other hand, in 1955, there appeared the Turco-Greek differences over Cyprus. The conditions necessitating a military alliance had changed and thus the maintenance of the Balkan Pact appeared to be meaningless.

Many similarities can be drawn between the Balkan Entente of 1934 and the Balkan Pact of 1953. Both were military alliances with limited objectives and collapsed as the conditions necessitating them changed. Both of them aimed at drawing Yugoslavia away from the Slavs and thus preventing the formation of a strong Slav bloc in the Balkans. But in both cases, Yugoslavia

felt the need of normalizing her relations with the Slav world immediately after signing the documents of "Balkan" cooperation. The Balkan Entente and the Balkan Pact were unsuccessful in establishing a Balkan understanding beyond the limits of military cooperation. The Balkan states seemed to forget that there were many other spheres of cooperation which would form a durable understanding and solidarity among themselves. Finally, neither alliance was the spontaneous outcome of a conscious Balkan cooperation, but was the extension of big power politics that presented itself in the Balkan Peninsula.

III

Taking this course of Balkan cooperation into consideration, let us now see the proposals made since the dissolution of the Balkan Pact for the alleged purpose of creating a real and durable understanding among the Balkan peoples.

The first proposal came from the Rumanian Prime Minister Chivu Stoica in September, 1957. Stoica sent a message to the Prime Ministers of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia, proposing a Prime Ministers' conference of six Balkan countries in one of their capitals before the end of 1957, in order to promote cooperation among their countries.¹⁵ The "Stoica Plan" was considered in the West as a component part of a Soviet plan of a neutral belt of lands stretching from the north of Europe, through the middle of the continent to the Mediterranean; the other parts were the Gomulka and the Rapacki plans.¹⁶ It is a fact that this proposal could not be made without the prior consent of the Soviet Union, and thus it must be considered as "national in form and Soviet in content."¹⁷ But, it had two important aspects quite different from the earlier attempts at Balkan cooperation. Firstly, Stoica's idea of Balkan cooperation was all-inclusive: all of the six Balkan countries,

¹⁵ For the text of the message, see: *East Europe*, Vol. VI, No. 11 (November, 1957), pp. 55-56.

¹⁶ David J. Dallin, *Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin*, London, Methuen and Company Ltd., 1962, pp. 502-503.

¹⁷ Hans E. Tütsch, "East Europe and the Non-Communist World," *East Europe in the Sixties*, Stephen Fischer-Galati, ed., London, Frederick A. Praeger, 1963, p. 223.

irrespective of their ideological stands, were to be included in the cooperation. Cognizant of the fundamental cause of the past failures of the Balkan cooperation, Stoica emphasized this view in his message:

"I would also like to emphasize that the understanding between the Balkan countries is not meant to become a grouping in opposition to other states outside it, nor a hindrance on the road of developing friendship with states which are not a part of the regional understanding in the Balkan area."

Secondly, contrary to the Western interpretation, Stoica was realistic enough not to propose the formation of a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans. Perhaps, to his mind, the time was not ripe for such a definite point; after an understanding has been reached on general principles, this point could have been worked on. His general principles of Balkan cooperation were closer and united cooperation in economic development, the idea that unsolved problems and disputes among the Balkan countries must not hinder inter-Balkan cooperation, and the "growth of mutual understanding, esteem and friendship" among the Balkan peoples through such cultural relations as "mutual visits of men of art, professors, students, and tourists." These were the purposes for which he proposed a conference among the heads of government of the six Balkan countries.

The Albanian and Bulgarian governments accepted the Rumanian proposal, while the Yugoslav government accepted it with the reservation that all Balkan countries should agree to participate. The Greek and Turkish governments declined the Rumanian invitation in September, 1957. The Scheme was considered by the latter two governments as an attempt to draw them away from NATO; while Rumania has continued to hope for some form of eventual agreement by unilaterally reducing her own armed forces by 20% in 1958.¹⁸

The Rumanian Prime Minister repeated his proposal in June, 1959. Stoica specifically proposed that the Balkan Prime Ministers with the inclusion of Italy, should sign a collective security treaty pledging their countries to settle all differences by peaceful means; that the Balkan countries should renounce

18 Joseph Rothschild, *Communist Eastern Europe*, New York, Walker and Co., 1954, p. 46.

nuclear weapons, rockets, and guided missiles; and that these arrangements should be guaranteed by the great powers.¹⁹ The second Stoica proposal has three characteristics quite different from that of the first one. The prime concern of the plan was the formation of a nuclear-free zone in the region. Its ultimate aim was clear: the dismantling of the American rocket bases in Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Besides, the Soviet support behind the proposal was more easily discerned compared with that of the first one; and lastly, Italy was included in the scope of the cooperation which clearly indicated that the aim of the proposal was the American bases in South-eastern Europe. Largely due to these features, the second Stoica plan has become a subject of lengthy repercussions and interpretations. Khrushchev twice repeated the proposal, once in Tirana and then in Sofia in 1959, and announced that the Soviet Union would set up rocket bases in all the countries of the Warsaw Pact, if the West rejected his proposal for a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans.²⁰ If one of the reasons of this effective support was the rocket bases recently established in South-eastern Europe, the other one was closely related to the Balkan Pact of 1953. The Soviet leaders grew suspicious of the possibility of revival of the Pact, due to the Greco-Turkish *rapprochement* in 1959 through their agreement on the Cyprus question which had formerly rendered the pact ineffective in 1955, and to the bad relations between Moscow and Belgrade because of the latter's "revisionist" Party Programme of 1958. They were not sure of the course Yugoslavia would follow.

The Stoica and Khrushchev proposals were again declined by the NATO countries. From 1959 onwards the country that endeavoured to form a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans by way of a close cooperation was Bulgaria. But, contrary to the first Stoica Plan, these overtures were not of a nature that would form a durable understanding among the Balkan peoples by way of a broad cooperation in all fields, but were mere attempts aimed at a limited and untimely objective of creating an atom-free zone in the region.

Parallel to these attempts, the Balkan states have initiated a series of meetings since 1961 for the purpose of promoting

¹⁹ *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1959-1960, p. 16908.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, s. 16907.

understanding among the Balkan nations. These were the meetings of the Committee for Balkan Understanding in which Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece participated. Turkey, labelling the meetings as a "leftist move" and Albania which broke away from Moscow in 1961, did not attend although they too had been invited. These meetings could be an ideal forum for the future Balkan cooperation by enabling contact among the Balkan statesmen if it were not for such typical Balkan stumbling-blocs as the Greek-Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute over the perennial Macedonian question, Greece's endeavours to use the meetings as an ideal context for her anti-Turkish drives, especially after the Cyprus question was aggravated in 1963, and for the resolutions advocating that the Balkans be made a "zone of peace" by dismounting nuclear weapons from the area,²¹ which in turn greatly affected the Turkish and Albanian absence.²²

IV

These were the unsuccessful attempts at Balkan cooperation from the collapse of the Balkan Pact up to the present time. Let us now view bilateral relations between the Balkan countries which have been of great importance as they would form the basis on which future Balkan cooperation is to be based.

I have already noted that the Balkan cooperation based on *Bulgarian-Yugoslav* feud can never turn into a lasting cooperation in view of half a century of Balkan developments; thus the relations between the two countries are important from the point of such a cooperation.

"... Our positions on many problems of international politics are identical. We believe that our ideological differences, as we have more than once emphasized, should not constitute an obstacle to the broadening of cooperation between our two countries. It takes no great intelligence to understand that it is in the interest of neither the Bulgarian and Yugoslav peoples, nor of peace and progress in the Balkans and in the world to return to the times when mutual attacks predominated in our relations..."²³

²¹ *East Europe*, Vol. XI, No. 4 (April, 1962), p. 34; Vol. XII, No. 7 (July, 1963), p. 34.

²² Albania considered the "atom-free zone" attempts as a plan to weaken the Albanian defence against Yugoslavia and Greece with which the Soviet Union had to establish close relations in order to induce them to participate in the "atom-free zone" scheme.

²³ *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XVI, No. 45 (December 5, 1962), pp. 9-10.

This is from a speech by the Bulgarian Party Leader Todor Zhivkov at the Eighth Congress of Bulgarian Communist Party in December, 1962. After 1962 the Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations have developed markedly by way of cultural agreements²⁴ trade protocols and mutual visits.²⁵ This thaw, after many years of strained relations between the two countries, was largely due to Khrushchev's visit to Bulgaria in 1962, in the course of which he announced that the time had come to reestablish relations with the largest of the Balkan countries "in all directions." This change in Khrushchev's attitude towards Yugoslavia was closely related with his policy of obtaining support in the ideological dispute between Moscow and Peking, and of materializing an atom-free zone in the Balkans which necessitated Yugoslavia's participation. In 1965, President Tito visited Sofia and went so far as to remark that "creating brotherhood and unity with the Bulgarian peoples" was easier than "achieving cooperation between our own republics in Yugoslavia."²⁶ In the official *communiqué* issued at the end of this visit it was stated that "Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, as socialist countries, direct their foreign policy toward expanding economic and cultural relations and mutually advantageous collaboration with the Balkan countries irrespective of their social order,²⁷ toward strengthening peace and friendship among the Balkan peoples, and toward settling unsolved problems by peaceful means."²⁸

Only the Macedonian problem seems to cloud the Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations.²⁹ But the dispute has cooled down somewhat in recent years due to the warmth of relations, and to the Bulgarian tacit approval of the fact that the Vardar Macedonia was a part of the Yugoslav federation.

²⁴ *East Europe*, Vol. XII, No. 2 (February, 1963), p. 38.

²⁵ "Tito and the Satellites," *East Europe*, Vol. XII, No. 10 (October, 1963), pp. 4-6.

²⁶ *East Europe*, Vol. XIV, No. 11 (November, 1965), pp. 32-33.

²⁷ It is clear that this call was made to Greece and Turkey.

²⁸ *Rabotnichesko Delo*, September 28, 1965, from *Ibid*.

²⁹ Yugoslavia maintains that Macedonia is a distinct South Slav nation; Bulgaria claims that the territory covered by the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is in fact a part of Bulgaria. For the Macedonian question, see: Elizabeth Barker, *Macedonia, Its Place in Balkan Power Politics*, London, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1950; Ivan Mihailov, *Macedonia, a Switzerland of the Balkans*, Pearlstone Publishing Company, 1950.

The nature and the direction of the *Yugoslav-Rumanian* relations will also effect the cooperation in the Balkans. With only one Communist country has Yugoslavia had normal relations since the Cominform break in 1948, and this was Rumania. First of all, the two countries have common background: both were members of the Little and Balkan Ententes as a protection against Hungarian and Bulgarian irredentism, and neither had ever waged war on the other. Furthermore, Rumania's independent course within the Soviet bloc since 1963 can be considered as Tito's first success in Eastern Europe since he initiated the policy of "national communism" (as contrasted to Communist internationalism) and "Communist neutralism" (as contrasted to membership in the Warsaw Pact).³⁰ For these reasons this relationship -which is likely to continue and develop- will remain a key aspect in the future Balkan cooperation independent of all great powers, especially of the regional great power, the Soviet Union.

Apart from the improved inter-Communist relations in the Balkans, Greece's relations with Yugoslavia and Bulgaria have improved rapidly since the dissolution of the Balkan Pact. Greece has followed a policy of developing friendly relations with her northern neighbours with the exclusion of Turkey and Albania, with which she has such territorial disputes as Cyprus and Southern Albania -which the Greeks call Northern Epirus- respectively. Although this Greek move can also be viewed as an attempt to form a Balkan front against Turkey, like Venizelos had formed in 1911, and from this point of view is not compatible with a broad and all-inclusive Balkan cooperation, it must be noted that it contributed markedly to the improved Balkan scene.

Turkey has played, since the dissolution of the Balkan Pact, a passive role in the Balkans and was reluctant to participate in the meetings among the Balkan states. The reasons for this attitude lie in the foreign policy Turkey had followed until the Cyprus dispute in 1963. For the Turkish leaders world peace was an indivisible whole and thus the security of a state could not be considered as independent from the security of the bloc

30 For the Rumanian-Yugoslav relations during 1964-1965, see: Ghita Ionescu, "Communist Rumania and Non-alignment", *Slavic Review*, Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (June, 1965), pp. 241-258.

in which she was a member. As a consequence of this outlook, Turkey appeared in the Balkans as a loyal member of the NATO bloc, and responded to the cooperation proposals according to the general NATO strategy. Secondly, evaluating the Soviet threat as dangerous as it was after World War II, Turkey considered it inappropriate to hold bilateral talks or meeting with the other bloc, because of the belief that such initiatives would weaken and divide the Western bloc. Furthermore, the Greek initiatives in the Balkans after 1956 and Yugoslav support of the Greek thesis concerning Cyprus were viewed by the Turkish leaders as measures that would lead to the formation of an alien grouping against Turkey. But, after the Cyprus dispute and especially following the Turkish defeat at the General Assembly of the United Nations, which voted with a great majority for the Greek stand in December, 1965, Turkey felt the need of friends from outside the Western alliance and began following an active policy in Eastern Europe. This was also due to the development of Turco-Soviet relations after the latter's acceptance of the Turkish view on Cyprus. But, what is important in view of the Balkan developments is the fact that Turkey's active Balkan policy would act as a counterbalance to the Greek designs of forming an anti-Turkish front in the region. It is this observer's belief that the Turkish government had, among others, this advantage in consideration when it began to pursue a more friendly policy towards the Soviet bloc countries after 1963.

V

In view of this picture of Balkan relations, it is safe to say that the conditions are more favourable for a Balkan cooperation than it was ten or twenty years ago. First of all, the Balkan statesmen have, before them, many lessons drawn from the previous attempts: The future Balkan cooperation should be all-inclusive like the Stoica Plan of 1957, i.e., it must not divide the region into two or more hostile groups. Any attempt aiming at the formation of a group of states against the others would prove to be abortive. Consequently, Greek or Turkish initiatives in this direction would not serve their interests. If a cooperation is to be formed, it should be based on the common and

long-termed interests of all the Balkan powers, not on the subversive aim of any Balkan or alien power. The cooperation should be of a non-military character. Although the possibility and advantages of economic cooperation among the Balkan countries may well be a subject of lengthy discussion and require a separate study, it is safe to maintain that there is ground in the Balkans for cultural, political, as well as economic cooperation. Above all, the Balkan countries should form a regional cooperation independent of all the great powers; they must not forget the fact that any attempt at international cooperation among the Balkan states has been frustrated by international conflicts among the great powers.

Secondly, most of the Balkan countries, cognizant of the fact that animosities among themselves would only lead to the fragmentation of the region, and thus serve for the interests of the foreign powers, have established friendly relations irrespective of their social systems. Only Albania's relations with the other Balkan states have been unfriendly; but it must be taken into account that this, to a great extent, was due to Yugoslav and Greek policies of expansion in expense of this small Balkan state, which for decades past has been a subject of imperialist aims on behalf of the bigger regional powers. If Albanian anxieties are to be reconciled by Yugoslav and Greek assurances, it would be highly possible for this state to participate in a regional cooperation.

Thirdly, the East European states have found since 1961 a larger space to manoeuvre in view of Soviet Union's need of support in her dispute with Communist China. The Balkan Communist countries, with the narrow exception of Bulgaria, pursue an independent policy *vis-a-vis* the Soviet Union.

Finally, the view that regional groupings would strengthen world peace is beginning to be accepted by the small states as a valid expedient against the division of the world into solid and hostile blocs, and thus against the danger of war. One such regional cooperation could well be established in the Balkan Peninsula.

SURVEY OF THE GERMAN PROBLEM SINCE 1944

*Kurt RABL**

The German problem, as it stands to-day, can be understood properly only in historical perspective. After Germany had lost the First World War, the left bank of the Rhine was demilitarized and occupied by the Allies for a limited period. About one-and-a-half decade later, the occupied territory, having been evacuated before the time contractually scheduled, was in 1936 re-fortified again; three years later, World War II was launched. When, in Autumn 1944, the end of German military resistance was coming in sight, the Allies appeared to be faced with a problem similar to that of 1918-19: to impose a peace upon their unsuccessful adversary, at the same time, however, taking care that their conditions were faithfully complied with in the future. To safeguard this, two measures seemed essential which had not been taken at the end of World War I: this time, the Allies decided, it would not be left to the Germans themselves how to effectuate a thorough reconstruction of their constitutional system - for such a reconstruction appeared essential in order to safeguard that the democratic idea and system, for whose world - wide realization the Allies were professing to fight, could be introduced into, and maintained in Germany. To carry through this far-reaching Allied determination, however, not a partial, but the total military occupation of German national territory, coupled with the total eradication of the hitherto controlling constitutional forces, appeared to be the indispensable prerequisite.

Hence, the Inter-allied agreements, arrived at in September, to be slightly modified in November, 1944, have to be understood. They provided for the partition of Germany in four zones of military occupation, to be administered by each of the four Great Powers, as well as for a joint Four-Power Control system

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