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**Yugoslavia and Eurocommunism. Yugoslavia and the Italian
Communist Party in the Sixties and Seventies**

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Table of Contents

Preface	4
Chapter 1: Introduction – The Relations Between Yugoslav and Italian Communists Before the 1960ies	9
<i>The Comintern Era</i>	9
<i>After the War</i>	11
<i>Trieste</i>	14
<i>The two conferences of the Cominform – two clashes between CPY and PCI</i>	28
<i>The rupture: 1948-1955</i>	35
<i>Reconciliation</i>	39
<i>Togliatti’s visit to Belgrade – May of 1956</i>	41
<i>The October visit</i>	45
<i>The Hungarian crisis</i>	51
<i>The Reale case</i>	54
<i>Epilogue</i>	57
Chapter 2: Forming of a Strategic Alliance (1962-1967)	60
<i>Reconciliation, once again</i>	60
<i>Tito and Togliatti’s last encounter – forming of a strategic alliance</i>	77
<i>Togliatti’s death – a halt in the alliance</i>	91
<i>November 1966 – relaunching of the alliance</i>	120
Chapter 3: After Czechoslovakia – Strengthening of the Alliance (1968-1972)	141
<i>The Mediterranean collaboration</i>	141
<i>The watershed: the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia</i>	148
<i>Moscow fights back: a mild distancing of the parties</i>	158
<i>Berlinguer meets Tito: the beginning of a friendship</i>	182
<i>The Yugoslav crisis and the anti-Soviet rapprochement</i>	191

Chapter 4: After Chile – The Pinnacle of the Alliance (1973-1980)	226
<i>Fear of instability and the birth of the compromesso storico</i>	226
<i>The road to Canossa or the road to Damascus? The preparations of the Berlin conference</i>	238
<i>Berlinguer in Belgrade: a different vision for communism</i>	253
<i>After Berlin: the defense of autonomy</i>	273
<i>The growing isolation: the two last meetings of Tito and Berlinguer</i>	289
<i>The demise of communism</i>	307
Conclusion	327
Sources and Bibliography	344

Preface

The idea for this research was born in 2015, during my research for my MA thesis at the Archives of Yugoslavia. The thesis, defended at the University of Belgrade during that year, was focused on the relations between Yugoslavia and the Italian left in the late fifties and early sixties. Researching further, I found out that the Archives of Yugoslavia preserve a vast quantity of sources, with more than six thousand pages produced directly by the collaboration between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY)¹ and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) during the sixties and the seventies. More importantly, that Yugoslav material was, and remained to this day, largely unexplored.

The sources from the Archives of Yugoslavia I am referring to are preserved in two archival fonds. The first one, crucial for my research, is the fond of the LCY's foreign affairs department. The part of the fond pertaining to Italy consists of 24 boxes, out of which 17 are related to the LCY-PCI collaboration. The full and formal title of the fond and its part related to Italy is: СКЈ - Међународна комисија 1945-1990, Односи СКЈ са страним партијама и покретима, Италија (1941-1990) [LCY-International commission 1945-1990, Relations Between the LCY and Foreign Parties and Movements, Italy (1941-1990)]. The second fond used in this research is entitled Кабинет Председника Републике [Cabinet of the President of the Republic]. This fond is the most important one in the Archives of Yugoslavia, due to the central role Josip Broz Tito had in the Yugoslav state, especially in its foreign relations. Although not as important for my topic as the first one, many of the documents contained within it proved invaluable for my research. Primarily, the minutes of Tito's conversations with Italian politicians.

This quantity of unused sources indicated the potential importance of the topic, motivating me to initiate my PhD studies with this project. But, more importantly, this research was motivated by the fact that its topic remains underresearched – the literature pertaining to it was scarce as well. Among the post-Yugoslav historians, only Saša Mišić, who primarily focuses on Yugoslav-Italian interstate relations, published something related to the topic. Mišić wrote two articles that

¹ The Yugoslav communist party changed name in 1952, during the conflict with Moscow. The change of the name was motivated by the wish to present the party as more flexible and inclusive than the traditional communist parties. Hence, prior to 1952 the party was called *Komunistička partija Jugoslavije* (Communist Party of Yugoslavia – CPY). The new name adopted in 1952 and preserved to the end was *Savez komunista Jugoslavije* (League of Communists of Yugoslavia – LCY). Hence, the CPY abbreviation is used in a part of the first chapter.

analyze the relations between the Yugoslav and Italian communists, but his focus was on the period from 1944 to 1956. For the period after it, which is in the focus of these thesis, nothing has been written based on Yugoslav sources. Among the Italian historians, who based their research on the PCI documentation, there were several publications relevant for the LCY-PCI relations during the sixties and seventies. However, only one of them is directly focused on the topic – Marco Galeazzi's book *Togliatti e Tito. Tra identità nazionale e internazionalismo*. This book deals with the relations between the two communist parties and their leaders up to Togliatti's death in 1964, and it is the most important contribution to this topic to date. However, it was written without the use of Yugoslav sources, and ends in 1964. Hence, the intention of my research was to expand on Galeazzi's contribution, both chronologically and by using Yugoslav sources.

Two other books published in Italian touch on the relations between the CPY and the PCI after Togliatti's death. The first one was also written by Marco Galeazzi, and it deals with the relations between the PCI and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) from 1955 to 1975. As Yugoslavia was one of the leaders of the movement, and had intensive collaboration on this issue with the PCI, Galeazzi had analyzed an important aspect of the interparty relations. The book was primarily written on PCI sources, but Galeazzi had also consulted a few important Yugoslav documents. The second Italian publication relevant for the topic is Silvio Pons' book *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*. It analyzes the foreign policy of the Italian party during Berlinguer's leadership and, as Yugoslavia was an important ally of the Italian communists in the seventies, it partially deals with the PCI-LCY relations in that decade, again based on PCI documentation.

Therefore, as the entire body of literature pertaining to this topic is published in Italian and based on PCI sources, the main aim of this research was determined – to give new insight into this underresearched topic based on abundant Yugoslav sources, whilst consulting the sources preserved in the archives of the PCI. This approach indicates the potential qualities and flaws of the thesis. On one hand, it puts a researcher like myself in an ideal situation to write on a topic that attracted little attention of his colleagues, but at the same time offers an immense quantity of sources. On the other hand, the vastness of documents poses a methodological obstacle to a researcher should he became focused on the sources and neglect to put them in a broader context of analysis. However, that was a risk I willingly accepted, as my deepest professional belief is that, when it comes to certain Cold War history topics similar to this one – underresearched but rich in sources, the task of the first historians who affront them is to primarily immerse themselves in the

sources and indicate the most important facts and processes. I find this approach very useful, as it enables the future researchers of this or certain related topics to rely on the results of such work and, in a more sophisticated methodological manner, bring further and broader analytic contributions.

Hence the main methodological principle of this research is somewhat conservative, one of classical political history. In order of defending this approach, I can only quote Eric Hobsbawm, who was by no means a methodological conservative, but indicated the need for more classical research of the topics similar to this one: “However, the sheer extent to which patently important matters had been concealed or passed in silence in the half-century since 1945 left a vast scope for straight, archive-based filling of gaps, or the ‘history of events’. One has only to think of the hidden continent of Soviet archives which came into public view in the 1990s, the history of the Cold War or the long official silences or public myths about France under German occupation, or about the foundation and early years of Israel.”²

Still, the methodological approach of this research, although principally focused on documents, was not intended as a mere summarization of sources. Various publications were used in order of establishing several levels of interpretation which dominate in the analysis. The first level was, naturally, to put the topic of this research in the context of the broader political activities of the two parties, linking it both to their foreign and internal policies. The publications of Silvio Pons and Ljubodrag Dimić were most used in this regard. The second level of analysis focused on the general history of the communist movement, and in particular on the history of the USSR, which were crucial and determining aspects of the LCY-PCI collaboration. Having this in mind, the publications of authors like Silvio Pons, Robert Service, Vladislav Zubok and many others were used. The third level of analysis was directed towards the political history of the Third World and of the interactions both parties had with it. This was not only an important and frequently mentioned topic in the contacts between the Yugoslav and Italian communists, but also a test of their ideological emancipation from Moscow. In order to reconstruct this broader context, works of Odd Arne Westad, Marco Galeazzi and others were consulted. Fourthly, the détente and the broad international cooperation in Europe were used as crucial factors in the analysis, based mostly, in addition to the previously mentioned authors and publications, on the volumes of the Cambridge histories of Cold War and Communism. Finally, the last level of interpretation focused

² E. Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times. A Twentieth Century Life*, Pantheon Books, New York 2007 (ebook), 227.

on the political histories of Yugoslavia and Italy, and of their mutual collaboration, as this had been a factor of immense influence on the relations of the two national parties. The works of Ljubodrag Dimić, Umberto Gentiloni Silveri and Saša Mišić were most important in this regard.

Finally, it should be underlined that this research is more Yugoslav oriented, although it aims at giving a complete analysis of the interparty collaboration. Two reasons led to this. The first one is subjective – the fact that my primary field of expertise is the history of Yugoslav socialism, gained during my BA and MA studies at the University of Belgrade. The second reason is objective, as the Yugoslav documentation is far richer than the one produced by the PCI, and gives more insight into the topic. However, the Yugoslav orientation of the research was not something I evaded, as, once again, my professional belief indicated so. As Italian authors had written more on the topic, and made significant progress in researching the relevant PCI documentation, my assessment was that a Yugoslav perspective was needed in order to create a full picture of the phenomenon of LCY-PCI collaboration in the sixties and seventies. At the same time, having in mind that my primary field of expertise is Yugoslav history, my professional belief was that illuminating the topic from the perspective of Belgrade could be the strongpoint of my research and its main contribution. Despite that, my sincerest hope is that in my three years of living and researching in Rome I had managed to have a better understanding of the PCI perspective of this topic, thus producing an analysis that is more comprehensive.

This research and thesis would be significantly different if it was not for the help of many dear friends, colleagues, professors and institutions. Their contribution was immense, and I remain humbled by it. They improved this thesis greatly, and its possible shortcomings remain only mine. Three professors had helped me significantly during my research. Firstly, my mentor, professor Umberto Gentiloni Silveri. He helped me greatly not only with his professional advice, but also with the support and understanding he gave me, even in the moments when the final aim seemed very distant. Professor Gentiloni Silveri helped me immensely in overcoming those difficult moments, and I remain grateful for the opportunity I had to learn from him. Secondly, professor Ljubodrag Dimić, from the University of Belgrade, who led me through my BA and MA studies, and taught me everything I know about Yugoslav socialism. He also greatly influenced the choice of my PhD studies. Lastly, professor Saša Mišić, also from the University of Belgrade, who selflessly accepted me in this field of research.

Besides the professors, several institutions made this research possible. Firstly, Sapienza University of Rome, which not only accepted my research proposal and granted me the privilege of being its PhD student, but also financed my research during these three years. I remain immensely indebted to Sapienza, extremely proud to be its alumni. This thesis, like every historical research, would have not been possible if it was not for the help of archival experts. Every historian relies on the work of archivists, who make research possible. Hence, without the kind assistance of experts from the Archives of Yugoslavia in Belgrade and the Gramsci Institute in Rome my work would be impossible. I express my sincerest respect and gratitude towards them.

Finally, several of my dear friends, colleagues and relatives were crucial for my work. Rastko Lompar and Natalija Dimić invested themselves immensely in this thesis. They helped me not just by discussing its crucial issues, but also in conducting additional research and correcting the text. Without their help these pages would be poorer, and I remain immensely indebted to them. Besides Rastko and Natalija, many other colleagues helped me by discussing the problems I had researched and offering precious advice. Arrigo Bonifacio and Stefan Gužvica in particular, and I am very grateful for their help. Professor Veronica Arpaia invested her time and effort in helping improve my English writing skills. Not just during these three years, but during my entire education, my family was the foundation and support that had made it all possible. The sacrifices they made for me are something I could never repay. Last but most important is Anđa Petrović. She shared the most difficult moments of this journey, making it more meaningful and fulfilling. Without her unwavering support this thesis would not have been possible.

Chapter 1: Introduction – The Relations Between Yugoslav and Italian Communists Before the 1960ies

The goal of this introductory chapter is to, on the basis of relevant sources and literature, give a depiction of the relations between the two parties prior to the '60ies, that is prior to the chronological starting point of this research and thesis. The main focus of the chapter is on the period after 1943, and there are two reasons for that. Firstly, the period after 1943 is substantially better researched. Secondly, and more importantly, after 1943 the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) ceased to be small and illegal sections of the Comintern. Instead, they became political factors of great importance, not just in their nation states, but also in the wider European political context. This newly acquired political significance and impact led to more dynamic relations between the two parties, creating both conflicts and prerequisites for their future friendship. Hence, in order to understand the friendship between the two parties in the decades that are in the focus of this research, it is necessary to go back in time and describe the problematic and ambiguous prehistory of these relations.

The Comintern Era

As it was said, the interparty relations prior to 1943 are not well researched. That is also true in the case of Marco Galeazzi's book that deals with the relations between Togliatti and Tito. Writing about this period, Galeazzi gives two parallel stories, barely connecting them at any point. On one side, he briefly depicts PCI's history in the named period, and on the other makes a solid attempt to do the same for the CPY. Hence, even the most relevant literature does not dig deeper into the connections between the two parties prior to 1943. One could question the importance of the subject, and historians maybe have not written about this topic deeming it unimportant. However, more probably certain other factors discouraged scholars. The main obstacle for research is the unavailability (or, maybe, the nonexistence) of relevant documents of the Comintern. This organization dominated the lives of both parties, therefore its documentation is crucial. Besides the problem with the Comintern sources, a historian that wants to deal with the topic faces another heuristic problem. Both parties were at that time victims of fierce repression in their countries, and

forced to conduct their activities illegally.³ Therefore, they have not left a substantial quantity of written traces of their activities, beside mostly propaganda material, and a historian does not have a lot to work on.

Based on little that is known, it appears that the Yugoslav party was subordinated to the Italian. In the highly hierarchized world of international communism, and the Comintern as its embodiment, there was not a single Yugoslav communist that had a position even remotely close to that occupied by Togliatti. While Togliatti was at the top of this organization, the CPY was a small and insignificant member of it, divided by internal conflicts and not showing the revolutionary potential it demonstrated during WWII. Therefore, the Comintern was highly critical towards the CPY, often intervening in its internal problems. One of the clearest examples of the Comintern's dissatisfaction with the situation in the CPY is the party's Fourth congress, held in Dresden in 1928. For this topic it is crucial to notice that the Comintern's representative, therefore the main authority and arbiter at the congress, was Palmiro Togliatti.⁴

Togliatti's paternalistic tone in a statement from 1948, when he had a reminiscence of the congress, seems to confirm the CPY's subordination to the PCI: "We fought to overcome this

³ The anticommunism of the fascist regime in Italy is a well-known phenomenon, but at this point it is important to give a summary of anticommunism in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and of its roots. Firstly, gaining international recognition at the Paris Peace Conference, the newly formed kingdom was also given an important role in the international relations of post WWI Europe. Like other newly formed states in Central Europe, Yugoslavia was perceived as a sanitary cordon against two factors – a possible rise of a new German aggression; and spreading of communism from the USSR. Therefore, that international role was one of the inspirations for repressive laws and measures against the CPY. However, if we look at Czechoslovakia, where the communist party was legal in spite of the same role of the country, it is evident that there were other ideological motivations for the anticommunist repression in Yugoslavia. Secondly, the fact that two aunts of king Aleksandar were married into the Romanov family shows the king's personal motives for persecuting communists. Thirdly, the king was not the only one with deep emotional and ideological links to the Romanov family – in fact, the whole Serbian elite was looking at the Romanovs with sympathy. The Russian-Serbian cultural bond lasted for centuries, and of special importance was the pro-Serbian stance of tsar Nikolay II, who was perceived as the biggest Serbian ally in the last war. And finally, all those links were taken to the next level when a large number of Russian "white" emigres came to Yugoslavia after the October revolution. As almost all of them were well educated, they immediately took a leading role in Yugoslav science, education, culture, architecture etc. The role and importance they gained led to an increase of anticommunism.

More about the kingdom of Yugoslavia, its international position and the history of its communist party in – B. Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988, Prva knjiga* [The History of Yugoslavia 1918-1988, Volume one], Nolit, Belgrade 1988. More about the role of Russian emigres in inter war Yugoslavia in – M. Jovanović, *Руска емиграција на Балкану (1920-1940)* [The Russian Emigration in the Balkans (1920-1940)], Čigoja, Belgrade 2006.

⁴ B. Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988, Prva knjiga*, 160, 261. S. Gužvica, *Before Tito. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia During the Great Purge (1936-1940)*, Tallinn University Press, Talinn 2020, 41, 50. The Fourth congress is one of the most controversial moments in the history of the Yugoslav party. The main directive of the congress was the quest for Yugoslavia's dissolution. That directive was abandoned in mid-thirties, but remained problematic for decades. Many historians (but also politicians etc.) claimed that this congress left a lasting trace on the CPY's national policy, especially regarding the Serbian national question in Yugoslavia.

situation [factional struggles in the Yugoslav party-BŽ] and believed that we succeeded, but this episode shows to us that we have not.”⁵ As Marco Galeazzi noted, Togliatti gave opposing testimonies on his role in the history of the Yugoslav party. In 1948 he underlined his active role towards the CPY, while in 1956, during a visit to Belgrade, he wanted to give an opposite impression. Talking about the role of Yugoslav volunteers in the Spanish Civil war, Togliatti said that “at the time I did not know comrade Tito, nor did I attend to Yugoslav questions”.⁶ In spite of this attempt to distance himself from the role he had in the Yugoslav problems, Togliatti’s presence at the Dresden congress, as well as the remarks he made in 1948 about that episode, make his position of authority over the Yugoslav comrades and his interference in their internal affairs evident. That is further confirmed by a statement Tito made during his conversations with Togliatti in 1964 - talking about Togliatti’s years in the Comintern, Tito said that the Italian comrade “knew how to find the right path during difficult times, even regarding the Yugoslav issue.”⁷ Although not as important as Togliatti’s interference in the internal matters of the Yugoslav party, there was another well documented episode which testifies to the authority that the Italian communists possessed and exerted in their contacts with the Yugoslavs comrades. Namely, it is the case of Edoardo D’Onofrio, who extensively interfered in the disputes between the Yugoslav communists during the Spanish Civil War. D’Onofrio strongly supported the faction of Roman Filipčev in its conflict with the faction led by Božidar Maslarić. Those two groups were, in fact, part of a broader struggle for dominance within the CPY, fought between Josip Broz Tito, who was supported by Maslarić, and his many rivals.⁸

After the War

WWII radically changed the relations between the communist parties of Yugoslavia and Italy. The hierarchical nature of the communist world was not substantially changed during the war, in spite of the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, and the Soviet prestige and authority

⁵ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito. Tra identità nazionale e internazionalismo*, Carocci editore, Rome 2005, 23.

⁶ *Ibid*, 147.

⁷ Archives of Yugoslavia (AJ), 507/IX – 48/I-266, Završni razgovori 21. I 1964. u zgradi SIV-a [The final talks on January 21st 1964 in the building of the FEC]. There are also other, less reliable, traces of Togliatti’s interference and interest for the Yugoslav issue. For instance, he allegedly discussed the situation in the Yugoslav party in 1940, with Nikola Petrović – M. Marić, *Deca komunizma. Knjiga I* [Children of Communism. Volume I], Laguna, Belgrade 2014, 257.

⁸ S. Gužvica, *Before Tito*, 163-168.

were only augmented by the final victory. However, the end of the war brought changes within the hierarchy, although Moscow's role remained unchained. Conducting a revolution by themselves, without almost any Soviet assistance prior to autumn of 1944, the Yugoslav communists were convinced that they had now deserved the second place. Their self-confidence only grew with the attention and recognition Yugoslavia was receiving across the communist movement, from Moscow and Eastern Europe to Northern Italy. Such stance also led to a dramatic change in the CPY's relations with the PCI. There was an inversion of roles - the Yugoslavs now wanted to be the teachers of revolution to their less successful Italian comrades.⁹ The essence of the new situation is encapsulated in a lapidary sentence from the memoirs of Gian Carlo Pajetta: "They have conducted a revolution and we have not".¹⁰ Faced with Yugoslav pressure, the Italian party was torn between a respect for all that the CPY had achieved, and a wish to rebel against the aggressive Yugoslav attempts to impose their dominance.¹¹

In order to understand the relations between the two parties from 1943 to 1948, it is crucial to highlight that Togliatti's opposition to Yugoslavia was not a sheer defensive reflex, or a mere wish to remain autonomous. It was much more than that. As Silvio Pons noted and elaborated, it was a conflict of two opposing strategies for the future of the communist movement. Togliatti and Tito were representatives of two factions within the movement. Togliatti can be identified as the "right wing", moderate and focused on preserving the war time antifascist coalition as the best way of defending socialism and the USSR. Therefore, he was also willing to accept the Western institutions and fight for socialism through parliamentary democracy. Tito and the Yugoslavs were the opposing left and radical wing of the movement, rooted in dogmatic Marxist legacy. For them, anti-capitalism prevailed over antifascism. A clash with capitalism was imminent, and therefore the relations with the former capitalist allies should now be hostile and intransigent.¹² Due to those differences, the two parties were bound to have a conflictual relationship. The Trieste issue, or the

⁹ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 58-59.

¹⁰ G. Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest Praga Varsavia*, Editori Riuniti, Rome 1982, 40.

¹¹ That arrogance, combined with constant and pressuring Yugoslav advice, even led to an unpleasant conversation in which, evidently frustrated, Togliatti said to his Yugoslav interlocutors to "leave the revolution in Italy to us". S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia. L'URSS, il PCI e le origini della guerra fredda (1943-1948)*, Carocci editore, Rome 1999, 219.

¹² It is not a coincidence that Tito and Togliatti were the strongest advocates of these opposing conceptions. As Marco Galeazzi noted, the two of them, in their own ways, represented the most autonomous leaders in the European communist movement - M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 20. The prerequisite of their autonomy was the fact that in Yugoslavia and Italy the USSR did not have a military presence. Due to that autonomy, Tito and Togliatti perceived themselves not just as mere executioners of Soviet orders, but as authentic political actors.

perspective of an armed insurrection in the West, were just some of the issues where the stances of the CPY and PCI collided. As Pons highlighted, Soviet ambiguity between these two conceptions was the main reason which left the conflict between the two parties unresolved until 1948. The creators of Soviet foreign policy, Stalin included, were not able to choose and implement one of the two possible strategies. Instead, they remained indecisive between the wish to preserve the security of the Soviet Union (by preserving the antifascist coalition) and the wish to beat their capitalist enemy, as the Marxist legacy implied. Therefore, Moscow was not able to perform its natural and recognized duty of arbitrating in the communist movement, and it was not resolving the conflict between the Yugoslavs and the Italians.¹³

After this summary of the essential problems of the CPY-PCI relations in the forties, which formulates the key in which they will be further analyzed, there is a need to go back to the chronological dynamics in which the interparty collaboration evolved, with a special focus on the Trieste issue and on the first two conferences of the Cominform.

The first signals of the conflict between Yugoslav radicalism and Togliatti's moderate party line, and of the Yugoslav wish to impose its dominance on the Italian communists, were already present during the war.¹⁴ In that sense, the most important document is a letter Tito sent to Georgi Dimitrov, in early April of 1944. In that crucial letter, Tito expressed his dissatisfaction with the PCI's policies, accusing the Italian party of "sectarianism and opportunism". In order to change that "chaos", Tito made an appeal to bring comrade Ercoli¹⁵ back to Italy, deeming that only he can change the situation and give the party a correct line.¹⁶ The Yugoslav communist leader went as far as accusing the PCI that it allowed itself to be led by Badoglio and Count Sforza.¹⁷ The Yugoslavs particularly wanted to influence the communists in Northern Italy, engaged in partisan combat. Those communist from the North were indeed subordinated to the CPY – Yugoslavia was their link to Moscow, and provided them with cadres and important

¹³ This phenomenon is best explained in the afore mentioned book by Silvio Pons - S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*.

¹⁴ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 24.

¹⁵ Togliatti's *nom de guerre*.

¹⁶ Not only was Tito unaware that Togliatti was already back in Italy, but apparently he also did not understand that Togliatti would become the biggest opponent of the Yugoslav attempts to radicalize the PCI.

¹⁷ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin. Il Pci e la politica estera staliniana negli archivi di Mosca*, Societa editrice il Mulino, Bologna 2007, 140. Of course, this was not the first accusation Tito had made against the PCI, just the most documented and elaborated example of it, highlighted in the relevant literature. Those accusations were present even earlier. For an example, in a letter Togliatti wrote to Manuilsky on October 28th 1943, the Italian communist labeled the information that Walter [Tito's *nom de guerre*] sent about the "weakness" of PCI's action in Italy as "incomplete and contradictory" - M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 61.

instructions.¹⁸ During WWII the CPY was, while fighting the liberation struggle against the foreign occupying forces, conducting a revolution and forming institutions of civil power.¹⁹ That was the model advocated for Italy, and there were radicals among the Italian communists, especially in the North, attracted by it.²⁰ This was a sign of division within the Italian party, a split between the Togliatti-led majority of moderates and a radical wing of the party.

A report Gian Carlo Pajetta gave on the situation in the North, in December of 1944, demonstrates the PCI's response to the new Yugoslavia. Despite expressing a sense of respect and friendship for Tito and his army, the report shows an aversion of leading Italian communists for the intransigent Yugoslav views on territorial issues.²¹ As it can be seen in that report, the issue of Trieste was the main point of division between the parties, reflecting their opposing visions in the period from 1943 to 1948.

Trieste

There has not been a consensus among Italian historians on the question of Togliatti's stance regarding Trieste. So far, the explanations vary between three possible answers. The first would be that the essence of Togliatti's policy was to give support to the Yugoslav annexation/occupation of the city. In that scenario, all the efforts PCI made to limit Yugoslavia's territorial expansion were only devised as a tool to calm the Italian public, without essentially challenging Belgrade's plans. The second and opposing view is that Togliatti was coherent in defending both the Italian character of the city, and its future in the Italian state. The third existing explanation is that Togliatti was trapped between Moscow's pro-Yugoslav stance and the importance the Italian public gave to the future of Trieste, therefore oscillating between support and defiance to Yugoslavia's territorial expansion on Italy's extent. On the other side, the policy

¹⁸ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 106. Josip Kopinič, a high ranked Soviet agent, told in an interview that he was responsible for the radio connection between the PCI and Moscow during the war. Regarding that issue, he had an encounter with Gian Carlo Pajetta, in 1940 in Ljubljana - M. Marić, *Deca komunizma. Knjiga I*, 233.

¹⁹ NOO – Narodno-oslobodilački odbori [Councils of People's Liberation]. Despite protests from the West, the Yugoslav communists preserved these institutions, using them as the foundation for their absolute political power in the country.

²⁰ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 59-60; E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 106; A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti. A Biography*, I. B. Tauris, London New York 2008, 162; Paolo Spriano's interview in – B. Valli, *Gli eurocomunisti*, Bompiani, Milan 1976, 98; M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sula piaga. Togliatti e il Pci nella rottura fra Stalin e Tito 1944-1957*, Mursia, Milan 2008, 55-56.

²¹ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 175.

of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was explicitly radical and intransigent. Not only in the case of Trieste, but in relations with almost every neighbor, socialist or capitalist, Belgrade had certain territorial aspirations. Those delusions of grandeur were noted in Moscow, and not always met with acceptance, eventually being the main cause of the Yugoslav-Soviet split in 1948.²²

The faith of Trieste and of the whole region of Venezia Giulia was an issue that was not very important in the interparty relations prior to the war, but during the war it became a burning question that troubled the relations between Yugoslav (primarily Slovene) and Italian communists. In the twenties and thirties, the two parties were unanimous in supporting Slovene independence and national unification. That support was based on a coherent Marxist perspective that the Slovenes were victims of exploitation, conducted both by the Italian and Yugoslav bourgeoisies. The Italian communists did not anticipate the perils of such support to Slovene independence. It was expected that Italy would undergo a revolution much sooner than Yugoslavia, having in mind the PCI's strength and CPY's weakness, hence no one feared a strong Yugoslav party that could endanger Italian territories. But exactly that was the scenario that took place in WWII. The CPY became a strong revolutionary party, and its Slovene component fought fiercely for the independence and unification of its people. As early as in 1941, the Slovene Osvobodilna Fronta²³ expressed its territorial aspirations, underlining that Trieste and Maribor were of crucial importance for the future Slovene republic. In 1942 the CP of Slovenia elaborated its views on Venezia Giulia. In its opinion, only Trieste could be deemed an Italian city. All other cities in the region which have an Italian majority were not Italian but Slovene, as the current demographic situation was a product of fascist policy of denationalization. Hence, only Trieste would be given an autonomy, but it would also become a part of Yugoslavia, as it belonged to its Slovene hinterland. Those views were repeated and additionally explained in a letter the OF's leader, Kardelj, sent to the Italian communist Umberto Massola. In the letter, Kardelj stressed the ideological aspect of the issue. According to him, it was evident that the future of Trieste was to be part of a Soviet republic. And while Yugoslavia was on its way of becoming that, in Italy the bourgeoisie was pro-British and the proletariat was weak. Hence, the CP of Slovenia would not

²² Ibid, 177.

²³ In English – Liberation Front. It was the organization that led the antifascist resistance in Slovenia. In spite of the fact that it included various organizations, the CP of Slovenia, and its leaders Edvard Kardelj and Boris Kidrič, dominated the organization.

give Trieste to a reactionary government that represented a threat for the future “democratic” Yugoslavia.²⁴

The next step for Kardelj was to secure Moscow’s support for his aspirations. Hence, he wrote a letter to the leader of the CPY, and the party’s connection with Moscow, Josip Broz Tito. The main aim of the letter, as Kardelj explicitly stated, was to ask of Tito to persuade Georgi Dimitrov in favor of supporting the Slovene CP’s dominance in Venezia Giulia. Kardelj particularly focused on two benefits his cause could bring to the whole movement. The first was the importance of the Slovene struggle in a wider European context, as a possible catalyst for revolution in Italy and Austria. The second aspect, presumably very dear to Tito, was that the Slovene struggle was a prerequisite for a possible and desirable hegemony of the strong CPY over the weak PCI. The initiative bore result soon. In August of 1942 Dimitrov appealed to the communists of Venezia Giulia to unite under the lead of the Slovene communists and of the CPY. Abiding to the order from Moscow, the leader of Italian communists in Trieste, Vincenzo Macron, entered the Slovene communist organization in the city.²⁵

After obtaining Soviet support, the Yugoslav territorial pretensions towards Venezia Giulia only grew stronger during 1943. The fall of Mussolini’s regime was another important factor in that process. Kardelj became very anxious – his main preoccupation now was to fill in the power vacuum created in the region before the Anglo-Americans do it. Hence, both the Slovene Osvobodilna Fronta and its Croatian counterpart ZAVNOH²⁶ publicly announced the annexation of Venezia Giulia to Yugoslavia.²⁷

It was obvious that the Yugoslav communists left no room for compromise. Togliatti found himself in a very difficult political position, and needed to react. In spite of the mentioned fact that Togliatti’s stance on Trieste was complex and ambiguous, one thing can be said with certainty. From this point onwards, Togliatti was consistently against and actively opposing the Yugoslav policy of *fait accompli*.²⁸ In October of 1943, Togliatti posed this issue in the Comintern, insisting

²⁴ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa. Il PCI, il confine orientale e il contesto internazionale 1941-1955*, Libreria Editrice Goriziana, Gorizia 2010, 29-35.

²⁵ Ibid, 34-38.

²⁶ Zemaljsko antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Hrvatske – in English: State Anti-fascist Council for the National Liberation of Croatia.

²⁷ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 35-39.

²⁸ As it was noted by Serbian historians, the essence of Yugoslav policy regarding Trieste was to put all the international factors in a *fait accompli* situation of Yugoslav annexation of the city - B. Dimitrijević, D. Bogetić, *Тришанска криза 1945-1954* [The Trieste Crisis 1945-1954], Institut za savremenu istoriju, Belgrade 2009, 11.

that resolving of the question of sovereignty over Trieste should be postponed until the end of the war.²⁹ Like the Soviets, he was adamant in defending the unity of the antifascist coalition. Therefore, in his opinion, the debates regarding all divisive issues that threatened the coalition's unity should have been postponed until the victory over fascism. The PCI's reaction did not end with Togliatti's actions in the Comintern. The Northern Directorate of the party sent a letter to the CPY, expressing its discontent with the Yugoslav declarations of annexation of Venezia Giulia. That letter, written by Umberto Massola, was not only a protest against Yugoslav expansionism, but also a sign of support to the Italian communists in Trieste. As it was said earlier, the fall of Mussolini made the Yugoslavs more active in Trieste. But, at the same time, during that chaotic situation many important Italian communists in the city managed to break out from fascist jails. Out in the open, they reorganized the PCI's structures, making them stronger and autonomous from the Slovenes. The main argument of Massola's letter was that, despite the fact that the Italian party supports the Slovene right of self-determination, their political line was threatened by Yugoslav aspirations. The PCI was in a broad national coalition, and forcing the issue of sovereignty over Trieste at that point could only hamper their efforts towards national unity. Hence, the main message was that the PCI was not against the idea of Trieste in Yugoslavia, but against posing the question at this point. Massola even wrote that the PCI would rather give Trieste to a socialist Yugoslavia, than to a fascist³⁰ Italy. But, the main problem with this protest was that it came from a subordinated position. The Northern Directorate depended on the Slovene communists for their connection with Moscow, finances, and arms supply. Hence, the possibility that a PCI protest could make deeper impact on the Yugoslav policy was not plausible. The only change brought about was that, affronted with these protests, Kardelj ordered the CPY cadres to be more diplomatic and tactical, and to tone down public announcements of annexation. However, the Yugoslav view on Trieste as a part of Yugoslavia, and their negative perception of the PCI, remained unchanged.³¹

At that point, USSR officials understood that it was time to intervene. Initially, Moscow was pro-Yugoslav in this issue.³² But, with time, the Soviets wanted to resolve the conflict between

²⁹ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 139.

³⁰ According to Patrick Karlsen, the term fascist was used here in a sectarian meaning, to describe every possible form of government that was not communist. P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 44.

³¹ *Ibid*, 41-46.

³² The earliest traces of this opinion can be found in 1941, in a conversation between Stalin and Anthony Eden, where the Yugoslav annexation of Trieste was favored – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 55.

the two communist parties, and, more importantly, to limit the Yugoslav radicalism that was a potential threat to their relations with the West. Therefore, in March of 1944, Georgi Dimitrov wrote a letter to Edvard Kardelj and Umberto Massola, expressing two requests. The first one was to find an agreement between the two parties, and the second was identical to Togliatti's views – territorial requests should be postponed until the end of the war.³³ The CPY's reaction was ambiguous. On one side, as it was mentioned earlier, in April of 1944 Tito responded to Dimitrov's initiative with a letter highly critical of the Italian party.³⁴ On the other side, Moscow's orders could have not been neglected, hence the two parties started working towards a compromise. The two main points of their agreements were: 1) to work on unity between the two parties through joint commissions in the disputed areas; 2) to postpone the resolving of the status of the disputed region. However, Kardelj managed to make an amendment to the agreements. That amendment included a recognition of the Slovene struggle and of the decisions made by Slovene political organs, and imposed the Yugoslav model as suitable for the Italian resistance movement. This showed that the Yugoslavs were not ready to easily give up on their territorial and ideological aspirations.³⁵

The agreements and the less aggressive approach of the CPY in the first half of 1944 had not resulted in a sustainable solution that would end the conflict. In fact, it can be said that in this period the two parties had only made the conflict less public. Anton Vratuša, who was the official liaison of the Yugoslav party to the PCI,³⁶ wrote reports in which he heavily criticized the Italian party, especially its broad coalition with non-communist forces.³⁷ Information gathered by the Yugoslav intelligence services exacerbated the conflict. In August of 1944, Tito received information that Togliatti was supporting other ministers in the Italian government in their territorial claims on Yugoslavia's expense.³⁸ The PCI was also not satisfied with the relations, and their discontent was visible in the joint commissions founded in line with the April agreement. Among other problems, the Italian communists suspected Yugoslav treason in the case of Frausin,

³³ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 139; M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 57; S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 174.

³⁴ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 140.

³⁵ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 50-54. Various agreements between the two parties were made in April, July and September.

³⁶ Vratuša was also the representative of the CP of Slovenia in the 9th Corps of the Yugoslav Army, which operated in the disputed areas. M. Zuccari, *Il dito sulla piaga*, 74.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 52-53.

³⁸ M. Milkić, "Yugoslavia and Italy, 1945 – 1947: Yugoslav Policies and Strategies in the Trieste Crisis", in: *Italy's Balkan Strategies*, edited by V. Pavlović, Balkanološki institut SANU, Belgrade 2015, 275.

the leading Italian communist in Trieste, who was killed by SS troops. The crisis culminated in the fall of 1944. In September, Tito got personally involved in the issue, publicly expressing territorial aspirations towards Istria, the Slovene coast and Carinthia. This meant the end of the April agreement which was based on postponing the territorial issue, and Edvard Kardelj explicitly confirmed that to Vincenzo Bianco, PCI's liaison to the CPY.³⁹

In that letter, dated September 9th 1944, Kardelj reiterated that Trieste belongs to Slovenia, and that he does not know why some PCI members keep claiming that it was an Italian city. But, in order to persuade Bianco, Kardelj resorted to ideological arguments that were more effective than nationalistic views. In his opinion, the enemies of communism used the April agreements between the two parties. In a situation where British and American troops were interested in Trieste, the city had to be protected from these imperialist forces. According to Kardelj, it was evident that the Yugoslav Army could defend the city better than the weak Italian partisans. The final and crucial argument Kardelj exposed was that Trieste should join Yugoslavia because it was already a socialist country. The presumption that Italy would not be a socialist country, and the lack of faith Kardelj showed towards the PCI and the Italian partisans, frustrated many in the Northern Directorate of the party. However, both Bianco and the Northern Directorate accepted the Yugoslav stance, and the autonomy of the PCI organizations in the disputed areas was ended. In order to decisively confirm their hegemony in Venezia Giulia, the Yugoslavs wanted to achieve the same agreement with the PCI chiefs in Rome.⁴⁰

Hence, in October of 1944, Togliatti met with Edvard Kardelj in Bari, in order to reach an interparty agreement which was recommended by Dimitrov in March. Being the leader of Slovene communists and the creator of Yugoslavia's policy regarding Trieste, Kardelj was, without a doubt, the most suitable person in the CPY leadership to attend the meeting. This encounter is another confusing event for historians, and the nature of the reached agreement remains uncertain. Some historians claim that Togliatti gave his full support to the Yugoslav annexation of the entire Venezia Giulia. Others think that he only supported Yugoslavia in taking the operational and military command of the region, while leaving the question of state sovereignty aside.⁴¹ Togliatti's

³⁹ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 55–57.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 58-63.

⁴¹ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 174-175; E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 140-141; M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 62; P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 64-66. Maurizio Zuccari quotes a letter of the Northern Directorate of the PCI which clearly shows how the Italian party understood the agreement with Kardelj – as a support to the military effort of the Yugoslav Army, but not to the annexation of Trieste. M. Zuccari, *Il dito sulla piaga*, 76-77.

attitude in the following months indicate that the second interpretation is more probable. It is difficult to believe that he would accept Yugoslav sovereignty over Venezia Giulia in October of 1944, and then, from March of 1945, constantly complain to Moscow and protest against the idea that Trieste should become a Yugoslav city. The Bari meeting was one of the numerous occasions where the Yugoslav representatives advocated for a more radical party line of the PCI, proposing the revolutionary road to the Italian comrades. Convinced in the need for the opposite – a broad national consensus, and aware of the fact that the Yugoslav radicalism attracted many in the PCI, Togliatti once again stood firm against such Yugoslav demands.⁴²

In the first half of 1945, the Yugoslav and Italian communist parties led parallel and opposing activities regarding Trieste. Yugoslavia conducted its policy of *fait accompli*, the annexation of the city in May of 1945 being its pinnacle,⁴³ and obtained Soviet approval for it.⁴⁴ On the other side, Togliatti was both consistent and unsuccessful in his appeals to Moscow. In many contacts with the Soviet ambassador, as in several letters he sent to Moscow, the leader of the PCI warned the USSR about the harm that was being done to his party by the Trieste issue, and asked for a containment of Yugoslavia's aggressiveness. The Soviet answers were disappointing. Sometimes his letters even went unanswered, and when there was feedback it created difficulties for the PCI's position. Moscow remained unconcerned with the troubles the party had within the Italian electorate, and with the antinational image of the PCI. The only advice the Soviets gave was to support the "justified" Yugoslav requests or, at least, put this issue aside and downplay its importance in the Italian public.⁴⁵ As a report of the Yugoslav ambassador to Moscow shows, Stalin himself thought that Togliatti was wrong, and strongly supported the Yugoslav ambitions in Trieste.⁴⁶

The pinnacle of the Trieste crisis came in May of 1945, when the Yugoslav Army entered the city. After intensive pressure from the West, it had to leave Trieste just a month later.⁴⁷ Having in mind the Soviet pro-Yugoslav stance in the previous months, as the Yugoslavs were

⁴² P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 66-71.

⁴³ See: B. Dimitrijević, D. Bogetić, *Трићанска криза*.

⁴⁴ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 176.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 175-177.

⁴⁶ M. Milkić, "Yugoslavia and Italy", 275.

⁴⁷ M. Milkić, "Yugoslavia and Italy", 268-269; B. Dimitrijević, D. Bogetić, *Трићанска криза*, 15-21.

approaching the city, Togliatti was left with no other option but to make an appeal to the people of Trieste to welcome the Yugoslav Army as liberators and help it in its operations.⁴⁸

In spite of this evident submission to Yugoslav and Soviet plans, Togliatti continued on his previous path.⁴⁹ Appealing to the center and not to the periphery, that is to Moscow instead of Belgrade, he advocated the need of postponing any moves that would imply a definitive Yugoslav sovereignty over Trieste. The most articulated move of that strategy was the mission of Giuseppe Di Vittorio, Italian trade union leader and communist politician, to Moscow in August of 1945. Di Vittorio went to the Soviet capital with the goal of presenting PCI's compromise for Trieste. According to the plan, the disputed territories should be given autonomy, for two or three years. During that period, the two states would be engaged in direct negotiations, and the final solution would be found through a plebiscite in Venezia Giulia. Presenting this plan, Di Vittorio once again underlined the damage that was made to his party on this issue, and the widespread perception in Italy that the PCI was an antinational party. The Italian syndicalist leader tried to persuade his interlocutors by saying that this plan was in fact a win-win situation – it allowed Yugoslavia to fulfill its territorial aspirations, by preparing the ground for a plebiscite where it would have an advantage over Italy, while at the same time it gave the PCI a chance to fight off all the attacks that labeled the party as treacherous. Once again, the Soviet answer favored the Yugoslav positions, discouraging PCI's initiatives. Lozovsky warned Di Vittorio that Trieste should not be the primary concern of Italians, but the British and American influence on the country's government. Although they rejected Di Vittorio's suggestion, the Soviets wanted to see what the Yugoslavs thought about it. When Dimitrov asked the Slovene communist Boris Zihelr about it, Zihelr's answer was essentially negative, as he stated that such an arrangement could be possible only if Italy had a democratic government, i.e. a government similar to those of the countries of people's democracy.⁵⁰

Belgrade's reaction to the PCI's increasing activity against Yugoslav expansionism was highly negative as they thought that the Italian comrades were too sentimental in their views on Trieste. The Yugoslav diplomats meticulously noted and analyzed the views of the most important members of the PCI Directorate. Scoccimarro, Reale, and Togliatti were labeled as the anti-

⁴⁸ S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", in: *Italy's Balkan Strategies (19th – 20th Century)*, edited by V. Pavlović, Balkanološki institut SANU, Belgrade 2015, 282.

⁴⁹ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 82.

⁵⁰ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 178-179; E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 147-148.

Yugoslav wing of the Directorate. Their stance on Trieste was attributed to a pre-election anxiety, a fear that a pro-Yugoslav view would lead to an electoral defeat. Pietro Secchia and Luigi Longo, leaders of the radical wing of the PCI's leadership, were perceived as pro-Yugoslav. The Yugoslav documents also show a phenomenon that was crucial in Yugoslavia's policy on Trieste, and one of long duration. Among the CPY's leadership, the Slovene communist were always the most intransigent, the strongest critics of the PCI and the fiercest advocates for annexation of Trieste.⁵¹ It was something that Togliatti understood. As his statements show, the Italian communist leader knew that the Slovenes were the biggest obstacle to an agreement, which could maybe be possible with the federal powers in Belgrade, but definitely not with the Slovene section of the CPY.⁵²

Searching for a compromise, Togliatti continued to construct a more national policy of his party. Despite resistance from Moscow and Belgrade, he emphasized the importance of the Italian public opinion, and became a strong supporter of the idea that Trieste is an Italian city. Those views influenced his contacts with Yugoslavia, like in November of 1945 when he met Josip Smodlaka, a Yugoslav diplomat stationed in Rome. Praising a change in the Yugoslav policy on the issue, its new and more flexible approach, Togliatti also warned Smodlaka that Yugoslavia had made some mistakes which complicated the situation – like the ad hoc raising of the issue of sovereignty, i.e. the annexation of Trieste, or the persecution and displacement of Italians from Venezia Giulia.⁵³

The “nationalist” shift of Togliatti's views on Trieste is evident in a letter he wrote in the spring of 1946 to Maurice Thorez, secretary-general of the French Communist Party (PCF). The letter was a reaction to an article on Trieste written by Stefan Mitrović, first published in Yugoslavia and then reprinted in the PCF's review *Cahiers du Communisme*. The French party's decision to reprint that article was an alarming evidence of its pro-Yugoslav stance. Like in his contacts with Moscow, Togliatti was keen to undermine the emerging pro-Yugoslav consensus in the movement, and to deprive Yugoslavia of its alliances with other parties on this issue. His letter was not a mere response to Mitrović's article. After attacking it point by point, Togliatti went beyond it, and gave a broad and complex analysis of the issue, articulating his stance more

⁵¹ S. Mišić, “Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956”, 282-283.

⁵² P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*; 114.

⁵³ S. Mišić, “Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956”, 283.

explicitly than ever. The crucial argument of the letter was that Trieste was without a doubt an Italian city – the vast majority of the city’s population saw it that way, as well as the majority of all Italians. In addition, he emphasized that, for decades, the Italian left was the leading political force which fought for Trieste’s liberation from Austria. Togliatti was convinced that giving up on this traditional stance, and accepting Yugoslav views, would have catastrophic consequences for the Italian left. Such a change of perspective would isolate the PCI further, breaking any possibility of an alliance with the middle class. And, in that scenario, the middle class would be pushed “into the arms” of the reaction and create an alliance which could revive fascism. In order to make his views more canonical, Togliatti resorted to quoting Lenin. He reminded Thorez that it would not be unprecedented for a socialist country to give territories to a capitalist neighbor – Lenin advocated for such a solution in a territorial dispute with Finland, in order to prevent the strengthening of the reaction in that Scandinavian country. Justifying his party’s policy, Togliatti aimed to prove that Yugoslavia contributed to the rise of “reactionary forces” in the region. Contrary to the agreements with the PCI, Yugoslavia opened the question of annexation, and also conducted a “sectarian party line” in the region. Those hegemonic aspirations of Belgrade seriously damaged the position of the working class, he thought. When the PCI was leading the working class in Venezia Giulia there was unity, even an influence on the middle class, and now, with the Yugoslav supremacy, the working class was divided and the middle class became nationalistic and reactionary. Not only did Yugoslavia provoke these negative consequences with its actions, but, more importantly, it provoked the American and British military intervention. The intervention deprived the population of Venezia Giulia of any power and autonomy, and made the region a center of anti-Soviet propaganda. The letter finishes with an appeal to Thorez. Togliatti concluded that staying true to the spirit of internationalism would not mean supporting Yugoslavia’s reckless policy, and isolating the PCI. Such behavior could only strengthen the forces of reaction in Italy and Europe and damage the communist movement.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 71-76. In the period from January to April of 1946, the PCI increased its activity in the region of Venezia Giulia, as its opposition to Yugoslav hegemony. During that time, the PCI formed the Information office, led by Giordano Pratolongo, which conducted the party’s activity in the region. P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 131-133. During 1946, the Office had many conflicts with the Slovene communists – *ibid*, 165-175.

At first, it seemed that the perspectives for Togliatti's policy were quite dim. In its contacts with the PCI,⁵⁵ like in its contacts with Yugoslavia,⁵⁶ Moscow continued to support Belgrade wholeheartedly, without showing any empathy for the problems of the Italian party. Clearly, there was no room for compromise. In spite of that, the PCI's luck was about to change. Ironically, that change was not brought by "the motherland of socialism", but by the hated capitalists from the West. The Western powers exerted military and diplomatic pressure on Belgrade. The military pressure was performed by the American and British air forces. Just in February and March of 1946, their planes violated the Yugoslav airspace 233 times. Those provocations led to various incidents, sometimes ending in human casualties. The most famous incident was in August of 1946, when an American plane was brought down by the Yugoslav army. The crew of the plane survived and was arrested, but released soon afterwards. These incidents were the strongest evidence of the tense relations between Yugoslavia and the West.⁵⁷

Western diplomatic pressure was evident for a long time, but in 1946 it became so intense that it bore results. The Soviet Union finally realized that Yugoslavia's territorial claims were unrealistic. During the Second Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Paris from June 15th to July 15th, the Western powers finally convinced Moscow and Belgrade that a compromise was necessary. In a letter on June 23rd, Stalin warned his foreign minister that the Soviet Union could not damage its relations with the West just because of Trieste.⁵⁸ The conference ended with a suggestion for compromise, enacted in 1947. The suggestion was to form a temporary autonomous territory, later called the Free Territory of Trieste, guaranteed by the United Nations Security Council.⁵⁹ This was a sobering moment for Yugoslavia. Diplomats in Belgrade realized that nothing can be achieved by the stubborn approach used previously. Hence, Togliatti's attempts to mediate and engage Italy and Yugoslavia in direct negotiations over Trieste became plausible.

⁵⁵ For an example, in May of 1946 – E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 149

⁵⁶ Most explicitly during Tito's visit to the Soviet Union in May of 1946 – *Југославија и СССР. Сусрети и разговору на највишем нивоу руководиоца 1946-1964, Том I* [Yugoslavia and the USSR. Meetings and Conversations of the Highest Ranking Officials 1946-1964, Volume I], edited by M. Milošević, V. P. Tarasov, N. G. Tomilina, Arhiv Jugoslavije, Belgrade 2014, 51-54.

⁵⁷ B. Dimitrijević, D. Bogetić, *Трићанска криза*, 29-31.

⁵⁸ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 150. Eugenio Reale, who in the name of the PCI was present in Paris, understood the shifting of the Soviet views, and communicated that to Togliatti - M. Zuccari, *Il dito sulla piaga*, 108, 114.

⁵⁹ M. Milkić, "Yugoslavia and Italy", 271.

With that new gained awareness, Yugoslavia initiated a broad diplomatic activity towards Italy. Contacts were made both with the Italian government⁶⁰ and with the PCI. Togliatti welcomed this and was encouraged by it to continue advocating for a meeting between him and Tito. Trying to persuade the Soviet ambassador in favor of the encounter, in September 1946 Togliatti stated that such a meeting would be a great opportunity to bring De Gasperi's foreign policy to collapse.⁶¹ Neither the Soviets nor the Yugoslavs needed to be persuaded anymore, and Togliatti finally got his chance to negotiate directly with Tito, hoping it would consequently lead to an agreement between the two governments. In early November 1946, he visited Belgrade with the proposition to arrange an exchange of territories. Yugoslavia would renounce all rights to Trieste - the city and a narrow corridor along the coast (intended for a railway line) would go to Italy. All other disputed territories, including the city of Gorizia, would be Yugoslav. Reluctantly, as he was bent on having at least some influence in Trieste, Tito agreed. Not only had Tito accepted the exchange of territories, but he also accepted Togliatti's request to free a number of Italian POWs, as a gesture of good will.⁶²

Expecting that this would be an initial step towards a complete and triumphant outcome, Togliatti was shocked and frustrated with the reactions in Italy to his visit. The PCI's propaganda highlighted the releasing of the POWs and the possibility for direct negotiations between the countries and, thus, a possibility to end the US/UK military presence in the region. But the Italian public was not persuaded. Togliatti was particularly irritated with the media coverage and the importance Gorizia was given. He ironically commented that it, all of a sudden, became a "holy" Italian city.⁶³ But what Togliatti and the PCI failed to understand was that, in spite of their achievements, they fell short to basic logic. If Italy's rights to Gorizia were recognized at the international conference in Paris, why should the country renounce them now? Even their left wing partner, Pietro Nenni, was of the same opinion. He stated that the agreement meant that Tito would give something he did not possess, and would obtain something Italy has.⁶⁴ In spite of some further

⁶⁰ On October 20th 1946, Pietro Nenni, Italian minister of foreign affairs, informed his Yugoslav colleague Stanoje Simić about the possibility of direct negotiations regarding Trieste. The Yugoslav side responded two weeks later, during Togliatti's visit to Belgrade, expressing the will to achieve an agreement. Ibid, 276

⁶¹ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 151. The visit was not coordinated with the Italian government. Therefore, it led to confrontations with De Gasperi at the first meeting of the government after the visit – P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 154-155.

⁶² E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 152; S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", 284. The same request was made by Longo, in April.

⁶³ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 154.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 152-154.

contacts between the two governments, it was obvious that direct negotiations had no perspective. Italy was better off securing its alliance with the United States and negotiating the Trieste issue multilaterally than in having bilateral negotiations with Yugoslavia. De Gasperi's visit to Washington in January 1947 was the most direct move in that direction. After months of mutual contacts, Yugoslav and Italian officials ignored each other in the US capital during the visit.⁶⁵ Even though he thought that his visit to Belgrade would endanger De Gasperi's foreign policy, it seems that Togliatti achieved quite the opposite.

Having failed in attempts to find a direct agreement on Trieste with Italy, Yugoslavia had to go back to the international arena. The international perspective for Yugoslav territorial aspirations was rather grim. The Western powers, as before, were unanimous in supporting Italy. More important was the absence of Soviet support. Yugoslavia's maverick like behavior constantly caused friction in the relations with Moscow. Trieste was, without a doubt, one of the main sources of that friction. However, despite certain conflictual episodes regarding Trieste,⁶⁶ the Soviets mostly supported Yugoslavia's ambitions, until the mentioned Paris conference in mid-1946. In Paris it became obvious that, faced with a strong Western pressure, the Soviet Union was ready to give up on Trieste. During 1947, many members of the Soviet leadership talked about the unthoughtful and selfish stance of Belgrade. For instance, when criticizing the widespread notion that Moscow should support its allies more, Zhdanov stated that the USSR would not risk endangering its position and strength for any cause, clearly alluding to Trieste.⁶⁷

In February 1947, Yugoslavia and twenty other countries signed peace agreements with Italy. The 21st article of the Yugoslav-Italian agreement sanctioned the forming of the Free Territory of Trieste. As it was mentioned, this solution was proposed earlier, at the Conference of ministers of foreign affairs of the great powers. The FTT was intended as a temporary compromise – an internationalization of the disputed territories, under the surveillance of the United Nations, which would be managed by a governor. Neither Yugoslavia nor Italy were satisfied with the

⁶⁵ M. Milkić, "Yugoslavia and Italy", 277-279.

⁶⁶ The most important of them was a speech made by Josip Broz Tito in Ljubljana, in May 1945. Faced with Soviet pressure to pull the Yugoslav Army out of Trieste, Tito famously stated that Yugoslavia would not be a "currency of exchange" for the great powers. S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 178.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 109.

solution, expressing that by not renouncing their territorial aspirations in the future. However, under international pressure, the agreement was signed and the stillborn FTT was created.⁶⁸

Although the FTT was short-lived, in 1947 it appeared to be an important and long-lasting solution. Therefore, Yugoslavia and the PCI had to align their policies with the existence of the FTT, and unite the communists of that area. Even before the peace agreement of February 1947, the two parties had a meeting in December 1946, aimed at resolving the parallelism within the communist movement of Venezia Giulia. Those December discussions brought no important breakthroughs, and both parties continued to have separate organizations in the area. But, with the forming of the FTT, the two parties finally managed to unite in April 1947. In an agreement between Milovan Đilas and Luigi Longo, the Communist Party of the FTT was formed, by a merger between the Yugoslav Communist Party of Venezia Giulia and the PCI's Office of Information.⁶⁹ In this new organization the Yugoslavs preserved their dominance, as Branko Babič became the leader of the new party. But the unity of the party was false, and the Yugoslav dominance was far from absolute. The PCI sent Vittorio Vidali to lead the Italian cadres.⁷⁰ He was an agent of the Comintern with an impressive curriculum, including important tasks in Spain and Latin America. The presence of such an important figure meant that the Italian communists decided not to be passive in the FTT. Hence, in spite of the merger, the parallel organizations continued to exist informally. When the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict emerged, the party was easily divided.

However, the conflict between Belgrade and Moscow came as a surprise to many, as the anti-Yugoslav sentiment of the Soviets was kept secret. Due to tactical reasons, Moscow remained silent about its discontent with Yugoslavia, using the CPY as a tool to discipline the "right wing" of the movement during the First conference of the Cominform. But in 1948 the conflict broke out, and Yugoslavia was definitely left without any further Soviet support regarding Trieste. When in

⁶⁸ The history of the FTT was short and problematic. Finding a compromise in electing a governor was impossible, and smaller conflicts and incidents between the Yugoslav Army and the USA/UK troops continued. The line dividing the northern Zone A, where the USA/UK army was in power, and the Zone B, where it was the Yugoslav Army, was destined to become a border between the two states. Any illusions about the efficacy of this arrangement, if they existed, were shattered in 1949, when Yugoslavia introduced its currency in the Zone B. B. Dimitrijević, D. Bogetić, *Трићанска криза*, 36-42. In 1954 the two countries agreed to the de facto state, that Zone A was Italian and Zone B Yugoslav, and in 1975 signed an agreement, finally and formally accepting the division of territories and renouncing further claims.

⁶⁹ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 186-189.

⁷⁰ S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", 284-286. Patrick Karlsen depicts the conflicts between Vidali and Babič - P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 193.

March of 1948 the Western powers made a joint statement supporting Italian territorial claims, Moscow did not even care to respond. Even Togliatti was surprised by this change,⁷¹ not realizing that it meant a definitive end of Soviet support to Yugoslavia, a fact that became evident very soon.

The Yugoslav-Soviet split, in the spring of 1948, substantially changed the complex international situation regarding Trieste. For the PCI it was a liberating and welcomed change, finally allowing them to lead a more active and coherent national policy on this issue.⁷² For Yugoslavia it was a destabilization of unforeseen proportions, a blow that would lead to collaboration with the previously despised capitalist powers. Consequently, it also led to renouncing much of the territories hitherto deemed as vital.

The two conferences of the Cominform – two clashes between CPY and PCI

The Trieste issue was one of the most important crises of early Cold War history. Therefore, it is no surprise that the historians dealing with the relations between the two parties in the 1940s focused extensively on this subject. Although such interest is warranted, the national dimension of the conflict often overshadowed its ideological underpinnings. The two conferences of the Cominform, the first one held in 1947, when the organization was formed, and the second one in 1948, when Yugoslavia was excommunicated from the movement, reveal the ideological rift between the parties. During the discussions, the issue of Trieste was sidelined in favor of the clash between the PCI's moderate party line and CPY's radicalism. So far, Silvio Pons went furthest in analyzing this aspect of the conflict between Tito and Togliatti, and in doing so focused greatly on the conferences.

As it was underlined at the beginning of the chapter, Togliatti represented the “right wing” of the communist movement, dedicated to preserving the war time alliance with capitalism, and Tito represented the “left wing”, advocating an immediate clash with the West. Moscow was ambiguous, shifting its views from one perspective to the other, due to that uncertainty unable to arbitrate and decide which path should be followed. However, in autumn of 1947 it seemed that the Soviet Union had finally determined its foreign policy and the policy of the entire movement. The perceived homogenization of capitalism, under way in Western Europe, frightened Moscow.

⁷¹ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 223.

⁷² E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 155; A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 197.

The announcement of the Marshall Plan and the expulsion of French and Italian communists from their national governments alarmed Stalin. His initial response was to revitalize earlier plans of recreating an international communist organization as a means of homogenizing the communist part of Europe.⁷³

Under such international circumstances, in September 1947 the founding conference of the Cominform, the new international organization of the communist parties, was held in Poland. The Conference was a strong dogmatic response to the changes in Western Europe, and dictated a harsher ideological discipline in the movement. Although the topics of the meeting were kept hidden by the Soviets, it was pretty obvious that they were going to attack the moderate policies of the French and Italian parties, and order a stronger conflict with capitalism. Togliatti predicted that scenario and warned Longo and Reale, PCI's delegates to the conference, to defend the party's line, arguing that it was aimed at preventing the Greek scenario (i.e. a civil war) in Italy.⁷⁴ However, the Italian representatives were powerless in front of the accusations made by Zhdanov, and agreed to change their policies and conduct the class struggle in Italy more coherently.⁷⁵

The conference brought about a short term conjuncture of views between Moscow and Belgrade. It appeared that the Soviets were looking more favorably on Yugoslav radicalism than on Togliatti's moderate policy. This was most evident in the behavior of Kardelj and Đilas, the Yugoslav delegates. The two of them were main Zhdanov's assistants in attacks on the Italians and French. Kardelj criticized the PCI, and Đilas the PCF. The general tone of Soviet and Yugoslav reproaches was the same. The Italian and French party had mistakenly thought that an advance to socialism was possible through legal means, through parliamentary democracy and participation in government, which proved to be an illusion. Kardelj claimed that the PCI was on the verge of revisionism as it lessened the class struggle and the confrontation with the United States, as well as its devotion to Moscow. Instead, their party lines should be more class conscious and more aligned with Moscow, as there can be no national independence and freedom without the support of the Soviets.⁷⁶ The reports that Zhdanov sent to Stalin were full of praise for Kardelj and Đilas'

⁷³ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 89-91, 99.

⁷⁴ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 222.

⁷⁵ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 205-206.

⁷⁶ The minutes of the meeting of the Yugoslav Politburo, held shortly after the conference, show the deep resentment of the Yugoslav leadership for their Italian and French comrades. PCI's and PCF's party lines were evaluated as social democratic. Tito was pretty harsh in criticizing the French, and claimed that they had become a petit bourgeois party that only waits for the moment to enter the government. The general tone of the discussion leads to the conclusion that the Yugoslav leader saw the PCI's policy similarly. *Zapisi sa sednica Politbiroa Centralnog komiteta KPJ (11.*

views.⁷⁷ At that precise moment, the Yugoslav policies were completely in line with the Soviets, and they were the winners in the conflict with Togliatti.

However, that conjuncture of views was far from being solid.⁷⁸ A deep rift between Belgrade and Moscow was growing in the background and became evident soon. In fact, the radicalization of relations between the USSR and the West was just an initial reaction to the mentioned process of homogenization in capitalist Europe. Soon, the Soviets came to terms with it, and decided not to enter a conflict with capitalism, but to strengthen their rule in Eastern Europe. With such a foreign policy in mind, the moderate French and Italians were no longer the problem, but the disobedient Yugoslavs and their radicalism.

The first signs of the growing rift were made public even during the conference, and revolved around the situation in Greece. While the Soviet and Yugoslav critiques of the Italians and the French were essentially the same, Zhdanov and Kardelj/Đilas had different perspectives on how to overcome the problems of the two parties. Zhdanov limited his advice to advocating for a bigger mobilization of the masses. On the other hand, the Yugoslavs openly advocated for the Greek scenario, i.e. a revolt, uprising and civil war in Italy and France.⁷⁹ While Moscow was becoming increasingly cautious in its relations with the Greek communists, Tito was adamant in supporting them. Before the conference, the Yugoslavs asked Moscow to include the Greek communist party in the meeting. The proposition was refused with the excuse that such an invite would only serve enemy propaganda, which would use it to label the Greek communists as foreign agents. At the conference itself, Kardelj wrote and proposed a Note of international solidarity with Greece, which was refused by Zhdanov.⁸⁰ Hence, even at the conference which symbolized a short term radicalization of Soviet foreign policy, it was impossible to gain Moscow's support for an open conflict with the West, which was the Yugoslav aspiration.

The mentioned change in Soviet foreign policy, i.e. the renunciation of the principles that guided the First Conference of the Cominform, was never made explicit and public. But the change

jun 1945 – 7. jul 1948) [Minutes From the Meetings of the Politburo of the CPY (June 11th 1945 – July 7th 1948)], edited by Branko Petranović, Službeni list SRJ, Belgrade 1995, 213-219, 587-588, 598.

⁷⁷ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 108, 203.

⁷⁸ The Soviet documentation from the preparation of the conference shows that, initially, Moscow wanted to also attack the Czechoslovak party, for its moderate policies (hesitation to refuse the Marshall Plan; the respect for institutions of parliamentary "bourgeois" democracy in the country), and the Yugoslav party, for its attempts to establish a hegemony in the Balkans. At the end, only the PCI and PCF were criticized, and the Yugoslavs were used for that scope, but it was evident that the relations with Belgrade were far from harmonious. *Ibid*, 104.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 201-202.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 109.

was evident soon, in November and December 1947, during several meetings Stalin had with French and Italian communists. Attributing the guilt to others, in this case to Yugoslavia, and establishing himself as an unbiased arbiter between two conflicted sides, was typical of Stalin's political practice.⁸¹ Hence, the same method was applied after the Cominform meeting. On November 18th the Soviet leader had an encounter with the French communist leader Thorez. On that occasion, Stalin told him that even if the PCF had managed to take power during the war⁸² it would have lost it soon, because the American and British military were present in France.⁸³ In a subsequent meeting with Marcel Causin, Stalin went even further in distancing himself from the Yugoslav critiques and discrediting Belgrade's views. On that occasion he said that "if the Red Army was in Paris, the situation in France would now be the same as in Yugoslavia". Finally, in the December meeting with Pietro Secchia, Stalin openly supported Togliatti's moderate line and his reluctance to engage in a civil war.⁸⁴

Despite all the signals which indicated a change in Moscow's policy, the Yugoslavs were not able, or not willing, to realize it.⁸⁵ Belgrade continued with its longtime radicalism, convinced that the First conference of the Cominform was the ultimate confirmation of such a view. Đilas' critiques of the PCF, for instance when he explicitly stated that the French comrades had been misunderstanding the Soviet foreign policy since the war, show how convinced the Yugoslavs were that their views were in perfect harmony with Moscow. Belgrade's attitude towards the PCI was essentially the same – it continued to be highly critical, and the Yugoslavs kept demanding a radicalization of the party's political line. A few episodes strongly confirm this general outline. Firstly, in a conversation with his Soviet colleague Martynov, Mladen Iveković, a Yugoslav diplomat in Rome, made several critiques towards the PCI. To such claims Martinov responded by saying that the strategy of the Italian party was derived from complex international

⁸¹ R. Wesson, *Lenin's Legacy: The Story of the CPSU*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford 2017, 125.

⁸² This was one of the main Yugoslav critiques, that the PCI and PCF missed their chance to obtain power in the final months of the war.

⁸³ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 116.

⁸⁴ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 233.

⁸⁵ How unaware the Yugoslavs were of a shift in Soviet policy was most evident in the meeting Stalin had with representatives of Yugoslav and Bulgarian parties, in Moscow on February 10th 1948. This meeting was organized in order to criticize the proposed Balkan federation, announced by Yugoslav and Bulgarian communists, and the Yugoslav interference in Albania. Neither of these initiatives were coordinated with the USSR, and the Soviet leader wanted to impose his authority. During the meeting Stalin had also made pessimistic predictions regarding Greece, and his wish to contain the conflict in that country was evident. At one point Kardelj stated that there were no differences between Yugoslav and Soviet views, to what Stalin responded sharply, stating that differences existed, and that it was opportunistic to conceal them. S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 116-117.

circumstances. Albeit not explicit, the answer revealed the Soviet perspective on Italy and class struggle in the country, which the Yugoslavs failed to understand in their radicalism. Secondly, on the eve of the 6th Congress of the Italian Party, Belgrade pressured the PCI more than ever, with patronizing advice and directives. Faced with such arrogance, Togliatti sarcastically responded that the revolution in Italy should be left to the Italian party.⁸⁶ And thirdly, in March of 1948, just before the upcoming elections, the Yugoslavs were prepared to launch a military intervention, together with the Hungarians, in Northern Italy.⁸⁷

While the Yugoslavs were blinded by their success at the First conference of the Cominform, Togliatti was much more successful in demystifying the true nature of Soviet policy. He understood the change in the USSR's foreign policy, and the growing differences between Moscow and Belgrade, using them to his advantage. That was not a surprise, as Togliatti's experience in Moscow had made him, more than any Yugoslav official, prepared to decipher what was truly going on in the high ranks of the Soviet party. In any case, Togliatti formally abided to the decisions of the conference but continued with his policies, as he was determined to avoid the possibility of a civil confrontation in his country. In doing so, the Italian communist leader had to defend himself not just from the Yugoslavs, but also from the pro-Yugoslav radicals within his party. As it was mentioned earlier, certain elements within the Italian party, especially among the partisans in the North, were very close to Yugoslavia. They were connected by the radicalism they all shared, expressed in their joint belief that a revolution in Italy should be conducted immediately. In the period after the Cominform conference, Pietro Secchia was the most important representative of such currents within the PCI. Secchia urged for a change in the party's policies, echoing Belgrade's views. He shared two important Yugoslav views. First, that the Italian party was excessively devoted to parliamentary democracy, and second, that it was a mistake not to seize the revolutionary potential in the final stages of the war. In addition, he asked for a more efficient pro-Soviet and pro-Yugoslav propaganda.⁸⁸

Togliatti's predictions that Moscow would support him rather than Secchia and the Yugoslavs paid off soon. In the mentioned December meeting between Secchia and Stalin, the Soviet leader supported Togliatti's views and his reluctance to provoke a civil war.⁸⁹ That was a

⁸⁶ Ibid, 219.

⁸⁷ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 238.

⁸⁸ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 205-6, 212, 216.

⁸⁹ E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 320.

big encouragement for the secretary general, but still it did not constitute a full and explicit support to him in his struggle against Yugoslav radicalism. During the meeting with Secchia it was even arranged that the Soviet financial support to the PCI should be sent via Belgrade.⁹⁰ But, as the Soviet-Yugoslav split was on the horizon, signs of Moscow's support to Togliatti became explicit. On March 23rd 1948, Togliatti had an urgent and secret meeting with Kostlyev, the Soviet ambassador to Rome. The Italian communist leader wanted to know how Moscow evaluated the possibility of a civil war in Italy after the upcoming April elections. The Soviets, acquainted with the joint Yugoslav-Hungarian plans of a military intervention in Northern Italy, were swift to convince Togliatti that they did not support such a scenario. On March 26th Molotov repeated that stance in a message to Togliatti. The Soviet minister of foreign affairs added that Togliatti should not listen to the Yugoslavs and Hungarians, as those two parties did not know what were Moscow's views, even if they claimed otherwise.⁹¹ Thus, Togliatti finally obtained explicit Soviet confirmation for his views, and won the conflict with Tito.

On the very next day, March 27th, the Soviets sent a letter to Belgrade, criticizing CPY's policies. The letter initiated the Yugoslav-Soviet split and it became obvious that the Yugoslav party lost Moscow's support, which appeared very strong merely six months earlier at the Cominform conference in Poland. The process was finalized in Bucharest, on the Second Conference of the Cominform, in late June 1948, when Yugoslavia was expelled from the movement. Officially, the conflict was motivated by deviations in the CPY's party line. Lack of internal democracy and a "faulty" policy regarding the agrarian issue were the main accusations. Beneath such dogmatic argumentation, internal Soviet documents reveal the true nature of the split. Above all, Moscow was frustrated by the very autonomous Yugoslav foreign policy, which aimed at securing Belgrade's hegemony in the Balkans.⁹² The Soviets perceived Tito's activity as a danger to their influence in the region, and were not willing to allow such a challenge to their dominance.⁹³ The Soviet wish for a stronger grip on Yugoslavia was exacerbated due to Belgrade's radicalism towards the West. The Yugoslav activity regarding Trieste, Albania and Greece was

⁹⁰ Ibid. It was a continuation of a usual practice: Belgrade was an intermediary for funds from Moscow, but also often supported the Italian party with its own financial resources - S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", 285-286.

⁹¹ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 222-223

⁹² Ibid, 104.

⁹³ In this regard, particularly important were the Yugoslav statements in which: 1) the USSR was criticized for its lack of will to defend the interests of smaller communist countries; 2) USSR's interests were ignored and its role in the liberation of Yugoslavia minimized. Ibid, 109, 223.

highly contentious, and leading the communist bloc into a clash with capitalist countries, something Moscow wanted to evade.⁹⁴ In the mentioned meeting between Stalin and the representatives of the Yugoslav and Bulgarian parties, on February 10th 1948, the Soviet leader explicitly stood against such Yugoslav activity in the Balkans.⁹⁵

However, during the conference in Romania the real motives, the ones Stalin had no problem mentioning in February, were hidden. The Second conference was, essentially, a total negation of the first one and of its principles. It was a definitive choice of the Soviet Union not to radicalize its relations with the West, but to focus on strengthening the control over Eastern Europe. Yugoslavia was chosen, due to its ultra-leftist tendencies, to be the scapegoat. The USSR did not want to accept its share of responsibility, and admit that it previously supported such views. And while at the first conference the Yugoslavs were supported in their attack on Togliatti, the Italian communist leader was now the perfect ally for the counterattack. He was one of the most important figures of the movement, which gave him credibility, and he was engaged in a dispute with the Yugoslavs for quite some time. More importantly, Togliatti's views now became highly compatible with the official Soviet line. Aligning against Yugoslavia, the PCI and Moscow finally improved their relations.⁹⁶

Togliatti's presence at the conference was of such importance for the Soviets that, most probably, it was postponed in order to allow him to participate.⁹⁷ He attacked the Yugoslavs on various bases. Belgrade's foreign policy was characterized as adventurously playing with the idea of a new war. In that context, he mentioned the dispute regarding Trieste. Also, Yugoslav radicalism was criticized as a wish to build some kind of super-socialism in complete isolation, without regards for the entire movement. Togliatti also contributed to Soviet fabrications that the Yugoslavs were Western spies, saying that Belgrade leaked some information regarding certain meetings with PCI representatives. In a nutshell, Togliatti openly advocated for a full and frontal conflict with the Yugoslavs. All this made his contribution crucial to the Soviets, and the reports sent to Stalin were full of praise for Togliatti. However, those reports also show that some parts of his views were censored. Especially the parts of his speech in which Togliatti wanted to move

⁹⁴ Ibid, 123.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 116-117; E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 243.

⁹⁶ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 125-131, 225. In internal Soviet documents, one of Yugoslav sins was the "inadmissible" attack on Togliatti. Ibid, 204.

⁹⁷ The conference was initially to be held in early June, but Togliatti asked for a postponement due to some obligations he had in the Italian Parliament - M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 104.

away from the Yugoslav topic, and defend his party's political line and its mass nature. This was not communicated to Stalin, but only his anti-Yugoslav remarks. Therefore, Togliatti was used by the Soviets and reduced to a role of a mere assistant in such an endeavor.⁹⁸

The decision to attack Yugoslavia and to cut ties with the CPY was a natural choice for Togliatti. Such an outcome improved the relations with Moscow, legitimized Togliatti's views, gave him an opportunity to totally defeat the inner party opposition, and enabled the PCI to free itself from the burden of supporting Yugoslav claims to Italian territories. In addition, it was a chance to get back at the Yugoslavs for Kardelj's attack during the First conference of the Cominform.⁹⁹ When Togliatti returned to Italy, and informed the party about the outcome of the conference, he found unanimous support and initiated a public campaign against Yugoslavia.¹⁰⁰ It was a beginning of an open conflict with Belgrade which lasted until 1955.

The rupture: 1948-1955

The true nature of the eight-year conflict between the Italian and Yugoslav party puzzled historians. Particularly confusing was Togliatti's stance during these years. Having Togliatti's role in the Second conference of the Cominform in mind, as well as his confrontations with Belgrade that dated back to the war, it would be natural to suppose that he was one of the most ardent actors in the conflict. However, the PCI's policy was much more complex and ambiguous. On one hand, the Italian party fully participated in the conflict and did not question Soviet guidelines in the fight against Belgrade. On the other hand, the PCI and its leader never exposed themselves too much during the confrontation. The Yugoslav documents clearly show that Belgrade perceived the PCI as the party that was least involved, in comparison with other communist parties, in the anti-Yugoslav propaganda of the movement.¹⁰¹ Whether it was due to Togliatti's tactical skills, or due to his belief that by attacking Yugoslavia he would, in fact, endanger the autonomy of the national communist parties including his, is still a subject of debate.¹⁰² Both interpretations seem plausible.

⁹⁸ S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 130-132, 225.

⁹⁹ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 102; A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 197. Gian Carlo Pajetta explicitly wrote that the excommunication of Yugoslavia was easier to accept due to the resentment in the party regarding Yugoslav attacks six months earlier. G. Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest Praga Varsavia*, 42.

¹⁰⁰ A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 196-197.

¹⁰¹ S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", 286.

¹⁰² M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 105; A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 196-197.

Furthermore, the memory of Stalinist purges surely left a trace on Togliatti and taught him to be very cautious during ideological conflicts.

When the conflict between Yugoslavia and the entire communist movement erupted, some representatives of other communist parties were still in Belgrade. In the case of the PCI it was Giuliano Pajetta, previously sent to Belgrade to participate in a Cominform journal based in the Yugoslav capital. A letter that Togliatti sent to Pajetta is probably the best example of PCI's position during the conflict. In short, Togliatti ordered the party's representative to demonstrate complete alignment with the USSR, while expressing a deep respect for the Yugoslav comrades at the same time.¹⁰³ Hence it is not surprising that, although fully participating in the rupture and never questioning Soviet decisions, the Italian party had some initiatives towards reconciliation, or at least towards containing the conflict with Yugoslavia. Just a few days after the Second conference of the Cominform, in early July of 1948, Edoardo D'Onofrio contacted the Yugoslavs and proposed to them to request a new conference in order to smooth out the differences with the other parties. Soon it was realized that such a scenario was far from possible, and that the rupture was complete, as the Yugoslavs were not willing to back down. Still, some covert contacts between the PCI and Belgrade were kept active throughout the years of the conflict, primarily through Eugenio Reale.¹⁰⁴ However, those contacts were probably known only to few individuals in the party's Directorate. For the vast majority of PCI's members, any contact with the Yugoslavs was perceived as an overture towards the enemy.¹⁰⁵

While the party's Directorate in Rome had such an ambiguous perspective, the party's branch in Trieste (the formally independent CP FTT – Communist Party of the Free Territory of Trieste) radicalized in an anti-Yugoslav direction. Before the conflict, it was a dual organization, influenced by both communist parties. When the conflict broke out, the anti-Yugoslavs had the majority and took over the party. Thus, the PCI obtained control over Zone A of the disputed territory, with Vittorio Vidali at the head of the organization.¹⁰⁶ The pro-Yugoslav minority, led by Branko Babič, ex party chief, left the party, but proved to be inefficient and made no deeper

¹⁰³ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 104

¹⁰⁴ S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", 287; M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 107.

¹⁰⁵ G. Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest Praga Varsavia*, 42.

¹⁰⁶ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 196-197.

impact amongst the local communists.¹⁰⁷ Vidali's party was of big importance for Moscow, as it organized a counterintelligence anti-Yugoslav center in Trieste. The center worked on Cominform propaganda and on infiltrating the Yugoslav party.¹⁰⁸ Hence, the Trieste party became the champion in the Cominform's attack on Belgrade. In 1948, Vidali labeled Belgrade as the "fifth column" within the communist movement, and declared himself willing to fight against it until the end.¹⁰⁹ Such a strong anti-Yugoslav sentiment of the Trieste communists was not a mere product of Soviet orders. It was, more importantly, caused by the local situation. Right or left, many in the region had a troubling history of relations with Yugoslavia, and looked at the country with negative sentiments. The communists were frustrated by Belgrade's wish to impose its hegemony over the regional movement, and others were frustrated by the Yugoslav territorial aspirations. The Trieste communist party was aware that it had to promote the Italian sovereignty in the area in order to become an important political actor in the region. Such views caused friction with the party headquarters in Rome, as the PCI and Moscow still insisted on the FTT and opposed the division of the area between the two states.¹¹⁰

Although the PCI was not as involved during the first stage of the anti-Yugoslav campaign,¹¹¹ it soon shifted its stances due to two reasons. Firstly, in November 1949 a Cominform meeting was held in Budapest, and it was agreed to intensify the attack on Belgrade. The PCI and the Trieste CP followed those instructions, and a fierce anti-Yugoslav campaign followed. The Yugoslav communists were attacked on several grounds, from accusations of collaborating with the Nazis and Americans during the war, to criticizing the repression of the Italian minority in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav regime was even labeled as fascist, and the concentration camps, where the pro-Soviet Yugoslavs were imprisoned, were used as a crucial proof to such views.¹¹² Secondly, when Aldo Cucchi and Valdo Magnani, two prominent PCI members, conflicted with

¹⁰⁷ The "Babič party" was heavily criticized in Belgrade due to the fact that it had not achieved any result, and because a large part of the Yugoslav financial aid to the party was embezzled - S. Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956", 288-289.

¹⁰⁸ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 209; E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 259; M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 196-199.

¹⁰⁹ M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 194. One of the most illustrative quotes, which testifies to the fierce anti-Yugoslav sentiments among the Trieste communists, was made in 1951 by Karel Siskovic, who said that "Titofascism is the watchdog of imperialism" – *ibid*, 244.

¹¹⁰ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 200-206.

¹¹¹ According to Pietro Secchia, one of the main reasons of the lesser involvement of the PCI during the first stage of the anti-Yugoslav campaign was the shooting of Palmiro Togliatti, which preoccupied the party with internal problems, in the summer of 1948. M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 186-187.

¹¹² P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 209-216.

the party and left it in early 1951, they received Yugoslav help in creating their new organization. This was an open declaration of war between the parties.

The Magnacucchi case, as it was known in the Italian public, was part of a broader Yugoslav strategy in the conflict with the Cominform. In the first years of the conflict, Belgrade was keen to prove the communist character of Yugoslavia, and the true Marxist nature of the CPY. The Yugoslavs thought that they were the only true communists, unlike the “imperialist Russians”, and that Yugoslavia could “save the soul” of the movement. Hence, they were not looking to collaborate with the non-communist left, something that would become a pillar of Yugoslav foreign policy in the early fifties. The initial reaction was to seek contact with dissidents within the communist parties, finance their activities, and create a network of organizations that would be opposed to the Moscow-led Cominform. Such strategy was abandoned in the early fifties, when the Yugoslavs realized that they had not achieved much other than creating marginal dogmatic organizations.¹¹³

Despite the fact that such Yugoslav policy was short-lived, it was enacted in Italy for some time. Since the beginning of the conflict, Belgrade tried to create an anti-Cominform opposition among the Italian communists, primarily through propaganda.¹¹⁴ The pinnacle of such activity happened when Magnani and Cucchi left the PCI. The two men formed the Movimento dei lavoratori Italiani in 1951, which was transformed to Unione dei Socialisti Italiani (USI) in 1953. Until the reconciliation between Yugoslavia and the PCI, in the mid-fifties, these dissident organizations were financed from Belgrade. It was a natural move for Yugoslavia, having in mind that Magnani fought on the Yugoslav side during the war, and was even a member of the Yugoslav party at that time.¹¹⁵

The Magnacucchi case was the most important case of dissent within the PCI since 1944. As such, it was a big challenge to Togliatti. Furthermore, Magnani was one of the best individual examples of the partito nuovo, and of the cadres formed in the resistance. He was essentially a product of Togliatti’s line, conducted since the war, which was evident in his common references

¹¹³ N. Dimić, „In Search of an Authentic Position: The First Phase of Political and Ideological Cooperation between Yugoslavia and the West European Left, 1948–1953“, in: *Acta Histriae*, 27 (2019) 1, Koper 2019, 55–74.

¹¹⁴ S. Mišić, “Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945-1956”, 287-288. Yugoslavia even bought a weekly magazine called *Omnibus*, and created a journal *Politica Nuova*, which propagated Belgrade’s views among the Italian left.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 288. For more about the Magnacucchi case see: F. Tenca Montini, S. Mišić, “Comunisti di un altro tipo: le simpatie filo-jugoslave in Italia (1948–1962)”, in: *Acta Histriae*, 25 (2017) 3, Koper 2017, 785-812.

to Togliatti's views. Additionally, Magnani was a cousin of Nilde Iotti, which further complicated the general secretary's position. Hence, Togliatti had to sharply distance himself from Magnani.¹¹⁶ Still, in doing so, he never went as far as others, like Secchia, who labeled the dissenting organization as fascist.¹¹⁷

Togliatti's personal involvement in the conflict with Yugoslavia was following a similar pattern. The Italian communist leader participated in the attacks on Belgrade, but never in the vehement manner of many of his comrades. Primarily, Togliatti was concerned with the possibility of the Yugoslav integration within the Western capitalist bloc, and that was the focal points of his critique. The aforementioned PCI's policy towards Trieste, i.e. insisting on the FTT and opposing to the partition of territories, was in line with Moscow and in line with Togliatti's concerns about future Yugoslav moves. Togliatti even contemplated a possibility that the West would, in order to appease Belgrade after it renounced Zone A, allow a Yugoslav territorial expansion in Albania, something he was explicitly against.¹¹⁸ Hence, the PCI was opposed to the partition, seeing it as a point of conjuncture between Belgrade and the West. Such a view was a product of the strong anti-American sentiment of the Italian communists. According to Togliatti and the PCI, Washington was very pleased with the tensions between Rome and Belgrade, as those tensions allowed the USA to arbitrate in the relations between the two countries and control the area. Therefore, the partition of the territories, agreed in October of 1954 in London, displeased the Italian communists, which saw it as a victory of Tito and the American "imperialists".¹¹⁹ However, this opposition was not long lived. Moscow accepted the deal soon, as part of the broader strategy of reconciliation between the USSR and Yugoslavia. After seven years of an intense propaganda war, the time came for Tito and Togliatti to reconcile.

Reconciliation

After the death of Joseph Stalin, in March 1953, the new Soviet leadership slowly started approaching Belgrade and worked on a reconciliation between the two states and parties. The new approach towards Yugoslavia became an essential part of Khrushchev's reformist agenda,

¹¹⁶ A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 213.

¹¹⁷ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 126.

¹¹⁸ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 132-135. M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 278-288.

¹¹⁹ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 224, 231.

signaling an overall change in Soviet policy. It became evident to all communist parties that the conflict with Yugoslavia was about to end, and that an era of rapprochement was coming. Togliatti's speech in Trieste, held on May 1st 1955, clearly showed that the Italian communist leader was fully aware of the new situation. In his speech Togliatti emphasized the need to have better relations with Yugoslavia, and greeted the Yugoslav-Soviet rapprochement, as a mean of separating Belgrade from the West.¹²⁰ Just a few weeks later the profound change in the relations between the communist movement and Yugoslavia was formalized. Khrushchev visited Belgrade, and the representatives of the two states signed the Belgrade Declaration, an act which regulated the relations between them. Although the new Soviet approach to Yugoslavia was already evident, the visit and the declaration were a watershed. After these events, the conflict initiated in Bucharest in 1948 had officially ended, and everybody in the movement was aware that the new agenda was to collaborate with Yugoslavia.¹²¹

Therefore, in the second half of 1955, Yugoslav and Italian parties initiated intensive contacts and started working on reestablishing the relations. During those six months, the representatives of the two parties had three important encounters. Firstly, Anton Vratuša met with Eugenio Reale, and openly discussed the most important issues. On one hand, Reale had encouraging messages, and spoke of Togliatti's personal pro-Yugoslav attitudes and will to improve the relations. On the other hand, Reale also underlined the most important impediment for rapprochement – the Italian communists were still unsure whether a definitive reconciliation between Moscow and Belgrade had occurred, and therefore wanted to wait before making concrete moves towards Belgrade. Secondly, Frane Barbijeri, the correspondent of the Yugoslav journal *Borba* in Rome, had a meeting with Longo and Pajetta, in October. In his report to Belgrade, Barbijeri stressed the importance of making a bigger impact on the PCI, having in mind that the Italian party remained indecisive concerning a possible rapprochement with Yugoslavia. The most important decision made in the meeting was to send a high-level PCI official to Belgrade soon.

¹²⁰ S. Mišić, “Обнављање односа између Савеза комуниста Југославије и Комунистичке партије Италије 1955-1956. године” [The Renewal of Relations Between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Italian Communist Party 1955-1956], in: *Токови историје 2/2013*, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Belgrade 2013, 121.

¹²¹ The complex relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia after the rapprochement in the mid-fifties until the conflict in 1958 are well researched and analyzed both in Serbian and English historiography. Cf: Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat* [Yugoslavia and the Cold War], Arhipelag, Belgrade 2014; S. Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, Comradeship, Confrontation, 1953-57*, Routledge, London 2010. Veljko Mićunović, a Yugoslav envoy to Moscow from 1956 to 1958, had previously published memoirs giving insight into the matter – V. Mićunović, *Moskovske godine 1956/1958*. [The Moscow Years 1956/1958], Liber, Zagreb 1977.

And thirdly, this had occurred. Gian Carlo Pajetta came to the Yugoslav capital in December 1955, on his return from a visit to Albania. Pajetta's stop in Belgrade and his conversations with Veljko Vlahović were kept secret to the general public. The conversation between the two officials had left them with opposing impressions. Pajetta returned to Rome with positive views, and was supported by Togliatti and Longo. Therefore, the pro-Yugoslav sentiments in the party were strengthened. Vlahović, on the other side, thought that the Italian comrade dedicated too much time to divisive issues (primarily the Magnacucchi case), and labeled him a Stalinist in his reports.¹²² Therefore, the PCI was more optimistic about interparty relations than Belgrade going into 1956.

Togliatti's visit to Belgrade – May of 1956

The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, held in February 1956, and Khrushchev's public denunciation of Stalin, radically changed the communist movement. De-Stalinization became the primary topic of every party and communist worldwide, and naturally it impacted the relations between the Yugoslav and the Italian party profoundly. However, for historians, the uprisings in Poland and Hungary are symbols of Khrushchev's total loss of control over the process of de-Stalinization. It is certain that de-Stalinization was not a controlled process at that moment, but the real question is - was it ever really controlled? The Soviet leader was not even remotely aware of the impact his actions would have in Eastern Europe, and that is evident nowadays.¹²³ Focused on the crises in Poland and Hungary, historians often underestimated the importance of two events in June which proved crucial to the history of de-Stalinization and involved Yugoslav and the Italian communist parties. The first one was the Moscow declaration,¹²⁴ and the second one was Palmiro Togliatti's theory of polycentrism.¹²⁵ The subversive essence of the ideals promoted in the

¹²² S. Mišić, "Обнављање односа", 126-132.

¹²³ A. Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-1956*, Penguin books, London 2012, 481-489.

¹²⁴ The Moscow declaration, signed between the Soviet and Yugoslav party on the 20th June 1956, renewed the relations between the parties and promoted the principles of equality, independence and recognition of alternative models of socialism. V. Mićunović, *Moskovske godine*, 529-530.

¹²⁵ Togliatti's theory opposed the centralized structure of the movement, promoting the need for developing a bigger autonomy for national parties and a bilateral, uncentralized, form of relations between the communist parties. It was believed that in that way it would be easier for parties to cope with different regional realities in which they were acting, and, therefore, to create alternative paths to socialism, differing from the Soviet model of 1917 and corresponding more to their contemporary situation. D. Sassoon, *Togliatti e il partito di massa. Il PCI dal 1944 al*

declaration and in Togliatti's theory demonstrated that Khrushchev practically had no control over de-Stalinization even before the uprisings and the crisis which happened a few months later. It can be said that he lost control in the very moment he initiated the process – from the pulpit of the CPSU congress in February.

Unfortunately, the documents from the Archives of Yugoslavia do not give a detailed insight into the visit Palmiro Togliatti made to Belgrade in late May 1956. In spite of that, it can be said with certainty that this visit was a crucial overture to the important events in June. In his book *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, Francois Furet wrote: "Togliatti was using the renewal of the relations between Tito and the USSR in trying to create a new pole that would be relatively independent from Moscow."¹²⁶ In the following pages I will try to expand on Furet's inspiring assessment.

In May 1956 Yugoslavia was facing a major turning point in its history. The experience of conflict with the Soviet Union was traumatic, as the country was on the verge of famine and ideologically divided. However, the fierce conditions had hardened the Yugoslav communists and provoked their ideological creativity, opening them to other parts of the world. As a result, the most important idea the Yugoslav socialism created – non-alignment. Therefore, when the letters inviting Yugoslavs to cooperate once again came from Moscow, Belgrade was determined that the relations had to be on equal terms. The relations between the two states were renewed in 1955, but the party relations were kept frozen. In spite of the fact that the Yugoslav leaders were obsessed with the wish to be recognized as communists once again, there was a strong feeling that re-entering the Moscow-led communist movement could be a dangerous move. Leaving the state and party to Soviet authority and mercy, like before 1948, was unacceptable. At some point this prolongation had to come to an end. The Twentieth congress and the new Khrushchev's foreign policy changed Yugoslav minds. They now thought that the time had come to accept the most important Soviet request – the renewal of relations between the two parties. Even though the new Soviet course was seen favorable, Tito had not forgotten his painful experiences. The Yugoslav leader went to Moscow in June with a new platform, a declaration that established the principles of equality, sovereignty and autonomy in the relations between the two parties. On the 20th of June

1964, Castelvechi, Rome 2014 (e-book), 92-108; *Evrokomunizam i socijalizam* [Eurocommunism and Socialism], edited by V. Mikecin, Globus, Zagreb 1979, 7-20.

¹²⁶ F. Furet, *Prošlost jedne iluzije* [The Passing of an Illusion], Paideia, Belgrade 1996, 561.

the declaration was signed, and a first blow was struck to the foundation of the communist movement, announcing the eruptions which would occur in the fall.¹²⁷

Josip Broz Tito was aware that the principles he promoted, which protected Yugoslav independence, had to become global in order to be valid. If we look at his activity in creating the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) we see the same rationale – Tito’s core idea was that the principles have to become global. Therefore, he opposed the regionalism of the Bandung conference in 1955, contrasting it to the globalism of the Belgrade conference in 1961.¹²⁸ Tito followed the same principles in his collaboration with Moscow. He wanted that the principle of quality of the parties be applicable not only for the LCY, but for the entire movement. In that context, Togliatti’s visit was crucial for Tito. As multiple sources reveal,¹²⁹ the Yugoslav president encouraged the visit, wanting to have a meeting with the most liberal communist leader prior to his trip to Moscow. In Tito’s perception, establishing a connection with the Italian general secretary, based on the idea of independence and equality between communist parties, could be a potent weapon for changing the entire movement. Just a month later, Togliatti launched his theory of polycentrism which was aimed at ending the Soviet hegemony. It is therefore clear that he also had his reasons to come to Belgrade and was enthusiastic to collaborate with Tito and discuss a new vision for the communist movement.

Although scarce, the documents from the Archives of Yugoslavia still provide two crucial insights into Togliatti’s visit. The first one is that the main topic of the conversations was the effort to reform the communist movement. Bilateral issues, like Trieste, were put aside. After this visit, during the following decades, international topics overshadowed the importance of bilateral issues in the contacts between the parties, giving their collaboration a global character. The second information is the pronounced stance of the Italian guest that the relations between the communist parties should be bilateral, as he was clearly opposed to a centralized organization like the Cominform.¹³⁰ In an interview he gave to the Yugoslav newspaper *Borba*, Togliatti emphasized his new and subversive ideas – a need for different and alternative paths to socialism, as the

¹²⁷ Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 188-207; S. Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 144-161.

¹²⁸ More about this Tito’s rationale and the conference in – D. Bogetić, Lj. Dimić, *Београдска конференција нествраних земаља 1-6. септембра 1961*. [The Belgrade Conference of the Non-aligned Countries September 1st – 6th 1961], Zavod za udžbenike, Belgrade 2013.

¹²⁹ S. Mišić, “Обнављање односа”, 135-136.

¹³⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I, 139. The same thing is underlined in Agosti’s biography of Togliatti – A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 235-236. In this visit, Agosti sees a clear sign of a new and more active foreign policy of the Italian party.

circumstances were different than Russia in 1917; and that other groups, not just the working class, were now striving towards socialism.¹³¹ Obviously, Togliatti was encouraged by the Yugoslav experiences and his stay in Belgrade to come out with his new program. Upon returning to Rome he wrote to the CPSU, explaining how Tito wanted to collaborate with other communist parties, but in a bilateral form and not through a centralized organization. In his letter to Moscow Togliatti strongly approved of those Yugoslav views, and Belgrade's role as a bridge to the non-communist left in the world.¹³² The same message, that Yugoslavia should remain independent and out of the socialist camp, Togliatti promoted to his Italian comrades, who saw that their leader broadened his perspectives during the visit to Belgrade.¹³³

After the meeting with Togliatti, Tito went to Moscow. As Khrushchev signed the Moscow declaration, validating the Yugoslav ideas, it seemed that a great success was achieved. The impact the declaration had on the PCI was instant. As it was mentioned earlier, during the negotiations in Moscow, Togliatti made the famous interview to the Italian review *Nuovi Argomenti*, launching the theory of polycentrism. The Italian general secretary was encouraged by the Yugoslav example to stand up against the Soviet hegemony and publicly declared a focus of his party on the special, Italian road to socialism. Also, the delegation of the PCI that had visited Moscow in June, led by Gian Carlo Pajetta, asked that the relations with the CPSU be reformed according to the Moscow declaration. The Soviet answer was however cold and sobering. To Togliatti's new theory Moscow responded with dogmatic criticism. Especially criticized were his beliefs that the analyses of the Twentieth congress regarding the mistakes was superficial and in need of further elaboration. The Soviet leaders were offended by Togliatti's claims that the root of Soviet problems was deeper than the mistakes of one man. Pajetta's request was promptly rejected by Khrushchev, who stated that the declaration was signed on Yugoslav request, not by Soviet intention, and that the relations with the Yugoslav party remain problematic.¹³⁴ This reaction, like the evolution of the Yugoslav-Soviet relations in the following months, showed that Khrushchev had made only a tactic withdrawal to Tito in June, and that to him any other structure of the communist movement, except the one led and dominated by the USSR, remained unacceptable. The PCI reacted to the Soviet

¹³¹ *Evrokomunizam i socijalizam*, 3-4.

¹³² S. Mišić, "Обнављање односа", 136. M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 339-341.

¹³³ G. Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest Praga Varsavia*, 48-49.

¹³⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-138, - Šifrovano pismo - Mićunoviću – Moskva [- Coded letter – to Mićunović - Moscow]; M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 153; M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 342-348.

pressure with a gradual moderation of their requests and of their internal reform, while Yugoslavia entered a new conflict with the USSR that escalated in 1957 and 1958.

The October visit

However, such a scenario developed only after the Hungarian crisis. Hence, until mid-October the Yugoslav and Italian parties still seemed to be very close and friendly. In that atmosphere, a delegation of high Italian officials, led by the second man of the party Luigi Longo, visited Yugoslavia for 10 days in early October. The visit was planned as a way for the Italian comrades to get acquainted with the situation in Yugoslavia,¹³⁵ and to discuss some aspects of Yugoslav policy, both internal and foreign. Numerous topics were debated, and the two sides were mostly in accordance. At the end, both parties viewed the visit as a success, and found that their views were very similar. Having that in mind, the visit will not be discussed in length. Two aspects are of great importance for this thesis. Firstly, the issue of collaboration with the non-communist left. The Yugoslavs enthusiastically advocated the need to open up to various parties and movements on the left, and to develop relations with them. At the time, the Italian communists were unwilling to accept such ideas.¹³⁶ But, in the following years they significantly changed their views. Soon the PCI established an important contact with the German social democrats, the SPD,¹³⁷ and during the seventies one of the most important ideas of Eurocommunism would be opening up to the European non-communist left.¹³⁸ Therefore, it is crucial to mark the moments in which the Yugoslavs, by their advice and example, led their Italian comrades to reconsider the dogmatic Moscow-propagated views on this issue. Secondly, the issue of Trieste and minorities was very important in the October talks, hence it will be expanded on in the following pages.

Relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR were the main topic of the most important conversation of the visit – the meeting with Tito. At this point it is important to mention how the

¹³⁵ Togliatti explicitly stated that getting acquainted with the Yugoslav system was the primary goal of the delegation - M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 361-362.

¹³⁶ Marco Galeazzi wrote that, during Togliatti's visit to Belgrade in June, there was an identical scenario: the Yugoslavs propagated collaboration with the non-communist left, and Togliatti replied, while supporting that view, with an emphasis on the need for unity of the communist movement. M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 151.

¹³⁷ D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, I.B. Tauris, London New York 2010, 335.

¹³⁸ S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III Endings*, edited by Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010, 60.

PCI went through rough times even before the Hungarian crisis. The identity and legitimacy of the party were derived from the prestige of the USSR and Stalin, the great victors of the Second World War. Khrushchev's speech blew away the idealizing image of the Soviet Union and of *Baffone*.¹³⁹ Being fully aware of that, the PCI leaders feared further conflicts within the communist movement, ready to sacrifice even their own autonomy (like giving up on the idea of polycentrism). Only in a united communist movement they saw a chance to preserve the prestige of the communist idea.

Realizing their fears, Tito calmed his guests at the beginning of the conversation, talking about the good relations with Moscow, underlining that they were based on the Belgrade and Moscow declarations. As it was said, Tito wanted the ideas of the Moscow declaration to become universal, so he emphasized them here once more. At the same time, the Yugoslav leader wanted to talk about some negative aspects of the relations. Deeply offended, he talked about the secret Soviet letter to fraternal parties in which the LCY was labeled as social democratic. Criticizing the pressure from Moscow to join the socialist camp, Tito still showed some understanding for the Soviet point of view. He said that he understood those moves as an attempt to calm down the situation in Eastern Europe and prevent an escalation of the problems, adding that he did not think that Khrushchev shared those views.¹⁴⁰ Tito concluded his monologue by underlining some important Yugoslav principles. To the idea of the socialist camp he opposed the concept of a "Socialist world",¹⁴¹ a flexible and more democratic path, without the hampering effect of pressures that can only spoil the mutual relations. According to Tito, led by those principles Yugoslavia succeeded in developing socialism globally. Yugoslav contacts and impact in India, Burma, Ethiopia and Egypt, socialist but not communist countries, were Tito's examples of these successes. The Yugoslav president was convinced that his country would not be able to accomplish its mission if it were a part of the socialist camp, as there were serious doubts in the mentioned countries regarding the USSR's foreign policy. He reminded the PCI delegation that the Soviets did not believe in the strength of other socialist forces, and calmly finished his exposition by stating that Yugoslavia would help Moscow more by acting independently, than as a part of the camp.

¹³⁹ Mustachioed, a man with a mustache – the nickname Italian communists used for Stalin, showing their highly emotional relation to Joseph Vissarionovich.

¹⁴⁰ Like the Italian communists, Tito considered Khrushchev to be the most liberal individual in the leadership of the CPSU, fighting against the Stalinists. Therefore, on several occasions, he wanted to support Nikita Sergeevitch. More about that in – S. Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the early Cold War*.

¹⁴¹ It is worth noting that in a parliamentary debate on June 13th, just a month after his visit to Belgrade, Togliatti used that same expression while talking about Nehru and Sukarno and their inclination towards socialism - M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 143.

Luigi Longo replied to Tito in an affirmative but restrained manner, sobered by Moscow's reaction in June. In spite of that restraint, Longo repeated the support of his party to the Yugoslav foreign policy and the desire to remain outside of the socialist camp. He stated that the only important thing was that the Yugoslav activity was socialist in its essence (as such useful to the PCI also), and therefore the form of that activity is not important.¹⁴² It was obvious that the Soviet pressure had not undermined the respect of the PCI for the independent Yugoslav position, nor limited its influence on the Italian communists.

The question of collaboration with the non-communist left was posed in many conversations during the visit. This question remained one of the rare divisive points during this otherwise successful visit. The only exception were the talks with Tito, when the Italians supported his views on the issue and asked the Yugoslavs to help them in establishing better relations with Italian social democrats¹⁴³. Several Yugoslav ideas on this topic were not acceptable for their Italian guests. During one of the first conversations Veljko Vlahović, head of the LCY's department of foreign relations, severely criticized of Stalin's policies and contrasted them to the Yugoslav faith in the ability of social democrats to develop their ideas, and a firm belief in their importance for the working class. Milentije Popović continued in the same anti-Soviet tone, talking how the sharp distinction between the world of capitalism and the world of socialism, imposed by the USSR, was an illusion, especially in a time when, even in the most capitalistic countries, economies were becoming centralized and planned. These Yugoslav views provoked a brusque reaction on the other side – Velio Spano answered that the bourgeoisie could corrupt the working class, and quoted Lenin to justify his views. To those quotations Vlahović responded that, in fact, the Yugoslav views about social democracy were based on Lenin's ideas and represent their development. Other Italian guests warned that the most important fact was which class had the power, and to that Popović responded in a provoking manner, saying that even Stalin did not give the power to the working class.¹⁴⁴ These reactions of the PCI delegation show that in 1956 they were still far from the Yugoslav acceptance of the non-communist left, even though they eventually accepted the same ideas regarding this question.

¹⁴² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145, Bilješka o razgovorima sa članovima delegacije Komunističke Partije Italije na prijemu kod druga Tita [Note about the conversations with the delegation of the Italian Communist Party during the reception with comrade Tito].

¹⁴³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145.

¹⁴⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145.

In spite of the cordial tone of the whole 10-day visit, similar views regarding the vast majority of issues, even problematic bilateral ones, explicit words of praise for the Yugoslav system and the communist party, the principles propagated by Vlahović and Popović remained divisive. The Italian communists talked more about their views, expressing their belief that the socialist world had clear frontiers, in contrast to Yugoslav views of a more fluid border. For them, capitalism was not changing in its essence, but was just giving some concessions to the socialist forces. In those discussions Yugoslav officials continued to elaborate their belief in the importance of social democracy. Vlahović and Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo went even further, talking about the example of American trade unions, which should not be neglected just because of their anti-communism.¹⁴⁵

The last event where the issue of the non-communist left was discussed was the final conversation, held in Ljubljana, with Edvard Kardelj. The main Yugoslav ideologue repeated like his others comrades that the Soviet thesis about “the capitalist surrounding of the socialist states” made no sense, as the state intervention in economy and the socialist forces within the capitalist countries were rapidly growing and breaking that barrier. Emphasizing the need to collaborate with a wide range of left forces in the world, at the same time he showed some respect and understanding for the Italian views that the collaboration between communist parties was always the most fruitful one. Kardelj also agreed with the guests’ views that social democracy was distancing itself from Marxism, but warned that it was crucial, especially in the capitalist countries, to collaborate with those parties for the common goal – strengthening of the socialist forces. For Kardelj, that collaboration had to be on equal basis, without imposing ideological models. As for the socialist camp, Kardelj approved this form only in a situation when socialism was under attack. In a world where socialism was becoming stronger, the socialist camp could only be a hegemonic factor that would impose its solutions to other socialist forces and scare them away. At the end, Kardelj wanted to talk about the dictatorship of the proletariat, as Yugoslavia was under attacks and suspicions that it gave up on the principle. Kardelj stated that in Yugoslavia this Marxist model was changed and widened, in order to include even other social classes.¹⁴⁶ Kardelj’s views were

¹⁴⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145. Interestingly, in 1971 Enrico Berlinguer took similar stances. At a meeting of the Central Committee of his party he talked about the need to reinforce the link with the progressive political actors in the United States – M. Galeazzi, *Il Pci e il movimento dei paesi non allineati 1955-1975*, FrancoAngeli, Milan 2011, 216.

¹⁴⁶ Interestingly, in the late seventies the Yugoslav criticized the French communists for their renouncement of this principle.

similar to others propagated by the Yugoslavs during the visit, but only expressed in a calmer tone. Therefore, the Italians had better control of their temper during this conversation, although remaining unconvinced. They responded by emphasizing and talking more about the relations between the communist parties, and the bilateral form of those relations, briefly adding that they also want to collaborate with the non-communist left.¹⁴⁷

Internal Yugoslav reports about the visit highlighted the rare issues that remained unclarified and divisive. The most important ones were: views on capitalism, social democracy,¹⁴⁸ the existence of a clear frontier between socialism and capitalism, the wish of the guests that the collaboration between the communist parties be closer than the relations with other left parties and organizations.¹⁴⁹ The PCI officials who visited Yugoslavia in October 1956 were still distant from Yugoslav views on these issues. Ironically, only two decades later, in March 1975, the general secretary of this party, Enrico Berlinguer, said to Josip Broz Tito something revolutionary different: “Continuing to affirm the existence of a communist movement united by a shared ideology and separate from the rest responds to a narrow view of the possibilities.”¹⁵⁰

The October visit was an opportunity to discuss another important topic - that of Trieste and of local communists who were fiercely anti-Yugoslav. Earlier in this chapter it was mentioned how and why did Vittorio Vidali and his organization became a center of anti-Yugoslav struggle. In 1955 and 1956, despite the rapprochement between Moscow and Belgrade and despite the PCI's reconciliation with the Yugoslav comrades, the Trieste communists were not willing to change their views easily. Vidali even went as far as to question the Soviet decisions, and criticize Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade in May of 1955.¹⁵¹ Eventually he was forced to back down from such extreme positions, and to withdraw his public protests against the rapprochement with Belgrade. Still, the Trieste communists continued to oppose Yugoslavia, and remained a divisive issue in the relations between the PCI and the Yugoslav party. Therefore, the role of the Trieste

¹⁴⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145, Zabeleška sa razgovora delegacije CK KP Italije i CK SKJ 14-X-1956 [Note about the conversations between the delegations of the CC PCI and the CC LCY October 14th 1956].

¹⁴⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145, Zabeleška sa putovanja sa delegacijom KPI u Hrvatsku i Sloveniju, dne 11. do 15. oktobra 1956 [Note about the trip to Croatia and Slovenia with the PCI delegation, October 11th – 15th 1956].

¹⁴⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145, Černeju – Rim, Mićunoviću – Moskva [to Černej – Rome, to Mićunović - Moscow].

¹⁵⁰ P. Karlsen, “The Italian Communist Party's Policy on Trieste as Viewed by Vittorio Vidali (1954-1975)”, in: *Italy and Tito's Yugoslavia in the Age of International Detente*, edited by Massimo Bucarelli, Luca Micheletta, Luciano Monzali and Luca Riccardi, Peter Lang, Brussels 2016, 339-340.

¹⁵¹ P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*, 239-241. M. Zuccari, *Il ditto sulla piaga*, 305-315.

communist party was mentioned on several occasions during 1956, and had to be affronted during the visit.

An internal Yugoslav document, written for the visit, depicts Belgrade's perception of the issue. Firstly, the Yugoslavs were displeased with Vidali's attitude towards the 1954 agreement between Rome and Belgrade, which de facto sanctioned a partition of the disputed territories. While the PCI accepted the deal, Vidali continued to attack several aspects of the agreement, irritating the Yugoslav communists. Secondly, Belgrade expected that the Italian communists make more effort in protecting the rights and status of the Yugoslav minority in Italy. And thirdly, Yugoslavia decided to decline a request made by Velio Spano in July. Spano asked for a return of 13 Italian communists who fled from the Yugoslav-run Zone B. The request was declined on two grounds: 1) Those individuals supported the Cominform resolution from 1948, and therefore were not ideologically suitable for the Yugoslav authorities; 2) As the deadline for repatriation, established in the 1954 agreement with Italy was over, Belgrade had not wanted to create a precedent which would complicate the interstate relations. Underneath this euphemistic rhetoric, it was obvious that Yugoslavia wanted to prevent any further return of Italian refugees.¹⁵²

During the visit, Veljko Vlahović initiated the discussion regarding the above mentioned issues. Although he was very careful not to offend his guests, and emphasizes that this was an internal PCI issue into which he did not want to interfere, he voiced his concerns regarding Vidali and asked about the future of this problem. Longo responded in a manner which satisfied the Yugoslavs. He clearly stated that the PCI did not share the anti-Yugoslav perspectives of the Trieste party, and that it was actively working towards altering such views. The Trieste party was perceived as sectarian, and was causing many problems for the PCI, not just in the Yugoslav issue. Also, he added that the Trieste party no longer had a *raison d'être*, hence its autonomy would be ended soon.¹⁵³ At this point Velio Spano interfered in the conversation, stating that both sides should be careful regarding this issue and tolerate certain views of the communists from that area. Kardelj agreed, and brought up Spano's request for the return of 13 Italian communists to Zone B.

¹⁵² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145. Spano's attempt was part of a broader idea of the Italian communists. The PCI showed aspirations of becoming the protector of the Italian minority in Yugoslavia. However, this initiative was not welcomed by Belgrade, and Yugoslavia wanted to leave the issue of the minorities to interstate diplomatic relations. The only success the PCI had in obtaining more rights for Italians in Yugoslavia was the liberation of certain Italian communists, imprisoned in 1948 for their support to the Soviet Union - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145.

¹⁵³ This view was very similar to what Reale communicated to the Yugoslavs in March, promising to abolish the Trieste party and to replace Vidali - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-136.

The Yugoslav ideologue talked in a very ambiguous manner. Although he said that Yugoslavia does not oppose the return of Italians to Zone B, and agreed to work more on this issue with the PCI, Kardelj emphasized that the Yugoslavs were not willing to accept those individuals that have been “compromised”.¹⁵⁴ This dogmatic formulation reflected the Yugoslav stance which was expressed more explicitly in the above mentioned internal report. Belgrade was reluctant to welcome back Italian refugees, and especially the communists that had been pro-Soviet in 1948. Hence, the Yugoslavs were reducing the problem down to one point – removing Vidali. Everything else was not to be debated.

The Hungarian crisis

As the Italian delegation was coming back to Rome, full of positive impressions and hoping that the interparty relations were going to develop steadily, socialism in Hungary started to crumble. The eruption of the Hungarian crisis in October and November of 1956 and its aftermath represented a crucial episode in the relations between the communist parties of Yugoslavia and Italy. During those months the principles of de-Stalinization were suppressed from Moscow, and the manner in which the Yugoslav and Italian communists responded to that pressure determined their relations.

The initial reaction of the Italians was to instantly alienate from Yugoslavia, not to irritate Moscow further. Therefore, the reports in the party’s newspapers about the visit were considerably colder than the visit had really been, as Velio Spano admitted in a conversation with a Yugoslav diplomat on October 27th. In the conversation, Spano gave further important information. He talked about the chaos within the party and a fear that the military intervention would have a devastating influence on the prestige of communism in Italy. The Italian communists primarily blamed the Hungarian party and the Soviets, seeing their belated actions as the main cause for the dreadful situation, and perceiving the military intervention as a terrible move.¹⁵⁵

These first reactions point out that the Italian communists had not been informed about the Soviet actions, and also that they were clearly opposed to them. Therefore, even though the Italian distancing was a bad sign, the Yugoslavs had no profound problems with what Spano said. But,

¹⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-145.

¹⁵⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-146.

when the Italian communists shifted from the initial chaos to full support for the actions of the USSR, the documents show a deep disappointment in Belgrade. In a self-confident and sometimes arrogant matter, the Yugoslavs perceived themselves as the leaders of de-Stalinization, the ones that were the first to condemn Stalin. The Italians were evaluated as the second best, the ones who went further than all others on that path. Because of such previous positive attitude, the disappointment was even more profound and dominated the report that came from the embassy in Rome on November 10th. The perception was a bit simplistic and Manichean, as the situation in the Italian party was viewed as a fight between the “bad old” forces and the “new and good” ones. The “bad ones”, the winners, were the party officials who supported Soviet actions in Hungary and tried to revive Stalinism. At the same time, many of them accused Tito as the main cause for all of the problems and an inspiration to the revolt, and they had also censored Yugoslav information. On the other hand, the opposition regarding the Hungarian question was perceived as the “good, new and anti-Stalinist forces”. This opposition consisted of both high and low ranking party members, and many of those individuals were known Yugoslav friends, or close to Yugoslav views on Hungary.¹⁵⁶

Those initially pessimistic views soon became nuanced, as Togliatti showed a certain criticism of the Soviets and approved some Yugoslav views. Therefore, at the end of November, Anton Vratuša, a man highly respected in the Italian party, went on a mission to Rome, trying to create a dialogue between the parties regarding Hungary.

The first conversation he had was on November 26th, with some leading officials of the Italian party – Luigi Longo, Velio Spano, Gian Carlo Pajetta and Renato Mieli. For the Yugoslav diplomat the conversation was not very inspiring, as the Italians were growing more and more closer to the Soviets, giving up on all principles that had brought the two parties together earlier. They were afraid and asked why Tito had to publicly attack the Soviet Union and why was he entering in a new conflict that could devastate the prestige of international communism? Regarding Hungary, they only talked about a counter revolution and labeled Imre Nagy as a “bandit”. At the end, Vratuša had the impression that he managed to moderate their views to a certain extent, by talking about the need to go public, to firmly stop the revival of Stalinist forces. Although Yugoslavia was silent about the “just” struggle of Gomulka, and had supported Gero, on Soviet

¹⁵⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-151.

requests, there was no more room for silence, said Vratuša. One of the reactions emphasized as positive, was that all of them were disgusted with the kidnapping of Nagy.¹⁵⁷

Much more inspiring, interesting and unexpected was the conversation Vratuša had with the party leader, Togliatti. During a reception at the Yugoslav embassy, on November 29th, Vratuša spent hours talking to him. Those unexpected views were, for instance, Togliatti's support for the fact that Tito went public in his critiques of the Soviets. The Italian leader told that he looked at Hungary in the same way Tito did in his Pula speech, especially regarding the condemnation of the first Soviet intervention. However, he added that he did not have the possibility to say those things publicly. Togliatti also criticized the Soviets regarding the Nagy's kidnapping, and revealed his biggest concern – that the Soviet mistakes would make him lose a lot of votes in Italy. Vratuša's conclusion in the report sent to Belgrade was that Togliatti changed his views when he has Yugoslav information, and that a more active communication with him should be developed.¹⁵⁸ For Belgrade Togliatti represented a “bright star” in the party, someone who brought positive changes and ideas, close to the Yugoslav principles. Therefore, he was to be supported, and a blind eye was to be turned on his public alignment with Moscow.

In December, the Italian party held its 8th congress. In the report of the Yugoslav delegation, particularly regarding the Hungarian issue, a conflict of views between the foreign delegations was underlined. On one side were the Soviet, Chinese, Czechoslovak, French and Bulgarian delegations, who perceived the events in Hungary simply as a counter revolution. In their dogmatic views, it was solely a conspiracy of imperialism, nothing more, and the Hungarian party had made no mistakes. On the other side were the Yugoslav and Polish delegates, who emphasized the mistakes made by the Hungarian party, its bureaucratization, and perceived it as the main culprit. Stambolić, the Yugoslav delegate, wrote in his report that Togliatti's views were somewhere in between. Togliatti continued to criticize the Soviets, of course in a way much more moderate than during his conversation with Vratuša, but at the same time talked about the justified Soviet intervention. Belgrade understood Togliatti's moderation and his ambivalent position, that of a hidden autonomy and friendship with Belgrade and public alignment with Moscow. Such an ambivalent stance was best shown in an episode regarding the press coverage of the congress of

¹⁵⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-153.

¹⁵⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-156, Razgovor sa Toljatijem 29. XI '56. na prijemu u Rimu [Conversation with Togliatti, November 29th 1956, at the reception in Rome].

L'Unità, the PCI newspaper. While the Soviet and East European press ignored the speech of the Yugoslav delegate at the congress, *L'Unità* gave more space to Stambolić's speech than to the ones made by any other delegate. But, on the other hand, in order to not irritate Moscow, the parts of the speech regarding Hungary were censored.¹⁵⁹

The Reale case

The Hungarian crisis affected another important phenomenon in the interparty relations. That phenomenon is the fact that Yugoslavia, as a symbol of defiance to Soviet hegemony, also inspired and was looked upon to by many members of the PCI who became Togliatti's opposition.

Like in the case of the French party, the PCI suffered a major blow in 1956 when a lot of its members, especially a large number of intellectuals, left the party. That phenomenon was caused both by Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin at the XX Congress, which posed the question of the repressive nature of Soviet communism, and by the Soviet intervention in Hungary, which represented the pinnacle of that repression.¹⁶⁰ In those circumstances an opposition was formed within the party, and it questioned the leadership of Palmiro Togliatti, especially his pro-Soviet stance. Within the opposition, some viewed Yugoslavia as a foothold for their de-Stalinist and anti-Soviet views. In their contacts with the Yugoslav officials, Umberto Massola, Mario Alicata and Velio Spano expressed harsh criticism not only towards the Soviet Union, but also towards Palmiro Togliatti and his soft stance on Stalinism, presenting themselves as the true anti-Stalinist forces in the PCI.¹⁶¹ Besides these contacts with high ranking officials of the PCI, the Yugoslav embassy in Rome noted a Yugoslav impact across the party also – for instance, certain communist groups in Milan wanted to have a copy of Tito's Pula speech,¹⁶² in order to have a better

¹⁵⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-157, Stenografske beleške P. Stambolić Utisci sa kongresa KPI [Notes of P. Stambolic. Impression from the PCI Congress].

¹⁶⁰ D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, 228, 266-267; A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 242-244.

¹⁶¹ All of them, despite criticizing Togliatti, remained members of the party. Reports on the conversations between Yugoslav officials in Rome and Massola (code name Quinto) - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-138, Zabeleška o razgovoru sa Kvintom 12. III 1956 g. [Note on the conversation with Quinto 12 III 1956]; Alicata - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-137; Spano - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-141.

¹⁶² On November 11th Tito held a speech in the Croatian city of Pula, in which he, while partially defending the second Soviet intervention in Hungary, criticized both the Soviet actions and the actions of the Hungarian party, blaming them for the crisis in that country. It was an important event in Yugoslav history, as it was the starting point of a new Yugoslav-Soviet conflict. S. Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 181-188.

understanding of the situation in Hungary.¹⁶³ Their request was reflected in the stance that Furio Diaz took at the party's congress in December, stating that regarding Hungary Tito and Kardelj were more correct than Togliatti.¹⁶⁴

But among all those names, the most important one was that of Eugenio Reale. Reale was one of the most prominent members of the PCI,¹⁶⁵ and one of the most intimate friends of Palmiro Togliatti.¹⁶⁶ Not much is known about his prior contacts with Yugoslavia. When the Yugoslavs were distancing themselves from him, in 1957, he cynically stated that one of the possible reasons for his expulsion from the party was his uninterrupted contact with Yugoslav comrades, even after 1948.¹⁶⁷ Having in mind that the contacts were preserved even during the time of the conflict, it was not a surprise that in 1956 he was one of the most pro-Yugoslav members of the PCI, always agitating for better relations between the two parties.¹⁶⁸ Unexpectedly for such a high ranking member of the PCI, the Soviet interventions in Hungary provoked a strong reaction in Reale, pitting him against Togliatti which resulted in his expulsion from the party. At the very beginning of that conflict, one of first Reale's moves was to contact Yugoslavia and to try to coordinate his activities and get support from Belgrade. The contacts were very intense – Reale met Anton Vratuša three times, on the 28th, 29th, and the 30th of November. During those conversations, Reale was intransigent in his attacks on Togliatti. Even recalling Togliatti's mistakes from the Comintern era, Reale was keen to show that his former friend was, is, and will remain a Stalinist, and therefore petrified the party in a situation without perspective. In fact, Reale wanted to persuade the Yugoslavs to end their support to the PCI, and shift their attention to the socialists and to his new project. In order to do so, he wanted to present himself as the true Yugoslav friend – on one side he claimed that Togliatti had privately condoned Stalin's actions in 1948, and on the other side

¹⁶³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-150.

¹⁶⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-158, referat DSIP-a 17. XII '56 [Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 17 III '56]. Diaz went further in opposing Togliatti than Massola, Alicata and Spano and left the party after the congress. Antonio Giolitti, one of the most articulated voices of the opposition at the congress, had the same destiny as Diaz. While I have not found any evidences of his direct contacts with Yugoslavia at that time, it is worth noting that he had some pro-Yugoslav views, even in 1948, when he was forced by Togliatti not to question the Soviet actions against Belgrade – A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 197. In 1956, when Togliatti posed the issue of the co-responsibility of other high ranking Soviet cadres, who wanted to blame everything on Stalin solely, Giolitti stressed how Togliatti also shared a part of the responsibility, for instance, regarding the erroneous conduct against Tito in 1948 – D. Sassoon, *Togliatti e il partito di massa*, 97.

¹⁶⁵ Among other things, the fact that he, with Luigi Longo, was the PCI's delegate at the first conference of Cominform speaks for itself. A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, 189.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 173.

¹⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-175, Reale 2. 1. 1957.

¹⁶⁸ S. Mišić, „*Обнављање односа*“, 126-128.

Reale went to the Albanian embassy to protest against the executions of several alleged Titoists. The project that he was creating, and for which he hoped to obtain Yugoslav support, was a magazine formed by the most prominent PCI dissidents.¹⁶⁹

Therefore, Yugoslavia was asked, by Reale and others,¹⁷⁰ to support the work of the most important PCI dissidents. But, from the initial contacts between Vratuša and Reale it was clear that Belgrade would refuse this collaboration. This choice seems unexpected. Only five years earlier, the Yugoslavs supported Valdo Magnani and Aldo Cucchi in their secession from the PCI, and during 1956 Yugoslavia had not hesitated to establish contacts with the opposition within the French communist party.¹⁷¹ Also, the Yugoslav reports from the PCI's Eight congress clearly show their sympathies for the views of this anti-Togliatti opposition which was forming the mentioned periodical.¹⁷² In spite of all that, the answer to the proposed collaboration was negative. Vratuša even immediately informed Togliatti about this case, and coordinated the actions in the direction of bringing Reale back to the PCI.¹⁷³

The outcome of the "Reale case"¹⁷⁴ is one of the clearest signs of an alliance in the making between Yugoslavia and the PCI. It shows that, even in a time when differences between them were growing and a new conflict was on the horizon, Yugoslavia had not wanted to undermine Togliatti's authority in the Italian party by supporting his opposition, even though the opposition was ideologically closer to Yugoslavia than their leader. Belgrade clearly perceived its relations with Palmiro Togliatti as a potent foundation for future collaboration, and despite the criticism considered him a politician of autonomous views, close to Yugoslavia. If we put aside the temporary conflict of the late fifties, the last years of Togliatti's life, and his collaboration with Tito in 1963 and 1964, show that the Yugoslav decision to support him was a long-term choice that paid off.

¹⁶⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-154. A communist journalist named Marco Cesarini Sforza was part of the same project. On several occasions he also asked for Yugoslav financial aid and other help in organizing the magazine, promising that it would have a pro-Yugoslav stance - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-144; AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-175.

¹⁷⁰ Fabrizio Onofri and Marco Cesarini Sforza - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-175.

¹⁷¹ Velio Spano underlined that fact in a conversation with Yugoslav diplomats in late November - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-153.

¹⁷² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-157.

¹⁷³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-154.

¹⁷⁴ This expression is the title of a Yugoslav report on contacts with Reale - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-175, Slučaj Reale [The Reale case].

*Epilogue*¹⁷⁵

The rich interparty collaboration during 1956 led many to hope that the two parties would collaborate even more in the future. However, this year turned out to be just an *intermezzo*, a brief moment of rapprochement that was followed by another long period of non-existent relations. Despite the profound closeness of views between Yugoslav and Italian comrades, the Yugoslav-Soviet relations remained the determining factor of the collaboration between Belgrade and the PCI. During 1957, the emerging conflict between Moscow and Belgrade made the Italian communists more attentive in their collaboration with Yugoslavia. The PCI was careful not to send too many of its representatives to Yugoslavia, and sent only lower ranking officials when compared to 1956. While in 1956 the two most important officials of the party, Togliatti and Longo, both had visited Belgrade, in 1957 Mario Alicata and Gian Carlo Pajetta were the highest PCI officials who visited Yugoslavia. In 1958 the conflict between the USSR and Yugoslavia radicalized, leading to a total break in relations. The PCI followed the Soviet example and from 1958 to 1963 the communication between the Yugoslav and Italian communists was mostly reduced to a few short birthday congratulations between Tito and Togliatti.

Before the definitive Soviet-Yugoslav split of 1958, the PCI did its best to be informed about the conflict from both sides, and to appeal, to both parties, against a repetition of the 1948 rupture. The main preoccupation of the Italian communists was to prevent a new clash within the international communist movement. Having the troublesome experiences from 1956 in mind, when the problems in Hungary created a lot of damage for the PCI (electoral losses, inner party opposition, strengthening of anticommunism in the West), the Italian party wanted to prevent an escalation of the conflict between Moscow and Belgrade. On the other side, the Yugoslavs were more than willing to inform their Italian comrades about the most important episodes of the conflict. It was a good chance to lead a propaganda war with the USSR, and prevent the isolation of the Yugoslav party that happened in 1948. Besides the conflict, other important topics in the communication between the two parties were the situation in Hungary, Poland and Albania.

PCI representatives, and Togliatti more than others, were trying to reconcile the Soviet and Yugoslav perspectives and bring the two parties together. Like it was mentioned in Yugoslav

¹⁷⁵ The following pages are a brief overview of the relations between Yugoslavia and the PCI during 1957 and 1958, based on archival documentation from Belgrade - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I, box 4.

analyses during 1956, the PCI was, once again, trying not to take sides, but to be somewhere in the middle. Therefore, the Italians criticized certain aspects of the anti-Yugoslav actions the Soviets undertook, especially through Albania, but at the same time warned the Yugoslavs that they were exaggerating other aspects of Soviet anti-Belgrade activity. In order to calm the Yugoslavs, PCI representatives always underlined how they had never been pressured by Moscow regarding their contacts with Yugoslavia. However, the peace-making policy of the PCI had to be ended in April of 1958, at the Seventh Congress of the League of Communist of Yugoslavia. This congress, and especially the speech Aleksandar Ranković made, in which he criticized Stalinism in the USSR, provoked the Soviets to definitely break ties and cease relations with Belgrade like in 1948. The PCI followed and Alfredo Reichlin, the party's delegate to the congress¹⁷⁶, confronted the Yugoslavs on several occasions. Reichlin also tried to influence other delegations to take a more anti-Yugoslav stance. He succeeded in persuading the CP of Indonesia to participate only as observers, but on the other hand did not succeed in influencing the Italian socialists to be more reserved towards the hosts.

The new Yugoslav-Soviet split influenced another important issue in the relations between Yugoslavia and the PCI. The Stalinist and sectarian leadership of the Trieste communist party, led by Vittorio Vidali, perceived the new rupture between Moscow and Belgrade as a confirmation and justification of their anti-Yugoslav views. In 1955 and 1956 they were forced to obey the authority of Moscow and the party central in Rome. However, the new international context allowed them to once again propagate their intimate views which were full of criticism towards Yugoslavia. This phenomenon was followed in Belgrade with lot of attention, and the Yugoslavs were helped by someone within the Trieste party in obtaining information regarding the issue.

In spite of the progressive deterioration of interparty relations during 1957 and 1958, some aspects of that collaboration were developing as if there was no conflict on the horizon. Primarily, the cultural exchange was active and growing. Alicata, who led the culture section of the Italian party, visited Yugoslavia twice in 1957, but Belgrade also collaborated with the Gramsci institute and Feltrinelli publishing house. The two party journals, *Borba* and *L'Unità* exchanged correspondents, and in the Italian case it was Sergio Segre, a figure of great importance in the

¹⁷⁶ More precisely, Reichlin participated at the Congress in the rank of an observer, not as an official delegate. All other communist parties also had only observers, following the Soviet example. The Soviets decided not to have an official delegation as they were unsatisfied by the draft of the new Program of the Yugoslav party.

Italian party during the following years. However, this type of collaboration was in the shadow of the big political issues and conflicts. Although the diversified interparty collaboration showed a vitality of relations, and the closeness of ideological views, it could not prevent the 1958 rupture dictated from Moscow.

Chapter 2: Forming of a *Strategic Alliance* (1962-1967)

Reconciliation, once again

In the period from 1958 to 1962 the PCI followed the Soviet orders and had no formal relations with its Yugoslav counterpart.¹⁷⁷ The only exemption from that rule were the greeting telegrams, regularly exchanged between Tito and Togliatti for their birthdays every year, and a Yugoslav greeting telegram from 1961, sent for the PCI's 40th anniversary.¹⁷⁸ However, the two parties maintained contact through various organizations that were under their influence, and the Yugoslav conflict with the PCI was not as fierce as with other communist parties. A Yugoslav document from 1962 explicitly states that the Italian comrades were, while participating in the anti-Yugoslav Soviet campaign,¹⁷⁹ doing their best to tone down the polemics. Their critiques were milder, and the fiercest accusations against Yugoslavia, made by the Soviet and other parties, were not printed in PCI's publications. Moreover, in order of promoting cooperation with Belgrade, every Yugoslav contact with the socialist countries received big publicity in PCI press.¹⁸⁰

Among several direct personal contacts between the officials of the two parties, the most important one was Velio Spano's trip to Belgrade, in late November of 1960. The meeting was organized through the two parties' peace organizations, and Spano had a conversation with a delegation headed by Veljko Vlahović. Spano visited Belgrade on his return trip from Bucharest, where he participated in a meeting of the World Peace Council, a peace organization led by the USSR. Although much of the meeting was dedicated to the work of this organization, it seems that the crucial motive for the visit lay elsewhere. At the same time, in Moscow, the conference of 81 communist parties was being held, and it was marked by the fierce Sino-Soviet conflict. Eventually, it will become the formal initial point of the split between the two most important communist parties in the world. Spano wanted to inform the Yugoslav comrades on the conference

¹⁷⁷ The attack on Yugoslavia played an important role in the homogenization of the Soviet-led communist movement – A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 248. According to Marco Galeazzi, the PCI was not very different in its policies than the LCY at that time, but had to support the unity of the international communist movement – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 187.

¹⁷⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-229, 230, 231, 232, 236, 237, 238. Marco Galeazzi emphasized how these greetings were overestimated at the Italian embassy in Belgrade, as a sign of some ideologic fraternity between the two parties, while, in fact, they showed Togliatti's cautiousness – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 213.

¹⁷⁹ More about the conflictual relation between the USSR and Yugoslavia from 1958 to 1960 – Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 241-248.

¹⁸⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-242. A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 251.

and on the depth of the conflict. He was very critical of China and Albania and of their ideological views. Since Yugoslavia was under attacks from Beijing for some time, Spano wanted to create a link with the Yugoslavs by attacking China. Firstly, he gave a detailed depiction of the almost unanimous reluctance to accept the Chinese views during the Conference. Secondly, he told that his personal impression was that the Chinese attacks on Yugoslavia were, in fact, attacks on Khrushchev and part of a plan to take the lead of the movement. Hence, Spano was implying that there was a profound connection between Yugoslavia and the USSR, based on an anti-Chinese perspective. Finally, as a proof of his assessment that a rapprochement between Moscow and Belgrade was possible, Spano transmitted the Soviet message that they are interested in bettering their relations with Belgrade - Korniychuk, high-ranking USSR official, personally told Spano that a rapprochement with Yugoslavia was imminent, and that the relations with Belgrade should be kept and developed through peace organizations.¹⁸¹

The rest of the conversation was dedicated to international topics and to the World Peace Council. Vlahović expressed his pessimism regarding cooperation with Albania in peace organizations, and clarified that Yugoslavia was not invited to participate at the Congress of the Cuban communist party. The disinformation that Yugoslavia was, in fact, invited, and the anti-Yugoslav campaign of the Cuban press, Vlahović attributed to the Chinese influence in Havana. Having in mind the importance of the Third World issues in the relations between Belgrade and PCI during the sixties, it is interesting to notice how this topic was treated during the meeting. The only point of divergence in this relaxed and informative discussion, was the situation in the United Arab Republic. While Vlahović was criticizing the local communist party and its defiance to Nasser, Spano clearly expressed his nonagreement. This situation was typical - Belgrade stressed out that the bearers of socialism in Third World countries will not be the local communist parties, while the other communists insisted on the potential role of those parties. Instead, the new popular leaders, not communist but left leaning and more suitable for the local non-European context, were Yugoslavia's hope for socialism in Asia and Africa. However, at the end of the visit, Spano gave his recently published book on Africa, which left a positive impact on Vlahović. The ideas

¹⁸¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-234. In December of 1960, despite the fact that Yugoslavia was labeled as “revisionist” by the conference of the 81 communist parties, the Soviets took another step forward. The message transmitted through Spano in November was posed bilaterally, when the minister of foreign affairs Gromyko expressed his wishes to better the relations with Yugoslavia. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 249. Hence, Spano and the PCI were used as messengers, and the bearers of first positive news after several years of conflict between Moscow and Belgrade.

presented in the book were, in fact, very similar to Yugoslav perceptions of the continent, and Spano admitted that he would have presented them more explicitly, but the party ordered him to erase the parts in which he was pessimistic about the perspective of the local communists and favoring other left movements.¹⁸²

The meeting with Spano was important for the Yugoslavs, and nothing proves it best than the fact that the report regarding it was delivered to the three most important persons in the party: Tito, Kardelj, and Ranković. A similar attention was provoked by the PCI's activity at the world communist conference in Moscow. The material regarding the Italian party's activity at the conference, in circulation among the party's members, ended up in Belgrade and was thoroughly analyzed. PCI's stances on Yugoslavia were well received in Belgrade, understood as a de facto condemnation of the Soviet actions against the LCY. Firstly, in his speech, Luigi Longo accused the Albanians of defending Stalinism and of opposing to a reconciliation with the Yugoslavs. In his view, it was better to try to bring Yugoslavia back to "more correct political positions". Secondly, in a letter to Khrushchev, the Italians were more focused on the Yugoslav issue, proposing an amendment regarding the part of the final document which attacked "the Yugoslav revisionism". Although they did not change the essence of the critique, the amendment was less rigid and attacking, in order not to offend Belgrade and provoke an irreversible split. In the same letter the Italian delegation underlined their opposition to the idea that Yugoslavia should be isolated. To justify their stance, they offered three arguments: 1 – such an action would be a condemnation of the rapprochement policy initiated in 1955; 2 – this would end the important and fruitful ties with Yugoslavia, through syndicates and peace organizations; 3 – it would be impossible to be tougher on the LCY, than on the socialist and social democrat parties worldwide.¹⁸³

Despite these early signs of a possible reconciliation, the two parties had to wait for 1962 to have a full and formal renewal of relations. During 1961, the PCI was cautiously observing the relations between Moscow and Belgrade,¹⁸⁴ in order not to develop its contacts with Yugoslavia

¹⁸² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-234; M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 60.

¹⁸³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-235. A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 271.

¹⁸⁴ Despite the afore mentioned overtures Moscow made towards Belgrade in late 1960, the relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia remained complex during 1961, due to the Yugoslav (successful) efforts to organize the first conference of Non-Aligned countries, in September, in Belgrade. Khrushchev was troubled by the rising Yugoslav influence in the Third World, hence he made several actions aimed at hampering the success of the conference – from strong diplomatic activity in the Third World (primarily by Khrushchev's visits to many countries visited earlier by Tito), direct influence through member countries like Cuba, Ghana and Mali, to organizing nuclear tests in the days

too soon (i.e. before the Soviets do it first). When officially speaking or writing about Yugoslavia, the discourse was partly favorable and open,¹⁸⁵ partly critical of Yugoslav socialism. Hence, in 1961 there were several meetings between the two parties' officials, mostly through other organizations under PCI and LCY's direct influence. Like in 1955, the first contact that was more official was through the regional organizations of the two parties. Vittorio Vidali, leader of the Trieste communists, visited his Slovene counterparts in late 1961 and talked about the local problems of his organization and region.¹⁸⁶ In late 1961, summarizing the Yugoslav issue at a meeting of the PCI's CC, Togliatti underlined good contacts with the LCY, adding that although the critiques of the LCY's program were still valid, Yugoslavia was not a capitalist country.¹⁸⁷

However, in 1962 it was clear to everybody that the Soviet and Yugoslav party ended their conflict,¹⁸⁸ and the relations were officially renewed. Some 20 PCI party officials spent their vacations in Yugoslavia, *L'Unità's* correspondent spent a month in Belgrade (interviewing Kardelj

of the conference, which Tito explicitly asked to be postponed. However, several factors contributed to a change in the Soviet stance towards Belgrade. Firstly, the impressions of the Soviet observer at the conference regarding Yugoslavia were that it was not a capitalist country, but much closer to the USSR than to the United States. Secondly, the Soviets were content with the fact that the Conference advocated views, on various international topics, which were very close to the Soviet ones, and distant from American policies. And, thirdly, a new wave of de-Stalinization was initiated in the USSR at that time. Hence, in late 1961, Moscow became more close and friendly to Belgrade, than in the previous years. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 251-265; A. Hilger, „Communism, Decolonization and the Third World“, in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II, The Socialist Camp and World Power 1941-1960s*, edited by N. Naimark et al., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2017, 328-331. It should be added that China also tried to undermine the Yugoslav efforts in organizing the conference of the Non-Aligned countries, primarily through Indonesia. Beijing's intentions were to keep the movement within Asia and Africa, exclude India and make it more radical. Like the Soviets, they were unsuccessful, and had to accept and formally salute the conference. J. Čavoški, „Jugoslavija i Daleki istok – Treći svet između Jugoslavije i Kine“ [Yugoslavia and the Far East – The Third World Between Yugoslavia and China], in: *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu* [Yugoslavia in the Cold War], edited by: A. Životić et al., INIS, Belgrade 2010, 63-75.

¹⁸⁵ As an example of the pro-Yugoslav opinions expressed by the PCI during 1961, the party's stance on the Belgrade Conference of Non-Aligned should be underlined. With some minor distancing, Togliatti supported the Conference and its decisions, and he also personally organized the publishing of a Tito's speech on the topics of the conference. On the other side, Tito gave an interview to *L'Unità's* reporters present at the conference, who covered it very positively. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 74-75.

¹⁸⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-242.

¹⁸⁷ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 212-213.

¹⁸⁸ Gromyko visited Belgrade in April, Brezhnev did the same in the autumn, and the culmination of the reconciliation was Tito's visit to Moscow in December of 1962. Besides the afore mentioned factors, during 1962 it was evident that the strongest reason motivating Moscow to reconcile with Belgrade were the mutual anti-Chinese views. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 266-271. That comes as no surprise, having in mind that the “Chinese issue” was the main problem for Soviet foreign policy during the sixties – O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005, 159. Hence, in light of such relations in the triangle Moscow-Beijing-Belgrade, Chinese attacks on Yugoslavia could be seen as Beijing's proxy war with Moscow – I. Banac, “Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State”, in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 584.

for the newspaper), several high level meetings were held...¹⁸⁹ As Aldo Agosti pointed out, Togliatti understood the growing Sino-Soviet conflict and Moscow's reconciliation with Belgrade as an implicit vindication of PCI's policies.¹⁹⁰ Thus, the international context and the closeness of PCI and LCY's policies created the situation for a full renewal of the relations between the two parties.

The first opportunity to symbolically demonstrate the renewal of the relations was the Tenth congress of the PCI, held in December of 1962, which included a participation of a Yugoslav delegation. In order to prepare themselves for the occasion, Yugoslav officials made a lengthy report that analyzed the current situation within the Italian party and its political line. The report focused both on the party's internal and foreign policy. The key issues treated in it were: 1) the evolution of the *Italian road to socialism* platform – particularly the revision of the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and acceptance of political pluralism; 2) the continuing split with the socialist party;¹⁹¹ 3) PCI's conflict with China and Albania; and 4) the deteriorating relations with the CPSU and PCF. The general tone of the report was favorable towards the Italian party, praising its ability to overcome dogmatism, devise new internal policies, challenge the Chinese radicalism and show a critical attitude towards the Soviet Union. However, the Yugoslav authors underlined that the Italian communist were still timid in substantially evolving in this direction. Although moderate, these views were irritating for Moscow, and the report focuses on the reactions of the Soviet and French communists. Togliatti and his party were under strong attacks (Belgrade's information was that Moscow decided to cut down its financial aid to the PCI) from both parties, even labeled as "revisionists", "social-democrats" etc. Thus, the authors concluded, the Italian party was becoming more and more isolated, both in Italy and in the international communist movement.¹⁹² It is important to note this remark, as this had a big impact on Tito's and Togliatti's subsequent decision to develop their relations.

During the conference, the Yugoslav delegation headed by Lazar Koliševski had various important meetings with PCI officials and foreign delegations. However, their primary and most

¹⁸⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-242.

¹⁹⁰ A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 279.

¹⁹¹ More about the forming of center-left Italian governments, which shaped the split between the PSI and PCI, initiated in 1956 – U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea 1943-2019*, il Mulino, Bologna 2019, 71-97.

¹⁹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-240. Aldo Agosti also underlines that the PCI was under attacks from the Soviet and French communists, and that the CPSU and PCF's attacks on Yugoslavia were also, in fact, implicit critiques of the PCI's national policies – A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 248-249.

important task was to deliver the personal letter of Josip Broz Tito to Palmiro Togliatti. The letter was written on November 25th, just days before the Congress. As it is crucial for the interparty relations, it will be quoted extensively here. It was exclusively dedicated to international topics, and gave a grim perspective of the global situation, which, in Tito's opinion, demanded action and an urgent meeting between the two of them.

At the beginning of the letter, Tito warns that a Third World War is possible, and that all progressive forces should unite for peace. In the course of the letter, although he did not write it explicitly, it becomes evident that China is presented as the biggest treat to global peace at that moment. Firstly, Tito comments on the Sino-Soviet conflict, which he identifies as one of the threats to peace. He condemns China's extremist positions regarding Cuba, and gives his full and utmost support to the "brave decision" made by Khrushchev, in whom he puts trust in all of the possible future situations.¹⁹³ At the same time, he appeals to all of the communist parties to support the Soviet leader on this topic, and reminds of the support the non-aligned countries gave to him in the United Nations. Chinese ideas that a war can bring the victory of socialism Tito labeled as "madness". Regarding the activity of the Cuban party, the Yugoslav president stated that it the party should be supported, although the Castro regime has to become more flexible.

Secondly, Tito condemned China for its conflict with India, in his opinion a bigger threat to world peace than the Cuban missile crisis. Although he allowed the possibility that the frontier between the two counties was unjust, in his view the Chinese attack was inadmissible for several reasons – such a use of force should not be allowed; and the disputed territory is not important nor rich. However, Tito's biggest concern was the possible reaction in India. In his words, it was a country of 400 million people that was going in a progressive direction, non-aligned, dedicated to peace and never threatened China. Now, because of the conflict, it is very possible that its foreign and internal politics will be dramatically changed – "reactionary" forces will become stronger, and the country will have to orientate itself more towards the West. Losing India would be a big blow to the "progressive" world, hence returning to the old frontiers and negotiations was the only way to resolve this issue justly.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ More about Khrushchev's actions and rationale regarding the Cuban missile crisis, and Chinese opposition to such conduct – V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire. The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapell Hill 2007, 143-152.

¹⁹⁴ A more detailed depiction of the Yugoslav policies on this issue, which was in line with the position expressed by Tito in his letter to Togliatti, in – J. Čavoški, *Jugoslavija i kinesko-indijski konflikt 1959-1962*. [Yugoslavia and the Sino-Indian Conflict 1959-1962], INIS, Belgrade 2009.

Finally, in the last part of the letter, Tito summarized the Yugoslav foreign policy principles and its vision of a different global order, inspired by socialism. Firstly, he emphasized the peaceful coexistence, in his words the only exit from the current situation. This political principle was the strongest reason for Chinese attacks on Yugoslavia.¹⁹⁵ Tito defended it by stating that peaceful coexistence does not exclude a forceful takeover of power in a country, nor does it prevent class solidarity – for instance, Yugoslavia follows this principle, but still helps liberation movements all across the world. Chinese counter perspective, that of imminent war with capitalism, Tito dismissed as something very similar to Trotsky’s “permanent revolution”. Secondly, the Yugoslav president stressed out the importance of Africa and Asia, and of the socialist perspective in these continents. In his opinion, it is crucial to help the development of socialism in the new and emerging nations of that area, and renounce of imposing revolutionary schemes on them. And, thirdly, equality and noninterference were underlined as key principles for every socialist foreign policy. Such ideas immensely helped Yugoslavia, for example in having good relations with Italy – although it was a capitalist country, mutual respect and noninterference enabled Yugoslavia to be on good terms with Rome. Concluding the letter with the remark that the non-aligned countries are an embodiment of all the hitherto listed principles, thus aiding socialism more than by being members of the socialist camp, Tito saluted Togliatti with a call for a meeting focused on these international topics and on the situation in the international workers’ movement.¹⁹⁶

During the conference, the Yugoslav delegation met with various PCI officials, but also used this opportunity, unique after a long period of split with the communist movement, to contact several foreign communist delegations. Among the Italians, they met Togliatti, Gian Carlo Pajetta and PCI’s delegates from three Italian provinces. The conversation with Togliatti was short, during a formal reception for the foreign delegates. Still, the Italian secretary general dedicated some time to a conversation with Koliševski, stating that he read Tito’s letter and that in his understanding it deals with the most important issues. Koliševski then shortly informed his counterpart of Tito’s visit to the USSR, underlining that Yugoslavia’s primary aim was not to go back to the old type of relations with the Soviets. Togliatti said that through discussions everything will be clarified and

¹⁹⁵ Fierce opposition to the principle of peaceful coexistence, shared by Moscow and Belgrade, was the essential idea of Mao’s foreign policy, deriving from his conviction that the United States and the Soviet Union want to divide the world among themselves – R. Service, *Compagni. Storia globale del comunismo nel XX secolo*, Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari 2011, 403-404.

¹⁹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-240.

bettered, and sent his regards to Tito with a promise to respond to the letter after the new party Directorate analyzes it. The conversations with Pajetta were more substantial. Those conversations were mostly focused on China, as the Italian party was fearing of a possible confrontation between the Yugoslavs and Chinese. Firstly, upon the arrival of the Yugoslavs, Gian Carlo Pajetta wanted to find out how will they react in a possible verbal confrontation with the Chinese delegation. When the Yugoslavs responded that they will not use the congress of the PCI for polemics with Beijing, he was pleasantly surprised. Secondly, Pajetta asked Koliševski not to attack China too harshly in his speech. Upon reading the text of that speech, Pajetta was once more positively surprised, since it was not excessively polemical. He asked only for one minor revision which was accepted by the Yugoslavs. Lastly, Pajetta had a lunch with the Yugoslav delegation where he attacked China for its hypocrisy – Beijing attacked the weak India, justifying it by territorial claims, while they do nothing regarding Macao and Hong Kong. Although he does not advocate an attack on these territories, he just wanted to underline the hypocrisy, frustrated by the fact that the Chinese delegation remained seated while the entire congress applauded to Khrushchev's reaction regarding Cuba. Also, Pajetta informed the Yugoslavs that he read Tito's letter and agrees with much of it – comparing it to Togliatti's views expressed at the congress, he said that Yugoslavia and PCI have a lot in common regarding foreign policy.¹⁹⁷

As it was mentioned earlier, this congress was one of the first opportunities to have formal contacts with various international communist parties. Hence, the Yugoslavs had several meetings with various party delegations – communists from Mongolia, Great Britain, Bulgaria, Poland, Soviet Union, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Austria, France, Algeria, as with the French and Italian socialists. These meetings were mostly a mere formality, having in mind that the conflict with Yugoslavia ended not long ago. However, certain meetings are worth of nothing. Firstly, the British, R. Palme Dutt and James Klugmann¹⁹⁸ were emotional and expressed their sympathy for Belgrade and eagerness to collaborate. The meeting with the Scandinavian delegates was similar, but the meeting with the famous Spanish revolutionary, Dolores Ibárruri (La Pasionaria), was by far the most emotional one. According to the report of the delegation, Ibárruri even cried, showing

¹⁹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-240.

¹⁹⁸ Klugmann was very involved in Yugoslav affairs during his life. His relationship with the Yugoslav communists was ambiguous. Firstly, during the war, he was a British intelligence agent that advocated support for the communist partisans; after the 1948 split he wrote a fierce attack on the CPY, in the book *From Trotsky to Tito*, published in 1951. Accessible online at: <https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/1951/trotsky-tito/index.htm>.

her remorse for the split with Yugoslavia. She also talked extensively about the situation in Spain, reproaching the socialist countries for not helping the Spanish communists enough, and asked for Yugoslav help, which would be precious as Belgrade has such a wide global influence. The encounter with the PCF was not so cordial, as the French delegate tried to transmit a Soviet request for a meeting and suggested mentioning Brezhnev's and Tito's mutual visits in the Yugoslav speech. Koliševski responded negatively, stating that Belgrade and Moscow never needed a middleman. Later on, the Yugoslavs were faced with another Soviet demand - to condemn the legal banning of the communist party in Algeria. This was refused, justifying the refusal by the principle of noninterference. However it was evident that the crucial factor was Yugoslavia's strong support to the Algerian regime at the time, which was considered in Belgrade as an important partner. Finally, the meeting with Gilles Martinet of the Unified Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Unifié, PSU), also deserves to be noted. Martinet stated that the PCI was more moderate than the PCF, but criticized the Italian party for not using the term polycentrism anymore. Both views were fully shared by the Yugoslavs. Martinet also asked the LCY to participate at a meeting regarding the European economic integrations, to which the Yugoslav response was positive.¹⁹⁹

Upon returning to Belgrade, the Yugoslav delegation wrote a report in which the activity of the congress was summarized and analyzed, and an opinion about the future interparty relations was given. Regarding the congress, it was noted that the dynamics of international problems (i.e. the crisis in Cuba, armed conflict between China and India, and the ideological clash between Moscow and Beijing) forced the Italian party to concentrate on foreign policy issues. Hence, the principle of peaceful coexistence was stressed out as the main idea, and it was praised by the Yugoslavs that China was, for the first time, openly and directly criticized by the PCI for attacking this principle. At the same time, the Yugoslav delegates were not so content with the stance regarding the Sino-Indian conflict, assessing it as too restrained. It was noted that the two other left wing Italian parties, the socialists and social-democrats, blamed China, while Togliatti indicated India as the culprit. PCI's openness toward European integrations²⁰⁰ and its dedication to multipartyism in Italy were also underlined. Finally, the delegation concluded that the relations

¹⁹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-240.

²⁰⁰ More about PCI's stances on European integration at that time – D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, 233-234; M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 216-218; Silvio Pons underlines Moscow's opposition to the PCI views - S. Pons, "The Italian Communist Party between East and West, 1960-64", in: *Europe, Cold War and Coexistence 1953-1965*, edited by: Wilfried Loth, Frank Cass Publishers, London 2004, 97-98.

with the Italian communists were growing, and that there was a perspective of further growth. Although their Italian counterparts, during the conversations at the congress, admitted the differences in views between the parties, they also stressed out the undeniable value of Yugoslav socialism and the importance of studying it further. However, it was also concluded that the relations with the PSI were more cordial, as the relations with the communist/socialist syndicate CGIL.²⁰¹ Hence, in spite of the will and determination to develop the relations with the PCI, the socialists remained the primary Yugoslav partner in Italy.

Despite the mutual plans to organize various visits and contacts, the relations between LCY and PCI were inactive in the first five months of 1963.²⁰² The crucial reason for such situation was the fact that the apparatus of the Italian party was occupied with the electoral campaign. The elections were held in late April, and brought a surprising success of the PCI – the party gained over a million votes compared to the previous elections, in May of 1958. The Yugoslavs followed the situation with great interest, analyzing in depth the reasons for such a change. Numerous factors were underlined –the softer stance of the Holy See towards the PCI, the good use of mass-media, the fact that a big number of migrant workers came for the elections and voted for the communists, and, finally, the PCI’s critique of the CPSU policies on art.²⁰³ This autonomous view, according to the Yugoslav ambassador Ivo Vejvoda, both prevented intellectuals from leaving the party and shielded the PCI from critics who attacked it for its loyalty to the Soviet Union. However, the primary reason for the success was found in a comparative advantage of the communists over the socialists. While the socialist party was part of the government, hence it had to defend its policies and results, the communists were in the opposition and wisely used the popular discontent. Or, how it was phrased in the report, in pure communist phraseology, “ the PCI’s program mirrored the aspirations of the popular and democratic masses in the most realistic manner”.²⁰⁴

With the elections ending successfully, the PCI was now able to initiate serious collaboration with Yugoslavia. Hence, in June, there was a series of important meetings – a

²⁰¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-240.

²⁰² The only contact worth of mentioning was a visit of a PCI delegation from the Piedmont province to Slovenia, which focused on the application of self-management and the situation in the Northern Yugoslav republic – APCI, Esteri, MF 0492, p. 2964-2975.

²⁰³ This phenomenon was intensively followed by the Yugoslavs. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-241.

²⁰⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-245. This sentence at the end of the report demonstrates certain doubts the Yugoslav ambassador Ivo Vejvoda had towards the PSI and towards the project of the center-left government. When in December the first center-left government was formed, Vejvoda expressed his disappointment with the governmental program which, in his opinion, was not leftist enough – P. Dragišić, *Šta smo znali o Italiji? Pogledi iz Beograda na Italiju 1955-1978* [What Did We Know About Italy? Belgrade’s Perspectives on Italy 1955-1978], INIS, Belgrade 2019, 92.

Slovene delegation visited the Friuli-Venezia Giulia PCI organization; the Yugoslav consul in Milan had a conversation with Armando Cosutta and Francesco Scotti; a study group of the Italian party visited Croatia; several PCI officials spent their vacations in Yugoslavia; and, most importantly, Gian Carlo Pajetta met with Aleksandar Ranković in Dubrovnik. The Slovene delegation in Friuli-Venezia Giulia was focused on local topics – the issue of the minorities and cooperation of the frontier regions. Their impressions were positive, and the Italian communists showed great interest for stronger connections between the parties. The only minor problem was, like before, Vittorio Vidali. Although he was cordial in the meetings, still he was viewed by the Yugoslavs as someone whose position on the issue of the Slovene minority was not as good as the stances of other PCI officials.²⁰⁵ The meeting with Scotti and Cosutta was another confirmation of the PCI's goodwill to collaborate further, which was explicitly showed. They were interested to know more about Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade and about the Yugoslav support to the Soviet leader. On the other hand, they talked about the situation in Italy, underlining the internal divisions in the DC and PSI, which went in PCI's favor, and expressed their sadness for the passing of Pope John XXIII, whose "progressiveness" was a great benefit for the Italian society.²⁰⁶

Pajetta and Ranković met on June 12th, 1963, in Dubrovnik, and spent more than two hours in a conversation about international topics.²⁰⁷ Hence, this meeting was another confirmation of the crucial role of the international topics in the relations between the PCI and LCY. The two main issues were USSR and China. At the beginning, Pajetta emphasized PCI's great fear of a possible split within the international communist movement and the harms such a scenario would produce.²⁰⁸ Hence, the Italian communists were advocating finding at least a temporary solution

²⁰⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-246.

²⁰⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-247. On Pope John XXIII's hitherto unseen openness for dialogue with the Italian left – U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 91; – D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, 302.

²⁰⁷ Before the meeting, the highest PCI officials informed themselves of the Yugoslav foreign policy by carefully following the public addresses of the highest Yugoslav officials. For instance, Kardelj's speech given in Ljubljana in early June of 1963 was translated and sent to Togliatti, Longo and Pajetta. In the speech Kardelj corroborated the outlook of the Yugoslav foreign policy by attacking the Chinese hegemonic ideas, and confronting them with the Yugoslav principles of non-interference, strong opposition to imposing ideological models, and of excluding war as a means of spreading socialism globally. APCI, Esteri, MF 0492, p 3022-3041.

²⁰⁸ PCI's fear of a split between Moscow and Beijing, hence the opposition to a Soviet-led conference which would excommunicate China, was one of the most important traits of the party's foreign policy in the early sixties – A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 287-288. And, on that issue, the views of Togliatti and Tito were very similar – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 234. Thus, it was a recurring topic in the conversations between the Italian and Yugoslav communists, who shared almost identical views on the issue and opposed to the Soviet intentions, although favorizing the USSR over China. The identical views of the Yugoslav and Italian parties derived primarily from the fact that both were under strong attacks from Beijing in the early sixties, labeled as revisionists. Khrushchev's visit to Yugoslavia in August/September of 1963 was clearly an anti-Chinese act, and it can be said that the opposition to Beijing was the

to the conflict between Beijing and Moscow, which would prevent the split if not resolve the problems. Pajetta criticized both sides, although obviously less inclined towards China. The Soviets were reproached for denying the successes of the Chinese revolution and for criticizing China's internal policy. On the other side, Beijing was harshly criticized for its radical and aggressive foreign policy, conducted without any support within the communist movement. The author of the report on these conversations stated that Pajetta did not propose any means of overcoming the situation. However, Pajetta did emphasize the importance of an open and public debate, which the USSR avoided. He said that the PCI was writing and speaking about the conflict openly, as the "bourgeois" press was already giving big publicity to the topic, so the communist had to enter the national debate. It seems that everything Pajetta said to Ranković was primarily motivated by the local context, the national situation of the PCI. Any turbulence in the movement, like in 1956, would endanger the party's prestige.

Ranković's response was that, as the conflict evolved from an interparty to an interstate conflict (leading to economic problems and territorial pretensions), it was unlikely that an agreement would be found. Although he agreed with Pajetta about the need not to criticize China's internal policy and revolution, he underlined that China was breaking the international unity of the movement by sponsoring factional struggles in many parties and by attempting to gather the African, Asian and Latin American communists under its lead. Finally, he explicitly stated that an international communist conference cannot solve the conflict, advocating for bilateral meetings as the best way of communication. When asked about the Romanian revolt in the COMECON,²⁰⁹ Ranković stated that it is not influenced by China, but was a mere struggle for a better economic position within the organization. However, he stated that it can potentially become a political conflict, on national grounds. Pajetta then touched upon the PCI's critiques of the Soviet cultural policies – although the Italian party shared the Soviet disapproval of abstract art, at the same time

crucial factor in reconciling the Soviet, Yugoslav and Italian communist parties – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution. A History of International Communism 1917-1991*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014, 238-241. However, favorizing Moscow over Beijing was not a rare or peculiar trait of Tito and Togliatti, but a transideological preference in the Western world of that era, as even Presidents Kennedy and Johnson shared the same view – F. Costigliola, "US Foreign Policy From Kennedy to Johnson", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II, Crises and Détente*, edited by: M. Leffler and O. A. Westad, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010, 114.

²⁰⁹ Pajetta was, in fact, asking about the opposition of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the Romanian leader, to the COMECON's plans. In those plans, Romania was seen as a country that should focus its economy on raw materials – oil and agriculture, and Dej wanted to focus more on the industrialization of Romania - R. Service, *Compagni*, 479-480; J. Baberowski, "Nikita Khrushchev and De-Stalinization in the Soviet Union 1953–1964", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 158-159.

it could not support the state and party interference in questions of artistic expressions, especially at a time when it was fighting against censorship in Italy. He wanted to know the background of the situation in the USSR, i.e. was it a rise of Stalinist forces, and what were the Yugoslav policies in this regard. Ranković responded that he does not think that the situation in the USSR has such a background, adding that the entire issue was dramatized. However, he responded that the Yugoslav policies in that area were different from the Soviet ones, and that the LCY does not want to arbitrate in the questions of artistic value.

In the final part of the meeting, Pajetta was eager to find out more about Soviet-Yugoslav relations. He was pleased to hear that those relations were developing after Tito's visit to Moscow, that Yugoslavia gives its full support to the Soviet foreign policy, and was flattered when Ranković told him the precise date of Khrushchev's arrival in Belgrade, taking it as a sign of trust. The relations with Albania were also touched upon, and Pajetta asked several questions regarding the Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia. The author of the report stated that he was, in fact, checking the claims of the Albanian state propaganda. Ranković responded that Yugoslavia was very careful not to interfere in internal matters of its southern neighbor. Concluding the conversation, Gian Carlo Pajetta talked about the situation in Italy. He was very critical of the PSI, because it attacked the communists and was accepting every demand of the right wing of the DC. Despite this, he stated that the communists will not try to grow on the PSI's extent, as the unity with the socialists remains their aim. At the same time, he positively commented on the positions of the left wing of the DC, particularly those of Amintore Fanfani.²¹⁰

Just twelve days after the meeting in Dubrovnik, Togliatti replied to Tito's letter, on June 24th 1963. Togliatti firstly apologized for being seven months late in his response. The dynamical political life in Italy prevented him from dedicating attention to international affairs, although he is interested and finds a meeting with Tito rather useful. Since certain issues Tito raised in his letter had become even more relevant, the necessity for the meeting remains. Togliatti underlined a few topics he would like to discuss. Firstly, addressing the problems of nuclear weapons, he suggested that the Soviet initiative for denuclearization of the Mediterranean should be supported, and that Yugoslavia can do a lot on that plan. Secondly, he opposed the Chinese attacks on the peaceful Soviet foreign policy, as their attacks on Yugoslavia. His stance was that, despite the differences, there should be a fraternal discussion with Belgrade. Lastly, Togliatti advocated for unity of the

²¹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-248.

communist movement, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian unity. However, that unity should also include the respect for autonomy of each communist party in its struggle for the joint cause – peace and socialism.²¹¹

The study group of the PCI, which visited Croatia in June, spent most of its time in smaller cities, focusing on the local problems and municipal organization. They were interested in educational policies – with an emphasis on the status of underprivileged students; the role of the LCY in the self-management system – the level of its involvement and impact; and in the self-management system itself – how it functions in practice, and what is the position of the workers within it. As the two parties had almost no relations since 1948, except for the short collaboration in 1956 and 1957, and since Yugoslavia was radically transformed during that period, the Italian guests did not have a deeper understanding of the Yugoslav system. Hence, this visit was not intended as a debate, but more as an opportunity to get to know the Yugoslav socialism better. Although the reactions of the Italian side were positive, a discrepancy between the class-oriented questions and the pragmatic Yugoslav answers can be noted.²¹²

A group of PCI party officials also visited Croatia, in August, and focused on similar topics – education, LCY’s influence, salary differences, democratic process etc, but also touched upon the topics of China and USSR. At the end of their stay, the guests spent some time in Belgrade, during Khrushchev’s visit, which made a big impression on them. The majority of the PCI delegates were impressed and praised the Yugoslav system. However, one of them, Costa²¹³, had some critiques. It is important to note these points, as similar views continued to exist among many PCI members in the following decades, although not at the highest party levels. In short, Costa criticized the LCY for “backing down” from the society, leaving its leading position, and being too much market-oriented.²¹⁴ At one point, when an LCY official criticized China for its radicalism, saying that, in fact, Beijing has identical views as the biggest reactionaries in the West, Costa rebuffed that such comments are an exaggeration, similar to the ones made in 1948 regarding

²¹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-250. APCI, Esteri, MF 0492, p. 3050-3052.

²¹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-251.

²¹³ First name unknown.

²¹⁴ The Yugoslav market oriented reforms were not in line with the rationale of the Italian communists that state is always better than the market, and that state intervention is the best solution for economic problems – G. Gozzini, “Italian Communism”, in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 600. Similar criticism was also present before, as early as in 1957, when Togliatti expressed his preoccupation that the Yugoslav system could “slide” to “progressive” capitalism, due to its market orientation – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 181.

Yugoslavia.²¹⁵ Besides this group, Sergio Segre, former correspondent from Belgrade and future important figure in PCI's foreign policy, spent his vacations in Slovenia. The meeting with Segre was pleasant for the Yugoslavs, as he expressed many views complement with Yugoslav ideas and interests. Segre criticized the Trieste communists for their dogmatism, criticized the PCF and CPSU, and reminded that the PCI had not agreed with the Soviet views on Yugoslav revisionism at the 1960 conference of communist parties in Moscow.²¹⁶ Segre's visit proved that the top level of the Italian party was eager to develop its ties with Belgrade.

The last important contact in 1963 was the visit of a PCI study delegation of economic experts.²¹⁷ In order to prepare everything for their arrival, politburo member Paolo Bufalini visited Belgrade and had a conversation with Veljko Vlahović and Boško Šiljegovic, on September 21st. Besides organizing the visit, they shortly touched upon other issues. Most important of them was the Sino-Soviet conflict, and both sides agreed that a global conference of communist parties, aimed at evaluating the conflict, would be a wrong move.²¹⁸ This was a shared position, that will be expressed numerous times in the following decades – both parties were strongly against a conference that would resemble the one from 1948, aimed at condemning and excommunicating one party.

In late October the economic experts arrived in Yugoslavia, visited various institutions and had talks with, among others, Miloš Minić and Veljko Vlahović. Eugenio Peggio was the chief of the delegation, and there was a big symbolic significance in the fact that one of its members was Valdo Magnani. Magnani, as it is explained in the previous chapter, was pro-Yugoslav in the 1948 split, and created a political party that was financed and abundantly helped from Belgrade. As that experiment failed, and Yugoslavia reconciled with the communist movement, Magnani returned to the PCI. His presence in the delegation was a sign that the conflicts from the past were definitely over. The Italian guests wanted to know more about various economic and trade topics – the

²¹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-265.

²¹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-265.

²¹⁷ Apart from this, two episodes should also be mentioned. Firstly, an LCY delegation to the congress of the PSI visited Italy in October of 1963, and had a conversation with Luigi Longo. Since it was exclusively dedicated to PSI's internal issues, the meeting will not be corroborated here – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-294. Secondly, a PCI delegation from the Veneto region visited Slovenia in late October and, like the Piedmont delegation, focused on the implementation of the self-management in the northern Yugoslav republic. Besides this, they posed the issue of Radio Koper (Capodistria) and asked for its bigger support to the PCI. APCI, Esteri, MF 0492, p. 3084-3088. This issue was posed on numerous occasions by various PCI officials in Yugoslavia, but was always met with resistance, as the Yugoslavs did not want to endanger their relations with the official Italian government.

²¹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-257.

possibilities of central planning in Yugoslavia, given the large autonomy of the republics; local authorities and companies; the democratic procedures in the self-management system; overcoming the inner Yugoslav inequalities between various regions; the international division of labor and Yugoslavia's role in it. They were given lengthy talks on these topics. The role of the LCY was explained as that of an external reviser – the party lets the economy flow freely, but intervenes to impose federal unity, or to educate the self-managing workers which are not fully prepared to participate in the system. The Yugoslavs also talked about their efforts to find a place for their country within the global division of labor, and the problems facing such an endeavor. The PCI's economists were not completely convinced in the perspectives of Yugoslav "light" planning – one year plans, adaptable to the market conditions, substituted the earlier five year plans, modeled in the USSR. On the other hand, the Yugoslavs were not happy with their guests' stance regarding the protectionism of Western countries – for the PCI it was a way of saving jobs, for Yugoslavia it was a blockade that prevents poorer countries to grow. In any case, the overall impressions of both side were positive. The guests primarily praised the democratic character of the Yugoslav system, which makes it more suitable for Italy than the models of other socialist countries. And the Yugoslavs were content with the fact that, for the first time in the party relations, there was a working meeting.²¹⁹ The two parties were getting to know each other better, paving the way for closer relations.

At the end of 1963, as a preparation for Togliatti's visit to Belgrade (more about it later on), the Yugoslav party apparatus produced two reports regarding the PCI, which summarized the Yugoslav views on the Italian party. The first one was dedicated to the evolution of the party since the X Congress, and the other one focused solely on the party's foreign policy. Regarding PCI's view on Yugoslavia, several factors were underlined. Firstly, that the Italian party two times publicly criticized the decisions of the 1960 Moscow congress regarding Yugoslavia. Secondly, it was noticed that the PCI wants contacts with Belgrade, but is careful not to be the frontrunner in opening towards Yugoslavia, waiting for further Soviet moves. Thus, as they do not have more opportunities to visit the country, the Italian communists still base their views on Soviet information, knowing little about Yugoslavia, and do not write sufficiently about it in their press. Since their adversaries always stressed out the lack of democracy and freedom in the socialist camp, the Yugoslav ambassador Vejvoda thought that it would help the PCI to write more about

²¹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-258. APCI, Esteri, MF 0492, p. 3067-3081.

Yugoslavia and use it as a counter example, of a free and democratic socialist country. Thirdly, it was noticed that since Khrushchev's visit the PCI showed more interest for Yugoslavia, and wants to have more meaningful collaboration. However, it was added that within the Italian party there were different attitudes towards Belgrade – some, mostly those who visited the country, who are pro-Yugoslav, and some that question Yugoslav democracy, considering it Stalinist and burdened by Tito's personality cult.²²⁰

Besides focusing on PCI's relations with Yugoslavia, the reports gave a detailed analysis of both internal and foreign policy of the party. The flexible stance of the communists towards the Italian government and the PSI was deemed as a good way of preventing political isolation. The party line was considered progressive, especially the policies regarding "the Italian road to socialism" and the utmost dedication to peaceful coexistence. The willingness to oppose China on that issue, and the democratic and public way in which the PCI was conducting its polemic with Beijing, were also looked upon favorably by Belgrade. Although an evolution of PCI's stances towards the Third World was noticed, for the Yugoslavs this issue remained one of the weakest points of the Italian party. According to them, the Italian communists were, like all other communist parties except the Yugoslav one, too biased in analyzing the complex realities of these continents. In short, they were not acquainted enough with the local realities, and stubbornly believed that the communist forces there should be helped, not the "nationalist" ones. Some CGIL and PCI officials informed the Yugoslav ambassador that many in the party are doubtful regarding Belgrade's activity in the Global South. Vejvoda was also informed that the Albanian and Indonesian communists told Pajetta that Yugoslavia always supports the nationalist forces. However, there were also numerous PCI officials who thought quite the opposite. They found Yugoslavia to be a country of great expertise on the topic and were willing to learn from Belgrade. Due to such willingness to learn, and the stronger activity of the entire party on the issue (for instance, contacts with the government in Algeria), the final evaluation was that the PCI has the potential to change its flawed perception of the non-European realities.²²¹

²²⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-260.

²²¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-259, 260.

Tito and Togliatti's last encounter – forming of a strategic alliance

After the ambiguous collaboration in 1963, Togliatti's visit to Belgrade in January of 1964 was a true watershed in the relations between the two parties. Hence, it will be analyzed in detail in the following pages. As it was mentioned earlier, Tito invited Togliatti in December of 1962, and Togliatti positively responded seven months later, in June of 1963. The official excuse was that the Italian communists were focused on the elections, but the Yugoslavs thought that the PCI was in fact hesitant in furtherly developing relations, waiting for Moscow to guide the way – which happened with Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade, in August of 1963. Hence, in October, the PCI's Directorate officially confirmed the visit of its delegation, although leaving the possibility that Longo will lead it, not Togliatti. The topics suggested for the conversations were: international relations; Third World; the unity of the international workers' movement (i.e. the conflict between Moscow and Beijing); the internal political situations in Italy and Yugoslavia; Yugoslavia's relations with the EEC and COMECON.²²²

A few days after the letter was sent to the Yugoslavs, ambassador Vejvoda had a conversation with Togliatti on October 23rd, in order to precise the topics for the meeting. At the beginning, Togliatti underlined that China's policy and the policies of the socialist countries towards Africa, Asia and Latin America are the crucial points of discussion for him. Such a selection of topics was based on Togliatti's assessment that Tito is well acquainted with these problems, especially after the meeting with Khrushchev.²²³ Talking about China, Togliatti mostly focused on criticizing the Soviet idea of a new global communist conference aimed at resolving this issue. Such a conference would just worsen the already weak relations (between the USSR and China), and shift the attention of the communists from their regional problems and realities. Although he did not mention polycentrism, it was obvious that the old idea, launched in 1956, was still alive for Togliatti, as he explained to Vejvoda that regional communist conferences would be more efficient, even in isolating China. Underlining his opposition to a global conference, Togliatti said that he does not want a repetition of 1948, and that he did not believe the Soviet information that, in fact, the PCF wants the conference and initiated the talks to organize it. He went further in

²²² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1402.

²²³ It can be also added that the focus on international affairs was not only driven by Tito's prestige in this area of political activity, but on Togliatti's newly found dedication to foreign affairs – A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 286.

criticizing the CPSU ideas on how to oppose Beijing, adding that the Soviets do not even understand the situation in China and its internal problems that caused such a radical policy.

From Vejvoda's report it is evident that he was very pleased with Togliatti's views. He also noted, like before, the differences between the PCI and CPSU in their approach to the debate with China. Vejvoda underlined three factors causing this difference: the internal Italian pressures on the PCI to be more autonomous from the USSR; a fear within the PCI of a new 1948 – i.e. of a new split within the movement; and a confidence the Italian party gained after its electoral success, which led it to ask for a more autonomous role. Vejvoda was also pleased with what Togliatti had to say on Third World issues. The Italian communist leader stated that USSR and China both had flawed strategies in opposing colonialism in these countries, based on bureaucratic information. On the other side, the PCI was trying to do something different, for instance by contacting Ben Bella and trying to include the Algerian communists in the popular struggle. Concluding his views on the issue, Togliatti added that he has great respect for Tito's knowledge on the subject and finds himself very fortunate to discuss it with the Yugoslav president in person soon.²²⁴ Although Vejvoda still had some reserves regarding PCI's Third World policies, in his report he underlined that, as the Italian party was trying to be more active in the Mediterranean, their views on the topic should be influenced during the visit. At the end of the meeting, Togliatti briefly added that he would also like to discuss the problems of science and art,²²⁵ if there would be time left.²²⁶

As the visit was approaching, the Yugoslav ministry of foreign affairs²²⁷ made short biographic notes on every member of the PCI delegation. Those notes have some interesting information which reveal the Yugoslav perception of these PCI officials. Firstly, the note on Togliatti was strongly positive. Togliatti was praised: for his role in the thirties – his personal efforts to end the extremist policies of the Comintern and spare the PCI of Stalinist purges; for his parliamentary debates in Italy after the war; and for the combination of both classical erudition and a deep understanding of the conditions in which the Italian working class lived. Most importantly, it was explicitly said that Togliatti, after the 20th Congress of the CPSU, “was the

²²⁴ In fact, Togliatti's visit to Belgrade was followed by the visits of Longo to Algeria and Ingrao to Cuba. Hence, they were all connected by one predominant factor – PCI's clear intention to gather more information regarding the Third World and be more active within it. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 90-100.

²²⁵ Vejvoda added that all of the topics proposed by Togliatti were ones regarding which the Italian party had differences with the CPSU.

²²⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266.

²²⁷ Drzavni sekretarijat za inostrane poslove (DSIP) – State Secretary of Foreign Affairs (SSFA).

most progressive and modern representative of the communist movement in Western Europe”. Regarding other delegates, Alessandro Natta was marked as one of the biggest critics of LCY’s ideological orientation; Nilde Iotti as kind in contacts with Yugoslavia, but of limited political potential; and Giorgio Napolitano as someone who will be of big influence the party’s future.²²⁸

The visit of the PCI’s delegation, led by Togliatti, in January of 1964,²²⁹ is not only important as the last encounter of these two figures. Its importance lies in the fact that this was a watershed in the relations between the two parties. Before the visit, periods of collaboration were rare and overshadowed by the longer periods of conflict. After the visit, the two parties collaborated closely for decades, to the point that we can describe their relations as fraternal. Not by chance this encounter changed the nature of the relations. The Italian historian Silvio Pons, commenting on the visit Berlinguer made to Belgrade in 1975 in his book *Berlinguer and the End of Communism*,²³⁰ said that in Belgrade Tito and Berlinguer formed a strategic alliance. In his book on the relations between the PCI and the Non-Aligned Movement, Marco Galeazzi rightfully claimed that the concept of strategic alliance in the relations between the PCI and LCY, in fact, dates back to Togliatti’s visit to Belgrade in 1964.²³¹ This concept will be discussed later, but it is the key idea in understanding the relation between PCI and Belgrade in that era. Also, it should be underlined that this change in the LCY-PCI relations was very important for the Italian communists. Various Italian historians have underlined that fact. For instance, Giovanni Gozzini stated that the rapprochement with Tito’s Yugoslavia was the main outcome of the new, more autonomous foreign policy of the PCI.²³² More extensively, in his foreword to Marco Galeazzi’s book, Antonio Varsori emphasized how Galeazzi, by writing a book on relations between Tito and Togliatti, understood the crucial impact of the Yugoslav president on Togliatti in his final years.

²²⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266. In his memoirs, Giorgio Napolitano dedicated a couple of pages to this visit. According to his testimony, the visit was very cordial, and Napolitano underlined how Togliatti, both during the visit and in his subsequent article published in *Rinascita*, defended the Yugoslav system, distancing himself strongly from the 1948 attack on Belgrade. In Napolitano’s view, this defense of Yugoslavia was, in fact, a sign of Togliatti’s ideological change that culminated with his Yalta memorial several months later. G. Napolitano, *Dal Pci al socialismo europeo. Un’autobiografia politica*, Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari 2008, 70-72.

²²⁹ The first historian who extensively wrote about the visit was Marco Galeazzi, primarily based on PCI documents – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 244-248; M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 100-107. The following few pages, dedicated to analysis of the visit, differ somewhat from Galeazzi’s perspective – mostly because of the more extensive use of Yugoslav documentation - AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-257.

²³⁰ S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, Einaudi, Turin 2006 (ebook), 46.

²³¹ M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 246-247.

²³² G. Gozzini, “Italian Communism”, in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 604.

Yugoslavia showed to Togliatti, through its Third World policies, that a new and autonomous form of communism was possible, and this was very attractive to Togliatti, leading the PCI to be more engaged in a similar direction.²³³

The 1956 and 1964 visit have a lot in common, and it is important to articulate the similarities and differences between them. The crucial similarity is the international context, or more precisely the Soviet influence. The 1956 visit came after the XX Congress of the CPSU, and the 1964 visit came after the XXII Congress of the Soviet party. Whenever some type of de-Stalinization and anti-dogmatism was rising in Moscow, the Italian communist felt free to “go to the right”²³⁴, which always led to a closer contact with Yugoslavia – as Yugoslavia was no more that extremist party from 1948, keen to conquer the capitalist world, but a party and country that went more to the right than the PCI itself. Yugoslavia was opening itself up to the world, to various left movements. For Belgrade, those new actors were the future of socialism, not the dogmatic socialist camp. In some ways, Yugoslavia became what the Italian party always wanted to be, but just did not have the possibility to become, by cutting its ties with the “motherland of socialism”.

1964 visit was in some aspects following the same scenario of the 1956 visit – Moscow reestablished its connection with Belgrade (like in 1955), the XXII Congress reaffirmed de-Stalinization (which the XX Congress launched). Hence, Togliatti once again felt free to pursue the very logical and natural collaboration with the Yugoslavs. Still, Togliatti’s approach was different now, after the turbulent experiences of the Hungarian crisis. Any new ruptures and crises in the movement could only damage the prestige of communism, and that by itself would lead to severe election losses for the PCI. Hence, Togliatti was keen not to irritate the Soviets and express dissent like in 1956. The autonomy of the party continued to be his goal, but now Togliatti wanted to achieve it under the radar, without provoking Moscow. Especially during Moscow’s conflict with Beijing, in which the PCI was fully on the Soviet side.

Having these differences in mind, it is understandable why criticizing Moscow was not the key topic of the conversations, like in 1956. A few critiques of the Soviets emerged occasionally, but Tito and Togliatti were focused on other issues. Yugoslavia had also changed - while in 1956 the foundation of its prestige was the 1948 conflict, and its defiance to the USSR, Belgrade’s

²³³ M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 8-10. In general, not just explicitly in these pages of Varsori’s preface, Galeazzi’s book proves how big of an impact Yugoslavia had on the PCI and on opening of its foreign policy towards the Third World.

²³⁴ To the right wing of the international communist movement, that is.

prestige was now primarily based on the Belgrade conference of Non-Aligned countries, held in 1961. Tito's foreign policy towards the Third World, his contacts and impact in the newly liberated countries became Yugoslavia's main characteristic. And Togliatti, although not a humble politician, recognized Tito's expertise in this matter and wanted to learn, as it was noticed in the conversations with VeJVoda.

The question of PCI's focus on the Third World should be briefly summed up here. Two main reasons created this PCI's need to connect with the newly liberated countries. One was the fact that the Italian party was becoming more and more isolated within the communist movement. Although moderate in its unorthodox views, still it was criticized across the movement, from China, Soviet Union, even by the French neighbors. Therefore, the PCI needed to look outside the movement in order to bypass its isolation. The other important factor was connected with the political struggle in Italy. The Italian communist wanted to challenge their government's foreign policy – criticizing it for sacrificing the national interests to USA's imperialism. Having in mind that the Mediterranean is a vital area for Italy, the PCI wanted to present an alternative policy in this key region, by focusing on contacts with the newly liberated, under developed, countries in the south of the sea. In that context, Yugoslavia was a more than useful mediator and a natural strategic ally. Tito was the perfect figure – his contact and advise could help the PCI more in developing a stronger connection with these countries. The aim of the Italian communists was to have relations with the southern Mediterranean that would be stronger than those of the official Italian government at that moment, which were limited by US interests.²³⁵

Hence, during the conversations in Belgrade, Tito talked extensively about the situation in the Third World. As he was just back from a tour to Latin America, he spent a lot of time describing the situation there, and the problems of USA's dominance in the continent.²³⁶ Also, a large portion

²³⁵ Marco Galeazzi's book on this topic, summarized to the maximum in this paragraph, shows in more detail why did the PCI turn its attention to the Third World, and why was Yugoslavia such a precious ally in that endeavor – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*.

²³⁶ Tito's visit to Latin America in the autumn of 1963 was followed by a visit to Washington and conversation with President Kennedy. His biggest impression was the immense level of US involvement in the political and economic life of its southern neighboring continent. More about the visit in – V. Eraković, „Титова „америчка турнеја“ 1963. године – посета Бразилу, Чилеу, Боливији, Перуу и Сједињеним Америчким Државама“ [Tito's „American Tour“ of 1963 – visits to Brasil, Chile, Bolivia, Peru and the United States of America], *Архив, часопис Архива Југославије*, 1–2, Belgrade 2015, 168-179.

Such Tito's impression was on point, having in mind that the visit came in the time of John F. Kennedy's presidency, arguably the most involved US president in Latin America during the country's Cold War history – F. Costigliola, “US Foreign Policy From Kennedy to Johnson”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 120. His successor, Lindon Johnson, inherited Kennedy's zeal for involvement in Latin America, and intervened directly in the

of the conversations was dedicated to the situation in the Arab countries. The essence of these lengthy conversations can be summed up in a few key points that the Yugoslav president used in describing the situation in the Third World. Those key points were, in fact, the advice Togliatti wanted - what was happening in the underdeveloped world, and how to approach it.²³⁷

The main problem Tito individuated was that those countries, although free, were still treated as colonies, both economically and politically. All of their problems derived from inequality. Hence, someone who wants to approach them has to look at them as equals. Bragging about the Yugoslav success, he underlined that he always treated the leaders of these countries with respect and got the same in return. But, the problem of other socialist leaders, and communist parties in general, was that they do not follow the same path. For instance, he was the first socialist leader to ever visit South America. More importantly, the main problem was dogmatism – the socialist bloc and the communist parties looked at the Third World in terms of classical Marxism. They wanted to apply the schemes of European revolutionary struggle onto these areas. Hence, all the support went to local communist parties, which were sectarian groups of intellectuals, detached from local realities. On the other side, there were numerous left wing movements – not Marxist in a classical sense, but combining in their political practice left ideas and principles with local conditions. In spite of all the problems and failures in their work, they represented a more potent force, and were leading their countries towards socialism, something the communist parties could never achieve. Therefore, Yugoslavia shifted its attention and support to these liberation movements and anticolonial leaders. Following such principles, Tito focused on the case of Egypt, explaining why it is better to support Nasser than the Egyptian or Syrian communist parties. Although Nasser’s repression against the communists was sometimes brutal, he was the future of socialism in the Arab world, not the sectarian communist parties.²³⁸

political life of Brazil and Dominican Republic in the following years – O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 150-151.

²³⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1402-1420.

²³⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266. Such Yugoslav policy was giving substantial results, as from 1961 Yugoslavia managed to exert big influence in the Third World, particularly in the Southern Mediterranean, containing Soviet influence in these regions. From the mid-sixties, the USSR changed its foreign policy, and became more involved with the nationalistic regimes, like the one of Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 252-253. (Westad underlines that the Soviets had realized the crucial importance of the Third World for the future of socialism earlier, in the early sixties - O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 72.) However, in the early sixties, Tito’s assessment that the USSR does not have a profound understanding of the Third World, and that it acted dogmatically in that part of the world, was very true. The fact that Moscow at that time had no experts on Africa proves him right – S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, “Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War*, Volume II, 151.

In essence, Tito's advice was: treat the local leaders as equals and understand their problems with neocolonialism; on the other side, forget about local communists, focus on the left movements that were truly building their nations' path to socialism. The aftermath of the visit shows that the advice had not went unheard. Since the PCI was a party whose official line was the *Italian road to socialism*, they were already aware of the need to have new and adapted forms of socialism in areas that were different from the original Soviet model, both socially and historically.

Of course, although the Third World was the most important topic, China,²³⁹ the Soviet Union, their mutual relations, and the situation in Italy were also thoroughly examined. Concerning China, the Yugoslavs and Italians were unanimous. In essence, their mutual stance was against Chinese dogmatism, but also slightly critical of the Soviet management of the crisis. Both parties had not wanted a theatrical global conference aimed at excommunicating China and Albania. Although attacked by China more than other communist leaders, Tito and Togliatti wanted to win the ideological conflict with Beijing by a clear, open and democratic discussion, not by a Stalinist excommunication.²⁴⁰

When talking about China, and the crisis that shook the movement, Tito once again turned to the issue of Third World countries. He thought that the true cause of the conflict was the Chinese wish to dominate Asia, and perhaps Africa, adding that that the same reasons motivated Beijing's attack on Yugoslavia. Once again, on the example of Chinese dogmatic foreign policy, Tito wanted to prove the superiority of his conceptions and that the Chinese were, despite their radical rhetoric, damaging the progress of socialism globally, while Yugoslavia was helping it. The example of Nehru was crucial for Tito – he was attacked by the Chinese, who did not recognize that Nehru was the main anti-reactionary force in India, the only political actor who can lead this country to socialism.²⁴¹ For those reasons Nehru had Yugoslav support, and Tito's morale of the story was that Yugoslavia was strengthening socialism globally with its flexible approach, while China was only causing damage with its radicalism.²⁴²

As it was said earlier, Togliatti did not want to express dissent against the USSR, especially in the light of its conflict with the China. Hence, every criticism of Soviets that occurred during

²³⁹ Aldo Agosti points out China as the main topic of the conversations in Belgrade – A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 287.

²⁴⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266.

²⁴¹ The example of India clearly showed the great differences between Belgrade and Beijing. For Mao, helping India and similar non-socialist countries was frustrating and he strongly condemned other socialist countries for doing so. O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 70.

²⁴² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266.

the Belgrade conversations was only occasional and moderate. Tito, on his behalf, also talked mostly favorably about the Soviet Union, underlining Moscow's understanding for Yugoslav policies.²⁴³

The two communist leaders also talked extensively about the situation in Italy – the situation within the government, and on the Italian left – i.e. the relations between the communists and socialists. Both agreed that a left unity in Italy was important, and the Yugoslavs were willing to, through their contacts with the socialists, help in strengthening that unity. Tito was also very eager to find out more about the situation in the Vatican, as he was being approached by the Holy See. This initiative was very important for Yugoslavia, given its considerable Catholic population. Still, the Yugoslav president was very careful, and wanted to have more information regarding the situation behind the St. Peter's square.²⁴⁴

Finally, it is important to note an absence of interest Togliatti showed for the system of self-management. During the press conference, a Yugoslav journalist asked Togliatti about the similarities between Gramsci's workers' councils and Yugoslav self-management. Togliatti's answer says a lot – he explicitly stated that comparisons with Gramsci were not justified.²⁴⁵ Therefore, it is obvious that the Italian communists were eager to learn from and implement Yugoslav foreign policy, but not the Yugoslav internal solutions. The mentioning of Gramsci is crucial here – his legacy was the foundation of the Italian road to socialism. Gramsci's focus on the differences between East and West, his emphasis on the different methods of revolutionary struggle that the communists in the West have to apply, in comparison to their comrades in the East – all of that led Togliatti not to be very interested in the Yugoslav experiment. The Italian communists, hence, wanted to find new solutions, based on their experience and tradition, not in imitating the system of a country that was close, but Eastern, with different historical and social conditions.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266. Despite almost a decade of turbulent relations between Tito and Khrushchev, at that time they became very close, sharing many views. That concordance was best seen during their last meeting, in June of 1964 in Moscow. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 273-275.

²⁴⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266.

²⁴⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266.

²⁴⁶ D. Sassoon, *Togliatti e il partito di massa*, 93. The Yugoslav papers also choose to omit a statement Togliatti made, furtherly emphasizing the differences between the Yugoslav socialism and PCI's vision for Italy. The omitted statement was Togliatti's explicit underlining that, when the working class takes power in Italy, the democratic elements will be more emphasized than in Yugoslavia. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, 1423. More about the international press coverage of the visit in: APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1421-1441.

With these brief remarks about Gramsci and Togliatti's lack of interest for self-management, the Pons' term of strategic alliance, in its antedated version used by Galeazzi, can be revisited. The alliance between Yugoslavia and the PCI was only strategic, as their differences were substantial – the Yugoslavs were in power, in an underdeveloped country in Eastern Europe; the Italian communists were an opposition party in a highly industrialized country of Western Europe, in the center of global capitalism. The closest allies of the Italian communists could naturally be just the parties fighting in similar conditions. However, in a wide and elaborated strategy of the PCI, the Yugoslavs were important as a bridge to the Third World and a bypass of isolation. Hence, Yugoslavia was precious on a strategic level, but not so much as a role model system. From the course of the visit it was obvious that both sides were content with such a relationship. The principles of autonomy of every communist party and of national roads to socialism were the connecting point, hence internal affairs were a zone of noninterference, left to each party to take care of by itself. On the other side, Belgrade was satisfied with the opportunity to have an alliance with the PCI on foreign policy issues, but was not interested in impacting its internal policies. Such action would be detrimental in two ways: firstly, as a breach of the Yugoslav principle of noninterference; secondly, as an unwished problem with the Italian government, Belgrade's important economic and political partner at the time. Hence, it was natural that the PCI and LCY primarily shared their foreign policy principles,²⁴⁷ and based their alliance on these issues.

Togliatti's visit made gave a big impulse to the interparty collaboration.²⁴⁸ After the relatively low-intensity collaboration in 1963, 1964 was filled with various high-level contacts. The first contact of that kind, after Togliatti's visit, was in February. Bogdan Osolnik, a Yugoslav diplomat, participated at the celebration of fortieth anniversary of the party's newspaper *L'Unità*, and had conversations with Alessandro Natta and Mario Alicata. Although it was planned for Osolnik to meet with Luigi Longo, due to his sickness Natta substituted him. Natta and Osolnik talked about the Sino-Soviet conflict and the possible global communist conference. Osolnik

²⁴⁷ M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 241.

²⁴⁸ One of the important symbolic gestures was Togliatti's explicit condemnation of the 1948 Cominform decision to excommunicate Yugoslavia in his text regarding the visit, published in *Rinascita* on February 1st – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 108, 249. In that period, Togliatti spoke very favorably of Yugoslavia and its foreign policies, advocating them at the highest organs of the PCI – M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 249-250. Such views were not met favorably in Moscow, and the Soviets strongly criticized Togliatti's support for the Yugoslav international position (of a socialist country outside of the socialist block) – S. Pons, "The Italian Communist Party between East and West, 1960-64", 99-100.

briefly explained to his counterpart the Yugoslav response to CPSU's letter, and found out that the PCI, although it did not principally oppose to a conference, found it inopportune. Natta commented on the Romanian effort to be a mediator between Beijing and Moscow, deeming it as a wish for prestige, and expressing doubt that this action can have any impact and success. Finally, Osolnik asked will the new *L'Unità*'s correspondent from Belgrade also be the liaison between the two central committees, like his Yugoslav colleague, to which the response was no, for the time being.²⁴⁹

The talks with Alicata were focused on the same topic. Alicata's view was that the USSR, but also some smaller parties, like the French or Spanish one, were frightened by China's impact, and desperately wanted to condemn and stop it. PCI was not in favor of the conference, and Longo personally defended that position in Moscow. The idea of the conference created problems for the PCI. The Italian party was very keen to activate the interparty collaboration between the parties operating in the capitalist West European countries, firstly by organizing a conference. This initiative was declined in France, by Waldeck Rochet, who insisted on the global conference of the entire movement. Although he admitted that the PCI would have to go to the conference if it was to be held, as the party membership could not understand a different decision, Alicata emphasized various problems that such a conference creates. Firstly, it should not be based on the declaration of the 1960 resolution – it was a shallow document, and a lot has changed since it was written, hence it did not resonate with the reality anymore. Secondly, a conference organized by Moscow can provoke the Chinese to have a counter meeting of communist parties close to it, which would formalize a division of the movement. Thirdly, the Soviet Union, and many other communist, have outdated views on the global situation. Alicata subsequently added that even inside the PCI they had similar problems within the leadership. For instance, when Togliatti published a positive article regarding Yugoslavia, many in the party's Directorate were not pleased by it.²⁵⁰

Just from these two conversations it was evident that, despite Tito's and Togliatti's goodwill to focus more on the Third World, the dramatic conflict between Moscow and Beijing will be the dominant topic in collaboration. An interesting document – instructions for the work

²⁴⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-267.

²⁵⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-267.

of Vukoje Bulatović, *Komunist*'s²⁵¹ correspondent from Rome and liaison between the two central committees – explicitly shows that the Sino-Soviet conflict was the primary topic for Belgrade. The instructions were written in February, and represent a detailed list of issues on which Bulatović should focus on. Following the USSR-China conflict, several topics were underlined: the development of the Italian road to socialism (with particular attention on the ideas for structural reforms of economy, notions on democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat, tactics of opposing the government and parliamentary activity, relations the PCI has with other parties); the relations of the PCI with the Catholic masses, organizations and the Vatican; the reactions to the turbulences in the movement and to the PCI's line within the party itself (hence, Yugoslavia was interested in a possible emergence of a more dogmatic opposition); party's activities in Western Europe – towards the communist parties, but also towards every type of regional organization. Surprisingly, PCI's views on the underdeveloped countries and resistance movements was on the bottom of the list.²⁵²

As contacts grew stronger, the collaboration was being diversified. The big issues of the international communist movement were crucial, but not the only topic.²⁵³ For instance, attention was given to the issue of Italian fishermen who breached the Yugoslav territorial waters and had their boats seized. This was a constant phenomenon, and the PCI tried to help those who were communists, by contacting Belgrade and asking for pardon. Although the Yugoslavs were previously inclined to do such favors to their Italian comrades, now it was not the case.²⁵⁴ On the other side, the collaboration in the field of culture and media was also growing stronger. A couple of meetings on those topics were held in March and April, and the Italian communists were particularly interested in two issues. The first was related to media – PCI wanted to be propagated more by the Yugoslav media, especially by Radio Koper (Capodistria), since its signal was reaching far into the Italian territory.²⁵⁵ This was a frequent request, repeated many times in the following years. The second issue was related to collaboration in the film industry. At that time, the movie *Le soldatesse* was being filmed in Yugoslavia, in a joint production. Since the movie

²⁵¹ LCY's official newspaper.

²⁵² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-268.

²⁵³ Although they continued to be dominant, and were discussed with Luciano Gruppi, in March – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-273, APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1450-1451; and with a PCI delegation from Bologna, in April – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-275. Also, in late May, Berlinguer met with Bulatović and had a conversation on the surprisingly underdeveloped and conflictual Yugoslav-Cuban relations. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1468-1469.

²⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-270.

²⁵⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-271.

depicted wartime events, it was crucial to have the assistance of the Yugoslav army in filming certain sequences. Hence, the director Valerio Zurlini and PCI's senator Francesco Scotti visited Belgrade, and asked the Yugoslav party for help in obtaining the army's collaboration.²⁵⁶

In June and July there were two events in the collaboration between the parties that should be noted, due to the high level of the officials involved. The first and less important was an article Veljko Vlahović wrote for *Rinascita*. The PCI's review celebrated its twenty years, and the party asked for an article from Vlahović. Although it was celebratory, it is interesting to note which factors were emphasized, thus revealing what were the PCI's positive ideological traits that Belgrade respected the most. Apart from the joint combat in WWII and good neighboring relations, Vlahović underlined PCI's brave analysis of the important issues for the development of socialism, activity in the international communist movement towards overcoming the contradictions within it, and the concept of the Italian road to socialism (particularly its mass nature). Later on in the text, he was more explicit, saying that the PCI and *Rinascita* gave great contributions in combating conservatism in the movement, and a big support to the policy of peaceful coexistence, which truly enables the strengthening of socialism, weakening of imperialism and peace.²⁵⁷ Hence, Vlahović painted the PCI as one of the most progressive actors in the communist movement, opposition to dogmatism, and these characteristics made it attractive for Belgrade.

The second event was Anton Vratuša's visit to Rome, on July 21st and 22nd, made on his return from Africa. It should be reminded here that, as it is explained in the first chapter, Vratuša was an experienced Yugoslav diplomat, particularly important for the relations with the PCI – he was very respected by the Italian communists due to their contacts and comradeship in the Second World War. Vratuša used his short stay to have conversations with the PCI, PSI and DC representatives, talking to Luigi Longo and Pietro Secchia from the communist party.

The first topic with Longo was Africa. After commenting that the PCI should be more active in the continent, Longo was interested to know more about the ideological nature of the political movements there (i.e. he asked “how much socialist” are they) and about the scope of Chinese influence. Talking about PCI's policies in the southern Mediterranean, Longo stated that the communist parties there were sectarian, thus destined to be isolated. He also said that he explicitly exposed such views to the Algerian communists, who, he thinks, understood him, and

²⁵⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-273. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1448-1449.

²⁵⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-278.

will join the liberation movement soon. Hence, it was evident that the PCI's policies on the issue were becoming very close to the Yugoslav ones. After this topic, Longo and Vratuša passed to the issues of the communist movement. Longo informed his counterpart of the problems with the PCF. The French explicitly stated that they do not want Togliatti as a member of the PCI's delegation to their congress, and the youth organization of the party was accusing PCI of revisionism. Regarding the possible global conference, Longo repeated the well-known position: the PCI will participate, if it happens, but do not find the conference useful, as they said to Khrushchev personally.

After reviewing these topics, Longo talked about the situation in Italy and about the relations between the PCI and LCY. Longo's predictions for the situation in Italy were grim. He expected the worsening of economic conditions and possible mass protests in the autumn. Thus, he thought that the socialists should leave the government, but adding that the PCI does not attack them fiercely. Longo also talked about the possibility of a clash between the army and the workers, and of a regime similar to the one of de Gaulle in France. For the PSI he predicted further deterioration and a possible split within it, which would make it a social-democratic party. Such a scenario evidently suited Longo, as then the PSIUP could find its place on the Italian political scene. For now, PSIUP was more left than the PCI, which frustrated Longo – he did not want their radicalism within the PCI, but it also created problems being outside of the party. He asked if Yugoslavia has contacts with PSIUP, recommending such action, probably expecting that collaboration with Belgrade can moderate it.

Finally, Longo listened to Vratuša's exposition on the situation in Yugoslavia, made a positive remark regarding his visit in 1956, and stated that Togliatti or him will not come to Belgrade soon, as the last visit was in January. This comment was obviously a subtle reminder that now it was LCY's turn to return the visit. After Longo, Vratuša visited Secchia, who was, for years, sidelined from any significant political activity and dedicated himself to historical research. Although he was a representative of conservative currents within the Italian party (it was underlined in the report that Secchia still had a picture of Stalin in his house), of which the Yugoslavs were very critical, Vratuša was sympathetic to Secchia due to their personal collaboration during the war, in Northern Italy. Hence Vratuša recommended that he should be helped in his research work, by providing him with Yugoslav documents.²⁵⁸ In short, this episode

²⁵⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-279.

points out the importance of combative comradeship in communist mentality, despite possible ideological differences.

In August came the season of holidays and various PCI officials were Yugoslav guests. Most important of them were Eugenio Peggio, Armando Cosutta and Giorgio Napolitano who spent their holidays on the Croatian seaside. During their stay they had meeting with LCY officials who informed them on some current Yugoslav issues, like the augmentation of prices and preparations for the Eighth Congress of the LCY.²⁵⁹

More interesting and substantial was the conversation between Dobrivoje Vidić and Gian Carlo Pajetta, on August 13th, dedicated to the organization of a global communist conference. Firstly, Pajetta commented that Togliatti was very satisfied with his visit, as the development of the international situation since January confirmed everything said in Belgrade, to what Vidić responded that the PCI's and LCY's views were very close, even identical. Vidić then went on with expressing the Yugoslav views on the possible international communist conference, given that Yuri Andropov was in Belgrade at that time, trying to convince Tito into participating. In short, the Yugoslavs were not apriori against holding a conference, but emphasized the need to prepare it well and absolutely opposed to potential excommunications. That being said, Belgrade still condemned China's actions, and thought that the movement should dissociate itself from Beijing, but underlined that every party should have the freedom to take its own position in this matter. At the same time, it was important to give support to the USSR in crucial issues.

Pajetta agreed to the need not to excommunicate China at the conference, which should be well prepared. In his words, it was important not to respond with a new Cominform to the Chinese aspirations to create a new organization under their lead. Absolutely opposed to the scenario of an excommunication, both were pleased to notice that the Soviet *Pravda* wrote in the same tone. Repeating that they will go to the eventual conference, although not finding it useful now, Pajetta stressed out, like Alicata in February, PCI's opposition to the 1960 Declaration as the basis of a new meeting. This declaration did not analyze current issues like the contemporary development of capitalism, situation in the Third World, social democracy, mass organization. According to Pajetta, those were crucial issues for the movement and needed new analysis.

Stressing out the need not to repeat 1948, and emphasizing the importance of autonomy within the movement, Pajetta asked Vidić about the relations between Romania and the USSR.

²⁵⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-280.

Although Vidić expressed understanding for Bucharest's intentions to protect their interests, he was moderately critical of Romania. In his words, they were "exaggerating a bit", and needed to solve their problems within the COMECON. He ironically added that the Romanians were acting as if Stalin was still in Moscow, and quoted Tito's words to Dej that they should be patient and work everything out with Moscow, in a fraternal manner. Vidić also criticized Romania's conduct towards China, saying that they should be more active in the struggle against it. However, he also added that it was evident that Buchares was opposed to Beijing, although Romanians sometimes made unfounded comparison between Moscow and Beijing. Pajetta agreed to Vidić's observations.

Finally, Gian Carlo Pajetta spoke about the situation in Italy. His comments on Pietro Nenni were venomous. It was underlined that the PCI has no more contact with him, and that Nenni was transforming the PSI into a social democratic party, which will split the party up. On the other hand, Pajetta spoke positively of the PSIUP, saying that its contacts with the masses were preventing it from becoming sectarian, and that the party was, unlike Nenni, pro left unity. Pajetta also denied any allegation of Chinese influence in the PSIUP, saying that Yugoslavia had similar reservations. Vidić responded that Belgrade was only concerned how will the PSIUP influence the unity of the working class parties in Italy, and what will be its role. With Pajetta sharing his optimism regarding the current status of the PCI, the meeting was finished.²⁶⁰ Just eight days later, such optimism was seriously challenged by the passing of Palmiro Togliatti.

Togliatti's death – a halt in the alliance

The Yugoslav reaction to Togliatti's death was a demonstration of profound respect for the late general secretary of the Italian Communist Party. Tito and Ranković sent telegrams to Nilde Iotti, and Tito wrote a cordial letter to the PCI's Central Committee. Like in no other socialist country, there was an official two-day mourning declared in Yugoslavia. And the Yugoslav delegation to the funeral was very high-level, headed by Edvard Kardelj. All of that was recognized and met with sympathy by the Italian communists.²⁶¹

The presence of the Yugoslav delegation was used to once more discuss the issues of the international communist movement and of the upcoming conference. Hence, on August 27th, the

²⁶⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-281.

²⁶¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-282, 283. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1482-1484.

Yugoslavs met with the PCI delegation consisting of Luigi Longo, Pietro Ingrao, Gian Carlo Pajetta, Umberto Terracini, Mauro Scoccimarro and Giuliano Pajetta. At the beginning of the meeting, Longo said that PCI's official stance on the situation in the communist movement was identical to the views expressed in the *Memoriale di Yalta*, which Togliatti wrote in the last days of his life, and asked Kardelj to corroborate the Yugoslav position. Expressing his condolences once more, Kardelj informed his Italian counterparts that Tito presented the Yugoslav views and concerns to Andropov, emphasizing the need to prepare the conference well bilaterally. The decision was uncertain, but it was most probable that Yugoslavia will not participate, due to its specific international position. Committing to the decisions of the conference, especially if they were going to be similar to the ones from 1957 or 1960, would be a loss to socialism. A participation at the conference would weaken the specific role Yugoslavia has among the non-engaged countries, and such a scenario would be detrimental to the cause of socialism. The general Yugoslav views on the issues that should be posed at the conference were almost identical to the ones PCI and the *Memoriale* advocate.²⁶² In Kardelj's opinion, it was more important what were the topics and how were they going to be discussed than will the conference be held or not.

Kardelj then explained the Yugoslav views on the conflict with China. Any rigidity at the conference would hamper the fight against Beijing, but it was also important that every communist party conducts this fight individually, as that was the most efficient way. Once again, he returned to the topic of non-engaged countries, saying that they were the most perspective ally of the working class and of the workers' and communists' movement in the struggle against imperialism, hence special attention should be dedicated to them. China was making some progress among these countries, but it would not be able to fully win them over. It was crucial not to make them choose between USSR and China, as they wanted to have relations with both, and this should be emphasized at the conference. Kardelj finished his introduction by announcing that Yugoslavia was going to deepen its polemic with Beijing, as the Chinese attacks on Yugoslavia were constant.

Longo returned to the question of the *Memoriale*, confirming its authenticity, explaining that it was written as the basis for conversations with Khrushchev, and repeating that it became the essence of PCI's line regarding the international communist movement. He also added that the

²⁶² The main Yugoslav problems with the conference were, in fact, in line with Togliatti's advice from the *Memoriale*. In it, he wrote that the best way to fight against Beijing was not through an exclusively communist conference, but through a broader meeting, which would include many democratic movements from the Third World – A. Agosti, *Togliatti*, 290-291.

Soviets asked for a response to the invitation for the preparatory meeting for the conference, by October 18th, and that the PCI was going to respond in October after the plenary session of the Central Committee. However, PCI's decision was already evident and Longo summarized it – they would participate, although convinced that the conference was dangerous and not useful, and try to affirm Togliatti's theses. Also, the PCI was going to, in conversations with the CPSU, try to postpone the conference, or at least base it on PCI's views.

Gian Carlo Pajetta took the word at that point, informing the Yugoslavs that they once again, at the funeral, reiterated their doubts regarding the utility of the conference. Despite such views, Pajetta wanted to make clear that the PCI had no intention of reconciling Beijing and Moscow. The PCI was having a polemic with China, but does not see it as an enemy. In any case, the conference will not end the conflict, and it would be “ridiculous” to think that China would respect its decisions, said Pajetta. Although agreeing that Yugoslavia's position, outside of the socialist camp and COMECON, with big influence in the Third World, was crucial, he noted that if Romania would choose not to participate it would be labeled as a traitor, while Yugoslavia has the possibility to do so. This remark was understood on the Yugoslav side as an appeal to use the authority Belgrade has and convince the Soviets to renounce of the conference, or at least give it a better direction.

Terracini indicated the differences between the PCI's and Yugoslav positions. As the Italian party was invited to the preparatory meeting, it had to decide now. Furtherly, the stigma of being labeled as pro-Chinese in case of a refusal was an important factor in deciding to participate. Hence, the PCI was going try to bring constructive elements to the preparatory meeting. Ingrao was more direct in asking for Yugoslavia's involvement. He wanted more information from Kardelj, and asked why was Yugoslavia not opposing the conference more actively. Kardelj responded that even without such actions, the Yugoslavs were always accused of being the opposition. Tito insisted on a good preparation, which would create something new, not a repetition of 1957/1960, but could not be against the conference in principle. In any case, it was obvious that Yugoslavia would not participate. Scoccimarro asked the LCY to corroborate the topic of the relations with and future possibilities of the newly liberated countries at the next LCY Congress, to which Kardelj responded by saying that a special report on that issue was in the

making. Concluding the meeting, Kardelj and Longo agreed to intensify the exchange of opinions in the following period, for instance through discussions at the Gramsci Institute.²⁶³

Shortly after Togliatti's passing, there was another shocking event which impacted the LCY-PCI relations. In October of 1964 Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev was removed from his position. This was undoubtedly a big change within the communist movement, raising many questions. Thus it was the dominant topic of the conversations between Yugoslav and Italian communists.²⁶⁴ On November 13th, ambassador Vejvoda met with Paolo Bufalini in order to discuss primarily this topic. Bufalini expressed PCI's doubts regarding the future policies of Moscow and discontents regarding the way in which the ousting of Khrushchev was being conducted. He also talked about the PCI's visit to the Soviet Union. It was on Moscow's request, and Longo went to the Soviet capital, although finding the meeting not opportune. In Bufalini's words, the debate was friendly but confrontational. The Soviets justified their move with internal reasons, without mentioning foreign policy issues. At one point they became very defensive, responding to the Italian critiques that those were internal party issues, particularly showing discontent for Berlinguer's views and conduct. The Italian delegates emphasized how important it was for them that this process has to be public and democratic, since similar changes in the capitalist organizations are much more open and clear. Bufalini corroborated this stance to Vejvoda, saying that the PCI fears that changing Khrushchev without an explanation would make him a perfect scape goat in the future, whenever problems emerge in the USSR. Also, the visit was used to pose some questions from Togliatti's *Memoriale*, but such efforts gave no result.

After informing Vejvoda of the visit, Bufalini briefly gave some additional comments regarding this issue. PCI's predictions were that the new leadership was not going to renounce of peaceful coexistence, and that it was interested in continuing the partnership with the West. However, the Italian party was publicly critical of Moscow as the events in the USSR were negative for the PCI's electoral campaign, adding that the best way to help the Soviet Union was to criticize it openly. PCI's stances toward Belgrade remained unchanged, as the Yugoslav experience and support were of big importance for the Italian party.²⁶⁵

²⁶³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-282.

²⁶⁴ The PCI followed the reaction of the Yugoslav press regarding the profound changes in the USSR. APCI, Esteri, MF 0520, p. 1485-1489.

²⁶⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-287.

The LCY's Eighth congress, held in December 1964, was an opportunity to once again discuss the current issues of the international communist movement. The PCI delegation was cordially welcomed in Belgrade, and the Yugoslav report on the PCI written in late November showed the strengthening of Belgrade's sympathy for the Italian communists. In this document it was explicitly stated that the PCI was more close to the LCY than any other communist party. Particularly praised were the PCI's views on China, growing interest for the Third World, and open dismissal of the anti-Yugoslav stances from the 1957 and 1960 communist conferences.²⁶⁶

The PCI delegation to the Yugoslav party congress was headed by Gian Carlo Pajetta, who was accompanied by Alfredo Reichlin and Pietro Secchia, and Mario Stendardi as the delegation's secretary. Although there was a strong sympathy for the Italian party, these particular officials were not viewed very positively in Belgrade. Pajetta was regarded as too polemical, and his fierce attacks on Yugoslavia in the 1948-1955 period were not forgotten, but it was admitted that he spoke mostly positively of Yugoslavia now. Reichlin was labeled as rigid, but cordial in contacts with Yugoslavs. And, finally, Secchia was a "dogmatic and Stalinist", but very friendly towards Belgrade in recent years.²⁶⁷ Still, despite this remarks, the Italian delegation was treated with respect and care during their visit.

The most important meeting the PCI delegation had was, on December 9th, with Tito, Ranković, Jovan Veselinov, Vladimir Bakarić and the ambassador Vejvoda. After Tito's compliments to Pajetta on his speech given at the congress, various international topics were addressed. Pajetta repeated that the PCI finds the international conference premature and not useful, as he also said to the Soviet delegate Demichev, unsuccessfully urging him to organize a smaller consultation not a conference. However, Pajetta repeated that, unlike the Romanians, the PCI was willing to continue its polemic with Beijing. Tito fully agreed with Pajetta, stating that he expressed similar views to Khrushchev and Andropov. His views were that each party should conduct its struggle with Beijing autonomously, and that a future conference should have precise goals and refrain from any excommunications or mandatory resolutions.

In the second part of the meeting Pajetta firstly posed the question of the non-engaged countries, as Tito dedicated a big part of his conference speech to this issue. Pajetta underlined that the PCI looked favorably on the Yugoslav involvement in the Third World, and that the Italian

²⁶⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-288.

²⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-292.

party was also trying to be more active, primarily through contacts with the UAR and Algeria. Tito supported such PCI's intentions, and said that directing the non-engaged countries towards socialism should be the primary question of the communist movement. At the end of the meeting, Pajetta and Tito discussed more about the situation in the Soviet Union. Surprisingly, Pajetta was more negative about the USSR than Tito. Criticizing the decision not to allow Boris Pasternak to receive his Nobel prize, Pajetta said that the success of the working class parties in the West was directly depending on the situation in the socialist bloc – every socialist success made it more plausible and every problem in the Eastern bloc hampered their struggle. Although he admitted that the Yugoslav congress was useful in that sense, he underlined that the Western media were still primarily focused on the USSR. Hence, the democratic progress had to happen there to make a strong difference in the Western public's perception of communism. Tito replied that the Yugoslav public had also reacted negatively to Khrushchev's ousting, but emphasized that the new leadership was even more progressive on some issues, especially economic ones, adding that these actions should be supported. Sending his regards to Longo, Tito ended the meeting.²⁶⁸

During their stay, the PCI delegation had numerous meetings where similar stances and views were repeated. From those meetings, and *Rinascita's* report on the conference, it was evident that they were primarily impressed by the self-criticism and openness of debate at the conference, something they had rarely seen in other socialist countries. Also, it should be noted that Pajetta was very eloquent in praising the relations between the parties. Were those words a rhetorical exaggeration or a realistic expression of views, it cannot be determined with certainty. However, it should be noted that Pajetta stated that the two parties had special relations in a historic moment for the communist movement and, something he repeated several times, that the January visit to Belgrade impacted Togliatti so much that it can be seen as crucial for his *Memoriale*, written in the subsequent months.²⁶⁹

Among the various meetings the PCI delegation had in Belgrade, two episodes deserve to be emphasized. Firstly, a part of their conversation with Kardelj, where the Italian guests spoke with him about the non-engaged countries and about the meeting they had with the Italian

²⁶⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-292.

²⁶⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-292. M. Galeazzi also underlines that the *Memoriale* mostly derived from the conversations Togliatti had with Tito – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 114-116. Alessandro Natta also made similar observations – M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu* [Three Challenges to Stalinism], Otokar Keršovani, Opatija 1983, 344.

ambassador. During the dinner, Pajetta posed the issue of the non-engaged countries, agreeing with the Yugoslav views that the PCI should be more active in that field, that the communist conference should focus more on this issue, and that the COMECON had to invest more in these countries, which Kardelj saw as the deadliest threat to neocolonialism. Pajetta then asked why does Yugoslavia have relations even with countries that do not have progressive regimes. Kardelj responded that they do so to emancipate such regimes, if it was possible, like in the United Arab Republic. On the other hand, in the cases where it was impossible, Yugoslavia helped the progressive opposition, like in Mali or Morocco. Pajetta also asked why Yugoslavia was not more active in Latin America. Although Kardelj did not agree with this statement, he underlined that the problems in that continent were twofold – the USA’s strong influence and Cuba’s rigidity and help to isolated groups. Also, it should be mentioned that regarding the Sino-Soviet split Kardelj was more open and informative than Tito. He said that the new Soviet leadership was wrong in thinking that removing Khrushchev could appease China, as Beijing only wanted a stronger global confrontation in order to raise its importance in the eyes of the USSR.²⁷⁰

Regarding the meeting of the delegation with the Italian ambassador to Yugoslavia, Ducci, its content was not very interesting. They talked about the relations between Yugoslavia and PCI, Italy, USSR, etc.²⁷¹ More important was the gesture itself. While in January Togliatti’s visit provoked a discontent in the Italian embassy,²⁷² now the new Italian ambassador personally requested to have a meeting with the PCI delegation. The Yugoslavs were confused by such a change, but ambassador Ducci spoke very positively of Togliatti’s *Memoriale* and, like Pajetta, attributed it to the Yugoslav influence in the January visit.²⁷³ Hence, it is very probable that the Italian government changed its position on the LCY-PCI relations, not seeing them as a threat to Italy, but as a positive contribution to the political life in the country. Belgrade could move the

²⁷⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-292. Reconciling with China was, indeed, the top foreign policy priority of the post-Khrushchev USSR – V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 197. Like Kardelj in this conversation, Josip Broz Tito also stressed out, in his contacts with the Soviet officials, that by ousting Khrushchev they would not achieve a rapprochement with China – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 244-245. More about Khrushchev’s failure in relations with Beijing, the role of that failure in his ousting, and the subsequent failure of his successors in obtaining a rapprochement with China (which proved right the Yugoslav predictions) – S. Radchenko, “The Sino-Soviet split”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 350-372.

²⁷¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-292.

²⁷² The visit was not openly protested, but the reaction of the Italian embassy was mildly negative. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-266.

²⁷³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-284.

PCI away from Moscow, in a more autonomous direction, and in the eyes of other Italian parties that would be an evolution of Italian communism.²⁷⁴

The interparty collaboration during 1965 was significantly different than in the previous period. Paradoxically, although there were less high level encounters, the collaboration was intensive and the two parties started to have a better understanding of each other's policies and problems. The problems of the international communist movement were not so dramatic as before, but internal problems in Yugoslavia and Italy emerged. Hence, the two parties dedicated more effort into understanding their mutual national struggles, not only focusing on international affairs which were still relevant. The role of Vukoje Bulatović, brilliant Yugoslav correspondent from Rome and liaison with the PCI's CC, was crucial. Bulatović managed to have an in depth knowledge of the internal dynamics of the Italian party, and sent reports that shaped Yugoslavia's policy towards it. His counterpart in Belgrade, Ferdinando Mautino, was not as closely successful, but the work of another *L'Unità*'s journalist, the famous Giuseppe Boffa, helped the PCI to have a better understanding of the Yugoslav reality. Finally, certain events clearly showed that at that time for Yugoslavia the collaboration with the Italian government was much more important than the collaboration with the PCI.²⁷⁵

The highest level meeting in 1965 was held in early February, when Mario Alicata and Amerigo Terenzi visited Yugoslavia. Although many topics were discussed, Alicata's goal was to obtain financial help for the party's newspaper *L'Unità*. A document from January which expressed the Yugoslav view of this proposal shows how the collaboration with the PCI was limited by the relations with the Italian government, which were primary for Belgrade. In this document it was explicitly stated that the request from *L'Unità* should be declined, as it would be

²⁷⁴ This assessment was made explicit in March of 1971, during a conversation between the Italian Prime Minister Emilio Colombo and Tito – more about it later on.

²⁷⁵ 1965 was a very important year for the bilateral relations between Yugoslavia and Italy. In November, the Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro visited Belgrade, thus becoming the first Italian President or Prime Minister to visit the Yugoslav capital. The visit was fruit of a diplomatic initiative to improve the relations, which started in the late fifties. For Belgrade, it was crucial to resolve the territorial dispute with Rome and foster the growing economic cooperation between the two countries – S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadraniu. Jugoslavija i Italija na putu ka Osimskim sporazumima iz 1975*. [Reconciliation on the Adriatic. Yugoslavia and Italy on the Road Towards the 1975 Ossimo Agreements], Fakultet političkih nauka, Belgrade 2018. 19-59. Also, Italy was a crucial ally of Belgrade in its aspirations to obtain a favorable trade agreement with the EEC – B. Zaccaria, *The EEC's Yugoslav Policy in Cold War Europe, 1968-1980*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2016, 28. This was an issue of broader importance, as during the sixties the Eastern European countries were in dire need of economic collaboration with the EEC, in order to deal with their growing economic problems – J. M. Hanhimaki, "Détente in Europe, 1962–1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 206.

a direct financial help to the PCI itself. The primary reason not to do so were the interstate relations – the author of the report wrote that the help would certainly damage the relations between Rome and Belgrade, which is neither LCY's nor PCI's interest, and that Yugoslavia already had problems with the Italian government in regard to its financial help to the PSI. The second reason not to give the aid was the fear that other Western communist parties would ask for it also, and Yugoslavia did not have the necessary funds to help them all. Finally, it was decided to help the PCI through loans, advertisement in the PCI press, raising the number of subscriptions to that press in Yugoslavia, and paying vacations to PCI officials, as these forms of help were not direct and could not cause problems with the Italian authorities.²⁷⁶ After 1968 the situation changed, but in the years prior to it Yugoslavia was not willing to risk its relations with Italy by helping the PCI financially.

Alicata and Terenzi had various conversations in which they mostly talked about the situation in the PCI and on the Italian left, and about the situation in the communist movement. The Yugoslavs (they talked to various officials, most importantly with Veljko Vlahović) were primarily interested in Amendola's article regarding the creation of a single left party.²⁷⁷ Alicata obviously did not completely agree with Amendola, as he replied that his comrade posed a lot of good questions, but that his personal focus was primarily on accessing the Catholic masses. This was motivated by the fact that, in Alicata's words, within the left wing of the DC there were individuals with more progressive stances than the right wings of the PSDI or PSI. Talking about the problems in Italy, Alicata focused on the issue of democracy and the PCI's need to emphasize it as a vital part of their program. Thus, the PCI's vision of socialism included multipartism and a centralized but democratic planning. In short, Alicata was emphasizing how the questions of freedom and democracy were crucial in the West, not only the economic aspects like in the East.

At this point Alicata underlined that the dogmatism in the socialist countries hampered PCI's struggle, delegitimizing its democratic credentials. The case of Soviet attack on Amendola's article was just one of numerous examples, and the Soviet dogmatism was detrimental in two ways – firstly, it delegitimized communism in the Western public; secondly, it strengthened the conservative forces within the PCI. Another illustrative case in this regard was that the

²⁷⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-299.

²⁷⁷ For instance, Kardelj personally asked for that article – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-294.

Amendola's article was, in fact, in line with the views of Western social-democracy – oriented more on economic development of the country and on evading the emergence of an authoritarian regime, than on the development of socialism. Petro Ingrao led the opposition to these Amendola's conceptions. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 302-303.

correspondents from socialist countries omitted to mention the widely discussed issue of democracy in their reports from the PCI congress. The previous experiences showed that PCI was gaining votes whenever it expressed skepticism towards the dogmatic moves in the USSR. Having all that in mind, Alicata's belief was that the communist movement in the West could grow only if the socialist countries bravely go forward in their reforms.

At that point, the conversations went in the direction of analyzing the situation within the communist movement. The mutual conviction was that, while China was determined in its foreign policy and gaining influence abroad, the USSR and the entire socialist bloc were indecisive and confused, without having a clear platform. In fact, within the bloc there was no strong support to peaceful coexistence and no clear opposition to China. Quite on the contrary, there was a strengthening of the dogmatic forces. Alicata added that Berlinguer had the same impressions when he was in Moscow – the Soviets were very confusing, as they could not renounce of the conference, but were afraid to hold it. Suslov explicitly told Berlinguer that 61 out of the 81 communist parties were against China, but most of them had serious internal dissent on this issue. Hence, both Vlahović and Alicata agreed that the socialist forces should be more active in fighting the dogmatists, both within the parties and internationally. Alicata talked about PCI's efforts to have a conference of the Western European communist parties. The initiative was hampered by the widespread fear of China - many parties were opposed to the conference, assessing that it could possibly insult Beijing. Vlahović talked about the need to be more active in the Global South – by helping the underdeveloped countries in Asia and Africa, and fighting China on this terrain also. He furtherly added that the socialist bloc should be very careful in Vietnam and avoid helping the US intention of having a global conflict. Also, both agreed that the COMECON was damaged by the chaotic situation in the socialist bloc. It had no internal unity and was thus impotent in achieving a global influence.

Finally, Alicata and Vlahović touched upon several other questions: Romania, Yugoslav-Italian interstate relations and the Cuban influence in the movement. Although noticing that the relations between Moscow and Bucharest were better now, both Alicata and Vlahović criticized the Romanians. Vlahović was blunt and said that the Romanians do not understand the problem, adding that they decontextualize certain Marx's quotes on czarist Russia and use them against the USSR. Alicata agreed and said that the Romanians "cherry pick" the arguments of the PCI – they use the ones critical of the Soviets, and neglect those aimed at China. Regarding the relations

between Yugoslavia and Italy, both agreed that they were good and that Saragat has intentions of developing them further. Vlahović emphasized the importance of having an open frontier, adding that Yugoslavia was not ashamed to show that it was poorer than Italy. Thus he implicitly advocated the opening of the frontiers of all socialist countries. Alicata agreed, saying that “the enemy” could always find a way to come, even with a visa. Finally, Alicata and Vlahović focused on Cuba. Vlahović told that the mutual relations were not good, and criticized Cuba for its revolutionary radicalism, which prevents it in having beneficial relations with progressive forces in Latin America. He also criticized the Cuban influence on Portuguese communists, with which Alicata agreed. However, he also noticed that the Cubans were becoming more flexible and that they have evolved. As a crucial factor of that change he indicated the Cuban contacts with China, which made them realize how flawed and hegemonic was Beijing’s policy.²⁷⁸

Upon returning to Rome, Alicata had a meeting with the ambassador Vejvoda, on February 27th. The topics of the conversation were the situation in Italy and the PSI’s role in, and Alicata’s conversation with ambassador Ducci, in Belgrade. Alicata was highly critical of the PSI. In his words, the government was very unsuccessful and the situation in Italy is worrying, but the socialists remained in government and compromised left ideas. PCI was fearing of a reactionary turn in Italian politics, a possible “de Gaulleian” tendency. Thus, it was mobilizing the masses against both the “incompetent” government and rising reactionaries. Despite such negative predictions and criticism towards the governing coalition, the PCI had some faith in Amintore Fanfani. He was perceived as someone who can possibly turn the government in a positive direction. Regarding the conversations with Ducci, Alicata told Vejvoda an interesting anecdote. Ducci had told that the Serbs in the Yugoslav government were more inclined to Italy than the Slovenes or Croats, and that he met some resistance to the idea of a visa waiving agreement. Alicata, as an internationalist, did not agree with such an observation. The Yugoslav assessment was that, having in mind the former problems between Slovene and Italian communists in Trieste, Ducci was trying to convince Alicata that the Yugoslavs were to be blamed for the slow progress in resolving of the frontier issue.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-299. The tensions between Havana and Belgrade were intensively followed by the PCI. The anti-Yugoslav stance of the Cubans was limiting the dialogue between the PCI and the Cuban party – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 112-113, 138.

²⁷⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-297.

The trust between the PCI and LCY, connected by their mutual wish to defeat dogmatism in the movement, was symbolically evident in an episode that happened in March. On March 15th, ambassador Vejvoda urgently informed Belgrade that he had a meeting with Pajetta, who, in confidence, gave him a text containing all the remarks the PCI had at a meeting held in Moscow a few days earlier. It was a preparatory meeting for the international communist conference, and the PCI was requesting that the conference's main document be consultative, not directive as it was at that point. Regarding the document's content, the Italian communists asked for a deeper analysis of the global situation, and a renunciation of any connection with the documents from 1957 and 1960 (having in mind harsh criticism of Yugoslavia in these acts, the PCI's intention to delegitimize them was very appreciated in Belgrade). Also, the Italians wanted to evade a formal split within the movement, to focus more on the anti-imperialist and anti-war struggle, have more dynamic contacts between the parties and organize a more diversified discussion.²⁸⁰ Although such PCI's views were not new for Belgrade, and were fully shared, the wish to inform Yugoslavia on this issue strengthened the ties.

The stance PCI took towards the meeting in Moscow was furtherly analyzed in Belgrade. Firstly, in late March, Bulatović notified Belgrade that, according to the PCI information he obtained, Yugoslavia was rarely mentioned in Moscow, and every party, except maybe the PCF, mentioned it in a positive context. The PCI had problems with the PCF at that time also, as the French party was blocking the initiative to have a conference of the Western communist parties, a crucial initiative for the Italian communists.²⁸¹ Bulatović also informed about the PCI's stronger activity in the Third World, and attributed it to Kardelj's influence on Pajetta.²⁸² In mid-April a more detailed report on the PCI's position at the Moscow meeting was written. In this document, PCI's crucial stances were once more underlined – the principles of equality, independence and autonomy, the intention to strengthen regional communist cooperation, the opposition to a centralization of the movement and a wish to combat dogmatism by an open discussion. The report also focused on PCI's open and public conflicts with Beijing, Tirana and the PCF, and on the confrontation with Moscow which was not public. At the meeting, the PCI felt obliged to sign a

²⁸⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-301.

²⁸¹ According to Bulatović, the relations between the PCF and PCI were so bad that French communist students threw Gramsci's and Togliatti's books in the Seine.

²⁸² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-304.

document which opposed its principles, not to threaten the unstable unity of the movement. However, in a later public announcement, the party distanced itself from the document.²⁸³

In April of 1965, there were two visits of PCI officials to Yugoslavia. The first one was made from April 2nd to 10th, by Francesco Loperfido. Loperfido was, in fact, visiting the LCY officials within the Italian minority in Croatia and Slovenia, thus demonstrating an interests of the PCI for the Italians in Yugoslavia which was not often displayed. Loperfido's main impression was that, with the better interstate relations between Italy and Yugoslavia, a significant space was opened for the Italian communists to influence the Italian minority. In his opinion, the members of the minority themselves wanted a stronger PCI presence. Primarily, they underlined that the "bourgeois" press and school textbooks were more present in Yugoslavia than the communist ones. Hence, Loperfido urged for several measures that could enhance the PCI's cultural presence among the Italians in Yugoslavia. He stressed out the need for a bigger dissemination of *L'Unita*, *Rinascita*, *Critica marxista*, *Studi storici*. Also, in accordance with the requests of the Italians themselves, he proposed organizing lectures, establishing a publishing collaboration between *Edit*, the Italian publishing house in Rijeka, and *Editori riuniti*, etc.²⁸⁴

More interesting was another PCI visit to Yugoslavia, made also in April. The identity of the PCI official who visited Yugoslavia and wrote a report with his impressions remains unknown. However, he gave a very interesting perspective of the situation in the socialist Yugoslavia. In fact, the report identified the rising crisis in Yugoslavia, which soon led the LCY to initiate a profound economic reform. Although the author initially stated that his view of Yugoslavia was positive, he added that, the Italian communists were too enthusiastic regarding their Eastern neighbor, as he saw some systematic problems that were going to be difficultly solved. The strongest impression was the inertia of the Yugoslav public, regarding both internal and international issues. Particularly in Slovenia, where the highest standard of living was achieved, it seemed that the people were more focused on consumerism and living standard than on political debates. However, beneath the seemingly good life, many problems were evident – inflation was the main one. Hence, the PCI official was under the impression that the Yugoslavs were living much better than the economic achievements of their country could truly provided. To make things worse, there were no major investments which could significantly develop the production. Hence, the combination of loose

²⁸³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-306.

²⁸⁴ APCI, Esteri, MF 0527, p. 2957-2960.

planning and self-management was evaluated as unsuccessful, and the author of the report thought that only a stronger centralized planning could furtherly develop Yugoslavia. Also, it was noted that, despite sympathies for the PCI, the Yugoslav public did not understand its long-term strategy. The Yugoslavs were mostly focused on PCI's short-term tactics, its electoral successes and compromises with other political actors, which were praised. However, they were unaware or ignored the long-term goals of the PCI – its dedication to the socialist transformation of Italy. This was attributed to the Yugoslav ties with the PSI, and to the Yugoslav openness towards the center-left governments.²⁸⁵

On April 10th, Bulatović summarized the state of the interparty relations in a very informative document that sums up the collaboration between the two parties at that point. In his opinion, three events substantially improved the collaboration. Firstly, Togliatti's visit, which showed a great similarity in views on the communist movement. Additionally, in the period after the visit Togliatti put a great effort into praising the LCY, changing the PCI's views on Yugoslavia. Secondly, the Yugoslav cordial reaction to Togliatti's passing and the good reception of the *Memoriale* in Belgrade. Thirdly, the warm reception of the PCI delegation at the LCY congress in December of 1964. Bulatović noticed that, on the issues of the international communist movement and Third World, Yugoslavia was a role model for the Italian communists,²⁸⁶ who often changed their perceptions when informed with Yugoslav views. Concluding his report, he underlined that the collaboration was mainly concentrated on international affairs. Hence, more effort should be put in discussing bilateral topics, and in better informing the Italian side about the Yugoslav socialism. He also added that, in that sense, it was crucial to make *L'Unità* write more about Yugoslavia. At that time, the Yugoslav press wrote more about the PCI than vice versa, and also the socialist *Avanti* wrote more about Yugoslavia than *L'Unità*.²⁸⁷

As the interparty collaboration grew wider, a PCI delegation headed by Rossana Rossanda visited Yugoslavia in late May of 1965, focusing only on ideological and cultural issues. Before the visit, Bulatović had a meeting with Rossanda and gave a series of instructions to Belgrade regarding the visit. Firstly, and most importantly, he underlined that the PCI had a positive prejudice regarding Yugoslavia. The Italian communists considered that it was different than other

²⁸⁵ APCI, Esteri, MF 0527, p. 2961-2963.

²⁸⁶ A few days after this report, Bulatović informed Belgrade on Pajetta's visit to Cairo. The visit showed that the PCI was opening up to Nasser, and Pajetta witnessed to Yugoslav influence in Egypt. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-298.

²⁸⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-305.

socialist countries, and particularly praised the open discussions in the Yugoslav political life. Hence, Bulatović's advice was to strengthen those perceptions and enable the delegation to have high level meetings. Secondly, he informed that the PCI wanted a stronger collaboration in the fields of science and culture, and that they were slightly insulted for not being invited to the philosophical symposium at the island Korčula in Croatia. Bulatović also proposed giving stipends to young communist scholars interested in Yugoslavia. Thirdly, it should be requested that they pay bigger attention to Yugoslav affairs in their press, as Belgrade was not satisfied with the current state. Bulatović warmly recommended Giuseppe Boffa as the perfect person to write on Yugoslavia, as he was very capable but also pro-Yugoslav. Finally, Bulatović added that the PCI's wish for a stronger collaboration in the field of theory should be accepted, and that Rossanda should be asked to elaborate on the internal situation in the PCI.²⁸⁸

The PCI delegation had two important and different meetings in Belgrade. The first one, with Veljko Vlahović, was dedicated to explaining various ideological and cultural aspects of the Yugoslav system, and the second one, with Boško Šiljegović, was dedicated to precisely arranging various forms of cultural and scientific collaboration. Vlahović was firstly explaining the concept of self-management in the area of culture. The main Yugoslav intention was to wipe out the elitist concept of culture, democratize the cultural area, make it mass and a "possession of the people". The Italian guests had various questions on the topic – what were the forms of censorship, does the LCY control the self-management process, were writers entitled to a salary like in other socialist countries? The Yugoslavs responded honestly about censorship, not so honestly about the LCY's control (which they denied) and gave an interesting, market oriented answer to the question about writers' salaries. In Yugoslavia, writers had regular jobs, and profited only from book sales, and there was a touch of cynicism in the way Vlahovic threw away the Eastern model. The only issue where the guests were not convinced by the Yugoslavs was the problem of wage ratio. The PCI delegation thought that the ratio in Yugoslavia was discouraging for the qualified workers, to which Vlahović responded that diplomas were being fetishized, and that the actual work was important, not the qualifications. On the other side, the Italian guests were impressed by the way in which the issue of nations was solved in Yugoslavia. Vlahović talked extensively about it, criticizing Stalin for suffocating nations. Yugoslavia had a different approach. It aimed at developing the nations, but in a progressive direction. That direction was the Yugoslav

²⁸⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-309.

multinational unity, and it was to be achieved through the united party. Although Vlahović was convincing in describing the idea of affirming both the nations and the multinational unity of Yugoslavia, just six years later it became evident how flawed was this approach.

The talks with Šiljegović were more precise and gave results in concrete agreements. Firstly, agreements that established cooperation between the Gramsci institute and several Yugoslav institutes were made. They obligated the institutes to organize various conferences and exchange articles (especially regarding the Third World). Secondly, the Yugoslavs promised to make special informative material for the Italian, Spanish and French communist parties, which would be transmitted through the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug. Thirdly, collaboration with various Yugoslav associations (of philosophers, economists, writers) was established. Fourthly, several publishing arrangements (regarding documents from WWII, Togliatti's and Gramsci's works) were made. And, finally, it was agreed that the next visit should be shortly after the PCI's congress.²⁸⁹

Not even a month passed, and the scientific collaboration was initiated, as a Yugoslav delegation participated at a conference on contemporary capitalism at the Gramsci institute, on June 25th. However, this broad conference which included participants from the socialist bloc was unsuccessful. According to the Yugoslavs, there was no discussion, but only a series of monologues. What particularly irritated the Yugoslavs were the dogmatic views on the Third World. More importantly, the Yugoslav assessment was that the peaceful road to socialism, credo of the PCI, was not well analyzed and devised theoretically. While the Italians thought that the main problem were the Eastern participants, the Yugoslavs did not agree. In any case, the conclusions were that it would be better to have bilateral encounters, in smaller and more specialized groups. Additionally, it was assessed as urgent the need to inform the PCI on Third World more, as the Italian colleagues have shown a lack of understanding of this topic.²⁹⁰

At the same time, during June, Bulatović was constantly sending shorter reports regarding the internal situation in the PCI. The biggest event was the launching of the idea of a single leftist party, the *partito unico*. Bulatović wrote about internal opposition, mostly intellectuals and youth,

²⁸⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-315.

²⁹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-300. At that time the PCI was still closer to the “radicals” within the Non-Aligned Movement than to Belgrade. One of the most important actors in this regard was Gian Carlo Pajetta, who had pro-Soviet stances on the Third World, thus halting the evolution of the party's views initiated by Togliatti – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 124, 129.

while the workers were in favor of such a proposition. He also gave detailed lists of the important officials that were opposing this idea, underlining Scoccimarro, Secchia, Terracini and Ingrao. Bulatović labeled them as sectarian, thus showing that the Yugoslav sympathies were with the idea and with the party leadership. Despite different views, he underlined that the discussion within the PCI was democratic. Bulatović also wrote about the reactions outside of the party, which were mostly positive, and underlined that the main aim of this move was to hamper the unification between PSI and PSDI, which was successfully under way at that point.²⁹¹

In July, in a letter written by Alessandro Natta the PCI informed Belgrade that they remained opposed to having an international communist conference, despite the need to coordinate the fight against China and the help for Vietnam. PCI's priorities were joint struggle for peace and new forms of collaboration between communist parties, in addition with an opening towards non-Marxist anti-imperialist forces. In a conversation with Bulatović, Natta said that there were no concrete initiatives towards a conference, but as various hints pointing in that direction were present they had to react. The letter was informative, and it was sent to the parties with which the PCI had closely collaborated on the issue.²⁹² In August, Bulatović informed about PCI's reactions to the coup in Algeria. Firstly, the PCI press reacted negatively to the event, exaggerating the rates of resistance in the country. Although they later tried to present their reaction not as negative as it was widely perceived, in contact with the Algerian communists they realized that the resistance was small and futile. Thus, revisiting the initial evaluation, they were open to collaborate with the new Boumediene regime. Bulatović's suggestion was to give more information regarding Algeria to the PCI, as a means of influencing both the communists in Algeria and PCI's policy towards similar countries.²⁹³ A few days later, Longo passed through Yugoslavia, on his way to Budapest. Since there was no time for a more substantial meeting, he only had a short lunch, during which he emphasized his personal interest for the developing of the good relations with the LCY, and informed that their correspondent in Algeria was changed, thus confirming Bulatović's assesment.²⁹⁴

²⁹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-311, 313. During June Bulatović also wrote about Longo's meeting with Waldeck Rochet in May, and the subsequent rapprochement between PCI and PCF – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-341.

²⁹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-316.

²⁹³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-316, 317.

²⁹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-318.

The market oriented views of the Yugoslav officials, evident in many conversations hitherto described, led to a comprehensive reform program, which was aimed at combating the economic crisis by deregulation and opening to the global market.²⁹⁵ Such policies were viewed positively in the West and evaluated as a return to capitalism. Although the Yugoslavs strongly denied it, such reactions remained dominant in Western Europe. In Italy, this perception of the Yugoslav reform was useful to the center-left government, which used the Yugoslav example to justify its own policies. Hence, the PCI found itself in a peculiar situation – on one hand, their political enemies attacked the PCI's economic plans by using Yugoslavia as an example for the inevitableness of the market; on the other hand, the dogmatic cadres of the party were very critical of the Yugoslav reform and its rationale. In such circumstances, it was crucial for the PCI to obtain more information, hence they urged the Yugoslavs to organize a lecture on the topic in Italy. Furthermore, Pajetta agreed with Bulatović to send journalist Valentino Parlato to Belgrade to write about the reform. Giving a positive evaluation of Parlato, Bulatović urged Belgrade to help him during his stay.²⁹⁶

Parlato spent nine days in Yugoslavia, from October 20th to 28th, reporting about the Yugoslav reform. In short, the Yugoslavs were satisfied, as Parlato's views were mostly positive. He underlined his agreement with the Yugoslav stance that the reform is not result of a crisis, but result of the need to go forward and strengthen the economic progress. Also, he added that this experience was very valuable for the PCI because, when they eventually seize power in Italy, it will be impossible to eradicate the laws of the market in the country. The only dilemma he had regarded the role of the LCY. Since the reform urged for a short time centralization and suspension of the Yugoslav principles of decentralization and self-management, Parlato was not sure how could that contradiction can be resolved. The only viable solution he saw in a stronger role of the communist party. Besides the reform, which was the dominant topic, the Yugoslavs also talked with Parlato about Indochina, the situation in the PCI and the interparty relations. While discussing the mutual relations, Parlato agreed with the Yugoslav discontent regarding *L'Unità*. The

²⁹⁵ More about the phenomenon of the market oriented economy of socialist Yugoslavia in – V. Unkovski Korica, *The Economic Struggle for Power in Tito's Yugoslavia. From World War II to Non-Alignment*, I. B. Tauris, London 2016.

²⁹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-320.

Yugoslavs were critical of the way in which the paper reported on Moro's visit to Yugoslavia and of the poor work of its correspondent from Belgrade, Mautino.²⁹⁷

The Italian prime minister Aldo Moro visited Yugoslavia just days after Parlato, and this event created a smaller conflict between Belgrade and the PCI. The Yugoslavs were dissatisfied as *L'Unità* wrote negatively about the visit while they gave positive coverage to Saragat's visit to Poland. Luka Soldić expressed these remarks to the correspondent Mautino, who was accompanied by *L'Unità*'s foreign policy editor, Arminio Savioli. Savioli came to Belgrade to write about Moro's visit. On the other side, the Italian communist journalists were dissatisfied with the Yugoslav press' coverage of the visit, especially as certain Yugoslav articles emphasized Italy's autonomous foreign policy, which was an unacceptable stance for the PCI. Soldić responded by saying that this was not a formal state declaration, but only the view of certain journalists. In any case, the conflict was not resolved and *L'Unità* continued writing negatively on the visit. The episode once again shows how important were the interstate bilateral relations, and how much they limited the interparty relations. On the other hand, this episode also showed Belgrade's dissatisfaction with the PCI press. The first problem was Mautino, with whose work the Yugoslavs were not satisfied for almost a year, and the second problem was *L'Unità*'s small attention to Yugoslav affairs. Mautino emphasized how he wrote positively of the visit, while Savioli was responsible for the negative parts. Also, he underlined that the editors of the journal were to blame for the poor results of his work, as they cut his articles and wanted only small informative pieces. Despite these excuses, it was evident that Mautino was unsuccessful in his work, unlike Bulatović in Rome, and that his days in Belgrade were soon to be over.²⁹⁸

While Belgrade and *L'Unità* were focused on Moro's visit, Bulatović was following the PCI's preparations for the upcoming party congress. Firstly, on November 1st, he had a conversation with Rossana Rossanda who was very critical of the situation in her party. She told that the DC and PSI were stabilized, and that the unification of the PSI and PSDI could be done smoothly, while the PCI had no new plans on how to respond to these changed circumstances. Especially having in mind the failure of Amendola's idea of *partito unico*, which no one admitted. Her fear was that, like in France, the stabilization of other parties would leave the communists strong but isolated. Secondly, just a few days later, Bulatović informed on the clash with Ingrao at

²⁹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-322.

²⁹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-342.

the session of the Central Committee, and on the forming of three dominant groups – the centrists, represented by Longo, Pajetta, Berlinguer and Alicata; the new leftists, represented by Ingrao, Reichlin, Occhetto and Ledda; and the right group represented by Amendola, Napolitano, Chiaromonte and Bufalini, which was the weakest of the three. The new leftists were, according to Bulatović, young intellectuals, capable orators and tacticians. He added that there was confusion in the party, caused by Longo's wish to have a compromise between Amendola's right and Ingrao's left wing, and that this confusion was used by the old Stalinists, Vidali and Secchia, who wanted that the party contacts China.²⁹⁹

On November 16th, Bulatović expanded on his theses, in a comprehensive report on the situation within the PCI. Although he criticized the centrists and the right group, saying that they bring nothing new to the party, he was more critical of the new left, labeling it as sectarian and attributing the rise of such views to the isolation of the party.³⁰⁰ His prediction was that there will be further inner party problems, as the conflict was only temporarily resolved by a compromise. He assessed that the support to Ingrao was maximally thirty-five percent of the party members. Besides focusing on ideological differences between the groups, in order of better explaining the divisions Bulatović emphasized an episode from PCI's recent history, underlining that this was a confirmed information. Bulatović's source revealed that the inner party conflicts were a continuation of a previously initiated struggle for power. In short, as many old cadres were being removed after the X Congress, held in December of 1962, Amendola, Pajetta and Ingrao wanted to remove Togliatti and take his position. Despite being unsuccessful, the ambition to take the party's lead had not left them. Hence, Amendola was leading the right wing, Ingrao the left one, and Pajetta supported Longo and the centrists. All three hoped to become the secretary general. Despite their wishes, Bulatović informed that Agostino Novella and Enrico Berlinguer were serious candidates for the position of Longo's deputy.³⁰¹

It should also be noted that a delegation of PCI local-level functionaries visited Yugoslavia in late November. The content of their conversations was not so important, since they had meetings only with low-level officials. What is important is that they also met with ambassador Ducci, thus

²⁹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-323, 324.

³⁰⁰ Isolating the extreme parts of the Italian political scene, PCI included, in order to achieve political stability was one of the main aims of the Italian politics of that period, i. e. one of the crucial aims of the centre-left experiment – U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 76.

³⁰¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-325.

continuing this newly established practice. In their conversation, Ducci defended the Yugoslav positions, explicitly stating that the Yugoslav reform was not a restoration of capitalism. However, the prelude of the visit is even more important, and it once again shows how Yugoslavs subordinated their collaboration with the PCI to the relations with the Italian government. The date of the visit was a problem, since the Yugoslavs wanted to postpone it to the period after Moro's visit. On the other side, the Italians wanted the opposite, as they had the party congress soon and as the visit was already postponed once. The Yugoslavs, frustrated by *L'Unità's* coverage of Moro's visit, suspected that the hurry was, in fact, motivated by the wish to have the visit before Moro. Hence the decision was to receive the delegation only after Moro's visit, but without admitting that this was the real reason for the second postponement.³⁰²

As the collaboration in 1965 was mostly focused on internal affairs of both parties, the final episode of the relations during this year was also focused on those issues. In December, Giuseppe Boffa came to Yugoslavia and spent a month writing on the economic reform. Like it was mentioned earlier, Boffa was appreciated in Belgrade, both for his abilities and pro-Yugoslav sentiment. Therefore, the Yugoslavs were very interested to help him in having a successful stay in Yugoslavia and had high expectations from his articles. Such interest allowed Boffa to have numerous high level meetings. His only unfulfilled wish was to have an interview with Tito. As he was received cordially, the Yugoslav refusal of the interview had not changed his positive impressions. Boffa added that the good reception he enjoyed demonstrated the good relations between the two parties. The Yugoslav documents show that the decision not to grant the interview was made by Marko Nikezić, minister of foreign affairs. Once again, the primacy of interstate relations was crucial. Nikezić's motivation for this decision was the fact that all similar requests made by non-communist Italian journalists during Moro's visit were refused, hence an interview to Boffa could endanger the developing relations with Italy. As another reason for declining Boffa's request, Nikezić underlined the Yugoslav discontent with *L'Unità's* negative reports on Moro's visit. Unlike the situation with the November delegation, when the Yugoslavs hid the real reasons of the postponement, the Yugoslavs were sincerer with Boffa. In a conversation with *L'Unità's* journalist it was explained that the interview cannot be granted as his Italian colleagues were refused only a month earlier.³⁰³

³⁰² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-328.

³⁰³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-336.

The key topics the Italian journalist was interested in were the reform, Yugoslavia's integration into the world market and self-management. During the conversations, Boffa's comments were mostly positive. He primarily emphasized the openness and critical thought regarding the problems.³⁰⁴ However, Boffa occasionally expressed certain critical remarks. For instance, he noted that the LCY continues to have a big influence on self-management, despite the proclaimed democratization, and, like Rossana Rossanda, thought that the wage policies demotivate the more educated and professionalized workers. During one dinner, Boffa was more explicit, and listed his most important critiques of the situation in Yugoslavia. In his view, the Yugoslavs: were too focused on economy, and neglecting other factors; had illusions regarding integration into the world market – in his opinion it would not resolve everything, nor Yugoslavia would be accepted into it without difficulties. Boffa's primary concern was that the international capital would ask for many concessions from Yugoslavia before allowing it to enter into the global market. Also, he added that there were some illusions in Yugoslavia regarding Moro, who is faithful to NATO. Despite these remarks, the Yugoslavs were satisfied by the visit, and especially by Boffa's preparation and understanding of the situation.³⁰⁵

A series of Boffa's articles on Yugoslavia were published in *L'Unità*, starting on January 4th 1966. The first one was entitled "Yugoslavia in 1966 – socialism and democracy on the trial of reform". In this article Boffa depicted the "strange" Yugoslav democracy. He praised the fact that the problems were openly discussed, and that, while other countries would hide the unpopular moves, Tito publicly announced that a lowering of standard for some Yugoslavs was imminent. Boffa also underlined that the LCY was crucial for the reform. It controlled the Yugoslavs who were very polemical and passionate in political affairs – for instance, it was difficult to find two persons with identical views, and they were truly offended when someone implies that the reform is a return to capitalism. The second article was focused on describing the gigantic leap in Yugoslav economy since 1945, which could only be continued by an integration in the global market. Protectionism of the EEC was the most important obstacle for Belgrade, which had to be surmounted. The third article was Boffa's analysis of the self-management system. The article's

³⁰⁴ It should be noted that this was not only Boffa's impression. Almost every PCI official who visited Yugoslavia was impressed by the fact that, unlike in other socialist countries, the problems were admitted and openly discussed. This was one of the very potent soft power tools in Yugoslav foreign policy, especially in the Third World. More about this phenomenon in - D. Bogetić, Lj. Dimić, *Београдска конференција несврстаних земаља 1-6. септембра 1961.*

³⁰⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-336.

title, “Self-management is a long road”, best describes Boffa’s ambiguous view of it – his sympathy for the idea, but also understanding of the problems in its implementation. In short, he thought that it was an idea more suited for a society with highly developed industry. In the Yugoslav conditions, with many underdeveloped regions, the practical application of the principle was often centralized and directed from above. However, he thought that it was the best way to go, and quoted Vlahović, who told him that Yugoslavia had passed just a small part of the road, but the goal was right. Finally, in the last article, Boffa summarized the results achieved hitherto, in the first six months of the reform. The standard was lowered and the prices grew, as there were less subsidies. On the other hand, the foreign trade balance and productivity were bettered, and due to the syndicates the unemployment rates had not gone up significantly. However, this was only the beginning of a big endeavor. Boffa finished his last article on a positive note, expressing his belief that the Yugoslav reform will be successful, as its planners were brave, decisive and analytical.³⁰⁶

The first opportunity to have important contacts in 1966 was the PCI’s XI congress, held in late January. This congress brought a crisis in the relations between LCY and PCI. Although this crisis was short-lived, the initial Yugoslav impressions were very negative as the Yugoslav delegation, headed by Veljko Vlahović, was not received cordially. The biggest problem was the PCI’s initiative to make a joint statement, including all of the foreign delegations, in which the anti-communist repression in Indonesia would be condemned.³⁰⁷ The Yugoslavs were asked four times to join this statement, three times by the brothers Pajetta and once by the Polish delegate. They refused every time, and eventually the statement was made only on the behalf of the PCI. Vlahović replied to the requests by listing several reasons not to sign it – firstly, Yugoslavia was loyal to the principle of non-interference; secondly, China’s role in Indonesia should be also condemned; and, thirdly, communists were also being killed in Albania but no one condemns it. While almost all of the foreign delegates were in favor of the PCI’s proposal, some supported the Yugoslav stance. The Romanian delegate spoke to Vlahović, underlining that he does not have the power to join the statement in the name of the party, as he is just delegate to the congress, and

³⁰⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-336.

³⁰⁷ In late 1965, a wave of anti-communist repression and mass killings took place in Indonesia. Under the leadership of Major General, and future President, Suharto, the third biggest communist party in the world (Communist Party of Indonesia, with three million members) was brutally attacked. According to some estimates, almost a million Indonesian communists were killed – R. Service, *Compagni*, 494.

found inappropriate this way of imposing such an act on others. The Dutch and Swedish delegates were also against, and Santiago Carrillo, the General Secretary of the Spanish party, said to Vlahović that, while they have to join the condemnation, he completely understands the Yugoslav stance and blames the PCI for not preparing this issue earlier.³⁰⁸

The Yugoslav refusal to sign the joint statement was the principle cause of the poor reception of the Yugoslavs, but there were other problems also. Firstly, the Yugoslavs were negatively surprised by the fact that the situation in the international communist movement was neglected. Although this could be justified by PCI's internal problems, both within the party and in relations with other Italian parties, the Yugoslavs were very disappointed, as the core value that connected the two parties was their closeness of views on this issue. In addition to neglecting this topic, the PCI was more aligned with Soviet views than before, which furtherly disappointed the Yugoslavs.³⁰⁹ Hence, in the final report of the delegation the disappointment was made explicit. Vlahović made pessimistic remarks, saying that the LCY had hitherto overestimated the PCI's impact in the communist movement, hence the Yugoslav expectations should be lowered in order to have a more efficient collaboration. Secondly, the Yugoslavs were frustrated by the fact that, as the case of Indonesia showed, the PCI had not evolved in its Third World policies. As Vlahović wrote, it was another disappointment, as during Togliatti's visit it looked like they were ready to change and interested in this issue. Thirdly, as Gian Carlo Pajetta made a bitter remark regarding the good relations Yugoslavia had with Aldo Moro, it was once again showed that the two parties have different perceptions of the interstate relations. And, finally, Boffa said that he was under attack by many PCI members due to his articles on Yugoslavia, which demonstrated the existence of anti-Yugoslav stances within the Italian party.³¹⁰

Besides the bilateral problems, the general assessment of the congress was negative, as it was primarily focused on resolving internal party divisions and offered almost nothing new. The PCI was labeled as an isolated party without a perspective of influencing the Italian society, unlike the center-left government. Rare positive comments were made regarding the opening towards the EEC and towards the Catholic masses. Amendola was deemed too pragmatic, but there was more

³⁰⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-345.

³⁰⁹ In the years following the passing of Palmiro Togliatti, the party was not quite stable, hence it lowered the level of criticism towards the USSR that was present in the final years of Togliatti's life. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 120.

³¹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-345.

sympathy for Ingrao than in Bulatović's reports. However, it was noted that Ingrao sometimes talks about issues "he does not truly understand". Every attack on Ingrao was noted, and Vlahović talked with him two times. This situation was also discussed with Carrillo and Ali Yata, the Moroccan communist delegate, who were both disappointed by the way in which Ingrao was defeated, without having a substantial discussion. As the centrists imposed their dominance, Ingrao was not the only one pushed aside. Amendola was also isolated, and one of the biggest problems was that his conceptions were too liberal for the Soviets. In a conversation between the Soviet delegates and Vlahović, the Soviets confirmed Bulatović's information that, in fact, the conflicts within the Italian party were personal, not so ideological but more of a struggle for power.³¹¹

Finally, it should be added that the congress was an opportunity for the Yugoslavs to meet various foreign delegates. Besides the hitherto mentioned meetings, Vlahović talked with Koeiredine Abdelmumiene from the FLN of Algeria, and with Jose Matar from the Central Committee of the Cuban communist party. Vlahović asked for a meeting with Abdelmumiene, who spoke Serbo-Croatian, and wanted to talk about the fact that Yugoslav was not invited to the Tricontinental Conference in Havana. Abdelmumiene apologized for this fact, adding that the Algerian delegates went with the idea to advocate for inviting Yugoslavia, but gave up due to the atmosphere among other delegates. Nonetheless, they were criticized for such behavior upon their return to Algeria. Vlahović responded by underlining that this was a question of principles, and if it was allowed than China could remove whomever it wants. Abdelmumiene added that they unsuccessfully tried to convince the Vietnamese to collaborate with Belgrade, and informed that Algeria's relations with the Eastern bloc were improving since Boumediene's visit to the USSR.³¹² The same issue of the Havana conference was mentioned with Matar, who blamed the Vietnamese and Venezuelan delegates. Matar showed a strong interest for improving the Cuban-Yugoslav relations, which was pleasantly surprising for Belgrade. Vlahović also talked with the delegate from Mozambique. This conversation demonstrated the big Yugoslav influence among African liberation movements. The delegate Simanga asked that a group of four, him included, who would occupy high positions in governing the country, be accepted to study in Yugoslavia.³¹³

³¹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-345.

³¹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-345.

³¹³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-345.

During February there were no significant contacts between the LCY and PCY, but this month was sufficient for the Yugoslavs to change their opinion, and tone down the negative view of the interparty relations. In a new comprehensive report on the PCI's congress all of the critiques remained, but the situation was taken more lightly. It was concluded that, despite all the problems, the PCI was going in a positive direction. Thus, as the party was facing difficulties in its complex transition, it should be helped, the relations should be strengthened, and critiques should not be exaggerated.³¹⁴

When Belgrade overcame its bitterness towards the PCI, the Italian party unofficially proposed that Luigi Longo visits Yugoslavia. On March 11th, Bulatović informed of his conversations with PCI officials who, despite the fact that it was LCY's turn to return the visit, proposed that Longo visits instead. Bulatović explained that the PCI was becoming more active in Europe, especially in allying with the PCF. Their aim was to create a European alternative for NATO, since there was a possibility of revision of the NATO agreements in 1969. Hence, a visit to Yugoslavia would give more prestige to their action, and they were also very interested in the Yugoslav initiative for a collective European meeting of the national Parliaments. Bulatović supported this idea, but warned that it should be carefully organized in order not to jeopardize the meeting of two prime ministers, Stambolić and Moro, planned for autumn.³¹⁵ During the 23rd Congress of the CPSU, held in Moscow between March 29th and April 8th 1966, Aleksandar Ranković met with Longo, and the PCI Secretary General promised that he would visit Yugoslavia during the summer or fall.³¹⁶

In parallel with the initiative for Longo's visit, the Yugoslavs observed with sympathy the revival of PCI's criticism towards the USSR. In early April it was noted that the PCI's CC was disappointed with the developments in the socialist bloc, especially with the deterioration of democracy.³¹⁷ On April 13th, Bulatović informed on PCI's press coverage of the Soviet congress. He underlined that Longo, who was initially frightened that there could be a possible rehabilitation of Stalin at the congress, ordered the press to write neutrally. The PCI press positively commented on Brezhnev and Waldeck Rochet's claims that the conditions for a global conference were not

³¹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-345.

³¹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-369.

³¹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-353. Also, during March, the PCI informed Yugoslavia of the current state of its debate with Beijing. Tito responded with a letter on March 12th, supporting the PCI position, and elaborating his views on the "destructive" impact of Chinese radicalism on international affairs. APCI, Esteri, MF 0536, p. 2356-2365.

³¹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-349.

ripe, and negatively commented on the attacks on Soviet writers. Regarding the Yugoslav delegation, Ranković was quoted abundantly, and it was emphasized that this was the first Yugoslav delegation to a Soviet party congress since 1948.³¹⁸

On the other side, Bulatović also followed the PCI's rapprochement with the PCF and its more active European policy. Firstly, on May 10th, he had a meeting with Galuzzi, Sandri and Stendardi, who talked about the relations with the PCF. In their words, after years of fighting for dominance, the two parties were now finally ready to work together and stop being passive, as were most Western communist parties. The main aim was to use the crisis of NATO and limit the US influence in Europe. However, they imagined their struggle was wider. The two parties wanted to create a political platform for the entire West European working class and initiate closer contacts with other left parties in the region. In order to achieve that, it was crucial that the PCF accepts PCI's view on the need to be more open towards the EEC.³¹⁹ A few days later Bulatović talked more on these issues with Alicata. Alicata talked extensively on the same issues like his comrades, emphasizing the need for a conference of West European communist parties. He also added that the PCI had not renounced of the idea of *partito unico*. In the case of a unification between the PSI and PSDI, the PCI would try to unite with the PSI's left wing and with PSIUP. At the end of the conversation, Alicata posed the topic of the Third World. Commenting on PCF's confusion on this topic, he underlined that the PCI wanted to furtherly develop its policy on this issue, as it was Togliatti's legacy to do so and oppose China in these continents. He wanted Yugoslav advice and bigger collaboration on this topic, but also wanted to hear more about the Yugoslav stance on Cuba in the light of the polemic between Belgrade and Havana. Concluding his report, Bulatović wrote that he believed in the sincerity of the PCI's intentions to be more active in the Third World, hence strongly suggested informing the Italian communists more on this issue. Also, he noted that there was a contradiction in PCI's policy – while they propagated a collaboration with the European left, their relations with the PSI were conflictual.³²⁰

Since there were such important changes and activities of the PCI, Belgrade sent its expert for Italian communism, Anton Vratuša, to visit Rome and observe the situation in the party. He

³¹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-369.

³¹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-350. The PCI had propagated these principles at a conference of West European communist parties held during the same month, May of 1966, in Vienna - D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 336.

³²⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-352.

arrived in late May and had conversations with Alicata, Magnani, Lizzero and Ferri, director of the Gramsci institute. Vratuša had several general impressions. Firstly, the crisis of NATO brought a transitional period for Moro and PCI both. Secondly, the internal struggle within the PCI was not resolved, and Amendola was getting stronger. Thirdly, the ongoing internal conflicts made the PCI an unwanted partner for the socialists, despite PCI's offers to form a government together in the future. And finally, after the visit of the Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko to Italy, the PCI stopped being critical of the Italian government's relations with socialist countries, Yugoslavia included. Vratuša paid special attention to Lizzero and Magnani, emphasizing that they were both very pro-Yugoslav, hence Belgrade must not neglect them as it was done previously. These two PCI officials gave him more details on the divisions within the party, and both criticized the unduly negative stance towards the PSI. With Ferri, Vratuša talked about scientific seminars that should be organized between the Gramsci Institute and its Yugoslav partners. Ferri also talked about the initiative to create a new joint communist review, that would be more independent, unlike the one in Prague. Vratuša ironically noted that the only flaw of Ferri's idea was that he wanted Soviet financial aid for the journal.³²¹

As the summer was approaching, arrangements were made and several important PCI officials spent their vacations in Yugoslavia, like Nilde Iotti, Bufalini, Ingrao, Berlinguer, Galuzzi, and the mayor of Bologna Guido Fanti. In the meantime, a big crisis broke out in Yugoslavia – the party's number two and chief of secret services, Aleksandar Ranković, was ousted from his positions and subsequently removed from the party, at the Fourth Plenary Session of the CC of the LCY, held on the island of Brioni on July 1st.³²² Naturally, this dominated the conversations with the Italian guests. The PCI also sent journalists to report on this event – Augusto Livi came just days after the event, and Giuseppe Boffa spent the last week of August in Yugoslavia.³²³ Livi talked to Vlahović on July 12th, who presented the conflict as a clash between the democratic and

³²¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-354.

³²² More about that crucial event in Yugoslav history, and its repercussions on the national issue in the country - I. Banac, "Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 586-587. See also: S. Kovač, B. Dimitrijević, I. Popović Grigorov, *Случај Ранковић: из архива КОС-а* [The Ranković Case: From the Archives of the CIS], Medija centar „Odbrana“, Belgrade 2015.

³²³ Boffa's articles on the Ranković case were published in *L'Unità* from September 10th to 14th. The general line of the articles was pro-Yugoslav and they were in line with the official Yugoslav stances on the issue although, as it will be shown later, some PCI officials were not so convinced by the Yugoslav explanations. APCI, Esteri, MF 0536, p. 2434-2441.

bureaucratic forces within the party.³²⁴ The democrats wanted to strengthen the self-management and the impact of the ordinary workers, while the bureaucrats identified themselves with power. In any case, it was important that everything was resolved publicly and in a democratic manner. Livi was not only interested in the Ranković case, but also asked about the possible existence of factions within the LCY (which Vlahović denied), the relations between Yugoslav nations, and the reception of the Yugoslav reform in other socialist countries. Vlahović responded that the first reactions in the Eastern bloc were negative, while now they were interested. However, he underlined that Yugoslavia did not think its solutions were valid for everyone. Both agreed that the other socialist countries urgently have to democratize, as that was the biggest problem of the Eastern bloc. The Yugoslav assessment of Livi's views was positive, but it was noted that he remained confused regarding the LCY's role in this new situation.³²⁵ A month later, Kardelj and Koča Popović used the fact that Bufalini and Ingrao were on vacation in Yugoslavia, and met with them to explain the current situation in the country. Like in the conversation with Livi, the official version of the story was met with sympathy, understood as a struggle for democracy against the centralistic and hegemonic elements.³²⁶

In parallel to the discussions regarding the Ranković case, Bulatović followed the internal dynamics of the PCI, and sent a detailed report on it in July. His assessment was that the party was stabilized to some extent but, since Longo was not perceived as a long-term solution for the leadership, the internal struggles continued to exist. While Ingrao's group was defeated, Amendola's group was growing stronger due to their articulated idea to collaborate more with other left parties. Giorgio Napolitano was one of the most prominent collaborators of Amendola, and he emphasized the need to construct left unity on concrete issues, in the light of the PSI-PSDI unification. However, Bulatović was not convinced that this idea would be successful, as the PCI was not consistent in its policy towards other parties – firstly they attacked the PSI and PSDI and opened up to the left wing of the DC, while now they were doing the opposite. Another big problem of this change of attitude towards the PSI (critical before the unification, moderate after it), was in

³²⁴ The LCY also sent its press material on the entire episode, corroborating its point of view - APCI, Esteri, MF 0536, p. 2379-2428.

³²⁵ By this it was intended that, like in numerous previous conversations with PCI officials, they could not understand how the state was being more decentralized in a time of reform, when central planning and direction was needed.

³²⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-355, 360, 361.

the fact that prior to the unification the left wing of the socialists was motivated by the communists to fight against the unification, but now even the PCI stopped criticizing it.³²⁷

Bulatović continued following PCI's internal policies. In October he reported that the party was not making any progress, and that the electorate was growing more distant from it. However, in this report, Bulatović was mostly focused on foreign policy issues. At the beginning, he underlined that the PCI was now more opposed to China. There were three reasons for this – firstly, the “cultural revolution” in China; secondly, the Soviet impact, after PCI's visit to Moscow³²⁸; and thirdly, the fact that the pro-Chinese groups in Italy were growing stronger and became a big problem. Bulatović added that in the time when these groups were weak and easy to eradicate, the PCI still had certain illusions that peace with Beijing was possible. Now, the illusions were gone but those groups remained as a big problem. Secondly, Bulatović wrote about the PCI's stance on Vietnam. According to the information he obtained, Brezhnev talked extensively about this issue to the Italian communists. His idea was to help the country, but at the same time to put all efforts into convincing the Vietnamese to work towards a peaceful solution, unlike China that was radicalizing the situation. The PCI fully agreed and planned a visit to Hanoi to propagate a peaceful solution.³²⁹ Finally, Bulatović added that the rapprochement between Italy and socialist countries was damaging the PCI. Before it, PCI trade companies controlled the commerce between Italy and the Eastern bloc, which is now impossible and leaves the party without a substantial income.³³⁰

November 1966 – relaunching of the alliance

The last important event in the interparty collaboration during 1966 was the visit to Italy of a Yugoslav delegation, headed by Veljko Vlahović, from November 9th to 18th. The visit went well, thus demonstrating that the crisis from January was definitely left behind. But, more importantly, this was not a mere reconciliation but a beginning of a new and strong rapprochement

³²⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-369.

³²⁸ The Cultural Revolution in Maoist China caused a severe deterioration in the Sino-Soviet relations – S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, “Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 148.

³²⁹ At that time, the PCI fully shared the Yugoslav views on Vietnam. The Yugoslavs were primarily interested in achieving peace and hampering the radical Chinese influence. However, the PCI was not as vocal as Belgrade on that issue. Such stance was taken as the PCI had not wanted to undermine the good relations with the more radical Cuban and French communists. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 150-151.

³³⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-369.

between the two parties. As Marco Galeazzi emphasized it, this meeting was a relaunching of the afore mentioned strategic alliance, forged in the last year of Togliatti's life. It was initiated in a series of contacts which the importance of Yugoslavia for the foreign policy of the PCI. Torn between its interests towards the Western European left and the Third World one side, and faithfulness to Moscow on the other, the PCI could not find a better partner than Belgrade, a country that managed to reconcile similar political tendencies within its policies.³³¹

The initiative for this meeting started in April, when Longo sent the invitation, adding that since January of 1964 there had not been a similar visit. Bulatović further informed Belgrade, underlining that the PCI expected a high level delegation (they suggested Ranković or Kardelj to be in it), and that the Italian communists wanted to talk about international affairs, communist movement, Third World, and the situation in both parties. October was proposed as the date of the visit, which suited Belgrade since there were no interstate visits in those months, and also the Italian elections would be over. Eventually, the Yugoslavs postponed the visit to November, which was accepted by the PCI.³³²

During the visit, Veljko Vlahović elaborated both on foreign and internal Yugoslav policies. Upon arrival, on November 9th, he spoke about foreign policy topics, primarily Vietnam and China, and on November 18th, before departure, he spoke about the reform in Yugoslavia.³³³ Regarding Vietnam, Vlahović made a comparison between the United States and China, claiming that, in fact, both wanted the same – war. Although he emphasized that the USSR should be more efficient, Yugoslavia was without reserve on USSR's side in this issue, and wanted a peaceful solution. Vlahović was also critical of North Vietnam, stating that they were excessively influenced by China, but also had some illusions themselves, although they were evolving slowly. In essence, Yugoslavia wanted a political solution of the conflict. Hence, despite the Vietnamese critiques towards Belgrade, Yugoslavia fought diplomatically in its favor – protesting the bombings, propagating the withdrawal of foreign troops and advocating for negotiations with the Vietcong. The main reason for the poor state of relations between Hanoi and Belgrade was China. The Yugoslav belief in peaceful coexistence and China's aggressive foreign policy were irreconcilable. Still, Vlahović emphasized that almost no one managed to understand what was

³³¹ M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 161-163.

³³² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364.

³³³ APCI, Esteri, MF 0536, p. 2450-2517.

actually happening in China, and that the situation there should be more analyzed. His initial impression was that the agrarian social structure caused the adventurous foreign and internal policies of Beijing, which provoked chaos in Indonesia, for instance. Concluding his remarks on China, Vlahović noticed that the Sino-Soviet split was becoming stronger, and that nothing would surprise him from Beijing, not even a rapprochement with Washington.³³⁴

On November 18th Vlahović talked about the situation in Yugoslavia. Once again, he analyzed the episode with Ranković as part of a wider conflict between self-management and statism. In his view, the bureaucratic forces blocked the further development of self-management, hence they had to be eradicated. The manifestations of nationalism were only a side effect of this initial conflict. The current state of the reform Vlahović evaluated positively, emphasizing that the need for state intervention was lowered. However, he admitted that there were still some problems, like unemployment and slow implementation of new technologies. The PCI officials had a series of questions. Longo asked about the migrations, and Vlahović answered that mostly workers were migrating, but that the state was trying to control that phenomenon – for instance, Yugoslav companies working abroad hired Yugoslav workers, thus enabling them to work abroad in an organized manner. Di Giulio was worried by the weakening of political parties, not just in Yugoslavia, and Bufalini emphasized another problem, the big wage differences in Yugoslavia. He also suggested, as his personal opinion, that sometimes the work of political organs should not be public. Vlahović disagreed, stating that self-management was the best defense against the creation of factions.³³⁵

³³⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-363. Since the Italian communists were also interested in the state of the Cuban-Yugoslav relations, after the visit the Yugoslavs sent an elaborate report on the issue, underlining the Yugoslav openness to Havana, and Cuban radicalism which hampered the developing of relations and even provoked an anti-Yugoslav stance among the Cuban communists. APCI, Esteri, MF 0536, p. 2526-2533.

³³⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364. Bufalini's and Di Giulio's comments, in fact, regarded the turbulences in Yugoslavia after the ousting of Ranković in the summer. A PCI report written in January 1967 clearly shows that the Italian communists were not convinced with the Yugoslav interpretation of the Ranković affair. The report, based on informal information obtained in Yugoslavia, identified Ranković as a guarantee of the LCY's unity and ideological cohesion. On the other side, his ousting led to the rise of certain Slovene and Croatian communists who were advocating a revision of the system, and were anti-Soviet. Hence, according to the author, this more radical reformist way of Yugoslavia was bound to be seen as a threat by Moscow, and as a dangerous example to other socialist countries. When Ranković was in power, the Soviets were more inclined to tolerate the reforms in Yugoslavia, knowing that certain limitations would not be overstepped. Hence, it was predicted that the change in the leadership would lead to a conflict with Moscow. It was also predicted this change would lead to national conflicts within the country, as the new important figures of the LCY favored national interests of the more developed republics – Slovenia and Croatia. APCI, Esteri, MF 0545, p. 2098-2102. This PCI perception was very close to the stances of the USSR and of other Eastern bloc countries, which were all very skeptical regarding this Tito's move. Moscow even exerted various types of diplomatic pressure to oppose to this decision. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 318.

The PCI delegation primarily focused on two topics during the conversations: the situation in the international communist movement and the situation in Italy. In the first meeting they talked about Vietnam, China and the old topic of the possible communist conference that would be organized by Moscow. Longo criticized Beijing, agreeing with Vlahović that there was a need for a better analysis of China, and that the LCY and PCI have to collaborate in that regard. He also stated that the PCI's support to the conference was conditional – i.e. they supported it only if it would be focused on specific issues, like clarifying what is unity and what autonomy of the communist parties. This issue was crucial for the PCI, as they were labeled as Soviet agents in Italy. Also, the deterioration of democracy in socialist countries was an important issue for them, as it limited the prestige and influence of the communist idea in the West. Unlike the conditional support to the global conference, they were fully engaged in organizing a conference of West European communist parties. Due to the crisis of NATO, it was a big opportunity for the Western communists to be more active in Europe.³³⁶

In the second meeting, the Italians focused on the issues of collaboration with the non-communist left, which both sides fully supported, and on the current situation in Europe and Third World. Regarding European affairs, the PCI officials were very enthusiastic about Yugoslavia's initiative for a conference of European parliaments. Ingrao was more particularly supportive of the initiative, adding that it could restore the impact of the parliaments and enable an agreement between all countries in Europe, not just between the two superpowers. He also added that, among socialist countries, only Yugoslavia has a true functioning parliament that was not a façade. The Italian hosts also talked about the urgent need to make Europe more autonomous from Washington. At one point, the conversation focused on the EEC and COMECON, and their insufficient Third World policies. On this issue, the Italian communists once again explicitly asked for Yugoslav advice, respecting their expertise. Ingrao added that the repression against communist had cut their ties in the Arab world, hence they were interested to have more information regarding that region.³³⁷

The third meeting was also important, as internal Italian issues and Italian-Yugoslav relations were discussed. Longo shortly described the political situation in Italy. In his view, the government was becoming more center than left, and brought nothing new besides the

³³⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364.

³³⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364.

rapprochement with the socialist countries. Due to this rapprochement, some socialist countries were critical of PCI's opposition stance. However, this change of Italian foreign policy was not autonomous, but only part of a broader NATO strategy. On the other hand, the PCI was becoming more isolated after the PSI-PSDI unification. The line of this new party was not, according to Longo, focused on crucial problems, hence the PCI will attack it. In order to clarify this aim, Longo underlined that this was not a biased view, but a disappointment shared by many socialists also. He even added that within the left wing of the DC there were more progressive politicians than many members of the PSI. In his view, the PSI became a middle-class party. He added that, paradoxically, while there was a tendency towards left unity in Europe, in Italy the situation was worse than before. At the end of the meeting, the question of Italian-Yugoslav relations and PCI's views on it, which caused many problems earlier, was finally discussed. Ingrao corroborated PCI's policies on the issue, and Longo supported his views. In short, they looked positively at the developing relations between Italy and socialist countries, Yugoslavia included, as it can be helpful in emancipating Italy from the United States. They also had no problems with the party relations between the LCY and PSI, although they warned the Yugoslav comrades that Belgrade should not have any illusions regarding that party.³³⁸

A few days after the visit Bulatović made a resume of it. He focused on three issues. Firstly, he underlined once again that the PCI was plagued by problems in Italy, thus neglecting international affairs. However, he was not viewing this negatively anymore, but hoped that the party's focus on Italy could produce viable policies. Secondly, regarding foreign affairs, it was evident that the Italian communists were against holding a global communist conference, but powerless to oppose it if it happens. Bulatović's recommendation was to inform the PCI on international issues as much as possible, as Yugoslav information had always influenced them and they were very interested in Yugoslav analyses. Thirdly, he emphasized that the PCI supported the Yugoslav reform, with minor doubts – the separation of the party from power and the lack of concentration and specialization of production were incomprehensible to them. And fourthly, it was evident that Yugoslavia and the PCI do not have similar views on the issue of the PSI-PSDI unification. However, the Italian communists were not emphasizing this issue, nor pressuring the Yugoslavs on it, but supported the good interstate relations.³³⁹ In January 1967 another report on

³³⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364.

³³⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364.

the visit was made, and it was in line with Bulatović's views. It should be only noted that this report was slightly more positive towards the PCI, emphasizing that it was the first communist party which supported the Yugoslav reform, and praising the tolerance and comradeship of the Italians, evident even in discussions on the issues which were viewed differently.³⁴⁰

Two events from 1966 show how the ideological notion of comradeship was influential in the LCY-PCI relations, despite the political pragmatism often showed on both sides. Firstly, in July, the PCI asked Belgrade to financially help the medical treatment of a child of a PCI member. The child was brought to a famous ophthalmologist in Sarajevo's hospital, and the Yugoslavs immediately paid for all the expenses.³⁴¹ In November, the Italian side had one more similar request, regarding another party member. A dock worker from Trieste caused a car accident in Koper (Capodistria) and was sentenced to two years in jail, serving his sentence in northern Serbia. The PCI asked for his release, as he was father of two children and in dire health conditions. Belgrade accepted the request, releasing him on parole and allowing him to return to Italy.³⁴²

After the visit not much happened in the relations prior to December 1966, when Luca Pavolini, a respected journalist and vice-director of *Rinascita*, spent ten days in Yugoslavia writing on the reform.³⁴³ Also, the Yugoslavs reacted poorly to the death of Mario Alicata - no one was sent to the funeral, while other parties sent high level delegations. After realizing the mistake, Alicata's death was given a big media coverage in Yugoslavia, in order to redeem for the initial negligence.³⁴⁴ Having in mind good personal relations and often contacts with Alicata, this reaction is surprising. However, it was most probably unintentional. The general evaluation of the relations in December 1966 was that they were very good, and that the crisis from January was definitely overcome.

During 1967, the PCI became more active in its foreign policy, especially regarding the situation in the international communist movement. Naturally, this led to a strengthening of the relations with the LCY. Once again it was demonstrated that the similarity of perspectives towards Moscow and regarding the future of the movement was the crucial link between the Yugoslav and Italian communists. Hence, during 1967, Luigi Longo visited Yugoslavia twice, in January and

³⁴⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-364.

³⁴¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-359.

³⁴² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-369.

³⁴³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-365.

³⁴⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-366.

August, bringing back the enthusiasm not seen in the interparty relations since Togliatti's visit to Belgrade and the Yugoslav delegation to his funeral, in 1964.

The idea for Longo's visit was, as it was described before, initiated in April of 1966. Before he visited the island of Brioni and spoke with Tito, on January 20th and 21st, Longo met with Nijaz Dizdarević, during the PCF's congress, on January 7th 1967. Like with Tito, the conversation was focused on two issues – the old Soviet idea of a global communist conference, and the PCI's idea of a European communist conference. Regarding the global one, Dizdarević asked was it going to be held as part of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. Longo responded negatively, adding that the Soviets had not gave him any convincing explanation why do they want to have the conference. Also, Dizdarević noted, during his speech Longo implicitly stated that there should be no further pressures regarding the global conference, and that it should be preceded by active bilateral collaboration between the communist parties. In his view, this would be the best mode of preparing the conference. Regarding the European communist conference, Dizdarević's impression was that the PCI wanted it only as a maneuver against the global one.³⁴⁵

On January 20th Longo spent almost all day conversing with Tito. Kardelj and Mijalko Todorović were also present, hence Longo was, in fact, welcomed by the two most important men of the LCY. At the beginning of the conversation, Tito and Longo shortly touched upon the situation in Italy. Firstly, Tito asked about the relations with the PSI, to which Longo responded that they were bad, but that the socialists were also in a crisis of their own after the electoral loss caused by the government's poor results. Tito was also interested in the economic situation in Italy, comparing it with Yugoslav economic problems, and emphasizing that there were certain similarities like mass migration. In any case, this was just an overture to the topics that dominated the conversations – the global and European communist conferences. Tito opened the topic with a friendly intoned question: “Are **w**e going to the conferences?”. Longo replied yes regarding the European one, adding that the PCI initiated it. Tito's response seemed naïve – he was asking was it a conference of only West European communists, or of all European communist parties. In fact, this question revealed Tito's view that a conference of Western communist parties was more than

³⁴⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-370.

welcome, while he was reserved regarding the idea of a conference of the entire communist movement in Europe.³⁴⁶

In short, Longo explained the main reasons motivating him to launch the idea of a European communist conference, which would be focused on the issue of security. The burning issues of peace, Germany, EEC and NATO had to be analyzed and the communists had to harmonize their policies regarding these issues in order to make an impact. Also, such a conference, with precisely defined goals, was more needed than the undefined global conference Moscow wants. Longo underlined PCI's big efforts towards a rapprochement with the PCF on these issues, and added that this European conference could be very important for the PCI as a possibility to demonstrate its autonomy from the USSR. Tito was not explicitly against this conference, but opposed it implicitly, on two grounds. Firstly, such an all communist conference could raise the "red scare" in a time when many European governments were making progressive moves. Secondly, the hegemony of the parties that were in power would be inevitable at the conference. Hence, his proposition was either to make a communist conference of only West European parties, or to make a broader European meeting, similar to the Yugoslav suggestion of the European inter-parliamentary conference.³⁴⁷

The global conference was more discussed and this issue led to analyzing various problems in the international communist movement. Firstly, Longo emphasized that a conference without China would be useless, and Tito responded that Vietnam's absence would be more important. Longo agreed, adding that Ho Chi Minh confirmed that they would not attend a conference that excludes China or the USSR. The Soviets motivated the conference by the need to help Vietnam, but Tito found it unconvincing, having in mind that all the communist parties already declared their support to Vietnam. Longo, on the other hand, focused on the methodological problems of the conference – it became limited to a debate who will come or not and there was no serious preparation and discussion, that should be initiated bilaterally. For him, the crucial issues were what type of unity, independence and differences should exist and be tolerated within the movement. Tito agreed with Longo that these questions were not clarified and that the Soviets, although verbally tolerating differences, were aggressive and hegemonic in practice, like in the

³⁴⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372. APCI, Esteri, MF 0545, p. 2106-2112.

³⁴⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372.

case of Yugoslavia.³⁴⁸ Hence, he saw the conference as the Soviet wish to impose their views on others, and found it useful only if the CPSU radically changes its flawed and hegemonic views.³⁴⁹

As always, when criticizing Moscow Tito had to point out the Third World issues. Firstly, he repeated something the LCY was underlining in the conversations with the PCI since 1956 – Yugoslavia was more useful to the socialist camp with its autonomous action in the Third World, than by joining it. The biggest part of the newly liberated Asian and African countries were distrustful of both blocs, so if Yugoslavia went to the conference it would lose much of its prestige among them. Once again, Tito underlined that it was of the utmost importance not to focus on evaluating were these countries socialist or not, but on letting them grow autonomously – the lack of courage to do so and respect their independence made the USSR look a lot like the USA. In short, Tito viewed the Soviet activity in Third World as limited to giving funds, but lacking in active political help against the United States. As before, the communist parties of the Third World were also a target of Tito's criticism, and he emphasized their inability to find a viable political line. Hence, the liberation movement progressed without them.³⁵⁰

At one point of the conversation Longo felt free to express his biggest problems with the Soviets. Firstly, the Soviet policy of *fait accompli* not just frustrated but, more importantly, it undermined the party's credibility. Secondly, Togliatti's *Memoriale* obliged them not to go to a conference like this one, but it was impossible to fight it in the long-term. Opposition to the Soviet Union was almost impossible due to their influence within the PCI, which was the natural outcome of the pro-Soviet education of the cadres. Thirdly, the other political actors in Italy were pressuring the PCI regarding the conference – going to it would help labeling the PCI as a servile party. And fourthly, like Yugoslavia, the PCI was strongly opposed to any idea of forming a new center of the movement, as to having decisions that would be binding to all parties. Regarding these issues, Longo stated that Yugoslavia could substantially help his party in two ways. Firstly, by aligning its forces with the PCI in order to change the movement, on the mutually shared principles, as the PCI could not do it by itself. Secondly, by participating at the conference – since in Italy nobody

³⁴⁸ In illustrating this, Tito emphasized the example of Non-Alignment – it was tolerated under Khrushchev, while now it was ignored.

³⁴⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372.

³⁵⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372.

doubts Yugoslavia's autonomy, the Yugoslav presence at the conference would stop the accusations that the PCI was sacrificing its autonomy to Moscow.³⁵¹

Tito was sympathetic to Longo's cause but remained firm in the decision not to participate at the conference. He also complained, listing numerous problems Yugoslavia had with the USSR. The primary problem was the Soviet distrust and constant doubt regarding Yugoslavia's ideological nature, expressed despite the fact that the Yugoslavs remained loyal to the cause of socialism. He then focused on the Ranković case, saying that everything was resolved democratically, and the perpetrators were spared the jail sentences they deserved. However, the Soviets were doubtful even regarding this, spreading skepticism among other communist parties. In Tito's opinion, the Soviets were counting that they could manipulate the LCY through one official, underestimating its mass power and autonomy.³⁵² Bitter and emotional at this point of the conversation, Tito added that it was better if Yugoslavia does not participate at the conference, because if it does there will be conflicts. Ending the meeting, Longo concluded that the Yugoslav emphasis on democracy brings the two parties together, and that for the Italian communists the notion of socialism as freedom, not coercion, was crucial.³⁵³

Strangely, as the Yugoslavs were not ready to accept Longo's pleas regarding the conferences, the mutual impression was that the visit went very well. In private, Longo admitted that what he likes most about Yugoslavia was the freedom to say what was really on his mind. Once again, it appears evident that the Yugoslav prestige among the Italian communists was based on being perceived as different and more democratic than other socialist countries. For the LCY this meeting was important as, at that time, no other communist party wanted to have stronger contacts with Belgrade. Hence, the Yugoslavs once again explicitly concluded in their internal reports that the relations with the PCI were very friendly.³⁵⁴

On March 6th Carlo Galuzzi, who was heading the department of foreign affairs of the PCI, had a meeting with Bulatović, with the aim of persuading the Yugoslavs to participate at the

³⁵¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372.

³⁵² The real reasons of Ranković's destitution are not yet resolved in historiography. However, these Tito's words implicitly confirm one of the hypotheses according to which Rankovic was eliminated due to his real or perceived connections with the Soviets.

³⁵³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372.

³⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-372. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 163-166. Galeazzi also emphasized the fact that Yugoslavia was crucial for the PCI as a mediator towards the Non-Aligned Movement, helping its struggle to overcome the international isolation of the party. Hence, Tito's negative responses to Longo's pleas did not damage the mutual relations.

European communist conference. Hence he was, in Bulatović's opinion, presenting the preparatory meeting held in Warsaw as better than it really was. Galuzzi underlined that they managed to gain some concessions – primarily they managed to erase, from the draft of the conference document, any mention of the 1957 and 1960 conference. As a sign of trust, Galuzzi gave to Bulatović an internal PCI document regarding the Warsaw meeting. Bulatović's advice was to talk to Galuzzi when he comes to Split, since he was very useful and pro-Yugoslav. The document Galuzzi gave underlined PCI's success in modifying the draft of the document, and concluded with an implicit message to the Yugoslavs that, if everyone comes, a good discussion was possible.³⁵⁵

In line with Bulatović's suggestion, Boško Šiljegović, the LCY's counterpart of Galuzzi, met him in Split, on March 25th and 26th. The meeting concentrated on two topics: future steps in interparty relations, and the European communist conference. Regarding the bilateral relations, Šiljegović had five concrete propositions: that a PCI delegation visits Yugoslavia, with the topic of its reform; sending someone from Yugoslavia to give a lecture on the same topic in Rome; initiating a review where crucial problems will be openly discussed, and possibly including the French and Spanish communists in this project; instead of vacations, it was better to have more study delegations and informal ad hoc meetings; invite someone from the PCI to participate at a conference on Marx in Yugoslavia. Galuzzi agreed with everything and proposed four things: that a group of Yugoslav officials come to the Gramsci Institute, in June, and explain the reform; that the PCI returns the visit in the fall; a bigger collaboration regarding the history of the workers' movement; and a visit of a PCI parliamentary delegation.³⁵⁶

Regarding the European conference, Galuzzi once more underlined their struggle to make the document and the atmosphere more acceptable to the Yugoslavs, and their great interest for the Yugoslav presence. He also underlined that the PCI was willing to fight for any condition Yugoslavia poses for its presence. The PCI wanted to definitely know was the LCY open to the idea of the conference, and if yes, on which issues. Their principles were: that the document of the conference had to be open for suggestions and modifications; that there must not be any condemnation or excommunication of the parties that refuse to come; and that the focus should be on topics of mutual interests, absolutely not on internal affairs of the parties. Šiljegović responded that the Yugoslav view was that the conference was not well prepared. However, Belgrade was

³⁵⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-374.

³⁵⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-375.

going to have contacts with Romanian, French, Czechoslovak and Polish communists regarding this issue, and inform the PCI on these meetings. Galuzzi thanked for the information, adding that for devising a strategy for the conference, for the PCI it was crucial to know will Yugoslavia be present or not. Šiljegović's impression was that Galuzzi was interested in Yugoslav presence, but not forcing it. At the end of the meeting Galuzzi complimented the Yugoslavs once more, saying that the PCI had a more useful collaboration with Yugoslavia than with other socialist countries.³⁵⁷

Eventually, the conference was held without the Yugoslavs, in Karlovy Vary in Czechoslovakia, on April 26th. The PCI's intention to persuade them was unsuccessful, but the Italian communists continued with their efforts to strengthen the strategic alliance with the LCY. On May 11th Galuzzi once again came to Yugoslavia and talked about the conference with Nijaz Dizdarević and others. Although admitting that the conference's document was mediocre, Galuzzi wanted to underline various positive aspects – the fact that there was no condemning of the absent parties,³⁵⁸ the more democratic debate compared to the previous meetings of this type and the respect of autonomy of each party. Hence, Galuzzi believed that the PCI achieved certain results and that a joint endeavor in strengthening these positive aspects should be undertaken. Dizdarević agreed that there were a lot of positive aspects in the work of the conference, but the Yugoslav stance had not changed. He thought that the “old ways” can be changed only through broad discussions and analyses.³⁵⁹

In the rest of the conversation, the two sides discussed various projects for future collaboration, most important of them being the PCI's initiative for a Mediterranean conference of communist parties and “progressive” regimes (like the ones in Algeria and UAR). In the final part of the meeting, the topic of the global communist conference was brought up. Galuzzi hoped that the Yugoslavs would be interested in making a counteroffensive with the PCI, in order to impose the topics that were truly important for the two parties and strengthen the progressive forces within the movement. However, the LCY remained firm in its decision that participating at the conference was out of the question.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-375.

³⁵⁸ The communist parties of Albania, Romania, Yugoslavia, Iceland, Netherlands and Sweden had not participated at the conference. One of the big differences in comparison with the previous meetings of this kind was the decision of the present parties not to end their relations with the absent ones. M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 379.

³⁵⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-376. APCI, Esteri, MF 0545, p. 2133-2136.

³⁶⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-376.

As the relations with the Arab countries were one of the biggest priorities of Yugoslav foreign policy, when the Six-Days war broke out the LCY carefully followed the PCI's reaction to it. Bulatović sent two reports, one in mid-June, other in July, describing PCI's policy on this issue. In the first report he underlined that the PCI was trying to be moderate, only in its second public announcement using the term "Israeli aggression". Despite that, the strong pro-Israel campaign led by Saragat isolated the communists. On the other side, *L'Unità* was more pro-Arab than the party itself, which was trying not to exacerbate the anti-communist campaign as the elections were approaching. While the Vietnamese issue created some unity with the socialists, Saragat and Nenni used the Six-Day war to break it. At the same time, the Arab-Israel war was problematic for the PCI in an electoral aspect. The majority of the Italian Jews voted for it, and there were many Jewish officials in the party. The complex position of the PCI was relieved when the Vatican and Fanfani expressed pro-Arab stances. Bulatović also followed the reactions to the Yugoslav positions regarding the conflict – they were all very positive, and *L'Unità* gave big publicity to every Tito's statement. On the other hand, the Yugoslav participation at the meeting in Moscow, which was viewed positively, revived PCI's hopes that the Yugoslavs could participate at the global communist conference. Bulatović had a conversation with Napolitano, Galuzzi and Boffa, who emphasized that their positive impact at the Karlovy Vary conference (i.e. not condemning the absent parties) enabled the current Yugoslav-Soviet contact,³⁶¹ and that more would have been achieved with Yugoslav presence there. They criticized the Romanian neutrality in the conflict, and pleaded Belgrade to "move" the Arabs more to the left.³⁶²

In July, Bulatović sent a subsequent report further elaborating on the situation within the PCI regarding the war. Although pro-Arab, and aiming to make the Italian government distance itself from Israel and the United States, the PCI had some critiques for the Arab side also. Firstly, the PCI's stance was that the existence of the state of Israel should be guaranteed, and secondly, the Arab side was criticized for not removing the reactionary elements within it. Hence, the PCI's

³⁶¹ The predominant motive for Belgrade's stronger collaboration with Moscow at that time was linked with the conflict in the Middle East. In the wish to support its Arab partners, Yugoslavia started collaborating (too) closely with Moscow, an issue which was resolved only in 1968, with the confrontation between Yugoslavia and the USSR regarding the situation in Czechoslovakia – more about that in: D. Bogetić, A. Životić, *Jugoslavija i arapsko-izraelski rat 1967* [Yugoslavia and the Arab-Israeli war of 1967], Institut za savremenu istoriju, Belgrade 2010.

The Six-Day war provoked a stronger pro-Arab policy of the USSR, and the Arab countries were started to be perceived as an ideological ally against imperialism, embodied in Israel – E. di Nolfo, "The Cold War and the transformation of the Mediterranean, 1960–1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 245-6.

³⁶² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-389.

position was that the communist movement should have more influence in this direction. Bulatović labeled such views as a distrust towards the liberation movements, and thought that the PCI perceives these movements as excessively influenced by the bourgeoisie and religious fanatics. The majority of the PCI, led by Longo, praised the USSR's moderate reaction. However, certain Italian communists, like Ingrao, wanted a stronger reaction both against Israel and in Vietnam. At the end of the report, Bulatović informed that the relations with the socialists were worsened, and therefore the PCI was once again confused whether to collaborate with the left wing of the DC or with the socialists.³⁶³

A PCI delegation, led by Alessandro Natta, visited Budapest in the last days of June, in order to discuss the preparations for the global communist conference with the Hungarian communists. In confidence, the PCI sent a report on the visit to the LCY. This act confirmed two factors crucial for understanding the interparty relations at that time. Firstly, the good state of the mutual relations and PCI's trust in Belgrade. And, secondly, it was obvious that the PCI had not renounced of its intention to attract the Yugoslavs into the idea of joint struggle for a more progressive communist movement. If possible, their wish was that Yugoslavia participates at the global communist conference, on progressive grounds and in alliance with the PCI. Such aims were evident from the named report, as in it it was underlined that the Hungarians were against labeling or excommunicating the absent parties and viewed the conference document only as a general orientation. Also, regarding Yugoslavia, the Hungarians said that there was no wish to interfere in internal Yugoslav affairs, only the intention to make an agreement regarding international issues. When talking about North Korea, the Hungarian stance was that the country was evolving, with the only remaining problem being their negative stance towards Yugoslavia. Criticism of China, Vietnam and Cuba, similar to Yugoslav stances, was also present. All these Hungarian views were underlined by the Italian communists in order to make the idea of participating at the conference moer attractive for the Yugoslavs. However, the Italian communists did not hide the Hungarian views that would be viewed negatively in Yugoslavia, like their evaluation that the Arab countries were not socialist, or their view that Yugoslavia was too optimistic regarding the situation in Europe.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-389.

³⁶⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-379.

Galuzzi continued his practice of often visits to Yugoslavia and had another conversation with Dizdarević, on August 11th. The primary focus of the meeting was the global communist conference, but other questions were also discussed. Firstly, the issue of Longo's visit. It was decided that he should come on August 22nd. Galuzzi explained that Longo wanted to talk about international affairs, but mysteriously added that he will come alone as he wanted to talk freely about the possibilities of Yugoslav help in case of an extraordinary situation in Italy.³⁶⁵ Secondly, the Yugoslavs explained their stance on Renato Strazza's stay in Yugoslavia.³⁶⁶ And, finally, the dissatisfaction with the work of Ferdinando Mautino, *L'Unità's* correspondent from Belgrade, was voiced once again, pleading to Galuzzi to replace him.³⁶⁷

Regarding the global communist conference, Galuzzi gave detailed explanation of their meetings with the Czechoslovak and Soviet communists. In short, PCI's idea was to widen the conference and include non-communist elements like liberation movements. This idea was met with strong opposition from both parties. However, the Soviets were open towards PCI's suggestion to increase the number of participants at the preparatory meeting and to freely pose any topic or suggestion. The Soviets also expressed their satisfaction with the Yugoslav stance regarding the Six-Day war, but were angry at the Romanians. At that point Dizdarević said that Yugoslavia was launching its initiative for a broad Mediterranean conference, where every party or movement that respects the principles of independence, integrity and anti-imperialism would be invited. Galuzzi agreed with the initiative and added that it would be good to have the conference during this year.³⁶⁸

Galuzzi's visit was followed by the second visit Luigi Longo made to Yugoslavia during 1967. The visit was made on Longo's proposition, and he made it after hearing the information that Waldeck Rochet was coming to Yugoslavia. As Galuzzi clarified earlier, Longo wanted to talk about a possible Yugoslav help to the PCI in case of a crisis in Italy, alongside with the

³⁶⁵ Bulatović informed Belgrade in May that the PCI was fearing for democracy in Italy, due to the instable situation in the world. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-378. In the following pages it will be explained what kind of help Longo asked from Tito in case of a crisis in Italy.

³⁶⁶ Strazza was a PCI official in the Aosta Valley region (vice-president of the regional council), who fled to Yugoslavia, faced with a trial (he was processed for not convoking the regional council after the resignation of the council's president Marcoz, which was a crime against the Italian Constitution). The Yugoslav decision was that he could stay in Yugoslavia, although not for a long period of time. If he got convicted, he definitely had to leave Yugoslavia and go to a socialist country that did not have an extradition agreement with Italy – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-380.

³⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-381.

³⁶⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-381.

recurring topics of the global communist conference, Mediterranean conference and the crisis in the Middle East. Although Tito was busy and his presence was uncertain, finally he decided to come and Longo firstly had a conversation with him, prior to a dinner with a group of high level Yugoslav officials.³⁶⁹

As Tito was recently back from his visit to the UAR, Syria and Iraq, the first topic of conversation was the Middle East. In his meetings there, Tito propagated a peaceful and political solution which would include Israel's right to exist, but would not be the Arab capitulation (i.e. Tito fully supported the request for Israel's retreat to the pre-war borders).³⁷⁰ In his words, Nasser was the most rational of all the leaders he met, and the UAR should be helped as it was on the front line of the struggle against imperialism. Tito also added that in this situation helping the Arab countries was a priority. Hence, a global conference which would isolate the movement was in his opinion harmful. Longo replied by analyzing the situation in Italy and emphasizing the positive, pro-Arab, influence of Fanfani and of the Catholic Church, to which Tito replied that "this situation with Fanfani" should be used. On the other side were Nenni and Saragat, who were, according to Longo, instruments of US influence in the country, especially important in the light of the upcoming renewal of the Atlantic pact.³⁷¹

According to Longo, this polarization of political life in Italy was not only related to the Middle Eastern question, but more importantly to the American influence. In his words, Italy was now more important for Washington due to the crisis in the Mediterranean. Thus, he left open the possibility of a "Greek scenario"³⁷², adding that, in such case, the PCI would have mass actions that could provoke a foreign intervention. Longo was also fearing of a possible war between Albania and Greece, as Italy would definitely intervene in such a scenario. Hence, in these turbulent circumstances and possible scenarios, Longo underlined the crucial goals of his party: support to the Arab countries; pressuring the government to condemn Greece; and preserving the territorial integrity and independence within the NATO (although the PCI was principally against the Italian membership in this organization). In his response Tito emphasized the importance of the Middle East for both Greece and Italy, saying that it was crucial to prevent the success of the

³⁶⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-383.

³⁷⁰ More about the visit in – A. Životić, „Jugoslavija i Bliski Istok u Hladnom ratu“ [Yugoslavia and the Middle East in the Cold War], in: *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 52-53.

³⁷¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-383.

³⁷² I.e. the military coup that happened in Greece in April of 1967.

Israeli aggression. Regarding Greece, he was confident it would not start a war with Albania, as Yugoslavia and Bulgaria would intervene. The socialist bloc asked the Yugoslavs to put pressure on Greece but Tito refused, as the situation there was still chaotic and uncertain and Yugoslav pressure would only push it in the wrong direction. Regarding Italy, Tito agreed that a military coup was possible, adding that everything depended on Washington. In this regard, for Tito the crucial question was will the United States initiate an anti-Arab offensive. Such a scenario would be dangerous for Yugoslavia also, and he praised PCI's mass actions conducted together with the socialists and Catholics.³⁷³

During this meeting Tito approved Longo's request to have Yugoslav help in case of a crisis in Italy and left him to go into the details of this issue with Mijalko Todorović, Petar Stambolić, Rodoljub Čolaković and Nijaz Dizdarević. At the dinner with these Yugoslav officials, Longo repeated that, having in mind the upcoming renewal of the NATO agreements and complicated regional situation, the USA was pressuring Rome on many issues, and there was a possibility of worsening of the political situation in Italy. In such a scenario, the PCI would initiate mass protests, which the would be used for a provocation by the "imperialist circles" in Italy. Hence, the Italian communists would need Yugoslav assistance in moving a PCI group to Yugoslavia, which would then coordinate the transfer of cadres. They already had a small illegal apparatus, which produced forged documents and organized escaping – it was used for many Greek, Spanish and Portuguese communists, as for Italians in Rhodesia. Regarding practical issues, they would need Yugoslav assistance in evacuation, especially via sea, and in obtaining intercity radio connections. Besides this exceptional situation, Longo presented some propaganda material and asked for its use in the programs of the radio and TV stations operating in Istria, in Italian, especially in a potential case of the afore mentioned crisis. However, he added that this should be done in a moderate manner that would not endanger the Yugoslav relations with the Italian government. Todorović said that the Yugoslav CC will look into the issue. Regarding propaganda work he added that it should not look like a subversive action towards the Italian government. Longo agreed, and said that the good interstate relations were their interest also. He added that they were very content with the way in which the Istrian media covered PCI's activity, but only wanted more of that positive coverage.³⁷⁴

³⁷³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-383.

³⁷⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-383.

The second part of the dinner was dedicated to the conferences – Mediterranean, global and the already held European. Regarding the Yugoslav initiative for a wide Mediterranean conference, Longo fully supported it. He said that Nasser also supported it, adding that beside the PCI the Italian socialists and Catholics were also interested in participating. Longo only asked the Yugoslavs to put up the formal initiative soon.³⁷⁵ Regarding the global communist conference, Longo emphasized that the PCI and LCY agreed³⁷⁶ and that a different conference was needed – that was the reason why the Italian communists tried to widen the conference. However, in his opinion, the LCY and PCI were in different positions. While it was positive that the LCY evades participating in order to preserve its influence in the Third World, the PCI had to go because without them no other party would pose serious problems. Stambolić and Todorović congratulated Longo on PCI's role in Karlovy Vary, deeming it very positive. However, Todorović underlined that Yugoslavia does not want its Third World activity to be tolerated, but accepted by the movement, as it was crucial for international communism not to be isolated from the broader democratic and progressive masses in the world. Once again, it was repeated that the Yugoslav view was that the USSR was organizing the conference not to resolve problems, but to assert its leading role.³⁷⁷

In September there were not much contacts between the two parties. The *Paese Sera*'s foreign editor Signorini visited Belgrade and praised Yugoslav foreign policy, quoting Longo, and added that the PCI was shallow in its analysis of the Third World.³⁷⁸ More importantly, *L'Unità*'s correspondent Mautino was finally changed, and Francesco Petrone was sent as his replacement.³⁷⁹

In October a round table on Yugoslav reform, initiated earlier and postponed because of the Six-Day war, was finally held at the Gramsci Institute, from October 25th to 27th. The documentation regarding this symposium is abundant, as the Yugoslav delegation presented an in depth analysis of the reform. However, for this research it is more important to focus on the PCI's perception of the Yugoslav reform, as it illustrates the similarities and differences between the two parties. As Vukoje Bulatović wrote, the round table went very well, and the left wing press gave

³⁷⁵ The author of a Yugoslav report on the visit wrote that it seemed that the PCI was dedicated with a special role, regarding the Mediterranean, in the communist movement. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-383.

³⁷⁶ In the Yugoslav document it was stated that, in fact, this was not true, and that the two parties had significant differences regarding the conference.

³⁷⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-383.

³⁷⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-384.

³⁷⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-385.

it good and positive coverage. The overall PCI outlook on the reform was positive, and the Italian communists especially emphasized the courage and persistence of the Yugoslavs in finding solutions. Furthermore, the Yugoslav reform was considered very important as it affronted problems which existed not only in Yugoslavia, but in every other socialist country also. The PCI invited the Yugoslavs first, as they assessed that Belgrade went furthest in the reform, and similar round table debates were to be held with the Czechoslovak, Polish and Soviet communists. The only downside of the conference was the lack of preparation of the Italian side, understandable as *L'Unità* had not wrote much about Yugoslavia. Hence, there was little discussion.³⁸⁰

However, during that limited debate, Bulatović's impression was that the Yugoslavs were convincing. The majority of questions focused on unemployment and worker migrations. Only Emilio Sereni, member of the party's directorate and *Critica Marxista*, was critical, on two issues. Firstly, opposing to the Yugoslav decentralization, he emphasized the need for voluntarism and modernization from above in underdeveloped countries. And, secondly, he criticized the Yugoslav integration in the global market,³⁸¹ saying that a socialist economy had to be autonomous from the capitalist ones and their laws. Eugenio Peggio opposed him, saying that they should get to know Yugoslavia better, not lament on the passing centralism, further noting that with the policy of peaceful coexistence the integration in the global market is inevitable. Peggio also posed the question of worker migration, and the Yugoslavs characterized it as a "necessary evil", inevitable side effect of the reform. Now, at least, Yugoslavia was controlling this phenomenon, and the workers were not forced to escape like before and become seekers of political asylum.³⁸²

Concluding the report, Bulatović added that he found out that the biggest part of PCI officials was critical of the Czechoslovak and Soviet reforms, deeming them too centralized and conservative. He also underlined that Giorgio Napolitano was the initiator of the idea to organize these meetings on the reforms, and accepted a Romanian offer to organize one with them soon. Since no other party accepted the invitation at that point, the PCI found itself in a problem – having the first meeting with the Yugoslavs and the second one with the Romanians would be too

³⁸⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-386.

³⁸¹ The same issue was problematic for the PCI when, in April, Stane Dolanc held a lecture on the Yugoslav reform at the PCI's party school. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-389.

³⁸² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-386.

provocative. Therefore, Amendola was not very active during the round table, in order not to involve himself excessively in a possibly problematic endeavor.³⁸³

The final contact during 1967 was on November 25th, when Carlo Galuzzi visited Yugoslavia once more and talked with Dizdarević, Josip Đerđa and Gašo Vučinić. The Mediterranean conference was the main topic. However, at the beginning of the meeting, Galuzzi talked also about the PCI's recent active contacts with the European social-democrats, especially the German SPD, and about the situation in Italy. Regarding the situation in Italy he said that the PCI, although opposed to NATO, realized that exiting it would be an impossible task, hence focused on achieving smaller goals, i.e. on limiting the negative aspects of Italian membership in this organization. Also, he added that the wave of strikes in the country created a big opportunity for left unity, but the global communist conference discredited the PCI and prevented it from achieving more. Hence, the Mediterranean conference was very important for them, a way to legitimize the party, like their effort to widen the global communist conference by including other parties and movements.³⁸⁴

Since Galuzzi wanted an urgent preparatory meeting of the eight initiators, it was evident that the PCI wanted the conference to be held as soon as possible, preferably in January. They also made big efforts to make the PCF participate.³⁸⁵ Dizdarević opposed to hurrying, saying that the preparatory meeting should include all parties and movements interested, not just the eight initiators, and that only at that meeting a platform and date for the conference could be established. Peace, opposition to foreign military presence and denuclearization could be the possible topics. Đerđa emphasized the need to be more active in including more parties and movements and in forcing the ones that were already on board to be more active. For instance, the Yugoslavs were trying to make Syria and Algeria come, and the PCI could try the same with Albania. Galuzzi agreed, adding that they were going to contact the communist parties of Morocco and Tunisia. Also, there was the issue of Israeli presence, as the Arab participants were open only to the Israeli political actors that were against "the June aggression". Regarding the initiative to include the countries from the Black Sea region, Yugoslavia was strongly against it, although accepting that non-Mediterranean Asian and African parties and movements could come as observers. Finally, it

³⁸³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-386.

³⁸⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-387.

³⁸⁵ Đerđa informed of his successful contacts with the French peace movements and Guy Mollet, adding that if they come, the PCF would have no choice but to come also.

can be said that once again, despite some differences, the meeting was cordial and reflected the closeness of the two parties. Best evidence for that are Galuzzi's own words from the meeting – "you are the only ones we trust in this peculiar chaos".³⁸⁶

On December 27th, a report on the PCI was made in Belgrade, summarizing the situation in the party situation during 1967. Regarding the internal policy, firstly it was noted that the internal struggles were only pacified, not resolved, as the January 1968 were approaching. Secondly, it was noted that the PCI was less fierce in its oppositional activity in the parliament, and that this strategy gave result – the PCI was invited to the DC congress, for the first time since 1948. Also, the relations with the socialists were better, after the conflict regarding the Israeli-Arab war. Surprisingly, the biggest problem was with PSIUP, which was growing on PCI's extent. This was more alarming having in mind that the PSU (united PSI and PSDI) was growing and the PCI was stagnating. Regarding foreign policy, the most important topic was the global communist conference. PCI's stance was clear – they were going, but had various problems with the conference: they wanted it to be better prepared, did not want any excommunications, preferred regional meetings, and opposed to any notion of a monolith or of a "leading socialist country". Longo explicitly stated that the party was not be forced to respect the decisions they do not agree with. Also, the PCI's opening to the European left was an important new factor.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-387.

³⁸⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-388.

Chapter 3: After Czechoslovakia – Strengthening of the Alliance (1968-1972)

The Mediterranean collaboration

The dominant topic in the LCY-PCI collaboration in the first half of 1968 was the Mediterranean conference. As it was mentioned earlier, the PCI wanted to hurry things up, so on January 3rd Longo, with Tullio Vecchiotti, PSIUP's Secretary General, invited the Yugoslavs to a multilateral preparatory meeting for the conference, to be held in Rome on January 22nd.³⁸⁸ The previous meeting was held in Belgrade, in December 1967, and the PCI was unsatisfied with comments Josip Đerđa made regarding the meeting in an article published in Yugoslavia. Firstly, they were generally opposed to giving big publicity to this meeting, while the Yugoslavs thought that it was crucial to publicize it and spark a debate about the conference. Secondly, in the Italian version of the article, transmitted by the ANSA, it was written that the next meeting will also be in Belgrade. This irritated the Italian communists, as it was decided to have it in Rome. According to the Yugoslav side, that was completely made up, and it was added that the PCI should have obtained the original text.³⁸⁹

This debate and misunderstandings showed the need to discuss the whole issue face to face, so Carlo Galuzzi visited Yugoslavia once more, on January 8th 1968. He spoke to Veljko Vlahović and Nijaz Dizdarević, and the main topics of the conversation were the Mediterranean conference and the Budapest meeting (preparatory meeting for the global communist conference). Galuzzi viewed these two events as correlated, since for the Italian communists, in their effort to widen the global communist conference and invite other forces, the experience of the Mediterranean conference could be very useful.³⁹⁰

Regarding the Mediterranean conference, Galuzzi talked first, stating that their aim was to finalize everything and summon the conference at the next meeting in Rome. Although they supported having the widest possible range of participants, Galuzzi underlined there had to be some platform, an antiimperialist one, and that it would be very hard to reconcile all the differences among the possible participants. In that sense, he gave the example of PCF's problems regarding

³⁸⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-392.

³⁸⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-393.

³⁹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-394.

the conference, primarily with the presence of de Gaulle-ists. Vlahović agreed with Galuzzi's view that there were big differences among the attending parties and movements. Hence, he underlined that it was of the utmost importance to define what did anti-imperialism mean for the participants, and who should be the allies in that struggle – liberation movements, social democrats, both, or others. In that sense, he showed understanding for the PCF's problems, although adding that the topic of possible allies should be viewed not in a national perspective, but from a more global point of view. In Vlahović's opinion, the wish for peace was what united, hence every force fighting for peace should be invited, Churches included. From the conversations it was evident that the Yugoslavs were in favor of a wider and less communist conference, while the PCI wanted to limit it, despite propagating the idea of a broad conference. For instance, regarding the presence of de Gaulle-ist forces the two sides had opposing views – the Yugoslavs wanted them present, while the PCI thought that despite all their proclaimed principles, they could not truly contribute to the conference. Although Galuzzi said that the PCF had no conditions for its participation, the Yugoslavs thought that, in fact, the PCF had some conditions, and that the PCI accepted them and now was trying to force Belgrade to also accept them. The conditions were: firstly, that the de Gaulle-ists must not be present; secondly, that the idea of Non-Alignment should not be propagated too much; and thirdly, that the conference should be focused on the current moment in the Mediterranean. It seemed that the Yugoslav insistence on the overcoming of blocs and criticizing the presence of both superpowers in the Mediterranean was the divisive point as the PCI, and the PCF even more, was not ready to be so critical of the USSR.³⁹¹

The second topic was the Budapest meeting, and Galuzzi expressed the PCI's opposition to the references to the 1960 conference – they thought that the XX congress of the CPSU would be a better starting point, and completely opposed to the parts of 1960 declaration in which Yugoslavia was condemned. These reference and the way in which the conference was summoned (without inviting Yugoslavia) bothered the PCI, but they still wanted to try and impose some new

³⁹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-394. Marco Galeazzi clearly showed how the Yugoslav critiques of both superpower's actions in the Mediterranean were the main divisive issue between the PCI and LCY at this time, with the PCI being less prone to criticize the Soviet presence in the Mediterranean. Berlinguer's words from February of 1968 best show that there was an obvious conflict between the LCY and PCI regarding the organization of the Mediterranean conference, as he spoke of "combating the Yugoslav positions". Hence, the PCI found itself in a position to defend Soviet values and interests, limiting the creativity of its Mediterranean policies. In the words of Marco Galeazzi, the Italian communists were so dedicated to preserving the Soviet prestige "the PCI seemed to be retreating back to defensive positions, thus risking to be brought back to the proletarian internationalism of 1957-1960" – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 173-185.

principles, like the broadening of the conference, oppose to binding decisions and advocate for the public and open work of the conference. Vlahović agreed with Galuzzi's remarks, even encouraging the PCI to participate at the conference as it would have a positive influence. However, he underlined the Yugoslav dissatisfaction with not being invited and due to the references to 1960. In his words, it was Yugoslavia's decision will it participate or not, no other party had the right to evaluate was the Yugoslav party communist and should it be invited or not. He underlined that this conduct of the Soviets was a breach of an important principle, which was more important than Yugoslav affairs. Galuzzi agreed, and at the end of the meeting shortly presented his impressions from the visits to Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania. In Budapest and Prague, he saw confusion and complex internal situation which limited the two parties to have stronger foreign policy principles and views, regarding Yugoslavia for instance. In Bucharest he saw a strong will to defend autonomy, deeming it as very positive. However, he was not satisfied with the fact that the Romanian communists were very interested in protecting their rights but not interested in changing the movement in its entirety. Hence, the PCI was, in Galuzzi's words, left alone to fight for the progressive ideas in the movement. In fact, like in previous Galuzzi's visits, this was an implicit appeal to Belgrade to help the PCI in reforming the communist movement. However, like in similar previous occasions, it was impossible to soften the Yugoslav stance and make them participate at a multilateral meeting with the Eastern bloc.³⁹²

Unlike Ferdinando Mautino, his successor Petrone was very respected in Belgrade and de facto become the liaison between the two parties, like Bulatović. Hence, on January 15th, Petrone talked to Luka Soldić, from the LCY's foreign relations department, and made a request. The Italian party, once again, asked that the Yugoslav media in Italian language, especially the Radio Koper (Capodistria), have a stronger, but subtle, pro-PCI propaganda. It was a request made in the name of Achille Occhetto, who was ready to come to Belgrade in order to arrange this. Once again, the Yugoslavs were against such propositions,³⁹³ and Soldić reminded of the negative reactions in Italy regarding the PCI radio from Prague. Beside the request, Soldić and Petrone talked about international affairs, proving that Petrone was respected more than his predecessor.³⁹⁴

³⁹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-394. The PCI intensively followed the Yugoslav stance on the Budapest meeting. Hence, an article from the Yugoslav journal *Borba*, published on January 18th, was translated for the PCI officials in order to furtherly get acquainted with Yugoslav views. APCI, Esteri, MF 0552, p. 1916-1919.

³⁹³ During another meeting with Petrone, on February 5th, this stance was reiterated, in a more formal way. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-400.

³⁹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-396.

As the PCI's relation towards the global communist conference was the primary issue for Belgrade, it was followed with attention. In late January, a comprehensive report on PCI's stances towards the conference was written, based on public PCI statements. In short, it was a repetition of the well-known PCI principles of autonomy and opposition to a centralized movement. Also, it was noted that Longo was defending the PCI's position (of being critical but going to the conference) by saying that unlike the DC and PSI, who follow every opinion of the international organizations they are part of, the PCI was different, unwilling to accept the positions it does not share.³⁹⁵

The practice of Galuzzi's often visits regarding international issues was continued, although this time instead of him, the visit was made by Ugo Pecchioli. Pecchioli had a conversation regarding the Mediterranean conference with a delegation headed by Nijaz Dizdarević, on March 6th. Pecchioli initiated the meeting by talking about various individual parties and movements, elaborating on their latest stances on the conference. Regarding the general issues, he noted that the PCF wanted a delay, while nor the Arabs nor the PCI wanted it. For the PCI, this conference had an important internal role – in Pecchioli's words, NATO was undermining democracy in Italy, and in the struggle against it the conference was very valuable. He also added that the conference should focus primarily on the actual moment and the anti-imperialist struggle. As it was noted regarding the previous Galuzzi's visit, the Yugoslavs thought that this was a condition posed by the French communists, inspired to do so by the Soviets. Hence, Dizdarević was against such limitations, underlining that, for instance, the economic issues should not be neglected. Pecchioli responded that his only concern was that if the conference goes too wide the differences among the participants can emerge, and it could then become sectarian. Dizdarević thought that the best cure against sectarianism, and at the same time the biggest fear of NATO, was to broaden the list of attending parties and movements and go outside of the communist movement. In that direction he also underlined that the conference should be focusing on global issues, not on local problems. In his opinion, the PCI was not opposing to this, and he praised the Italian party for giving its best to include new actors. Pecchioli agreed with Dizdarević, adding that, unfortunately, it was not realistic to expect more now, as there was a lot of resistance to include certain parties. Also, like in the previous Galuzzi's visit, Pecchioli was against the

³⁹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-398.

Yugoslav idea to include de Gaulle-ists, saying that their foreign policy in Africa shows they were not anti-imperialist.³⁹⁶

The different perspectives of Yugoslavia and PCI inevitably led to misunderstandings at the conference. Hence, this issue was the principal topic of the meeting between Albert Bubičić, from the Yugoslav embassy in Rome, and Lucca Pavolini from *Rinascita*, in late May. Pavolini's critiques were that the Yugoslav position at the conference was too official, one of a state, inappropriate with the meeting of "progressive" parties and movements. He once more criticized the Yugoslav support for Guy Mollet and de Gaulle, reminding of their stances during the Suez crisis in 1956. Regarding the Yugoslav critiques of Soviet presence in the Mediterranean, Pavolini cynically added that the Arabs themselves have resolved this issue, viewing it as their protection. Bubičić responded that the Yugoslav delegation did not equate the USSR and USA, reiterating that Belgrade wanted a wider conference and this was a narrow ideological one. He further criticized Pavolini's article, where it was written that Yugoslavia wanted an immediate overcoming of the blocs, clarifying that Yugoslavia wants it only in perspective, as an aim for the future. Pavolini agreed that this was the official Yugoslav stance at the conference, but added that in the last preparatory meeting it was like he wrote. Besides this debate, that was not heated, Pavolini talked about the upcoming meeting in Moscow, which was another preparatory meeting for the global conference, asking the Yugoslavs to come and help the PCI, PCF and the Czechoslovak communists in their struggle.³⁹⁷

Pajetta's visit was in preparation since March.³⁹⁸ Initially, he wanted to come and discuss the Mediterranean conference, especially the Soviet pressure on the PCI regarding it. However, the visit was delayed multiple times, the conference passed, and it was finally agreed that Pajetta should come in late June. In preparation of the visit, Pajetta had a meeting with Frane Barbijeri, saying that he was sorry that the two parties have not coordinated their actions better prior to the conference, and added that he was ready to come and resolve the misunderstanding. Barbijeri informed Belgrade about this request, suggesting that a contact with the PCI would be welcome, but adding that, despite the inconvenience at the conference, there was no need to clear out

³⁹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-403.

³⁹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-410.

³⁹⁸ APCI, Esteri, MF 0552, p. 1922.

anything, especially with Pajetta,³⁹⁹ with which Mijalko Todorović agreed. As the documents clearly show, the Yugoslavs were primarily interested to hear more about the preparations for the global communist conference. Hence, when Pajetta came and proposed the Mediterranean conference as a possible topic, Dizdarević relegated that topic to another meeting, of lower level, and put the focus on the communist conference and international affairs.⁴⁰⁰

Pajetta had two meetings, first with a delegation headed by Dizdarević, regarding the preparations for the global communist conference, and the second with Mijalko Todorović and Dizdarević, regarding Yugoslav bilateral relations with socialist countries and the Non-Aligned movement. Pajetta initiated the first meeting by elaborating PCI's activity and views in the preparations of the conference. Despite the problems, the Italian communists wanted to fight and better the conference on some issues (the mode of discussion, creating a broader and more efficient platform of the anti-imperialist struggle), and also defend their autonomy. Speaking of problems, the biggest one was with the Polish comrades, who accused the PCI of being "revisionist and Zionists". The Eastern German communists also attacked the Italians. On the other side there were the Romanians, who left the preparatory meeting, which was exaggerated in Pajetta's view. Hence, he was presenting the PCI as a moderate force, ready to collaborate with everyone and be constructive. He also added that the Soviets showed understanding for their position. They neither criticized the different views in cultural policy, nor the good relations between the Italian and Czechoslovak communists. The Soviets even tried to mediate in the PCI's conflict with the Polish and Germans. At the end, Pajetta added that Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo, an important LCY official, also criticized the PCI. Tempo argued that they have not fought against the reference to the 1960 conference, and that the Romanians and Czechoslovaks were more determined in opposing the way in which the meeting was summoned (i.e. excluding Yugoslavia). Hence, Tempo concluded that this was a withdrawal of the Italian party, compared to their activities in Karlovy Vary, and underlined that nobody should go to such a conference. Pajetta, naturally, opposed to this interpretation.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁹ This emphasis of Pajetta shows that Belgrade, despite often contacts, did not perceive him as the most adequate person in the PCI leadership to communicate with. In fact, the Yugoslavs thought that Pajetta was becoming less important in the party, while Galuzzi was on the rise.

⁴⁰⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-411.

⁴⁰¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-411.

Dizdarević repeated the views Vlahović exposed to Galuzzi at their last meeting, thus moderating Tempo's critique. For Dizdarević it was not only understandable, but very positive that the PCI was going to participate at the conference and wanted to make a positive impact. However, he added that the Yugoslavs had expected PCI's stronger opposition to the references to 1960 and to exclusion of Yugoslavia. Pajetta responded that they did oppose to the two issues, but underlined his impression that Yugoslavia itself was not interested in participating at the conference, thus justifying the mild reaction against not inviting Yugoslavia. Dizdarević responded by underlining the principle that only Belgrade had the authority to decide in such manners, not the other parties. Then he made more general remarks, evaluating the political substance of the conference. In his view, the first problem was that such a conference would isolate the movement from the Third World, and already had a negative influence on the Mediterranean conference. Those negative repercussions are particularly problematic since, in Dizdarević's opinion, this was a time when anti-imperialist unity was of primary importance. The second problem was in the evasion of the core issue regarding the future of socialism, the internal struggle within the socialist countries. The Yugoslavs interpreted the current problems in the Eastern bloc as a conflict between democratic and progressive forces on one side and the old Stalinist bureaucracy on the other. In regard to that, he emphasized Czechoslovakia as one of the best and brightest examples of this phenomenon, underlining the need to affront this issue bravely and openly. Pajetta responded that this issue was out of PCI's reach, and that the maximum that could be achieved at the conference was to protect the parties from external interference. This, of course, had not satisfied Dizdarević, but he thanked Pajetta for not pressurizing the Yugoslavs to participate at the conference where Yugoslav principles would only create divisions and conflicts. In his view, Yugoslavia was contributing more to socialism with its foreign policy, and by combating dogmatism, conservatism and statism. He also added that Belgrade had official relations with fifty communist and eighty-seven socialist or social-democrat parties, hence it was not influential only in the Third World, but across the global left also.⁴⁰²

The second conversation with Todorović and Dizdarević was focused on Yugoslav relations with the socialist bloc, which were becoming significantly better. The Yugoslavs participated at the Moscow meeting regarding the Middle East, sharing the majority of Soviet views on the issue. The collaboration with the COMECON was also positive, but, implicitly

⁴⁰² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-411.

propagating the Yugoslav and explicitly the Czechoslovak reform, Dizdarević emphasized the need of this organization to open itself up. With three countries the relations were not so good. Firstly, with Poland – like the PCI, Yugoslavia was also criticized from Warsaw. Secondly, with Bulgaria, as they were expressing territorial claims to the southern Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and denied the existence of the Macedonian nation. And thirdly, with Albania. Despite the growing cooperation in economy and the crisis in Greece, which should have naturally led to bigger contacts between Tirana and Belgrade on this issue, the radical elements in the Albanian party were still determined not to collaborate with Yugoslavia. Dizdarević then explained the Yugoslav efforts to organize the conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the problems they faced. One of the biggest issues was Cuban radicalism, which hampered the progress of the movement in Latin America. Pajetta then talked about his visit to Cuba, emphasizing that his biggest impression was that Castro’s radicalism was mostly propagandist. According to him, the Cubans were in fact very pragmatic, and their relations with Spain were the best evidence of that.⁴⁰³

A few days after Pajetta’s visit, Longo sent a letter excusing himself for not being able to spend his vacations in Yugoslavia. In the letter he added that the PCI’s Directorate was following with attention the situation regarding the student revolt in Belgrade, finding it even more important than the Fourth Plenum (i.e. ousting of Ranković), as only now the democratization was in full swing. Transmitting this letter, Bulatović added that the PCI’s press suddenly showed much more interest for Yugoslavia, and that, for the first time, they propagated Yugoslav solutions (self-management and direct democracy) in the Italian context, especially regarding the student revolt in Italy.⁴⁰⁴

The watershed: the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia

The improvement of the PCI-LCY relations was catalyzed by the subsequent crisis in the communist movement, caused by the Soviet-led intervention in Czechoslovakia. The intervention was not just one of the most important moments in the history of the LCY-PCI relations, but the

⁴⁰³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-411.

⁴⁰⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-412. The student revolt in Italy was one of the main interests of Longo at that time. Despite some opposition within the party (Amendola was critical of the revolt, reproaching the students for their “irrationality” and “nihilism”), Longo imposed a more moderate line on this issue, demonstrating openness and self-criticism in the party’s relation with the students. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 404-405.

event which “determined the fate of European communism forever”.⁴⁰⁵ Although the Soviets were content with Dubček and his reforms in January, already in March they started to fear that a “Hungarian scenario” (i.e. the revolt of 1956) could be repeated in Czechoslovakia. As the situation spiraled out of Soviet control, Moscow made the decision to intervene, in mid-August, and on August 21st the Soviet-led military invasion of Czechoslovakia was initiated.⁴⁰⁶ However, it was not only Moscow that was frightened by the process of liberalization in Czechoslovakia. The broadening of political and artistic freedoms in the country triggered panic reaction from several East European leaders. Walter Ulbricht, Wladyslaw Gomulka, Todor Zhivkov and, to a much minor extent, Janos Kadar were nervous and impatient in the light of the Czechoslovak crisis, fearing that the liberalization could spread to the countries they were leading also. Hence, East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary gave their significant contribution in propagating and conducting the invasion of Czechoslovakia.⁴⁰⁷

As “The legacy of the Czechoslovak experience was crucial to the persistence of a reform communist tradition in Europe”,⁴⁰⁸ it particularly affected the LCY and the PCI, the two most reformist communist parties in the continent. The Soviet intervention unveiled the fragmentation of the international communist movement as, unlike the scarce opposition to the Soviet use of force in Hungary during 1956, in 1968 many parties were opposed to the new Soviet military intervention. In such a fragmented movement, the Yugoslav and the Italian communists found themselves together, being two of the most active and most prominent communist parties opposed to the Soviet use of force in resolving the problems within the movement.⁴⁰⁹ However, despite being faced with strong opposition from the LCY and PCI, the Soviet Union had not renounced of its aspirations of controlling the two parties in the future. Hence the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev underlined his hopes for a “normal development of the relations” with Yugoslavia and his wish to

⁴⁰⁵ S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 259.

⁴⁰⁶ S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, “Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 144-145.

⁴⁰⁷ A. Kemp-Welch, “Eastern Europe: Stalinism to solidarity” in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 223-226; V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 207.

⁴⁰⁸ S. Pons, M. Di Donato, “Reform Communism”, in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume III, Endgames? Late Communism in Global Perspective, 1968 to the Present*, edited by: J. Furst et al., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2017, 184.

⁴⁰⁹ S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 261-262. China was also opposed to the intervention, but not for the same reasons as the Yugoslav and Italian communists. Beijing was critical of the Czechoslovak reforms, but did not principally oppose to the use of force. The only problem for the Chinese was the fact that the Soviets were the ones using that force – *ibid.*

“constantly work on” changing the positions of the Italian comrades.⁴¹⁰ Due to their weaknesses, neither Belgrade nor the PCI were capable of completely distancing themselves from the USSR, thus remained prone to Brezhnev’s intentions. The following pages of this thesis show how the LCY and PCI, both individually and mutually, oscillated between being Moscow’s partners or opposition, up to their more definitive and mutual distancing from the USSR in the late seventies.

The crisis in Czechoslovakia and its outcome were also the dominant preoccupation of Yugoslav foreign policy during 1967 and 1968, and one of the most important moments in the history of socialist Yugoslavia, comparable even to the dramatic events of 1948. Hence, prior to analyzing the LCY-PCI relations in the light of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, it is important to give a more detailed depiction of the Yugoslav stances on this issue, from the beginning of the Czechoslovak reforms to their brutal termination in August of 1968.

Despite having a stable foreign policy, whose impact and importance were not in balance with the actual economic and demographic power of the country, Yugoslavia was faced with the rising crisis within the country. Self-management had become an obsession of the Yugoslav officials, despite being an inefficient system which furtherly destabilized the country and its economy. Faced with such challenges, the Yugoslav communists were intrigued by the efforts to reform the Czechoslovak socialism, finding that both countries had similar problems, similar politic and economic weak points that had to be changed. Due to such Yugoslav interest, and despite certain differences (primarily in foreign policy), a rapprochement between Prague and Belgrade was initiated. The Czechoslovaks were also interested in the Yugoslav reform experiences hence many contacts were established. The most important one was the visit of the Prime Minister Antonin Novotny to Yugoslavia, in September 1967.⁴¹¹

Although Novotny and Tito had a productive meeting, the Yugoslavs were content when Dubček replaced him in January of 1968, seeing this change as a victory of the reformist currents within the Czechoslovak party. The new leaders of Czechoslovakia were also more inclined towards Belgrade, furtherly improving the relations between the two countries. However, even in the first days of the new leadership, the Yugoslavs predicted that a clash between Prague and

⁴¹⁰ R. Service, *Compagni*, 412. As Marie-Pierre Rey indicated, the Soviets viewed the PCI’s dissent as a temporary mistake of the Italian comrades and minimized the conflict. Hence, Moscow reacted inadequately, underestimating the PCI’s opposition, which grew in time and led to Eurocommunism. M. Rey, “The Western European Communist Parties in the Cold War, 1957-1968”, in: *Europe, Cold War and Coexistence 1953-1965*, 210.

⁴¹¹ Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 309-320.

Moscow was imminent. When the CPC announced its new party program in April, Belgrade was even more certain that a conflict with the Soviet Union could not be evaded. The emphasis on the particular and national “Czechoslovak conditions” in the program was viewed in Belgrade as something positive, but as something the Soviets would not tolerate. As there was a strong conviction among the Yugoslav highest officials that the attacks on Prague were also, implicitly, attacks on Belgrade and on the foundations of the Yugoslav socialism, Yugoslavia strongly supported the Czechoslovak comrades and Tito initiated a series of his personal diplomatic actions towards calming “the powder keg” of the communist movement.⁴¹²

Firstly, in the second half of April, Tito visited Moscow and spoke with Brezhnev. The Soviet leader was very critical of the situation in Czechoslovakia, underlining that it got out of the hands of the party, that the reform was ideologically flawed (particularly criticizing, as the Yugoslavs predicted, the Czechoslovak promoting of a particular and different model of socialism), that many dangerous non-communist elements were active etc. Also, he was critical of the support the Yugoslav press gave to the reforms in Prague. Everything Brezhnev said was understood by Tito as an implicit critique of Yugoslavia, and as a Soviet warning not just to Prague, but to Belgrade also. Hence, the Yugoslav leader continued with his efforts to stabilize the situation and the relations within the socialist countries, knowing that many in the Eastern bloc saw the situation in Czechoslovakia as an influence of Titoism, hence blamed Yugoslavia. The relations in the triangle Prague-Belgrade-Moscow were more dynamic in July. The Czechoslovak comrades wrote to Tito, pleading for his support as the possibility of the military intervention became viable. They also asked him to involve Longo and Ceausescu in a broad action of support to them. At the same time, similar to the way in which Khrushchev obtained Yugoslav support for the intervention in Hungary in 1956, the Soviets wanted to make Belgrade its accomplice in the invasion. Hence, in a letter from July 11th, the Soviets wrote about the alliance between the Czechoslovak “counter-revolution” and “revisionists” within the CPC, justifying the need to intervene. Faced with the Czechoslovak pleas and Soviet threats to the sovereignty of Prague (and to Yugoslav sovereignty also, as the Yugoslavs understood it), the CC of the LCY decided to support the CPC. Both in his response to the Soviet letter and in public statements, Tito fully supported the Czechoslovak

⁴¹² Ibid, 321-237.

reforms and expressed his utter belief that the Czechoslovak party was capable of resolving the problems within the country by itself. Finally, he also decided to visit Prague.⁴¹³

The Czechoslovaks were desperately hoping that an alliance with Yugoslavia and Romania could spare the country of the Soviet invasion. On the other hand, Tito perceived the possible intervention as a tragedy for socialism, not just in Czechoslovakia but globally, and as the biggest threat to Yugoslavia, due to the similarities of the political lines of the two parties. Those were the dominant perceptions of the two sides when Tito arrived in Prague on August 9th 1968. His and Dubček's main intention was to send an explicit message to the Soviets that the country was in order, not attacked by the counter-revolution, thus in no need for foreign intervention. Despite being fully supportive of Dubček, Tito's advice for the Czechoslovak leader was to tone down the reform to some extent. Tito particularly suggested implementing repressive measures in the political life of the country, in order to appease the Soviets. At that time the Yugoslav president was threatening the dissenting professors of the Belgrade University, and proposed to Dubček to strongly attack the opposition within the country. Leaving Prague, Tito was content, believing that everything was done in order not to give further excuses for intervention to the five countries of the Warsaw Pact.⁴¹⁴

Despite this optimistic assessments of the Yugoslav leader, just ten days after his visit Czechoslovakia was invaded. Tito immediately summoned the highest organs of the LCY, and spoke of the issue in war-like rhetoric. He underlined that this was an occupation, and that Yugoslavia was in danger. His understanding was that the Soviet Union was not worried about possible Western interference in Czechoslovakia, but was, in fact, brutally opposing to the principles of democratization and anti-bureaucratism.⁴¹⁵ Hence, as a country devoted to those principles, Yugoslavia was the next target. In an outburst of revolutionary zeal, the Yugoslavs perceived themselves as the party that preserves the "true socialism", not its corrupted and "degenerated" version present in the USSR.⁴¹⁶ Fueled by such missionary self-understanding,

⁴¹³ Ibid, 327-342.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, 342-346; P. Kolar, "Post-Stalinist Reformism and the Prague Spring", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 174-177.

⁴¹⁵ Tito was not the only one who viewed the intervention in this manner. The latest historiographical contributions also indicate that the Soviet intervention against the Czechoslovak reforms was, in fact, a clash of post-Stalinist reformism, and its principle of democratic socialism, with the bureaucratic Soviet socialism. P. Kolar, "Post-Stalinist Reformism and the Prague Spring", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 170.

⁴¹⁶ Kardelj theoretically corroborated the critiques of the Soviet socialism, labeling it as "statist dogmatism" and "hegemonism".

Yugoslavia mobilized its citizens, and Tito advocated for repression against the opposition, both pro-Western and pro-Soviet.⁴¹⁷ Finally, this fear of the Soviets led the Yugoslavs to a rapprochement with the West, which was seen as the “lesser evil” at that time. A rapprochement with Italy, which led to the long-awaited territorial agreement in 1975, was also initiated in an anti-Soviet key,⁴¹⁸ and this rapprochement was an important factor in the LCY-PCI relations in the following years.

As for the PCI, the 1968 Soviet intervention led the party to “a historic turn of events” – the party opposed to the intervention, unlike in 1956. Also, unlike the PCF which backed down from its views on the intervention after some time, the PCI held to its stances, despite improving the relations with the USSR at one point.⁴¹⁹ The Italian communists were deeply inspired by the Czechoslovak ideal of a “socialism with a human face”, which became an integral part of PCI’s ideology, and paved the way towards Eurocommunism. However, the Italian party was still faithful to Moscow, hence its dissent was less radical and more diplomatic and patient.⁴²⁰ Compared to the Yugoslav case, the situation was very similar. Like the Yugoslavs, the Italian communists identified with the Czechoslovak comrades. They too understood the Soviet attacks on Prague as attacks on themselves and their principles. Having in mind the essential similarities of the CPC’s April program and the PCI’s credo of “the Italian road to socialism”, it was not a surprise that the PCI perceived the Soviet intervention in this manner, nor it was a surprise that it had been supporting the Czechoslovak reforms all along. The lesson to be learned for the Italian communists was that the USSR was a strict adherent to the bloc division of Europe, not a force which would help the victory of socialism in the West. Hence, the PCI, changed its rhetoric, adopting the

⁴¹⁷ Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 346-354.

⁴¹⁸ As the Yugoslav leadership was in panic after the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, fearing that Yugoslavia could be attacked by the USSR, in September 1968 came a reassuring message from the Italian minister of foreign affairs, Medici. He told the Yugoslav ambassador in Rome that Yugoslavia can, without any hesitation, move its troops to the eastern frontiers, guaranteeing for the Yugoslav security on its western border. This statement came as a relief to the Yugoslav leaders and initiated a rapprochement between Yugoslavia and Italy, after decades of turbulent relations. The interests of both parties for this rapprochement were primarily anti-Soviet. The Yugoslavs were in dire need of having a partner interested in their country’s sovereignty, endangered by the Soviet aspirations. The Italians also wanted to avoid a possible stronger Soviet influence in Yugoslavia, which would bring the Soviet troops and interests on the eastern Italian frontier. S. Mišić, „Југословенско-италијански односи и чехословачка криза 1968. године“ [The Yugoslav-Italian relations and the Czechoslovak crisis in 1968], in: *1968 – четрдесет година после* [1968 – Forty Years Later], edited by: R. Radić, INIS, Belgrade 2008, 293-312.

⁴¹⁹ S. Pons, “The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism”, in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 45.

⁴²⁰ S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 284.

principle of overcoming of the bloc division more than ever.⁴²¹ Enrico Berlinguer was the PCI official who was most successful in articulating this approach, hence he rose to prominence within the party.⁴²²

The first LCY-PCI contact regarding the crisis in Czechoslovakia was between communists from Venezia Giulia and Slovenia. Bacicchi and Cufaro, on the Italian side, talked with some of the most important Slovene communists, Popit, Ribičič and Dolanc, on August 30th. The Italians expressed the shock and contempt of their party towards what happened. For the PCI, it was a breach of autonomy, not even justified by the situation in the country as the reforms were necessary. They were particularly worried by the anti-communist propaganda that was on the rise and jeopardizing the entire movement, although the PCI's anti-interventionism prevented stronger attacks on their party. Hence, their presence at the global communist conference was now under question. However, they were of the opinion that the USSR would not try to do anything similar elsewhere, and that the aggression was a side-effect of the bloc policy, not an action deriving from USSR's aspirations to be the hegemon.⁴²³

A meeting of a higher level regarding the issue was needed, and on September 7th Galuzzi, Dizdarević and Vlahović met in Yugoslavia once again.⁴²⁴ Prior to the meeting, the Yugoslavs wrote an elaborated report on PCI's positions during the crisis. Firstly, it was underlined that the PCI's critiques of the USSR were harsh and principal, as evident in the afore mentioned meeting with the Slovenes. The criticism was also rooted in the PCI's constant praise for and support to the reforms in Czechoslovakia. On the other side, according to the Italian communists, some other communist parties did not have the necessary faith in the Czechoslovak comrades, thus hampering their efforts to correct the mistakes ("anarchical views") which occurred. Just a few months earlier, Dizdarević tried to convince Pajetta that the issue of democracy was the crucial problem regarding socialism's future, and met a restrained reaction. Now, the PCI was fully adopting that stance in light of the intervention. The PCI also became closer to the LCY on the issue of political and military blocs in Europe, emphasizing that the bloc logic hampered internal development of the

⁴²¹ Besides the PCI-USSR context, this principle had a broader social appeal, linked to the profound changes in the political culture of that era. Namely, it was appealing to the youth, which was a new and key actor in international politics whose outlook and language could have not been reduced to the bipolar mindsets of their predecessors. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 116-117.

⁴²² G. Gozzini, "Italian Communism", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 604-605.

⁴²³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-414. APCI, Esteri, MF 0552, p. 1942-1947.

⁴²⁴ Pajetta had the same mission in Bucharest. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-417.

socialist countries. The Italian communists underlined how the consolidation of blocs would inevitably lead to strengthening of US and USSR global dominance, creating virtually two guiding states, a scenario the PCI was strongly opposed to. Their discontent was getting bigger as, with the harsh division of the blocs that followed the intervention, the room for political maneuver of progressive parties in the West, like the PCI, was becoming very narrow. This was more frustrating as just months earlier the Czechoslovak reforms had struck serious blows to the anti-communist taboo in Western Europe. Regarding the USSR and its theoretical justifications of the intervention, the Italian communist clearly voiced their opposition, emphasizing sovereignty and autonomy. Hence, they were now against a global communist conference, at least until a viable solution for Czechoslovakia would be found. The author of the report concluded that *Pravda* and *L'Unità* had a debate on the issue, in which the Italian communists were active and direct in defending their principles.⁴²⁵

The September 7th meeting was, naturally, exclusively dedicated to the intervention and its repercussions for socialism. It was initiated by bitter remarks of the Yugoslavs. They were extremely critical of the USSR, and explained that the Yugoslav positions and the historical evolution of the Yugoslav socialism were the absolute opposite of the ruling tendencies in the CPSU. Once again emphasizing their dualistic view of current socialism, the intervention was presented as an attack of bureaucracy and statism against democracy. The Soviet intervention was explained as an impotent Stalinist move, a wish for hegemony and willingness to divide the world with Washington. They warned Galuzzi that in such Soviet conceptions there was no room for French, Italian, Asian or African communists.⁴²⁶ The Yugoslav predictions were that for a certain period of time the situation was going to remain the same. However, in the long run, the Yugoslavs believed that Stalinism had no chance of surviving, and that it was going to be easier to defeat it than in it was in 1948, at the highpoint of its power. However, the biggest problem for Yugoslavia was that there were no guarantees that the Soviets would not make a similar move elsewhere. Hence, Belgrade was dedicated to Non-Alignment more than ever, viewing it as the only viable

⁴²⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-415.

⁴²⁶ With this statement, the Yugoslav communists intended to say that the intervention showed USSR's focus on preserving its hegemony within the socialist bloc by any means necessary, and, on the other side, its willingness to "pay the price" for that hegemony by sacrificing the interests of socialism elsewhere. In short, Belgrade saw the intervention in Czechoslovakia as a confirmation of an implicit deal between Washington and Moscow, which left Moscow free to use force within its sphere of influence, but at the price of respecting Washington's interests in the US sphere of influence. Hence, parties like the French or Italian, and their perspectives of gaining power, would be left without substantial Soviet support and sacrificed to US interests.

solution for the future of their country. Although relations with the USSR were not going to be ended, Moscow will not be given a special position in the Yugoslav foreign policy anymore, like in the prior years when Belgrade propagated it as a peaceful force to its Third World partners. Now, Yugoslavia was ready to collaborate with everyone, on equal grounds, even with China and Albania. Finally, they underlined the undivided Yugoslav agreement with Longo's statement that the conference was unthinkable now.⁴²⁷

Galuzzi then emphasized three grounds on which the PCI was opposed to the intervention: 1) the Czechoslovak party was able to deal with every problem by itself; 2) the intervention weakened the struggle against imperialist and reactionary elements in Czechoslovakia; 3) the intervention violated the principle of noninterference, adopted by the movement in its previous meetings. Although they were under attack, Galuzzi convincingly underlined that the Italian party remained and would remain firm, especially its leadership, despite the pro-Soviet sentiments within the party membership. Also, they were united with the French and Spanish party in condemning the Soviet actions.⁴²⁸ As both sides were still uncertain regarding the true motives of the Soviets attack, and regarding the direction of their future moves, Galuzzi said that the PCI believes that there were two possible scenarios. The first, and less frightening, hypothesis was that Moscow was being reactive - frightened by the Czechoslovak reform and its possible spreading in other socialist countries, they reacted, also wanting to warn Romania and Yugoslavia. The second hypothesis was darker, and it implied that, in order to counter China's influence, the Soviets wanted to create an empire. Hence, Yugoslavia would not be safe. The PCI's intention was to put pressure on the five countries which committed the intervention, even by threatening with a split in the movement, but not to an extent which would endanger the Czechoslovak comrades. Also, they were frightened by the possibility of a Washington-Moscow agreement which could leave them in a desperate position.⁴²⁹ Thus, they tried to find ground outside of the Eastern bloc – in contacts with other Western communist parties (although many of them were scared of the Soviets,

⁴²⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-416. APCI, Esteri, MF 0552, p. 1948-1954.

⁴²⁸ The Yugoslavs were not so convinced that the PCF will be consequent in its opposition to Moscow, although Galuzzi tried to convince them that both parties were fully opposed to the conference. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-417.

⁴²⁹ The Yugoslavs also bitterly commented on this possible bipolar agreement, adding that Tito, despite his active participation in the crisis (trips to Moscow and Prague and initiatives to calm the conflict), was informed of the intervention only after President Johnson, de Gaulle, and Kissinger. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-417.

which hampered the PCI's idea of a conference of these parties), Western non-communist left and, even, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea (despite their support to the intervention).⁴³⁰

Hence, Galuzzi asked the Yugoslavs about their contacts with China and Albania. Additionally, he wanted to know more about Belgrade's assessment of the dangers for Romania and Yugoslavia, and its assessment of the current state of the CPSU leadership. The Yugoslavs firstly underlined that they had very similar perspectives, almost identical to the PCI. Regarding Romania, it was evident that Bucharest did not want to provoke the USSR, but was ready to defend itself and its autonomy. On the other side, the Yugoslav population was very organized and keen to defend its country. An informal mobilization was on the way, with massive popular support. The Yugoslavs agreed that it was important to pressurize the aggressors, and Belgrade was going to do it through interstate channels of communication, as now this was an interstate issue, not an ideological one. Regarding the Soviet decision makers, the Yugoslavs had no illusion that, even if there were dissenting voices among them, the Soviet policies could change. For Belgrade, the actual situation was a product of the system, a further "degeneration" of Stalinism.⁴³¹ Regarding China, Dizdarević and Vlahović only briefly explained that now it could not be viewed differently than the USSR. Regarding Albania, they added that, despite the Yugoslav will to have stronger relations, there was still no feedback from Tirana. Also, the Yugoslavs agreed with Galuzzi's idea of strengthening the relations with the non-communist left, admitting that Yugoslavia neglected relations with it from 1962.⁴³²

Finally, at the end of the meeting happened something that symbolizes how the LCY-PCI relations grew to a bigger level. Galuzzi asked that, in case of problems in the party's relations with the Soviets, the PCI members who fled from Italy to Czechoslovakia come to Yugoslavia. These Italian communists evaded jail sentences in Italy, and before 1968 the Yugoslavs were hesitant to accept them, having in mind the good bilateral relations with Italy and the extradition agreements. However, now the Yugoslavs accepted this request, thus demonstrating once again how opposition to the Soviets automatically produced closer ties between Yugoslav and Italian communists.⁴³³

⁴³⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-416.

⁴³¹ Interestingly, despite the lack of Yugoslav protest against the destitution of Khrushchev, Belgrade now viewed that event as the crucial moment. It was interpreted as the moment when the bureaucratic forces of the Soviet party toppled the leader who tried to fulfill the ideas of the XX congress. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-417.

⁴³² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-416.

⁴³³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-417.

Moscow fights back: a mild distancing of the parties

On October 7th Bulatović sent another report analyzing the PCI's stance on the intervention. According to him, the party was in a good position, gaining prestige in Italy with their condemnation of the USSR. This prestige enabled them to be more active in the country, which they used to elaborate their vision of the Italian road to socialism, but also enabled the PCI to become the leader of West European communism. On the other side, although not wanting to deny or minimize his praise for the PCI, Bulatović paid attention to some nuances in the party's view on Czechoslovakia. Firstly, he emphasized that the PCI was engaged in Czechoslovak affairs for some time before the intervention, supporting the government in Prague. Hence, they were not in a position to change their stance now, despite the fact that the party masses were not so attached to the issue. Even at that point, while the Directorate was unanimous in condemning Moscow, there was a strong resistance to such views at the lower levels of the party. This opposition, in addition with the Soviet pressure, made the PCI less fierce in its views, but the party was not renouncing of any hitherto stated principle. The PCI officials admitted that their stance was less harsh now, but explained that this slight change was caused by pleas of the Czechoslovaks themselves, which did not completely convince Bulatović. This moderation of the attack on Moscow led to *L'Unità's* reluctance to quote the harshest Yugoslav attacks on the USSR. Bulatović corroborated this situation by explaining that the socialist press often attacked the PCI with the Yugoslav example of a stronger opposition to Moscow, hence the communist press was reluctant to transmit every Yugoslav statement. Despite these afore mentioned nuances, Bulatović was content with the PCI's position, especially with their theoretical analysis of the situation, deeming it the only theoretical contribution, along with the LCY, in criticizing the Soviet intervention. He also added that Longo strengthened his leading role in the party by opposing to Moscow, and summarized his report by claiming that the PCI would not retreat on this issue, but go forward in devising the Italian road to socialism.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-421.

It was evident that at that point the Yugoslavs became more eager and interested in collaborating with the PCI.⁴³⁵ Hence, an LCY delegation, led by Cvijetin Mijatović, visited the Italian comrades, from October 21st to 28th. Among the meetings they had, the most important ones were with Pajetta and with Galuzzi. Pajetta repeated the aspects Bulatović had already noted – the PCI was firm in its principles and critique of the USSR, but had moderated it slightly after the request from Prague. However, he underlined that the Italian party's assessment was that the situation had only become worse after the USSR-Czechoslovakia agreement, which had not resolved anything. Pajetta also informed the Yugoslavs about the propaganda attacks against the PCI from Sofia and East Berlin, and that the Polish communists had refused to meet them. The PCI tried to organize a conference of Western Communist parties despite such circumstances, but the Soviet influence, especially in the Austrian and Finnish party, had blocked this initiative. On the other hand, Pajetta made some statements that worried the Yugoslavs. Firstly, he asked was a conference of the Non-Aligned countries opportune now, or would it be perceived by Moscow as a creation of a third political bloc in the world. Secondly, he expressed his doubts that the Yugoslav, Romanian and PCI's support to Czechoslovakia had maybe only worsened the situation and provoked Moscow's intervention.⁴³⁶

The meeting with Galuzzi was different, as he supported the Non-Alignment activity. Hence, the Yugoslavs concluded that Pajetta's statements were not shared by the PCI's CC but were individual, a fruit of Soviet influence on him. Galuzzi gave an impression that the PCI was ready to defend its principles and autonomy, without hesitation. His opinion was that the global conference was going to be postponed, which would only delay finding a solution. Hence, he thought that maybe it would be better to have the conference, discuss, conflict and find a solution immediately. He agreed with the Yugoslavs that a new Mediterranean conference should not be held now, and talked about the PCI's intention to have stronger ties with German, British, Swedish and Austrian social-democrats, particularly important in changing the West European policies towards the Third World. After the talks with Galuzzi, the Yugoslav delegation visited Florence and talked with the local PCI organization. There, on the terrain, they witnessed to the phenomenon Bulatović already described – although the leadership was unanimous in opposing to the

⁴³⁵ For instance, it was suggested that Tito, after two earlier requests made by Boffa, finally grants an interview to *L'Unità*. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-420.

⁴³⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-420

intervention, the membership of the party was still doubtful and uncertain. Hence, it appeared evident that the PCI was trying to avoid an open conflict with Moscow, in order to keep the party together prior to the Congress that was due soon.⁴³⁷

The Twelfth PCI Congress was held in Bologna, in February 1969. The Yugoslavs carefully followed the situation within the PCI prior to it – the Yugoslav ambassador Prica had a meeting with Longo, and Bulatović sent numerous elaborate reports. Prica and Longo talked on December 30th 1968, and Longo explicitly stated that he expected a high-level LCY delegation.⁴³⁸ He also informed that the Soviet pressure on the party had weakened, and, more importantly, that Czechoslovakia was not going to be a topic per se, at the Congress. In fact, it was going to be discussed under the topic of the International Workers' Movement, where the main focus of the discussion will be on the intervention. The PCI had not expected any inner-party opposition on this topic, although there was some resistance to the official line in the party's base. Regarding the situation in Italy, Longo underlined that they do not expect any improvement from the center-left government, but added that the PCI was going to be a constructive opposition and fight for left-unity, particularly in the struggle to obtain a more direct participation of the workers in governing Italy.⁴³⁹

Another important meeting prior to the congress was between Soldić, chief of the department of foreign relations of the LCY, and Petrone, *L'Unità's* correspondent from Belgrade, held on January 14th 1969. Petrone informed of the Soviet pressures prior to the congress, especially aimed at Galuzzi. He also added that Longo was not very well physically, and that the probable cause of his illness was the way in which the intervention occurred, particularly the fact that he was in Moscow at that time but was not informed, finding out what happened only from the newspapers on his way back. Petrone was surprised that Berlinguer emerged as his right hand, to which Soldić responded by praising Berlinguer and concluding that he was the logical choice. Soldić expressed Yugoslav dissatisfaction with the publication of Longo's letter to the CPSU from 1960.⁴⁴⁰ Petrone tried to defend his party, by saying that this was a part of history, hence could not

⁴³⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-420.

⁴³⁸ This was the case, eventually. The second man of the LCY, Edvard Kardelj, led the delegation. But the support to the PCI was not the only reason for such a high-level delegation. The Yugoslavs seized this opportunity to have meetings with the Italian government also, as the two countries were rapidly growing closer after the Soviet intervention – S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 79-80.

⁴³⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-424.

⁴⁴⁰ The PCI published a collection of documents, entitled "The PCI and the International Workers' Movement 1956-1968". The Yugoslavs were satisfied with the general line of the editors, who selected documents which focused the XX Congress of the CPSU and Togliatti's thought on autonomy. However, the LCY was very disappointed that Longo's letter to the CPSU in the occasion of the 1960 conference was published. In the letter, Longo shared the

be erased. Soldić was frank, saying that it seemed like the PCI was balancing, and Petrone sincerely responded that his party had to balance sometimes. At the end of the meeting Petrone returned to Yugoslav internal issues. At that time, a rebellion broke out among the Albanians in Serbia's southern province of Kosovo and Metohija, and the foreign correspondents visited the region. Petrone's impression was that the situation was not as bad as it seemed from Belgrade, and wanted to know was there any foreign influence on the revolt (i.e. from Tirana).⁴⁴¹

Bulatović's reports were a detailed analysis of PCI's policies (with an emphasis on its firmness in defending the principle of autonomy but also its wish to evade a full conflict with the USSR), and a detailed depiction of the party's internal state, including the key topics of the upcoming congress. However, the most important part of those reports was his analysis of the relations between the PCI and LCY, which best shows the growing but complex friendship between the two parties. Firstly, Bulatović wrote a short sentence which describes the essence of the relations between the Italian and Yugoslav communists – “as they are conflicting with the CPSU, they are becoming more open and interested in us.” This PCI's opening towards Belgrade was a proof of their emancipation from Moscow, but it also proved that the USSR could not succeed easily, like before, in isolating Yugoslavia. Still, Bulatović once more underlined the publication of the 1960 letter and of an anonymous text in *L'Unità* which was critical of Yugoslavia. He understood these two episodes as tactical withdrawals, made in order to appease Moscow, and was certain that the PCI would not renounce of its principles, despite the fact that similar moves could be expected in the future. Bulatović then gave a broader explanation of the differences and misunderstandings between the PCI and LCY. Firstly, the PCI saw Non-Alignment only as a maneuver, hence they supported it solely when the actions of the NAM were not irritating for Moscow. Secondly, despite the fact that the PCI was attracted by the Yugoslav socialist autonomy and democracy, some Yugoslav internal policy solutions were not understandable to the Italian communists, like antistatism or the lack of central intervention. For instance, Bulatović noticed that the PCI criticized the Soviets, on many occasions, for their lack of democracy, but never for their statism. Hence, Bulatović evaluated that the Italian communist, in fact, wanted a

Soviet negative views on Yugoslavia, but asked for a moderation of the critiques of the LCY. He was asking this in order not to irritate the Yugoslav masses, adding that Belgrade should not be isolated from the rest of the movement. The Yugoslav evaluation was that by publishing this document, which was critical of the LCY, the PCI was trying to balance between Moscow and Belgrade. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-395.

⁴⁴¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-428.

democratic statism. The Yugoslav antistatists solutions were viewed by the Italian communists as a mere countering to the Soviet principles, possible only because Yugoslavia was consolidated and had an authentic revolution. But, as Bulatović added, the entire Western left had similar views, advocating a strong centralized state as the only solution. Hence, it was natural that the decentralized Yugoslav experience was not interesting to these parties, and little had been written on it.⁴⁴²

Regarding the situation in the PCI and the upcoming conference, besides repeating the already well-known stances, Bulatović informed about certain new developments and discussions within the party. He noted a rise of the conservative forces, encouraged by the Soviet pressure on the PCI, as by the party's tactical withdrawals to that pressure. More importantly, he underlined that Berlinguer became the de facto leader, Amendola held his strong positions and Ingrao was strengthening his position. The PCI's attempt to contact China and Albania failed, and the responses of the two parties to the invitations to the PCI congress were not only negative, but also rude.⁴⁴³ Regarding the congress topics, Bulatović noted that there hegemony of the two superpowers was going to be criticized. In addition to that, USSR's inability to push socialism forward and the policy of imposing rigid ideological models, conducted not only by the two superpowers but also by China and Cuba, was going to be negatively evaluated and underlined. Although the policy of peaceful coexistence was going to be reiterated, Bulatović was disappointed that, as it seemed, there would be no substantial analysis of the Non-Alignment. Hence, Bulatović's evaluation was that the PCI still viewed the Third World as the "reserve force" of the communist movement. Interestingly, the concept of self-management that hitherto attracted no attention from the PCI, was now more interesting and was a potential topic as part of the broader issue of workers' power and influence. The student revolt additionally posed the need to address this issue.⁴⁴⁴

Finally, a high-level LCY delegation, headed by Edvard Kardelj, participated at the PCI's congress. They were more than satisfied with it and with PCI's official stances⁴⁴⁵, as with the way

⁴⁴² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-425.

⁴⁴³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-425.

⁴⁴⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-426.

⁴⁴⁵ In his statements for the Yugoslav media, Kardelj was very positive, praising not only PCI's stances on the relations between communist parties (i.e. the Czechoslovak issue), but also its internal policy and openness to collaborate with other political actors in Italy. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

in which the Yugoslav delegation was received.⁴⁴⁶ In his address to the Yugoslav CC, Nijaz Dizdarević gave a detailed explanation of the delegation's impressions. In the initial sentence of his address, Dizdarević stated that the congress was better than expected, both regarding Italian topics and international communist affairs. Regarding the Italian affairs, Dizdarević praised PCI's determination to collaborate more with other parties, but also its intentions of having more extra-Parliamentary direct actions and advocating for some kind of self-management. Hence, he thought that the Italian communists were now truly beginning to develop the "Italian road to socialism". In that sense, the democratization of the party and more liberal relations with other organizations, like syndicates, were crucial. Dizdarević spoke very favorably of Pietro Ingrao, who was the only PCI official who identified the need to fight against the "bureaucratic statism".⁴⁴⁷

Regarding international communist affairs, Dizdarević clearly stated that, despite the initial intention of the Italian comrades not focus on Czechoslovakia, which left the Yugoslavs confused, the PCI had defended its position which was identical to the Yugoslav one.⁴⁴⁸ As he explained, the "reactionary" stances of the Soviet and French⁴⁴⁹ delegates imposed the unwanted Czechoslovak topic, and the PCI was brave and consistent, reiterating its stances, especially its opposition to the theory of limited sovereignty (i.e. the Brezhnev doctrine⁴⁵⁰). The only dilemma Dizdarević had was will the PCI continue to be persistent in its stances in the future. Hence, he concluded that the LCY-PCI relations were probably not going to be substantially changed, but they depended on the state of the PCI-CPSU relations. Despite this smaller doubt, Dizdarević underlined that the LCY intentionally sent such a high-level delegation as a sign of support to the Italian comrades (the only party that sent a stronger delegation was the Spanish one, which was more than expected due to the "specific" relations between the two parties). Dizdarević concluded his remarks by

⁴⁴⁶ The only problem was the conduct of the delegation from North Korea, which refused to sit close to the Yugoslavs during the official lunch.

⁴⁴⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

⁴⁴⁸ In his speech at the congress, Kardelj particularly emphasized sovereignty and autonomy as the crucial principles in relations between communist parties. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

⁴⁴⁹ This was a disappointment for the Yugoslavs, and it was evaluated that the PCF has annulated all of its progressive stances taken since the intervention.

⁴⁵⁰ The principle proclaimed by the Soviet leader to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia. According to the doctrine, the communist parties were not only responsible to the nations they represented, but also to other socialist countries, and to the entire communist movement - S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 145.

emphasizing that, for now, the PCI was making a very positive influence on other Western communist parties in emancipating them from Moscow.⁴⁵¹

Edvard Kardelj had a series of important encounters during his stay in Italy, and he spoke with the most important PCI officials. The first and most important meeting was on February 13th 1969, with Luigi Longo. Initially, Kardelj complimented the PCI on the congress, and expressed his belief that the five countries that intervened in Czechoslovakia were isolated in their positions. Kardelj then responded to several Longo's questions regarding the USSR. Firstly, Longo asked what will be the future Moscow's actions. In Kardelj's opinion, it was still debatable whether this was only a defensive reaction to progressive reforms, a more probable scenario, or a part of a wider action in which Romania and Yugoslavia would be endangered. Kardelj underlined that the Yugoslav masses were prepared for that scenario. Although Pajetta was convinced that the second scenario was not possible, Longo did not share his conviction. Hence, secondly, he asked about a possible Polish-Soviet unification. Kardelj responded that they in Belgrade do not know much about this, but did not exclude this option, as there was similar information regarding Bulgaria and as he remembered the Soviet pressure in 1948 to create a Yugoslav-Bulgarian federation. Thirdly, Longo asked about possible differences within the USSR leadership, which Kardelj dismissed. Fourthly, Longo asked about Yugoslav relations with other socialist countries, and Kardelj underlined good relations with Hungary were, despite their participation in the intervention, the reform was developing. Finally, Longo asked about a possible Yugoslav participation at the global conference, which Kardelj absolutely excluded, but adding that Belgrade will not attack it. Longo then explained PCI's decision to participate and fight for progressive values, adding that from then on the international communist movement was going to be led by three parties – CPSU, PCI and PCF.⁴⁵² He added that the Soviet pressures were “in the limits of acceptable”,⁴⁵³ but condemned them for leaving the hall during Kardelj's speech. At the end of the meeting, Kardelj proposed stronger interparty collaboration in the field of theory, to which Longo agreed.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429. As another report added, beside the PCI, Yugoslav and Romanian delegations, during the discussion regarding Czechoslovakia the British, Belgian, Japanese and Spanish communists were also critical of the intervention and of Soviet hegemony – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

⁴⁵² This statement was very noted by the Yugoslavs, and understood as a division of the International Workers' movement on West-East basis.

⁴⁵³ Longo even said that if the CPSU had decided not to come, it would only be positive for the prestige of the Italian party. Once again Pajetta interrupted him with a pro-Soviet remark, adding: “I would not be so radical”.

⁴⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

On the next day Kardelj met with Valdo Magnani, out of the need to pay special respect to Magnani for his collaboration with Belgrade. Kardelj promised him bigger interparty collaboration in agriculture, as Magnani occupied a function in this field, and Magnani gave an insider's view of the party. He underlined that Berlinguer and Longo were now closer to Ingrao than to Amendola, and denied that there was a viable possibility for a right wing coup in Italy.⁴⁵⁵ More interesting were Kardelj's meeting with politicians from other parties – as it was mentioned earlier, during 1969 the Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement was under way, and Kardelj used this visit to meet with the Prime Minister Rumor, as with Nenni and Saragat. The PCI was discussed only with Nenni and Saragat, in two separate meetings held on February 18th. Saragat shortly commented on the PCI, saying that it was still not emancipated from the USSR. Kardelj tried to change his mind, saying that the Bologna congress was a big step in that direction, but Saragat remained skeptical. With Nenni there was more discussion regarding the PCI. Nenni did not deny the importance and positive impact of the Bologna congress, but added his prediction that the party would not be fully consequent in its stances, as the official PCI rhetoric of that time was against “Nenni's way from 1956”. Although he expected more from Amendola, surprisingly Ingrao and the left group were more efficient in proposing a new left majority. As for Longo, Nenni did not expect much from him. He viewed him as an old-school cadre, and in Nenni's view this new criticism of Moscow was a big and unexpected contribution from Longo. Hence, in short, Nenni's expectations were that the PCI would stagnate, without the strength to make further steps, but will not go back in its stances, that being the congress' biggest contribution.⁴⁵⁶

Just a month after the PCI's congress, LCY had its own, Ninth congress, from March 11th to 15th. The PCI sent a delegation headed by Giorgio Napolitano, and they had the opportunity to meet the highest Yugoslav officials, Tito included. According to the Yugoslavs, they were well received and satisfied with the congress, especially with Tito's speech. The PCI participation was important for Belgrade, having in mind that the communist parties from the Eastern bloc had not participated, and the PCF sent only an observer (which was a surprise to Napolitano). Mijalko Todorović talked about this issue with Napolitano, emphasizing that the Czechoslovaks were pressured by Moscow not to come, and that there were protests in the party because of this. However, the Yugoslavs were satisfied with the fact that the present delegations were very

⁴⁵⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

⁴⁵⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-429.

heterogeneous⁴⁵⁷, and that the smaller communist parties had decided to come. Having this in mind, it was not surprising that Todorović was critical of the USSR, denying it the possibility to democratize, and underlining that Yugoslavia was not going to participate at the international communist conference. During the meeting the two sides were almost identical in their views on the international communist movement. The second important meeting Napolitano had was with Kardelj, and it was dedicated to internal Yugoslav issues. Firstly, they commented on the problem of underdeveloped regions. At one point Napolitano compared this problem in Italy and Yugoslavia, but Kardelj emphasized that in Yugoslavia it was not only a regional problem, but also a national problem, having in mind the country's ethnical complexity. Secondly, they talked about the student revolts in the two countries, and both tried to present them as new and fresh energy for the two parties. Finally, Kardelj informed (only) of Nenni's positive remarks regarding the Bologna congress, which was a surprise for Napolitano.⁴⁵⁸

In his report to the party's Directorate, Napolitano had underlined the warm reception of the PCI delegation in Belgrade, and the positive reactions to the Bologna congress of the Italian communists. However, his report was critical, something the Yugoslav had not noticed, and he focused on the Yugoslav-Soviet dispute. Napolitano underlined that the Yugoslavs were very hurt by the absence of the CPSU and other communist parties, and frightened by a possible isolation of Yugoslavia from the socialist bloc. He also added that, maybe due to such frustration, Tito's speech mentioned several turbulent and conflicting episodes from the history of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. Due to such atmosphere, certain anti-Soviet stances were heard during the congress. Napolitano reacted when they were exaggerated, calling for a more pragmatic policy towards Moscow and advocating for evading of the split with it. Hence, Napolitano predicted that a strengthening of anti-Sovietism in Yugoslavia was possible. Also, Napolitano was not content with two points in Tito's speech. Firstly, he was opposed to the elevation of Non-Alignment and disrespect for the socialist bloc – as he wrote, Tito used “an ambiguous formula of *forces of*

⁴⁵⁷ As a Yugoslav report shows, Napolitano used the conference to have several contacts with various African delegates.

⁴⁵⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-448. A few days after Napolitano and his comrades left for Rome, an interesting belated letter for them arrived at the Yugoslav CC. Giuseppe Zerrardo, living in Skopje under the fake name of Alberto Benedetti, asked the PCI delegates to, as Longo promised his mother, finally do something to initiate the revision of his process in Italy. Accordingly, Zerrardo was falsely accused and sentenced for murdering certain fascists (he claimed that it was in self-defense) in 1944. After the incident, he was sent to Yugoslavia, where he had lived since then. Although he was satisfied with his life in Yugoslavia, and the treatment of Yugoslav authorities towards him (he had a stable job and started a family, but more importantly Yugoslavia declined to extradite him in 1968), he wished to visit his family in Italy and urged the PCI to help him. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-448.

imperialism and hegemony". Obviously, Napolitano could not accept this Yugoslav implicit equalization of socialist and imperialist blocs. Secondly, Napolitano underlined that, despite the propagandistic support to Vietnam, Yugoslavia did little to actually help it.⁴⁵⁹ However, in the end of his report, Napolitano added that in private conversations with Tito and Kardelj both Yugoslav leaders demonstrated their will to improve the relations with Moscow in the future.⁴⁶⁰

The old practice of regular contacts with Galuzzi regarding international issues was continued. On April 7th, he visited Yugoslavia and talked to Veljko Vlahović and Mika Tripalo. The main topic of the conversation was the preparatory meeting for the global communist conference, held in Moscow,⁴⁶¹ and Galuzzi gave a detailed explanation of the atmosphere of the meeting. The PCI had a big problem with the proposed document, underlining that it was too similar to the one from 1960. The Italians wanted a document that would focus on anti-imperialist struggle (i.e. Vietnam, Middle East, European security), hence they would sign only the third chapter, which deals with this topic. Only smaller and less important parties fully shared PCI's views, while the Romanian and Spanish delegates supported the document conditionally, asking for smaller changes. Another important condition for the PCI was that the debate at the congress should be public. Besides the afore mentioned parties, this request was supported by the Polish delegates also. However, this stance of the PUWP⁴⁶² meant little, as they wanted to exclude the parties opposed to the document from the debate. The PCF's stance was similar to the PUWP's, hence they enabled to the Soviets to appear as a moderate, middle-ground factor. Regarding the Soviet position, Galuzzi underlined the hypocrisy in their inclusion of the principles of independence, sovereignty, mutual respect and noninterference in the document. However, he

⁴⁵⁹ The war in Vietnam was never a particularly important topic in the relations between the Italian and Yugoslav communists (despite the fact that Vietnam was very important to the Western left as a topic for mobilizing the masses in an anti-imperialist key – O. A. Westad, *The Global Revolution*, 192.). Hence, this criticism of the Yugoslav policy towards it was an exception. However, it is no surprise that such an unusual attention to the issue was posed by Napolitano in January 1969. At that time, Vietnam became the burning problem for the international communist movement, due to the pinnacle of the US military presence in the country. In 1968, like in no year before or after it, there were more than a half-million American troops in the country – F. Costigliola, "US foreign policy from Kennedy to Johnson", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 131.

⁴⁶⁰ APCI, Esteri, MF 0308, p. 1419-1425. After the congress, Napolitano gave an interview to *L'Unita* in which he had not explicitly expressed his doubts. He only advocated for the unity of the communist movement, and supported the LCY's stance not to create divisions within it. Napolitano also supported the Yugoslav reform, saying that it was obvious that it implied a stronger role of the party. APCI, Esteri, MF 0308, p. 1426-1429.

⁴⁶¹ At that time, it was obvious that the Conference was going to be of bigger importance than it was earlier predicted. Two events contributed to this. The first one was the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, and the second one the Sino-Soviet military confrontations in March 1969. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 266.

⁴⁶² The Polish United Workers' Party.

admitted that the Soviets gave some concessions to his party, primarily the promise that the work of the conference will be public, and renounced of the idea to have a centralized international press agency. Concluding his remarks, Galuzzi said that the conference would be probably postponed, but it was inevitable as the political careers of many Soviet leaders depended on it.⁴⁶³

Galuzzi then briefly elaborated PCI's stances on some other issues. Firstly, regarding European security, the party's stance was to support any initiative that led to overcoming of the bloc policy, the Soviet Budapest appeal included. In that direction they already had contacts with various European leftists, most importantly the SPD.⁴⁶⁴ Secondly, the PCI was now convinced that the Soviet policy makers were unanimous in requesting a hegemony of their country, and in such a situation the best thing to do was to support the ones that have a "softer" and more "progressive" conception of that hegemony. And finally, in light of the Sino-Soviet armed conflict,⁴⁶⁵ the PCI wanted to group the "progressive" communist parties, and show that socialism was not only Moscow or Beijing. Since the Romanians were hesitant, Galuzzi's idea was to have a meeting of Yugoslav, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and even French communists, which would be an encouragement to various socialist forces in light of the conflict.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-430.

⁴⁶⁴ This statement made by Galuzzi shows how the PCI followed the crucial Soviet foreign policy aims in Europe at that time - the launching of the détente, and the special role of the SPD in this process. The genesis of the détente leads back to the 1968 crisis in Czechoslovakia. Firstly, during the crisis, the Soviet decision makers had the best chance to understand why the détente, and its economic advantages, was badly needed by the Eastern bloc, in order of preventing similar future crises. Secondly, the missing Western reaction to the military intervention demonstrated that the NATO was not interested in changing the borders in Europe by using force. Hence, Moscow felt confident and free to work on formalizing the territorial status quo in Europe, and preserving its sphere of influence through an agreement with the West. One of the most important Western partners in this endeavor, eager to contribute to the East-West dialogue in Europe, was Willy Brandt, the SPD's leader, who in 1969 launched his famous "Ostpolitik", i.e. the rapprochement with the Eastern bloc. S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 134,146. While Brandt saw his foreign policy approach as the best way leading towards a German reunification in the future, the Soviets saw it as the best way to strengthen the division of Germany and to obtain the import of Western technology, crucial for the economies of the Eastern bloc. J. M. Hanhimaki, "Détente in Europe, 1962-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 211; V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 211. More about the openness towards the détente of the American president Nixon and of his National Security Advisor Kissinger in: R. D. Schulzinger, "Détente in the Nixon-Ford years, 1969-1976", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 373-377.

⁴⁶⁵ i.e. the conflict on the Ussuri river. Despite the previous antagonism between Beijing and Moscow, this incident caused a definitive split between the two communist parties, and pushed China towards a rapprochement with the United States, formalized by President Nixon's visit to Beijing, in 1972. S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 148; S. Radchenko, "The Sino-Soviet split", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 367-369.

⁴⁶⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-430. A couple of weeks later, analyzing this proposition, the Yugoslavs concluded that this meeting could also include non-communist parties, but that it would be useful even in the proposed format (i.e. consisting only of certain communist parties). AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-430.

Vlahović commented on the topics Galuzzi introduced, firstly on the issues regarding the communist conference. Thanking Galuzzi for the precious information, he reiterated the Yugoslav decision not to go, and underlined that the entire process unveiled a lot of turmoil in various communist parties. Secondly, regarding the Budapest appeal, Vlahović gave his support to it, as to any initiative that calls for peace in Europe. However, he strongly emphasized that Belgrade has no faith in Soviet appeals of that kind, not only because of the intervention in Czechoslovakia, but also because of the Soviet penetration in the Mediterranean and because of the Bulgarian territorial aspirations on Yugoslavia's expense. Thirdly, he supported the PCI-SPD contacts, and proposed more PCI-LCY meeting regarding European security and the Mediterranean. Finally, Vlahović commented on Yugoslav relations with Moscow. The Soviets were looking at the Non-Alignment conference as an anti-USSR activity, despite the fact that Czechoslovakia was not a primary topic of that meeting. Also, the Soviets were not satisfied with the Yugoslav "unbiased" press coverage of the Sino-Soviet conflict. Vlahović's predictions were that, since Khrushchev was ousted in order to resolve the conflict with Beijing and this was not achieved, a clash within the Soviet leadership was imminent.⁴⁶⁷

Besides this usual dynamic of Galuzzi's visits, i.e. discussing international topics, on the margins of the meeting he had a proposition and an appeal. The proposition was to have a meeting of various European left and communist parties, which would debate the contemporary concepts of socialism. Galuzzi stated that the main intention of this meeting would be to help the progressive forces within the USSR and Eastern bloc. In a report written a few weeks after the meeting, the Yugoslav side supported this proposition, adding that Yugoslavia had the same interest like the PCI, especially since Belgrade was being isolated by the Eastern bloc. But the appeal to financially help the PCI was more important, showing that, since the Soviet intervention, the relations between the Yugoslav and the Italian party became stronger than before. Galuzzi urged for financial aid, adding that the PCI was going to be punished for its views.⁴⁶⁸ In a report written on April 28th, as a preparation for the visit of Vladimir Bakarić, Galuzzi's appeal was analyzed. The author of the report underlined that, hitherto, direct financial aid was not an LCY policy. The Yugoslavs focused on indirect help, like vacations in Yugoslavia, trade agreements with PCI directed companies,

⁴⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-430.

⁴⁶⁸ In a short period from 1968 to early seventies the Soviet financial aid to the PCI was lessened (although not completely stopped). S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 18.

paying the salary of *L'Unità's* correspondent etc. Also, Yugoslavia had not recently given any direct financial aid to other communist parties, except the 20 thousand dollars to the Spanish comrades. Hence, the initial proposition was to offer the same amount to the PCI, and then see if the Italian party would ask for more. The Yugoslavs saw potential problems with this aid as it could be used by Moscow against the PCI, and, on the other side, they preferred to help indirectly. However, it was understood that the indirect help given to the PCI hitherto (60 million dinars annually) was not enough, so Bakarić was designated to resolve this issue out during his visit, but having in mind that Yugoslavia gave, in total, 80 thousand dollars and 70 million dinars to various parties and movements in the previous year.⁴⁶⁹

Prior to Bakarić's visit in May, there were a few important contacts between the two parties that should be noted. The first one was on April 10th, when *L'Unità's* correspondent Petrone had a meeting in the Yugoslav ministry of foreign affairs, asking for an interview from the minister, regarding European security. Beside this request, Petrone had some important information for the Yugoslavs. Firstly, his party was not satisfied with the fact that Crvenkovski, the Yugoslav delegate at the congress of the Finnish communists, had not mentioned Czechoslovakia in his speech, leaving the Italian delegate as the only one who did it. Secondly, beside this critique, Petrone complained that the Soviets were sending less money to the PCI, hence this was an information aimed at reiterating Galuzzi's request. However, the situation within the Italian party was good, and Petrone explained that the Sino-Soviet conflict detached the PCI's membership from the USSR more than the intervention in Czechoslovakia. Finally, Petrone added that he obtained an information, from a conversation between an Albanian and Yugoslav diplomat in Belgrade, that Tirana was looking less negative on Yugoslavia than before, particularly due to the good Italian-Yugoslav relations.⁴⁷⁰

On April 17th, Adalberto Minucci visited Yugoslavia and had a conversation with Dolanc, focused on the Yugoslav economic reform. Dolanc firstly admitted that the reform had sparked national conflicts within the country, and, in his words, the party's response was not to suffocate the national sentiment. Yugoslavia had not resorted to a "limited sovereignty" within the country, but the party focused on strengthening the unity through the full development of nations. The other problem that emerged was unemployment, but Dolanc labeled it as a "temporary necessity". Like

⁴⁶⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-430.

⁴⁷⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-431.

many other PCI officials before him, Minucci asked about the process of Yugoslav integration within the international market. Dolanc responded that the biggest problem in achieving that goal was the protectionism of the two blocs. However, he added that the Italian government fully supported the Yugoslav efforts to have better trade conditions with the EEC. Minucci also asked about the student revolt, and Dolanc repeated the Yugoslav propagandistic outlook that the revolt was very different compared to the Western, and that it was, despite some deviations, in solidarity with the Yugoslav system. He even quoted Jean-Paul Sartre, who said that self-management gives all answers to the student revolt.⁴⁷¹

Vladimir Bakarić came to Rome on May 12th and held a lecture at the Gramsci Institute on May 16th, where he talked about the relation between democracy and economy. More important was his meeting with the PCI's highest officials. On May 14th, Bakarić met with Longo, Berlinguer and Pajetta, and the conversation was dedicated to the situation in Italy, Europe, international communist movement and the Middle East. At the beginning of the meeting, Pajetta spoke extensively about the situation in Italy. In short, he said that the current development of the situation only confirmed PCI's views. The Italian communists thought that the wave of protests delegitimized the social-democratic solutions of the government, and that a possible right authoritarian tendency would only strengthen the PCI as it was biggest opponent to fascism. He also added that the international situation, especially the crises in Czechoslovakia and between Moscow and Beijing, confirmed PCI's foreign policy views. On the other hand, these two crises augmented the pro-NATO sentiment in Italy. Bakarić asked would the PCI be able to oppose to the right, since Yugoslavia had some information about a possible coup in the country. Berlinguer dismissed such scenarios, adding that the radical right was not a problem, since the left wings of other parties were becoming more cooperative with the communists. However the moderate right, which was in power, remained the strongest opponent of the PCI.⁴⁷²

Berlinguer then passed to the topic of European security, which became very important for the LCY-PCI relations. Although he was aware of the fact that the Soviets were probably not sincere when they issued the Budapest appeal, this document proved to be useful for the PCI – it was well received in the West, paving the way for a European conference and for the PCI's fruitful contacts with the SPD. Bakarić fully supported the PCI's contacts with the SPD, seeing them as

⁴⁷¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-432.

⁴⁷² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-436.

an important opportunity to pacify the burning German question. Regarding the Budapest appeal, there was a change of mind of the Yugoslavs. Although in the last meeting Vlahović was skeptical towards it, Bakarić admitted that the Yugoslav stance had changed. In his words, Yugoslavia was belated in realizing the positive impact of the document, and now had identical views as the Italian comrades regarding it.⁴⁷³

Longo then commented on the global communist conference, which was going to be held in June. He repeated the already known PCI critiques of the conference and the document, which Galuzzi presented a month earlier. Longo also explicitly stated that the document was propagandistic and reiterated their stance that it should focus only on the anti-imperialist struggle. Hence, the PCI would sign only the third chapter of the document, which was dedicated to that issue. Bakarić agreed with Longo, repeating that Yugoslavia would not participate in order to preserve its sovereignty, but Belgrade understood and supported the PCI's decision to go.⁴⁷⁴ After the conference, Yugoslavia was going to give its negative evaluation of the document, but would not open a conflict. Probably motivated by earlier Petrone's remarks regarding the Finnish congress, Bakarić said that Yugoslavia did not renounce of its views regarding Czechoslovakia, but he admitted that Belgrade did not emphasize its negative views on the USSR like before, in order not to make the situation in Czechoslovakia more difficult and because of the growing economic cooperation between Yugoslavia and the Eastern bloc.⁴⁷⁵

In the rest of the conversation, various issues were affronted. Firstly, Pajetta said that while he was in Budapest he had the impression that Hungary wanted a stronger collaboration with Yugoslavia. Bakarić confirmed it, adding that the Soviets were undermining these efforts.

⁴⁷³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-436. This rarely seen PCI-LCY accordance in fully supporting a USSR initiative proves right the evaluations that the CSCE process (the Budapest appeal being its starting point, while the CSCE was officially pronounced as a Soviet foreign policy goal only in 1971 - V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 214.) was the “pinnacle” of the Soviet European activities - S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 278.

It should be also underlined that the Budapest appeal and the initiation of the CSCE process brought a profound change in the Yugoslav-Soviet relations. After almost a year of harsh conflict, Tito was puzzled by the Soviet initiatives for a trans-ideological European dialogue. Despite having doubts regarding the true intentions of the USSR, he initiated a process of rapprochement with Moscow, in April 1969. The Yugoslav rationale leading to this improvement of relations was the assessment that “the Russians want stability”, hence they should be supported in this regard. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 359-363.

⁴⁷⁴ During the meeting it seemed that now the PCI officials were more skeptical towards the USSR than Bakarić – for instance, when he said that there was some progress in the Soviet approach to the conference and to PCI's requests, Longo and Berlinguer responded that those were only promises and it remained to be seen would they be fulfilled.

⁴⁷⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-436. Pajetta agreed with this view, eloquently putting it that “we cannot be bigger Czechoslovaks than Czechoslovaks themselves”. Both sides agreed that Gustav Husak was a moderate solution, and that he should be supported.

Berlinguer was interested in the Yugoslav assessment of the situation in the Middle East. Bakarić said that in Yugoslav view many Arab countries, like Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, were fixated with the idea of attacking Israel. As they were very inefficient in previous attempts, this wish made them very dependent on Moscow. On the other hand, Nasser was viewed more positively, despite his neglecting of Non-Alignment and excessive reliance on the Soviets, who provided him arms. Regarding the Soviets, Yugoslavia welcomed their presence during the war, but the Yugoslav stance was that the USSR must not be present in the Mediterranean. Thirdly, Pajetta once again wanted to know more about Yugoslav-Albanian relations. Bakarić responded that he did not believe the Soviet rumors that Tirana had military potentials to threaten Yugoslavia. Belgrade tried to have some cooperation with its southern neighbor, although not in an anti-Soviet key as it was believed, but Tirana was not interested. Regarding the case of the strong Albanian revolt in southern Serbia, he thought that there was little influence from Albania, adding that it was an internal Yugoslav problem for which Belgrade did not blame the Albanian government.⁴⁷⁶ Finally, at the end of the meeting China and the French communists were briefly mentioned. Berlinguer asked about the Yugoslav views on Beijing, and Bakarić admitted that the Yugoslav communists had little information, adding that despite some rumors the relations with China were almost non-existent. Pajetta then mentioned the PCF, saying that it was fighting against the French re-entrance in NATO and that it should be helped in achieving that goal. Bakarić fully agreed, despite the underdeveloped relations between the LCY and PCF. He added that a Tito's telegram, which Pajetta censored in *L'Unità*, was precisely advocating for the same, although Pajetta understood it as a support to de Gaulle.⁴⁷⁷

Bakarić used his visit to also have contacts with other parties – DC, PSIUP and PSI. These conversations were focused on various international and bilateral topics, but the PCI was also mentioned in the talks with DC and PSI representatives. Flaminio Piccoli, from the DC, talked about a crisis within the PCI, but underlined that his party and the communists must not be “on the

⁴⁷⁶ Bakarić gave a historical perspective of the problem – initially, after WWII, the Yugoslav communist authorities were willing to have a “correction of the frontier” with Albania (i.e. the partition of Serbia's southern province of Kosovo and Metohija, populated by an Albanian majority), but the civil war in Greece prevented this solution. Hence, the Yugoslav authorities were now faced with a widespread Albanian revolt, with the main aim of creating a republic of Kosovo. Bakarić explained that such a solution was not possible, as two Albanias would be like two Germanys, Vietnams and Koreas, hence a source of conflict. In such circumstances, Belgrade's decision was to grant the biggest possible autonomy to the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija (within the Socialist Republic of Serbia), hoping that this solution would, with the development of Yugoslav socialism, be sufficient to integrate the region.

⁴⁷⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-436.

barricades” against each other anymore. Piccoli thought that the LCY could have a big role in relaxing the DC-PCI relations, and help the PCI to evolve in a more “national” direction. Lombardi, from the PSI, underlined that there were big differences, regarding the USSR, between the Directorate of the PCI and the party masses. However, there were also disputes within the directorate. Hence, according to Lombardi, Longo’s medical problems were only an excuse for the postponement of the CC. In his view, the real reason was a lack of consensus within the Directorate regarding the document that was going to be adopted at the global communist conference.⁴⁷⁸

During the visit the issue of potential Yugoslav financial aid to the PCI was posed again. Bakarić had a meeting with Cossutta, where he was explained that the PCI could, due to the lessening of the Soviet aid, match only 50 percent of its expenses (6 billion liras). In that situation, although it could potentially lead to a bigger control over the PCI, the party accepted to negotiate with the DC and PSI regarding a law on financing of the political parties in Italy. Hence, Cossutta asked for direct aid and for stronger trade with companies linked to the PCI. Bakarić principally agreed, but said that he would have to look into all of the details when he comes back to Belgrade. The remaining documents pertinent to this issue are not detailed, but they confirm that Belgrade decided to answer positively to the PCI’s request. In July, Tito approved both a direct aid of 100 million liras and an augmentation of trade with PCI companies. The operation was done personally, in order not to trace the source of the money. In October Gavriilo Vučinić gave the money to Anelito Barontini.⁴⁷⁹ Having in mind that prior to 1968 the Yugoslavs were always worried that their collaboration with the PCI could threaten the interstate relations, and that it was not a Yugoslav practice to give direct financial aid to communist parties, this episode is very significant in evaluating the inter-party relations. It can be said with certainty that this Yugoslav financial aid to the PCI, first since 1948, demonstrated that after the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and PCI’s opposition to it, Yugoslavia started perceiving the Italian communists as a truly important and close partner. Hence, the relations rose to another, higher level. The strongest cause for that was the PCI’s distancing from Moscow, the crucial aspect in every LCY-PCI rapprochement.

Bakarić and Cossutta talked once more, on July 10th. This meeting, at which Dolanc was also present, was arranged in May – Cossutta said that he would visit Belgrade on his way back

⁴⁷⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-436.

⁴⁷⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-441.

from the International communist conference in Moscow, in order to inform the Yugoslavs about it, but also to see what was the Yugoslav response to the request for financial aid. As it was mentioned earlier, Dolanc said that Tito approved a help in the amount of 100 million liras. Cossutta was grateful for it, and the three men then had a conversation regarding the conference, situation in Italy and some other issues. Since the Yugoslavs were very interested in information regarding the internal situation in Italy, Cossutta gave a detailed explanation of the current state of political affairs. He said that the socialists were in a problematic situation – the United States pushed the social-democrats to split the PSU, and the right wing of the DC was not open for collaboration with the PSI. After the split of the PSU, one of PCI's principal wishes was to have a government without the PSDI, although they had not advocated for this publicly as it would only produce a counter effect. Regarding the “reactionary” incidents in the country, the PCI adopted a similar tactic of non-provocation. In general, the PCI was ready to take more responsibility, at least by being a constructive opposition, as they accepted that there was no revolutionary perspective in Italy at that time.⁴⁸⁰

Cossutta also gave a detailed information regarding the conference held in Moscow.⁴⁸¹ His views were very ambiguous. On one hand, he criticized the document and underlined that the conference had little legitimacy, having in mind that China, Vietnam and Yugoslavia were not present, while the Cubans sent only observers. On the other hand, he added that the discussion was not so bad, that Brezhnev's speech was better than the document, and that, except the Bulgarian attacks, the attacks on the PCI were not direct. Other weak points of the conference were the fact

⁴⁸⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-438.

⁴⁸¹ Having in mind the Sino-Soviet armed conflict, the conference was, in fact, a ratification of the schism within the international communist movement. Despite some moderate opposition tones of the Italian and Romanian delegations, the vast majority of the participants supported Moscow, thus finalizing Beijing's defeat in the over a decade long struggle for power within the movement. However, as Cossutta had also underlined in this conversation, many parties had not participated and damaged the legitimacy of the conference. This fact had not only put in question the legitimacy of the Soviet hegemony in the communist movement, but more importantly it unveiled the fact that the movement was very fragmented. The fragmentation was not bipolar, based on the Moscow-Beijing antagonism, but more nuanced, deriving from various national experiences of the individual parties (the LCY and the PCI were best examples for this). Hence, as the fragmentation of the movement strengthened in the following years, the 1969 conference was, in fact, “the last gathering of world communism”, and the beginning of its definitive downfall. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 265-270.

Regarding the PCI's involvement in the conference, it was somewhat successful – they had managed to delay the organization of this conference, originally intended to be held in 1965, and succeeded in their intention not to sign the document in its entirety. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 335. However, the Soviet tolerance for the PCI's dissent was primarily motivated by the fact that on the most important topic of the conference, China, the Italian communists shared the crucial views of the Soviets. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 18.

that China was not mentioned, and that Husak asked not to mention the intervention in his country (which frightened Cossutta). The PCI was opposed to this, deeming that those were the most important problems, hence could not be neglected. In general, the PCI's delegation had problems to convince the Soviets in accepting their stances. In the conference's aftermath, the PCI feared of two possible problems: the first one was the possibility of war between the USSR and China, and the other one was Nixon's visit to Romania – a possible American interference within the communist movement. Bakarić was convinced that the second scenario was not possible, reassuring Cossutta that the Romanians would not be tempted by such a proposition. In general, the Yugoslav remarks regarding the conference were similar to the ones made by Cossutta, and they praised Carrillo's, Berlinguer's and Ceausescu's speeches. In addition to the already mentioned critiques of the conference and USSR hegemony, the Yugoslavs underlined the fact that the conference had neglected the developing countries. Hence, they shortly presented the situation within the Non-Aligned Movement. The movement was once again growing, due to numerous global crises, but was also undermined by Indonesia's brutal anticommunist campaign.⁴⁸²

Despite the fact that the Yugoslav direct financial aid was given to the PCI in October, the party relations were quite still in the second half of 1969. The strongest reason for this was the fact that Belgrade, in the period from May to October, was occupied with the very dynamic relations with the Italian government. Pietro Nenni, the minister of foreign affairs, visited Belgrade in May,⁴⁸³ and in October President Saragat and the new minister of foreign affairs, Aldo Moro, also visited Yugoslavia.⁴⁸⁴ Prior to the visit of a Yugoslav delegation in December, the only important episodes were the participation of Kardelj and Mišo Pavićević (minister of foreign affairs) in a debate initiated by *Neue Gesellschaft* and *Rinascita*, in October, and a conversation between Soldić and Petrone, in November. The debate was part of a wider joint activity of the SPD and PCI, focused on issues of European security, with the aim of supporting the CSCE⁴⁸⁵ idea. Naturally, the Yugoslavs were more than interested, having in mind that the Yugoslav diplomacy was

⁴⁸² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-438.

⁴⁸³ PCI officials had noticed the importance of this visit, seeing it as something new in the Italian foreign policy, due to the fact that Nenni discussed with Tito the idea of broadening the potential pan-European conference, by including neutral and Non-Aligned countries. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 189.

⁴⁸⁴ Both visits were focused on European and Mediterranean affairs, in light of the détente process. S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 86-104.

⁴⁸⁵ the Conference on security and co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

becoming more active in Europe, with the same aim of relieving the tensions and organizing a conference. Hence, Kardelj and Pavićević supported the idea of the conference in their answers, emphasizing the well-known Yugoslav foreign policy principles: peaceful coexistence, overcoming of the bloc division in Europe, anticolonial struggle and bigger collaboration with the underdeveloped Third world, and, finally, the overarching principle of limiting the hegemony of superpowers in international affairs.⁴⁸⁶

The meeting between Soldić and Petrone, held on November 11th, focused on two important points. The first one was Petrone's proposition to send a delegation to Rome, as there were no official contacts after July. The second one was Petrone's information that, as he was not paid enough to conduct his work in the appropriate manner, he asked Pajetta to go back to Italy in May 1970. Petrone's work was very respected in Belgrade, and there was a strong interest for the continuation of his work. Hence, it was decided to react to both of the problems - a delegation was sent just twenty days later, and Petrone was promised an increase of his salary.⁴⁸⁷

However, prior to the visit, there was an unpleasantly surprising issue in the relations. The PCI organized a meeting in Palermo between various Arab parties and communist, or communist leaning, organizations from Western Europe. Yugoslavia was neither invited nor informed about it. The information came from the Syrian Ba'ath Party, and the Yugoslavs then contacted the PCI asking for a clarification. Galuzzi and Occhetto tried to minimize the importance of the meeting, linking it to a PCI committee in Palermo, not with the party's Directorate in Rome. The Yugoslavs were not convinced by this explanation, and believed that they were deliberately evaded – after the misunderstandings at the 1968 conference, and having in mind that the Yugoslavs were not invited to a similar meeting in Algeria in March 1969. Hence, it was evident that there was a bigger problem, and that the PCI was trying to emancipate its Mediterranean policy from the LCY. The Yugoslav decision was to protest, as they were irritated by such an attempt of isolation and deemed that they belong to every meeting of that type.⁴⁸⁸

The LCY delegation's visit in early December was the best opportunity to clarify the issue, but, naturally, this was just one of the many issues touched upon during the meetings. The delegation's leader, Cvijetin Mijatović, gave a comprehensive report on the visit at a meeting of

⁴⁸⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-437.

⁴⁸⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-442.

⁴⁸⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-443.

the Executive Bureau of the LCY (after the reform of the party, it was its most influential organ). At the beginning, Mijatović emphasized that he was very satisfied with the way in which the delegation was received – they had the opportunity to talk with every important PCI figure, and the PCI press gave big publicity to the visit. The biggest part of Mijatović’s oral report was dedicated to the situation in Italy and PCI’s position in the country. In his view, there was a strong mass movement that destabilized every party, PCI included, although they seemed to be more stable than others. However, the communists demonstrated an optimism that was not convincing, as, according to Mijatović, every party in Italy was “on the tail end” of the mass movements, unable to control and lead them.⁴⁸⁹ He also noticed that the PCI evaded to use the term self-management, and Napolitano confirmed it, saying that they could not use it in a capitalist country.⁴⁹⁰ In any case, it seemed to Mijatović that the principle of self-management could be very useful in a situation of such fierce workers’ revolt, especially having in mind that the syndicates were strong, not the party’s “transmission belt”. Also, Galuzzi talked with Mijatović regarding the *il manifesto* group, saying that, unfortunately and despite all efforts to give them space in *Rinascita* and *Critica Marxista*, they had to be expelled as they had become a faction.⁴⁹¹

Mijatović then talked about various aspects of PCI’s foreign policy. The most important issue was the Palermo conference. Since the PCI officials repeated the previous excuses, which had not convinced the Yugoslavs, Mijatović’s evaluation was that this action was bloc oriented – i.e. it was influenced by the USSR, and the PCI wanted to strengthen its role in the region on the basis of being the representative of the international communist movement in the Mediterranean.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁹ Mijatović was, in fact, speaking about the turbulences of the Italian society and politics in the late sixties, and particularly of the “autunno caldo” that was under way at that time – the shift of the student unrests into industry. This combined student and worker mass movement urgently posed the issue of reforms, and the political parties were unable to channel and articulate it. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell’Italia contemporanea*, 114-119.

⁴⁹⁰ On the other hand, as Mijatović noted, PSIUP was explicitly using this term.

⁴⁹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-447. The *il manifesto* group was formed of Ingrao’s supporters, who opposed to the welfare reformism of Amendola. In spite of Ingrao’s wishes, they had taken a step forward in their dissent by forming the *il manifesto* review, inspired by the egalitarianism of the Chinese revolution. Hence, the PCI’s CC and Ingrao decided to expel them from the party. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 303.

⁴⁹² Mijatović’s suspicions that the Italian communists were an agent of Moscow in the Mediterranean was very similar to the various afore mentioned Yugoslav critiques regarding the PCI’s Third World policies. The Yugoslavs had not denied the PCI’s progress on this topic, even praising it occasionally, but it was regularly underlined that the PCI’s views on the Third World remained dogmatic and similar to the positions of the Eastern bloc. This Yugoslav criticism was not unfounded. As Marco Galeazzi underlined, at that time, the PCI saw itself as a bridge between the USSR and other European communist parties on one side, and the Non-Aligned countries on the other side. Hence, the limit and scope of PCI’s activity in the Mediterranean was profoundly shaped by Soviet interests. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 198.

Regarding other aspects of PCI's foreign policy, there was nothing new – the party continued to develop its contacts in Europe, within both blocs, and had not changed its views regarding the international communist movements and its problems. Both sides talked positively of the Italian-Yugoslav relations, and Mijatović invited Longo to visit Yugoslavia. This was accepted, but it was asked for the possibility that Berlinguer comes instead, in case Longo would be prevented due to his illness. Mijatović then mentioned his direct contacts with Longo. Although the party's general secretary was evidently not well, he was very kind to the Yugoslav delegation – he apologized for the Palermo meeting, explaining that it was important for them in the national context, and was the only one from the PCI who explicitly mentioned self-management. Longo also commented on the situation in the USSR, expressing his pessimism regarding Moscow's future moves. He was also critical of Czechoslovakia, but saw progress in Hungary. Kardelj interrupted Mijatović at this point, commenting that Berlinguer would be a suitable replacement, as he was not particularly known for his friendship with Belgrade, hence he would not come only because of Yugoslavia. Mijatović responded that this was Galuzzi's proposition, and he viewed it as a support to Berlinguer in the battle for the main position in the party. Finally, Mijatović added that the press release was initially "too bloc" oriented, hence Galuzzi wrote a new version based on Yugoslav suggestions, which emphasized the overcoming of the blocs and collective European security.⁴⁹³

During the visit, Mijatović had a meeting with Pajetta and Boffa, both from *L'Unità*, focused on two important issues – the status of Petrone, and a possible Tito's interview, which would be followed by a big article on Yugoslavia. The meeting was unpleasant as Pajetta was very cynical. Firstly, through seemingly humorous and ironic remarks, he criticized Yugoslav foreign policy in the Arab world, saying "you are always supporting the ones in power in middle-sized powers". Secondly, he was frustrated by the fact that there was an unintentional incident with Petrone - he was placed under arrest, and the court had not contacted the LCY.⁴⁹⁴ And thirdly, he said that the question of raise for Petrone was only Petrone's issue and that he was not interested in it, criticizing the correspondent for not writing more about ordinary life, or even scandals, not

In a broader context, it is important to note that in the late sixties the connection with the USSR was more important for the PCI than its activities in the Third World – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 272.

Hence, it can be said that, although inspired by the Yugoslav example, the PCI was limited by its strong connections with Moscow in conducting an autonomous Third World policy, unlike the Yugoslavs.

⁴⁹³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-447.

⁴⁹⁴ Despite being badly threatened during the arrest, Petrone explicitly stated that it was obviously a mistake, and that he had the support of all the high-level LCY officials in regards to this incident. Pajetta was not convinced, and saw the incident as a provocation of Yugoslav secret services. APCI, Esteri, MF 0308, p. 1430-1432.

just about politics. The Yugoslavs ironically responded that Pajetta wants those articles as his paper did not write them about other socialist countries.⁴⁹⁵ After the visit, Soldić had a conversation with Petrone, and told him about the mentioned meeting. Petrone agreed with the final Yugoslav remark, underlining that Pajetta already made similar request, wanting a stronger focus on national conflicts and the system's flaws, but he had rejected. He also added that Pajetta had been making those ironic comments for some time. For instance, every time he faced a problem in Yugoslavia Pajetta replied "that is the Yugoslav self-management". In short, Petrone explained that the motivation for this kind of behavior lies in the fact that Pajetta was a pro-USSR official, unlike Berlinguer and Longo, and was frustrated by the failure to obtain some of the highest positions. Also, he warned Soldić that Pajetta expressed his sincere views when making his notorious ironic comments. At the end of the meeting, Soldić asked Petrone why was the PCI not mentioning self-management, and why was this concept less mentioned in Italy than in other Western countries. Petrone responded that the PCI evaded to use it in order not to be labeled pro-Yugoslav, hence the LCY should put more effort in convincing them of the benefits of this idea.⁴⁹⁶

The second topic of the meeting Mijatović had with Pajetta and Boffa was Boffa's proposition to have a big article on Yugoslavia published in *L'Unità*, as it was already done with Romania. The Romanian piece included Ceausescu's interview, hence Boffa asked, once again, for Tito's interview. He underlined that the interview could also be published separately from the piece on Yugoslavia, in the same issue or in some of the next ones. This was, in fact, organized as an indirect financial aid to the PCI. Since the PCF's *L'Humanité* also asked for an interview, the two requests were analyzed together. The Yugoslav authorities were more inclined to give the interview to Boffa, for numerous reasons – firstly, there was the need to support the PCI in a time when they were under attack from Moscow and from the *il manifesto* group; secondly, *L'Unità* wrote more on Yugoslavia than *L'Humanité*; thirdly, Boffa planned to have interviews not just with communist leaders, while his French colleagues wanted to interview only leaders from the Warsaw pact; and, finally, it was the second time Boffa was asking for an interview. However, since the final decision was to reject *L'Humanité*, and since Tito was preparing a state visit to Rome, the final decision was to grant the interview to *L'Unità*, but only after the visit.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-447.

⁴⁹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-445.

⁴⁹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-446.

Despite the Yugoslav financial aid, the interparty relations during 1970 were somewhat ambiguous. On one side, Berlinguer visited Yugoslavia, and had his first encounter with Tito. On the other side, besides the visit, there were not many contacts between the two parties. This lack of initiative in interparty collaboration can be explained by various factors. For instance, Yugoslavia's rapprochement with Italy rose to such level that Tito's visit to Rome, first and only one during his thirty-five years in power, was planned for December. Hence, having in mind the previous Yugoslav stance of subordinating the relations with the PCI to the interstate relations, it can be said that Belgrade was not so interested in provoking possible misunderstandings with the Italian government (as it is already mentioned, it was decided that Tito should give his interview to *L'Unità* only after the visit). On the other side, the PCI was focused on its internal issues – the wave of protest in Italy and the internal fight for Longo's succession. However, Belgrade's assessment was that the primary reason for the slight distancing between the two parties was linked to the relations between the PCI and CPSU. In short, the Yugoslav officials concluded that the PCI improved its reports with Moscow, and even stopped mentioning Czechoslovakia. According to the Yugoslavs, there were two main reasons for that PCI-CPSU rapprochement. Firstly, the Soviet assistance and support were crucial for the party's stability, especially in the turbulent period of succession. And secondly, the USSR, due to its initiatives for a European conference and contacts with Brandt, was now viewed more as a partner than as the enemy in the West. Hence, in such circumstances, any excessive contact with Belgrade could only harm the Italian party, and was not as useful as before.

Prior to Berlinguer's visit to Belgrade, in May, not much was happening between the LCY and PCI. In March, Gašo Vučinić, who was the new Vukoje Bulatović – sending reports and analyzing the PCI from Rome, gave a comprehensive report on the situation within the party. In general, the report was positive, praising the PCI for choosing neither to radicalize its struggle, nor to assume a position similar to the government of the left center. Due to the impact of the mass movement in Italy, the PCI became more oriented towards social struggle, not only towards political actions, and Vučinić emphasized that. He also added that another positive change was the PCI's openness to other parties. Vučinić then summarized the position of the main groups within the PCI. The first group was the so-called party's right, led by Amendola. The core idea of this group was that the crisis in Italy was not a revolutionary one, but that there was a danger of an authoritarian coup. Hence, Amendola and his group thought that it was crucial to have a swift

political response, by forming a new and truly left government, with the left wings of the DC and PSI. The *il manifesto* group, expelled from the party, also asked for a swift action, but in a different direction. They thought that there was a revolutionary opportunity, which urges mass action, not political bargaining. The so-called “new left”, led by Ingrao, was the old opposition to Amendola, and they advocated for less political and more direct mass action. However, unlike the *il manifesto*, Ingrao’s group was convinced that the traditional political and democratic institutions were still important, hence they wanted to introduce self-management and a bigger mass participation in governing of the country. However, they thought that at that moment a democratization of the existing institutions, hence a combination of both afore mentioned approaches, was the only viable solution. And finally there was the group led by Berlinguer, which supported Amedola’s idea of a “new majority”, but opposed to him when he underestimated the importance of mass action.⁴⁹⁸

Berlinguer meets Tito: the beginning of a friendship

Berlinguer came to Yugoslavia with Galuzzi, in late May. Initially, the visit was to be held a little bit earlier, but on March 30th Galuzzi informed Vučinić that the visit had to be postponed, due to Berlinguer’s illness, crisis in Italy, and, finally, because the party found out that Stendardi and Ottaviano worked with the Italian security services. This information was not yet public, but it was given to Vučinić in confidence. Galuzzi also briefly informed him regarding several international issues. Firstly, the PCI wanted to reactivate itself regarding Czechoslovakia, as the situation there was not good. Secondly, the party supported the Italian government’s plan for the solution of the Middle Eastern crisis, with some minor remarks. And, thirdly, Beijing stopped attacking the PCI for some time now – according to certain information, it was due to the party’s stance on Czechoslovakia. In any case, Berlinguer and Galuzzi arrived in late May, and prior to the visit the Yugoslav party apparatus produced a short biographical note on the new de facto PCI leader. In that note, three things were underlined: Berlinguer’s consistent defense of PCI’s autonomy and fierce criticism of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia; his newly founded, although still incoherent, focus on the democratic participation of the masses in governing the

⁴⁹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-451. Besides this report, it should be mentioned that, in late March, Mario Quattruci visited Slovenia. His most important impression was that the PCI’s presence in Yugoslavia should be strengthened. According to Quattruci, the Slovenes with which he talked wanted this themselves, worried by the growing US impact in Yugoslavia. APCI, Esteri, MF 071, p. 249-250.

country; and his orientation towards a West European socialism, which should be different from each existing model, the Yugoslav one included.⁴⁹⁹

Berlinguer met with numerous Yugoslav officials, but the most important meeting was the one with Tito, held on May 21st. At the beginning of the meeting, the Yugoslav president said “we rarely see each other, despite being neighbors”, thus hinting that Belgrade wanted stronger contact. Firstly, Tito wanted to know more about the widespread strikes in Italy. In short, Berlinguer emphasized both a positive and a negative side of the strikes. The positive thing was that the workers now widened their struggle, and asked for a reform of health and school system, while the negative side was that the success of the strikes motivated even some well-paid public servants to join, despite their revolt being unfounded. Tito strongly agreed with Berlinguer, adding that the Italian government should have different responses to justified and non-justified strikes.⁵⁰⁰

Obviously, Tito wanted to obtain information from Berlinguer, so he also imposed the second topic, asking about his views on the international situation. However, Berlinguer said that, as the PCI already informed the Yugoslavs of their stances, he would like to first hear Tito’s position regarding these issues. Tito agreed, and started with the most important international topic at that time - Cambodia, where recently the head of state Norodom Sihanouk was ousted from power.⁵⁰¹ Tito gave his full support to Sihanouk, adding that the entire Non-Aligned Movement was firm in supporting him, not the new government. He viewed Sihanouk as a moderate politician, opposed to the rule of great powers. Tito added, in confidence, that Sihanouk was also not looking favorably on Chinese and Vietnamese infiltration in his country. However, Tito was glad that Sihanouk found salvation in China, underlining that the CIA had ousted him, hence the Non-Aligned will be on his side. Yugoslavia was attacked for its position on this issue by some socialist countries, who emphasized their economic interests in Cambodia. Tito responded to those remarks by saying that Yugoslavia also risked its economic interests when recognizing East Germany and Algeria, but had not hesitated. Regarding the Soviet Union’s involvement in this matter, and more generally regarding its actions in the Third World, Tito stated that Moscow should not issue resolutions, but be present in anti-imperialist struggle, for its own sake.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454.

⁵⁰⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454.

⁵⁰¹ More about his ousting and the political dynamics in Cambodia at that time – O. A. Westad, *The Global Revolution*, 189-190.

⁵⁰² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454.

After reviewing Cambodia, Tito and Berlinguer passed to other international topics. Tito expressed his frustrations with Indonesia and Sukarno, as they were, with their anti-communist campaign, entering the American bloc. Berlinguer responded that moves like those create problems with the general public. For instance, they had a problem with the Italian communist public when a Bulgarian delegation visited Greece, and Tito responded that for the same reason Yugoslavia had no interstate relations with Spain. Tito then asked about PCI's views on the Middle East, which was in an alarming situation, and Berlinguer explicitly stated that the PCI views it identically like Yugoslavia. Their main aim was to contact various Arab actors and to influence the Italian government. Unlike in 1967, the PCI was now not alone in defending the Arab positions. Longo was worried about the military aspect, i.e. the capability of Arab armies to overcome at one point, so Berlinguer posed this question to the Yugoslav president. According to Tito, time was not working for Israel, since the Soviets finally provided substantial military aid and Nasser was patient. Berlinguer also wanted to know more about the Palestinian issue, and Tito's view of the Fatah. Tito responded that he viewed them as progressive actors, and in confidence added that he was personally involved in the issue. He already had one meeting with Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, and was going to meet him again. The meetings were on Goldmann's initiative, and Tito expressed the well-known Yugoslav positions. According to Goldmann, there was both understanding and opposition to Tito's perspective, but with room for further talks.⁵⁰³

At the end of the meeting, Berlinguer expressed his concerns regarding the Sino-Soviet conflict, saying that it severely damaged the movement and the situation in Indochina. He also added that the communist masses in Italy were very concerned, wanting peace among these two socialist countries. Hence, Berlinguer asked what can be done to stop the conflict, although he had no illusions that it was an easy task. Tito responded that the crucial thing was not to take sides, but be unbiased and remind both countries of their internationalist duties. Yugoslavia, in an effort to do so, tried to improve the relations with Beijing, but such action bothered Moscow. Finally, Berlinguer gave his full support for the upcoming Tito's visit to Italy, and offered PCI's help. Tito thanked, adding that he hopes the PCI would not mind him meeting the Pope. Berlinguer responded that that was certainly not the case, as his party supported this meeting also.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454.

⁵⁰⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454.

In subsequent meetings the topics were similar, as Berlinguer also talked about Indochina, the Middle East and Europe with other Yugoslav officials. Regarding Indochina, Berlinguer emphasized that the PCI had three goals – to make its government condemn the aggression, recognize the government of North Vietnam, and do not recognize the new government in Cambodia. For now, success was still distant, but many other parties and groups were joining them, except the PSDI that remained the most faithful American actor in the country. Outside Italy, the PCI organized a meeting of Western communist parties, with the topic of Indochina. The goal of the meeting was not just to address the situation in that region, but to send an appeal to Beijing and Moscow to stop their conflict, an initiative that was not accepted by all of the present parties. Berlinguer then switched to European topics. Despite the mutually shared reserves regarding two Soviet initiatives, for an anti-imperialist and a European congress, the PCI decided to participate and asked the Yugoslavs to join them. However, the PCI thought that it was crucial that every workers' party fights for the overcoming of the blocs within its own country. The economic agreements with the socialist countries were not seen as a sufficient step in this direction. They also supported East Germany in its wish to negotiate with Brandt and to pressure him not to talk only with Moscow. Hence, the PCI was skeptical of interstate agreements and direct negotiations of superpowers, but wanted to broaden the process of collaboration in Europe, and make a bigger impact within the Italian and other Western societies. These views were strictly correlated with the PCI's experience of collaboration with the SPD. As Berlinguer explained, once SPD entered power, they neglected their collaboration with the PCI (and the LCY), and focused on interstate relations. The PCI was fearing that, in fact, the SPD was just conducting a task for Washington with its contacts with socialist countries.⁵⁰⁵

Other topics were briefly touched upon. Both sides agreed that the situation in Czechoslovakia was difficult; Berlinguer defended PCI's close relations with the PCF, as necessary for the workers' movement in Western Europe, despite the differences between the two parties; and he wanted to know more about the pro-Soviet groups in Yugoslavia, which were, according to the responses, existent but small and weak. However, the final paragraph of the Yugoslav report on the visit summarizes the Yugoslav stance towards the PCI at that time. According to the report, there were three important aspects of this visit. Firstly, the PCI postponed this visit, waiting for a strong cause to come and justify it. Eventually, they found it in the

⁵⁰⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454.

Cambodian crisis. Secondly, the visit was important for the PCI as a balance, a visit to a “liberal” socialist country after the expulsion of the *il manifesto* group, and after a period of close collaboration with the conservative PCF. And finally, the visit was important for the international affirmation of Berlinguer, being his first visit as the deputy Secretary General.⁵⁰⁶

Just a month after Berlinguer’s visit, from June 27th to July 1st, Krste Crvenkovski and Stane Dolanc visited Italy and had meetings with various high-level PCI officials (Berlinguer, Galuzzi, Pajetta etc.). The first topic of the meetings were international issues, mostly the same ones analyzed during Berlinguer’s visit to Yugoslavia. Berlinguer added that he had a meeting with George Marchais of the PCF, who asked him to transmit to the Yugoslavs his idea of forming a separate body of the European communist parties, which would coordinate their actions regarding various European initiatives, primarily the CSCE. Berlinguer distanced himself from this idea, saying that it was only a proposition and that the PCI had not assumed its position. The Yugoslavs explicitly refused it, saying that they have had negative experiences with similar bodies in the past. Berlinguer and Galuzzi passed to the Czechoslovak issue, criticizing the removal of Dubček from the party, which they also did publicly, and adding that their stance on Czechoslovakia, despite Soviet pressures, remained unchanged. However, in writing the report on the visit, the Yugoslav delegates underlined that the public critique was milder than it was firstly intended, and that during the visit the Italian comrades had not openly criticized the CPSU. Pajetta once again made comments which irritated the Yugoslavs. When he was talking about the situation in the Mediterranean, he underlined three factors that blocked the solution of the crisis: Soviet meddling; PCF’s relation with the Algerian communists, and Algerian radicalism; and, as he added, “Yugoslavia, with its Non-Alignment policy”.⁵⁰⁷ Even Berlinguer remained silent when the Yugoslavs exposed their views on the preparations of the Non-Aligned Conference, proving that the PCI was apparently not fond of this organization. However, when the Yugoslavs explained

⁵⁰⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-454. In his analysis of the visit, Marco Galeazzi underlined how this meeting brought together Tito and Berlinguer, forming a strategic convergence between the two leaders. The crucial principle forming that convergence was the mutual wish to fight for the overcoming of the blocs. Berlinguer understood the impact of Non-Alignment, and of Tito personally, in the global struggle for this principle. Hence, he became a staunch promoter of closer ties between the PCI and LCY. However, many in the PCI were not so convinced regarding Belgrade’s alleged positive international impact. Some, like Pajetta, for pro-Soviet reasons, some, like Tortorella, Curzi and Barioli, due to the unreliable ambiguity of the Yugoslav foreign policy, which often shifted from Moscow to Washington. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 225-227, 233.

⁵⁰⁷ Pajetta made another provocation when, while talking about Bulgaria, he said that the San Stefano Treaty of 1878 would have changed Europe (this was a provocation having in mind that by the treaty Bulgaria would be given the biggest part of Yugoslav Macedonia and a significant part of Eastern Serbia).

their stances on European affairs, especially their support to the CSCE, Berlinguer fully agreed, only adding that it would be good if the Yugoslavs could participate at the preparatory meeting for the conference of European nations, organized by the Eastern bloc.⁵⁰⁸

The second part of the conversations was dedicated to the situation in the PCI and in Italy. Pecchioli underlined that the new PCI's strategy was one of broad agreements, even with the left wing of the DC. The goal was to immediately enter in the "governing zone", despite risks of losing a significant part of the party's membership.⁵⁰⁹ The Yugoslav delegates were under the impression that the party's leadership was not united in this idea. The PCI officials also talked about the *il manifesto* group,⁵¹⁰ strikes, youth,⁵¹¹ etc. Finally, at the end of the report, the Yugoslavs made a few observations. Firstly, their impression was that almost every high-level PCI official wanted contact with Yugoslavia, as contacts with Belgrade gave them prestige, not just within the PCI but in the general Italian public also. Best example for that was Novella's attention to the delegation, understandable having in mind that he was contesting Berlinguer's position. Secondly, it was added that many considered Berlinguer as excessively progressive and insufficiently leaning towards Moscow. And, thirdly, it was predicted that, due to the Soviet pressure, the situation at the PCI's top would continue to be complicated.⁵¹²

After this visit, the LCY-PCI relations were quite still for the rest of 1970. The only important contacts were in November, and they were motivated by Tito's visit to Italy.⁵¹³ The first one was the visit of Gerardo Chiaromonte, made from October 29th to November 2nd. Chiaromonte offered PCI's help for Tito's visit to Italy, adding that it comes in time of rising of the left, a process which could only be strengthened by the visit. The two sides also agreed to have a meeting

⁵⁰⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-456.

⁵⁰⁹ The Yugoslav delegates had a similar conversation with Galuzzi, who commented on the results of the PCI at the regional elections. Galuzzi underlined that the most important lesson the PCI learned was that, in order to have any viable electoral progress, it had to demonstrate its national independence and internal democracy. Hence, at the cost of losing some members, the PCI had to make a significant step forward, as the voters had not wanted to vote for a party that had no chance of entering the government and changing the country. Galuzzi presented him as a part of these new forces, adding that they still faced opposition within the party's directorate, from officials who ask for a stronger link with Moscow. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-457.

⁵¹⁰ According to the Yugoslavs, the group was not as insignificant as the PCI wanted to persuade them.

⁵¹¹ The Yugoslavs were interested to see was the Italian youth interested in self-management. Gruppi responded positively, but added that the youth was very much chaotic in its ideological views, hence those who were interested in self-management also talked about "neo-capitalism" in Yugoslavia.

⁵¹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-456.

⁵¹³ Originally, Tito intended to visit Rome in December of 1970. However, due to a statement made by Aldo Moro, understood in Belgrade as a contestation of Yugoslav sovereignty in the so-called Zone B, the visit was postponed and eventually held in March of 1971. S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 135-160.

regarding the Slovene minority in Italy, which was held two weeks later in Trieste. Chiaromonte also added that it was Longo's recommendation not to condition the visit with a solution for the interstate frontier.⁵¹⁴ Dolanc asked Chiaromonte about PCI's foreign policy, and the PCI guest underlined that they were planning a trip to Northern Vietnam, with a possible meeting with the Chinese, adding that the party's stance towards Czechoslovakia remained unchanged. Once again, like in the previous report, the Yugoslavs noted that there was no critique of the Soviet stance towards Czechoslovakia. Chiaromonte also commented on the preparations for the Yugoslav party's congress, praising the openness in discussing the problematic topics, like the burning national issue and the student revolt. He underlined that the democratic Yugoslav approach was important for PCI's struggle in Italy. However, like many from the PCI before, he was still confused by the strong decentralization of the country.⁵¹⁵

Beside Tito's visit and PCI's foreign policy, Belgrade also continued to observe the turbulent struggle for power within the PCI. The Yugoslavs were informed not only through direct contacts, but also followed the Italian press. One of the articles that was evaluated as accurate and very informative came from *ABC*, the Milan weekly, published on November 6th. The article dealt with the changes within the party's top echelon – Pajetta and Segre, who led *L'Unità*, were downgraded, moved to the party's section of foreign affairs. On the other hand, Galuzzi was upgraded, now leading the party's press and propaganda. Berlinguer, in fact, grew stronger with these changes, and Natta was on his side, but he was under pressure from various positions. The old conservative cadres attacked him, and Amendola's group was also dissatisfied, convinced that he did not attack the *il manifesto* group strongly enough. Also it was underlined that the pressure from Moscow caused Galuzzi's substitution with Pajetta, who was a guarantee that the PCI would not "cross the line" in its foreign policy, something not certain with the more liberal Galuzzi.⁵¹⁶

On November 16th, the delegations of the two parties met in Trieste to discuss the issue of the Slovene minority in Italy. The Yugoslav delegation consisted of Mika Tripalo, Franc Popit and Jože Smole; and the PCI was represented by Chiaromonte, Silvano Bacicchi and Segre. Bacicchi initiated the conversation by underlining that the PCI was fighting for Slovene rights (through their

⁵¹⁴ With this message, the PCI in fact supported the Italian government, who also asked Belgrade not to mention the frontier issue during the visit, but rather use the visit as the best possible foundation to initiate the process of resolving this issue after Tito's return to Yugoslavia.

⁵¹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-465.

⁵¹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-460.

proposition of a law and through the struggle for a bigger autonomy of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region). Their aim was not to have a reciprocity with Yugoslavia on this issue, but they perceived stronger Slovene rights as an Italian national interest, an important democratic principle. On the other side, Bacicchi was critical of certain Slovenes who believed that the center-left government would resolve their problems better than the PCI, and of those Slovenes who formed a national party, “Slovenska skupnost”. In his opinion, the Slovenes should not divide themselves ethnically, in a separate party or syndicate. Smole praised PCI’s activity on this issue, and agreed with Bacicchi that the Slovenes should fight for their interests primarily through progressive parties, and especially through the PCI. However, he added that some form of Slovene unity should exist, adding that despite favoring the PCI, Yugoslavia could not reject contacts with other organizations, like the Slovenska skupnost, which was, in fact, an affiliate of the DC. He also agreed with Bacicchi that the Slovenes from various parties should write and sign the document regarding the position of the Slovenes together. This document was intended to be sent to the government prior to Tito’s visit. Once again, Chiaromonte repeated that it would be better to evade any discussion regarding the frontier during the visit, although the PCI deemed this question resolved and the current frontier as definitive. Tripalo assured him that there will be no discussions on the issue, but adding that the situation was ripe for a solution, and that it would be good not just for the two states, but for entire Europe, to resolve this issue soon. Chiaromonte agreed, adding that he even had information from the Italian embassy in Belgrade that an agreement could be finalized in two or three months after the visit.⁵¹⁷

The second part of the meeting was dedicated to PCI’s foreign policy. It started when Segre arrived, as he was late due to Gromyko’s visit to Rome. Firstly, Segre informed of Gromyko’s impressions – he said that the Italian government had a certain level of autonomy, and was especially pleased with its views regarding the preparations of the CSCE. Gromyko also had a conversation with the Pope, regarding the Middle East, peace and disarmament. Secondly, Segre informed on some current issues in PCI’s foreign policy. Regarding relations with the USSR, the PCI was fighting for a widening of the Soviet organized conference of European nations. The Soviets promised them that the SPD will be included.⁵¹⁸ Regarding relations with other Italian

⁵¹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-461. The PCI stances from this meeting were agreed upon a few weeks earlier between Chiaromonte and the communists of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region. APCI, Esteri, MF 071, p.258-260.

⁵¹⁸ This was a time of very fruitful collaboration between the USSR and the SPD – in August 1970 Brandt’s government signed a treaty with Moscow, declaring the inviolability of European frontiers, and a similar agreement

parties, the party was now open for collaboration in foreign policy with DC and PSI cadres. Hence, together with the DC, an institute focused on Asia, Africa and Latin America was to be founded. Finally, Segre added that Brandt, in preparations of his visit to Italy, asked for a dinner with all of the democratic Italian parties, so he could have a contact with the PCI. Tripalo understood it as a suggestion that Tito should do the same.⁵¹⁹

This turned out to be the last meeting of the two parties, as a visit of Eugenio Peggio, PCI's economic expert, was postponed due to a misunderstanding.⁵²⁰ Hence, the last important episode from 1970 that should be mentioned here is a report of the Yugoslav embassy in Rome, written in late November, on the situation within the PCI. Some of the main conclusions of this report – regarding the PCI's slight distancing from Belgrade, were already mentioned earlier, but since the report is very concrete and explicit in its evaluations, it will be quoted here extensively. According to the report, the détente in Europe was the main reason why the PCI was not so firm in its stances regarding Czechoslovakia anymore. It had become more pragmatic and wanted to preserve the unity of the party, not willing to endanger it on an issue which was not as important anymore. Hence, their stance towards the LCY was reserved now, and their interest for the overcoming of the blocs was not so strong – for instance, the Lusaka conference of the Non-Aligned was poorly covered by the PCI's press. The author of the report underlined that the PCI's opening towards the government was in Soviet interest, and that it led to a lessening of the party's theoretical engagement. However, he also underlined that this was completely in line with the “Italian road to socialism”. The report also mentioned PCI's withdrawal from some earlier stances, like the fact that the party had not been mentioning the specificity of Western Europe anymore. The main reason for this was the wish of the Italian communists not to go too forward in comparison to the PCF, its most faithful ally despite all of the problems between them. On the other side, the PCI was seeking a contact with China, which would help strengthening the party's autonomy towards Moscow, but would also undermine *il manifesto's* left opposition to the PCI. Regarding the internal division of the party, the report evaluated that the situation was calmer now. The ideas of Amendola's right had won, but they were implemented by Berlinguer and the center who

was made with Poland, in December. A. Kemp-Welch, “Eastern Europe: Stalinism to solidarity” in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 231; V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 212.

⁵¹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-461. The Yugoslavs accepted this suggestion, so, eventually, Tito did the same.

⁵²⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-465.

controlled the party. What was left of Ingrao's group blended in, becoming less important after the expulsion of the *il manifesto* group.⁵²¹

The Yugoslav crisis and the anti-Soviet rapprochement

Despite the, from Belgrade's point of view, disappointing 1970, a swift change, and a new rapprochement between LCY and PCI occurred in early 1971. As in the previous similar cases, this was motivated by the PCI's disappointment in the USSR. Now, the reasons were the Leningrad process (i.e. severe penalties for a group of Soviet Jews who tried to flee the country) and the violent clashes in Poland between the protesters and the Gomulka regime.⁵²² These were the main topics of the conversations of the Yugoslav delegation led by Mika Tripalo, which visited Italy in early January. This aim of the delegation was not to meet only with the communists, nor where they the primary address. Instead, the visit was part of the preparations for Tito's state visit, and Tripalo spoke with various Italian parties.⁵²³ Prior to the visit, Tripalo met with the Italian ambassador in Belgrade, Folco Trabalza, on January 8th. Trabalza's main aim during the conversation was to emphasize how the Yugoslav stability was an important national interest of Italy. Elaborating on this, Trabalza added that one of the reasons why a stable Yugoslavia was important to Italy was its positive contribution to the "evolution" of the PCI, which would be endangered by a crisis in Yugoslavia. In essence, this diplomatic remark meant that a Soviet

⁵²¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-464.

⁵²² According to some informal contacts the Yugoslav delegation had with PCI officials during the visit, the party's membership was more opposed to Moscow now than in 1968. Besides the two mentioned issues, mass migrations from the USSR to Israel also undermined the Soviet prestige. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470. More about the December 1970 crisis in Poland in: A. Kemp-Welch, "Eastern Europe: Stalinism to solidarity" in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 228-229; R. Service, *Compagni*, 487-488.

⁵²³ As it was mentioned earlier, after the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Italy initiated a rapprochement – Italy wanted to support Yugoslavia and its autonomy towards the Soviet Union, and the Yugoslavs needed allies as they feared a Soviet occupation of the country. The pinnacle of that rapprochement was Tito's visit, firstly planned for December of 1970. However, the unresolved issue of the frontier between the two countries hampered the rapprochement. Yugoslavia was insisting that an agreement, in which the 1954 division (Zone A of the FTT was under Italian and Zone B under Yugoslav authority) would be formalized, had to be made soon. The Rome government, having in mind the not numerous but strong opposition to renouncing of the Zone B, was opposed to such hurry. In order to pacify the internal opposition, Aldo Moro made an ambiguous statement in early December, which was understood in Belgrade as a territorial aspiration. Hence, the visit was postponed, but in January of 1971 Moro made another statement, underlining the respect for mutual territorial sovereignty. After this statement, the visit was relaunched and finalized in late March of 1971. Sasa Misic, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 146-167.

It should be added that PCI members of Parliament Umberto Cardia, Carlo Galuzzi and Leonilde Iotti protested against Moro's statement, saying that it was detrimental to Italian interests and the friendship between Italy and Yugoslavia - APCI, Esteri, MF 071, p.266.

intervention in Yugoslavia, or some other form of deterioration of the Yugoslav autonomy and its inclusion in the Eastern bloc, would hamper the positive progress of the PCI's emancipation from Moscow. Tripalo defended the PCI, not only praising its understanding of Yugoslav ties with other political parties in Italy, but also quoting their stances from the previous Trieste meeting, where the PCI officials had positive views on Italian foreign policy, and were being very constructive in that regard. Trabalza agreed, adding that they should continue to act in this direction.⁵²⁴

Prior to Tripalo's visit, *L'Unita's* correspondent from Belgrade, Petrone, wrote a comprehensive report on the crisis in Yugoslavia,⁵²⁵ and sent it to Segre. Firstly, Petrone underlined that, due to the economic crisis and decentralization of the country, inter-national and inter-republic problems arose within Yugoslavia. The main conflict was between Serbia and Croatia. The Serbian leadership wanted the continuation of the decentralization, as the economic situation in the republic was rather good. On the other hand, the Croatian and Slovene leadership wanted a stronger central control, especially over the banks and import-export companies, which were predominantly stationed in Serbia and gained big profits.⁵²⁶ Secondly, Petrone analyzed Tito's proposition of a collective leadership that should succeed him. The leadership was to have a rotating General Secretary, and many viewed it as a plan B. Allegedly, plan A was to introduce Kardelj as Tito's successor, but this idea was met with strong resistance, especially from Croatia. Thirdly, Petrone underlined that the Yugoslav foreign policy was very active during 1970 – Yugoslavia not only managed to organize Non-Aligned conference, but also normalized its relations with China, Vietnam and the Holy See, and started to be more active in Europe (Tito visited France, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and West Germany).⁵²⁷ Fourthly, regarding

⁵²⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-466.

⁵²⁵ The national crisis in Yugoslavia, acute during 1971 and 1972, damaged the LCY's prestige among the Italian communists – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 225.

⁵²⁶ More about the rising national problems, and the Serbo-Croatian conflict, during those years - I. Banac, "Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 588.

⁵²⁷ Petrone noticed a very important process, a profound change of the Yugoslav foreign policy labeled by historians as a "new foreign policy orientation" of the country. After more than a decade of concentrating primarily on the Third World, Tito shifted his focus towards Europe. The main reason for this was the general revival of European affairs at that time, through the détente and the CSCE process. Naturally, the Yugoslavs had not wanted to be sidelined from these crucial changes in Europe, but wanted to be proactive and obtain a more important role in the new East-West dialogue. Tito's visit to Italy was just a part of this initiative – from 1969 to 1972, the Yugoslav president visited 24 countries, including meetings with Brezhnev and Nixon (both in Belgrade and Washington). The main aim of the Yugoslav foreign policy was to broaden the dialogue, not just by including Non-Aligned countries, but by preventing the two superpowers to marginalize small and mid-level European countries. The Yugoslav intention was to have a conference which would not be an inter-bloc exchange of views, but a subtler and more nuanced dialogue, where every country would have a voice regardless of its power, which could lead to an overcoming of the bloc division. In fact, it was a Yugoslav attempt to introduce the values and principles of Non-Alignment in European affairs. Lj. Dimić,

the situation in Poland and the Leningrad process, Petrone underlined that the LCY had identical views as the PCI, and hence the Yugoslav press extensively reported on the stance of the Italian communists. Finally, regarding the Italian-Yugoslav relations, Petrone was under the impression that despite the crisis that had occurred, the Yugoslavs still evaluated the interstate relations positively and believed that Tito's visit was going to be organized and the crisis resolved. However, the Yugoslavs explicitly told him that they expected a stronger activity of the PCI regarding the frontier issue.⁵²⁸

On the first day of his visit, January 11th, Tripalo had a long conversation with Berlinguer, Pajetta, Segre and Mechini. Tripalo was mostly interested in the Yugoslav-Italian relations, primarily in Moro's afore mentioned statement. On the other side, the PCI officials primarily wanted to talk about the frustrating international events (Poland and the Leningrad process). The Yugoslav-Italian relations were briefly touched upon, since the PCI's stances were known and appreciated by Belgrade. The PCI wanted a definitive solution for the frontier, that is a formalization of the current demarcation, and supported the interstate rapprochement,⁵²⁹ encouraging the Yugoslavs to conduct the visit soon. The only surprising stance was that the PCI officials, like every other party except PSIUP, denied the Yugoslav suspicions that Moro's statement could have been inspired by some external forces (i.e. Washington). Although it was surprising for the Yugoslavs that the PCI agreed with the other parties, they praised it, emphasizing it as a "new quality" of the Italian communists. The PCI officials also commented on the upcoming presidential elections in Italy. According to them, Moro had no chance to be elected. However, although the PCI appreciated his foreign policy, like the Vatican they preferred Giulio Andreotti, due to his openness for DC-PCI collaboration.⁵³⁰

After the Yugoslav side gave its explanation of the internal situation in their country,⁵³¹ the two sides passed to international issues, the primary interest of the Italian communists. Pajetta,

Jugoslavija i Hladni rat, 357-383. Naturally, such a profound change of Yugoslav foreign policy consequentially impacted its relations with the PCI also, giving them a new, more Europe-oriented, meaning.

⁵²⁸ APCI, Esteri, MF 058, p. 19-24. From this point on, up to the 1975 agreements, the Yugoslavs were constantly pressuring the PCI to advocate for a swift solution, based on the de-facto state of the frontier. The reluctance of the Italian communists to do so had been one of the rare divisive points in the relations between the two parties.

⁵²⁹ Tripalo even informed them, for the first time, of the secret negotiations between the two states regarding the frontier, initiated in 1968. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470.

⁵³⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470.

⁵³¹ They offered a series of propagandistic claims that Yugoslavia was successfully resolving the inner national conflicts, which was proved wrong just months later with the rise of the national revolt in Croatia. Ironically, Tripalo

like in several previous occasions, asked about the Yugoslav relations with Tirana, but he and Segre also asked about the Yugoslav perception of the Mediterranean, of the Soviet role within it, and about the Yugoslav relations with Greece. Tripalo responded that: the Albanians, despite Yugoslav attempts, wanted to collaborate only in a case of crisis; relations with Greece were improved, although Bulgaria wanted to hamper this; and finally, regarding the Mediterranean, although the Yugoslav goal was the withdrawal of both superpowers, Belgrade was aware that the Soviet presence protected the Arabs. Hence they tolerated not only the USSR military presence, but also the fact that the Soviets were strongly limiting the Yugoslav influence in Cairo. Despite this Soviet influence, Nasser was going to make a visit to Belgrade soon, and the Yugoslavs believed that Egypt would remain Non-Aligned. Regarding the relations between Moscow and Belgrade, they were only formally good. When in December the crisis between Italy and Yugoslavia arose, Moscow's message was to join the Warsaw pact, as it was the only mode in which Yugoslavia could be helped. Pajetta then asked were there any Soviet pressures regarding the Lusaka conference of the Non-Aligned Movement. Tripalo responded that some pressures were present but, after the conference, the Soviet media gave it a positive coverage. However, for Tripalo the problem was that the USSR practically denied the existence of Non-Alignment, rarely mentioning it like the United States, but wanted only inter-bloc solutions and agreements regarding the most important global issues.⁵³²

The next topic of the conversation was the most important one – the situation in Poland. Since the PCI was better informed and more interested,⁵³³ for the biggest part of the conversations regarding this topic the Italians were informing their Yugoslav comrades. Pajetta elaborated on the situation in Poland, adding that the PCI had not assumed its negative stance towards the situation due to the pressures of the Italian public, but due to information they obtained from Starewicz, who was sent by the Polish party to explain the situation. Starewicz's explanation was that this was a working-class protest, despite the burning of some PUWP's premises. The death toll was forty, although, according to him, it would be even worse if the orders of Gomulka and Kliszko

himself was ousted in late 1971. According to the Yugoslav reports, the Italian communists were interested in the situation, but not worried by it. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470.

⁵³² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470.

⁵³³ Yugoslavia was consequently anti-Soviet, hence the crises in the Eastern bloc could not damage its reputation. However, for the PCI it was the opposite, particularly having in mind the rapprochement between the PCI and the Soviets in 1970. Hence the Italian communists were very affected by these crises in the Eastern bloc, which damaged the PCI's reputation in Italy and across other Western countries.

were followed through. Hence, the government was the sole responsible, and the leadership of the party was paralyzed, while the workers and the Catholic church were cautious and acted responsibly. Starewicz also praised the Soviet response,⁵³⁴ saying that Moscow had advocated for a political solution all along. After the crisis was calmed, the PUWP decided not to initiate a process against Gomulka, but primarily to have a dialog with the Catholics and the Vatican in order to resolve the problems. The only flaw of this strategy was the regime's conflict with cardinal Wyszynski. After corroborating Starewicz's information, Pajetta ironically added that in socialist countries the General Secretary could be changed only if he goes "crazy". Regarding the Leningrad process, Pajetta said that the PCI assumed its position, and wanted to discuss the issue with Moscow. As he added, although the PCI was the most pro-Arab party in the movement,⁵³⁵ they were bothered by the concessions to anti-Semitism in the USSR. Berlinguer then asked Tripalo what was the Yugoslav stance on Poland. Tripalo responded that, in fact, the Yugoslavs were not much informed, since the LCY and PUWP had no relations, hence they followed the PCI's reactions to inform themselves. For Belgrade, the Polish crisis demonstrated, once again, the pitfalls of bureaucratism. That kind of political system led to the alienation of the leaders, not just from their class, but from their colleagues in the party's top echelons also.⁵³⁶ Hence, the status quo was unsustainable and had to be changed. The only positive thing was that no one blamed imperialism, like in similar previous cases in the Eastern bloc. For the Yugoslavs it was also surprising how, having in mind the much better situation in Poland than in Hungary during 1956, now it was the opposite, and the Hungarians went forward but the Poles no. Hence, Yugoslavia would like a Kadar-ization of Poland, to which Pajetta ironically added that in Hungary there was a type of "enlightened absolutism".⁵³⁷

The meeting was concluded with a discussion about several international topics. Pajetta spoke of their visit to Vietnam, praising the great relations, adding that the only divisive issue was Yugoslavia. The Vietnamese did not understand the concept of Non-Alignment and, despite PCI's

⁵³⁴ The Italian communists were not so convinced, adding that the Soviets "pretended to be naïve", but, in fact, had an impact in the ousting of Gomulka.

⁵³⁵ It is reasonable to assume that Pajetta did not include Yugoslavia in the movement, thus labeling his party as the most pro-Arab one.

⁵³⁶ Identifying bureaucratism as one of the greatest dangers to socialism was not mentioned only during this meeting, but was, in fact, one of the core values of the Yugoslav party. However, it was not an exclusively Yugoslav stance, nor original, although the LCY was certainly the most prominent communist party in denouncing this phenomenon. In fact, the anti-bureaucratic tendencies were very present across international Marxism of that era, although mostly outside of the political mainstream and as subversive tendencies – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 257.

⁵³⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470.

efforts, did not want to change their mind regarding Belgrade. Also, the PCI was bothered that the Vietnamese, in their official diplomatic lists, were not considering Yugoslavia as a socialist country, but listed it as the first one after other socialist countries. Tripalo responded that Belgrade was gaining some results in strengthening relations with China and Vietnam, but the ideological issues continued to block a stronger collaboration. Berlinguer also asked about the relations with North Korea, and Pajetta, in his well-known ironic manner, added “you are not liked in Asia”. Berlinguer then concluded this issue by saying that the PCI did not want to be a mediator, but was very interested in improvement of relations between Hanoi and Belgrade. Finally, the issue of summoning a Mediterranean conference was mentioned, and the Italians emphasized two problems: the PCF wanted to include the Algerian communists (which would be a problem for the country’s regime) and that there was the dilemma should the Francoist Spain be invited.⁵³⁸

Later that month, on January 24th, the PCI celebrated its 50th anniversary. Besides the LCY and other Italian parties, only the CPSU, PCF, Communist party of Spain and the Swiss Party of Labour were invited. The LCY was represented by Veljko Vlahović (and Budimir Babović), who gave a speech in which he emphasized certain PCI views dear to Belgrade – he spoke of the PCI’s autonomy, creative and critical approach to theory, dedication to democracy and to different roads to socialism. Regarding the presence of other Italian parties, the impression of the Yugoslav delegates was that this was a symbolic gesture of opening, connected with the 1973 elections which had already posed the question of the PCI’s possible entrance in the government. It was also noted that the PCI was once again zealously dedicated to the principles of autonomy and of different roads to socialism, after the Polish crisis and the Leningrad process. Most importantly, the Yugoslavs were under the impression that they, once again, became the PCI’s favorite communist partner. That impression was not only due to the cordial reception of the Yugoslav delegation, but also due to the explicit information, coming from the PCI officials, that their relations with Moscow were not good. Giuliano Pajetta added that the Soviets even teased the Italians, saying that their Yugoslav “friends” were going to the PSU⁵³⁹ congress. Although this re-opening of the

⁵³⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-470.

⁵³⁹ In fact, at that time it was consisting only of the old social-democrat party. Just a month later, PSU readopted its old name – PSDI. The PCI was very critical of the social-democrats, viewing them as a pronouncedly right-wing party, and expressed interest (i.e. preoccupation) regarding the LCY’s participation at their congress. Later on, in April, the PCI was more explicit, expressing its protest regarding the PSDI’s visit to Belgrade. In that protest, communicated telephonically by the correspondent Petrone, the PSDI was labeled as a “reactionary” party, which collaborates with fascists and does not participate anymore in antifascist committees. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-477.

PCI towards Belgrade was a repetition of the similar processes from 1956 and 1968, which the Yugoslav delegates emphasized, it was evaluated that this rapprochement was on “more solid grounds”. Vlahović used the visit to invite Longo to Yugoslavia, and to advocate for a bigger PCI involvement in propagating the CSCE project in Italy. On the other hand, Segre asked Vlahović to organize a left-wing European meeting that would include the SPD, PCI, PCF, LCY, Swedish social-democrats and French socialists.⁵⁴⁰ Also, he added that the Soviet idea of a congress of European nations was not viable now, since Czechoslovakia was renouncing of its sovereignty.⁵⁴¹

The PCI-LCY contacts were so intensified that not even a month passed and there was a new high-level meeting – Pajetta visited Yugoslavia, from February 14th to 18th. He held lectures on the PCI’s 50-year history in Belgrade and Zagreb, and had various meetings with Yugoslav officials. The most important of them was in the presidency of the Yugoslav party, and it was focused on international issues. Firstly, there were the European topics, and the most important of them was the idea of a left-wing European meeting, proposed by the PCI in earlier encounters.⁵⁴² The Yugoslavs emphasized that this meeting needed to be complementary with the CSCE process, not parallel to it. Pajetta agreed about the importance of the CSCE, adding that Belgrade should try to pressure the Italian government regarding this process,⁵⁴³ since Italy was conditioning the CSCE with finding a solution for Berlin and the Mediterranean. Regarding the practical preparations of the meeting, it was agreed that the PCI should contact the PSI and try to include them in this initiative, and it was also discussed about the inclusion of Romanian communists and of the British Labor Party. On the other side, Pajetta was skeptical of a possible PCF’s involvement. Regarding the Soviet conference of European nations, a preparatory meeting in

It should be added that this was a time of great division within the Italian left and within the entire political system in Italy. The main friction was between the PSI and PSU, with the PSI being, once again, more directed towards the PCI than towards the DC, while the PSU continued its collaboration with the DC – U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell’Italia contemporanea*, 121-122. Hence, the PCI’s staunch criticism of the PSU was inextricably linked to their rapprochement with the socialists.

⁵⁴⁰ Since 1969, Berlinguer, Galuzzi and Segre led the efforts within the PCI to develop the party’s collaboration with the European non-communist left. Their aim was to create a new, third, foreign policy pillar of the party, in addition to the socialist countries and the liberation movements – M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 190-194.

⁵⁴¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-472.

⁵⁴² The earliest PCI proposition in this regard was made by Galuzzi, in April of 1969. In the meantime, Swedish social-democrats and the SPD had a similar proposition, which was supported by Berlinguer and Galuzzi, during their visit to Belgrade in May 1970. The SPD then dismissed the idea, labeling it “too wide”, but, as it was mentioned earlier, the idea was once again proposed by the PCI. Firstly, Segre did it, in his conversation with Vlahović in January of 1971, and Pajetta repeated it during this meeting. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-478.

⁵⁴³ According to Marco Galeazzi, the known pro-Soviet Pajetta assumed the role of a USSR messenger in this meeting, acting in line with the Soviet interests. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 227.

Brussels was summoned, and Pajetta thought that the LCY was invited, which was not the case. Pajetta added that the Soviets were reluctant to resolve the Czechoslovak issue, but underlined that it was a problem that could not be avoided.⁵⁴⁴

The second topic were the preparations of various Mediterranean encounters. The PCI, alongside the Egyptian government, proposed a wide conference on “peace and justice in the Middle East”, which was to be held in fall, in Florence. On the other side, the Algerian government proposed a meeting of Mediterranean communists and progressive Arab countries. This initiative was hampered by the PCF, which wanted to include the Soviets, exclude the French united socialists, and had problematic relations with the Algerian regime. However, there were also problems between the Arab parties themselves. The PCI was thinking of creating an Italian committee, which would include PCI, PSIUP, PSI and the left-wing of the DC, which would then contact various Arab organizations and parties. In that regard, Pajetta was asking for Yugoslav help in contacting the Albanian communists, adding that Tirana probably had significant impact in hampering the PCI’s efforts to establish some contact with Beijing. The Yugoslav response was that, despite some improvement in the interstate relations, the LCY still had no party relations with the Albanians. Finally, at the end of the meeting, Pajetta proposed a few concrete forms of collaboration – a visit of Yugoslav experts to the PCI, Gramsci Institute and *Rinascita*, in order to get better acquainted with the work of the Italian communists.⁵⁴⁵

In March of 1971, Josip Broz Tito made his first and only state visit to Italy. Although the Yugoslav aims were not achieved during the visit (i.e. speeding up of the negotiations regarding the frontier), the visit was important and successful on two levels. Firstly, it served as a strengthening of the Yugoslav-Italian rapprochement on bilateral issues, which was initiated in 1968 and went through a crisis in December of 1970. And secondly, it was an opportunity for the leaders of the two countries to discuss various important international issues of mutual interest - the CSCE process and the situation in Europe; the state of affairs in the Mediterranean, with particular focus on the Middle East; and the situation in Indochina.⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-474.

⁵⁴⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-474.

⁵⁴⁶ More about the visit in: S. Mišić, „Poseta Josipa Broza Tita Italiji 1971. godine“ [The Visit of Josip Broz Tito to Italy in 1971], in: *Tito – viđenja i tumačenja* [Tito – Views and Interpretations], edited by: O. Manojlović Pintar, INIS, Belgrade 2011, 505-521; AJ, KPR (837), I-2/48 κ90.

The Italian communist party was mentioned only once during Tito's conversations with the Italian leaders, but on that one occasion it was extensively talked about the PCI. The Italian Prime Minister Emilio Colombo met with Tito privately, in an informal meeting during the visit, on March 26th, and the two men discussed the position of the PCI within the Italian political life. Colombo expressed the stance of the governing parties towards the PCI. As he said, the communists were an undeniable political force, the second party in the country by electoral support. Hence, he added, their participation in the government would be natural, but it provoked harsh disagreements. In his view, the main problem was in the fact that the PCI was directed more towards the USSR than towards the interests of the Italian working class, thus not being a national party in the full sense. To this Tito responded by saying that the PCI had evolved significantly in the recent years, now being part of the group of parties which advocate the different roads to socialism. Colombo questioned this view, saying that the PCI followed such principles more in its rhetoric than in its actions, especially regarding its foreign policy, where it prioritized Moscow's interests. He underlined the particular political education of the PCI's leadership, which blocs the impulses for autonomous actions (which were, for instance, present in the early stages of the Czechoslovak crisis), and leads the party to always align with the USSR. Hence, according to Colombo, various problems would emerge if the PCI was to enter the government with such policies – they would ask for the country's exit from the NATO alliance, and would defend the Soviet interests in the Mediterranean. The Italian prime minister concluded the conversation by saying that the PCI's status would be completely different if the party was more like the LCY – class oriented, but independent.⁵⁴⁷

After Tito's visit to Italy, the intensive LCY-PCI contacts continued, and Belgrade was satisfied with the PCI's firm foreign policy course.⁵⁴⁸ The most important contact was in late June,

⁵⁴⁷ AJ, KPR (837), I-2/48 к90, Забелешка о разговору Председника Републике са председником италијанске владе Е. Коломбом 26. марта 1971. у Риму [Note on the conversation between the President of the Republic and the Italian Prime Minister E. Colombo March 26th 1971 in Rome].

⁵⁴⁸ For instance, Longo's interview to *Rinascita* in late May was noted in Belgrade, since the PCI's leader emphasized his critiques of the blocs and hegemony, devotion to peaceful coexistence and national autonomy, and support to the CSCE. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-479. It should be added that Vlahović gave an interview to *Rinascita* during the same month, in which he spoke of Togliatti's influence on international communism. One of the reasons Vlahović was so respected by the Italian communists was his decades-long friendship with Togliatti (it started during the Spanish civil war, and continued in the years when both of them worked at the Comintern). The main point of the interview was a defense of polycentrism (denial that it was aimed at forming more centers, but underlining that it was principally against any type of center within the communist movement), and Vlahović emphasized that this was not an idea Togliatti launched only in 1956, but was also present in his earlier work, especially after the Comintern's dissolution in 1943. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-471.

when a PCI delegation (Aldo Tortorella – member of the Politburo and director of the *L'Unità*; Adalberto Minucci – member of the Directorate; and Rodolfo Mechini – from the party's foreign affairs section) visited Yugoslavia. Prior to the main meeting between the PCI's delegation and a LCY delegation led by Vlahović, Mechini informed his Yugoslav counterpart Babović of some important issues in PCI's foreign policy. Mechini firstly, and mostly, spoke of the Mediterranean affairs. He said that, despite the changes in the Egyptian government after the death of Nasser, Cairo still wanted to participate at the conference on peace and justice in the Middle East. However, the conference was hampered by several PCF requests to exclude some participants, like Jean-Paul Sartre. Mechini also informed that the LCY would be invited to a meeting between the Italian and Arab parties, which was probably going to be held soon. According to Mechini a wider Mediterranean conference was not plausible in the nearest future, and he underlined the biggest dilemma regarding this initiative – should the USSR be invited or not. Concluding the Mediterranean issues, Mechini added that several anti-Israel Jews were in charge with the Middle Eastern affairs in the PCI, which caused some problems. Secondly, Mechini repeated the already mentioned PCI assessment that the Soviet idea of an antiimperialist conference was not existent anymore. And, thirdly, he informed Babović that the PCI relaunched its contacts with the SPD, as with the Swedish social-democrats.⁵⁴⁹

During the main meeting mostly the Yugoslavs spoke, on two topics – Yugoslav internal affairs, and the situation in the international communist movement. Vlahović was inspired, and gave a detailed, although propagandistic, outlook on the Yugoslav socialism, its problems and the solutions for those issues. He underlined diversity as one of the missing attributes in current socialism, and Yugoslavia, as a multiethnic state, was particularly interested in strengthening this principle. The Yugoslav main preoccupation was how to reform the system from the bottom up, not the other way round, and self-management was crucial in achieving it, as in resolving the national disputes. For all of that to happen, the party had to lead the self-management, but also to be changed itself by the self-managing process. The national program of the LCY was to affirm the nations, not suffocate them in a centralist system, but to also affirm internationalism. The Yugoslavs, in fact, wanted to give an example to the socialist world that affirming the national sentiments does not have to endanger internationalism. In Vlahović's words, the national sentiments were not the problem, but statism and bureaucratism, which provoked nationalism.

⁵⁴⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-480.

Like in previous occasions, the PCI officials listened to these Yugoslav ideas and approved them, but wondered could these ideas be implemented without a strong party. The Yugoslavs were opposed to such centralist views, adding that the democratization had to include the party, or the entire process will be inefficient. Vlahović, however, added that there were some tendencies to transform the LCY into an alliance of national parties, but Tito and the masses were the strongest obstacles to such intentions, demanding a unified Yugoslav party.⁵⁵⁰

When the Italian comrades made a flattering remark that they would like Italy to be neutral like Yugoslavia if the PCI obtains power, the conversation passed to international communist affairs. Vlahović was asked about his view of the situation within the movement, and he evaluated it ambiguously – on one hand saying that there were some improvements, on the other adding that the contradictions were becoming more aggravated. He once again underlined the national issue, repeating that the new situation in the world asked from the communists to revisit their “classic” views on nationalism, and redefine them, due to an unprecedented entrance of masses in politics and due to the socialist aspirations of new national states in the world. At the same time, the old forms of unity also had to be revised. Above all, the idea of “unity in differences” had to be clarified – what were the tolerated differences in that unity. In Vlahović’s opinion, the Yugoslav outlook on this issue was gaining support worldwide. Finally, Vlahović moved from strict socialist topics and underlined, according to him, the biggest problem in international affairs – the superpowers that were dividing the world between themselves. His fear was that, after finding a solution for the Berlin issue, the Balkans could be the next focus. This fear was bigger having in mind his personal experience from the Third World, where he saw an efficient delimitation of zones of interests. However, he was very optimistic due to the inclination of various political actors from Latin America, troubled by the Monroe doctrine, towards Non-Alignment. Also, he added that China was not anti-Non-Alignment like before, but started to demonstrate more respect for this idea.⁵⁵¹

In the same days of late June, when the PCI delegation was in Belgrade, Giuseppe Boffa visited Yugoslavia once more. Since, as it is shown earlier, he was very respected by the Yugoslavs, Boffa had a very cordial reception. He was granted the opportunity to talk with several LCY officials of the highest level, but also had various conversations in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia. The reason for his arrival was the process of constitutional and party

⁵⁵⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-480.

⁵⁵¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-480.

reforms in the country, but he was also interested in the international relations within Yugoslavia, economy, self-management and some aspects of foreign policy (views of the current state of the communist movement and relations with Bulgaria). Hence, Boffa primarily came to listen and research the Yugoslav situation. However, in the Yugoslav report on the visit, three Boffa's reactions were underlined. The first one was that, according to the Yugoslavs, he made "unrealistic" parallels – instead of comparing Yugoslavia with, for instance, Turkey, he always compared it with the highly industrialized West. Secondly, Boffa was always glad, and spoke affirmatively, when he heard that the party's role was being strengthened. And, finally, Boffa once commented on the Italian affairs, saying that the key issue of Italian politics at that moment was would the DC go to the left or to the right.⁵⁵²

During the summer, numerous PCI officials spent their holidays in Yugoslavia. Although Belgrade cancelled this form of cooperation earlier, reasoning that it would be better to invest the funds in study trips than in holidays, now the situation was different. The Yugoslavs were interested, once again, in attracting high-level officials of other parties to visit Yugoslavia. Regarding the PCI, it was decided to invite Longo, but he did not come. The highest PCI official that spent his holidays in Yugoslavia was Pajetta, who personally showed his interest to be invited, and particularly asked to spend a part of the vacation in Macedonia. As the conversations in the southern Yugoslav republic showed, he was interested in observing the situation in Macedonia regarding the Bulgarian territorial claims, and to have a better understanding of the entire broader region of Macedonia, divided between Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece. Besides this visit, Pajetta had the opportunity to talk on international issues with Dolanc, Crvenkovski and Dizdarević. The conversation with Dizdarević was the most important one, since he informed Pajetta on Tito's visit to Moscow,⁵⁵³ and on the Yugoslav view of the current situation in the Middle East. At this meeting it was also decided to organize another visit in fall, which would be similar to the previous one in June, focusing on international issues.⁵⁵⁴

Due to organizational problems, primarily regarding the upcoming Second conference of the LCY (in February 1972) and PCI Congress (March 1972), this meeting was eventually postponed, and held in 1972.⁵⁵⁵ Hence, in the fall of 1971, not much happened in the LCY-PCI

⁵⁵² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-481.

⁵⁵³ The PCI intensively followed Tito's visit to the USSR. APCI, Esteri, MF 162, p. 1095-1101.

⁵⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-484, 486.

⁵⁵⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-488.

relations.⁵⁵⁶ In late October, Belgrade was informed of a contact between Pajetta and the Egyptian ambassador. The PCI was irritated by certain politically motivated trials in Egypt, hence the Egyptian ambassador came to the PCI headquarters in order to reassure Pajetta that the new government, led by Sadat, was not getting closer to the United States and distancing itself from the USSR,⁵⁵⁷ but was putting maximum efforts into preserving the friendly relations with Moscow. The ambassador had not had much success in persuading Pajetta. Although the PCI still had sympathies for Egypt, viewing it as an anti-imperialist country, the political trials and Cairo's contacts with Washington endangered the credibility of Egypt in the Italian public. Many other incidents in the Arab world had even a stronger negative effect. The biggest one was the Palestine-Jordan armed conflict, which, as an internal Arab conflict, additionally hampered the growing of pro-Arab sentiments in Italy. The PCI was particularly frustrated with this evolution of the situation, since they managed to do a lot for the Arab cause after 1967, when they were practically alone in Italy with such views. Now all the progress that was made in the pro-Arab direction was endangered by political turbulences within the Arab countries.⁵⁵⁸

In late October there was another interparty contact, as *L'Unità* sent a new correspondent, Arturo Barioli. Barioli was met by Babović, from the LCY's foreign relations department, and they had a short conversation on October 29th. Praising the Yugoslav democratic discussions and the good interparty relations as something that will make his work easier, Barioli informed the Yugoslav side that during the following PCI congress, most probably, Longo will become the party's president and Berlinguer its General Secretary.⁵⁵⁹ Finally, the LCY had made a short plan for the collaboration in 1972, emphasizing that a high-level PCI delegation, led by Longo or

⁵⁵⁶ The organizational problems were, probably, not the only reason for the passivity of the LCY-PCI relations during the fall. Once again, an inactive period of interparty collaboration coincided with a dynamic period in interstate relations – in September of 1971, Sergej Kraigher, a high level Yugoslav official, visited Rome and had an informal meeting with the Prime Minister Colombo regarding the issues of the frontier and of the Slovene national rights in Italy – S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 178-180.

⁵⁵⁷ Although, in fact, that was true. The United States were, in the period from 1969 to 1973, very successful in their Middle Eastern foreign policy, managing to diminish the Soviet influence in the region – O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 197-201.

⁵⁵⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-483. Marco Galeazzi described how the PCI failed to predict Cairo's distancing from Moscow, due to its pro-Soviet bias, convinced that the Arab countries saw their future and survival only in Moscow's help. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 222-224.

⁵⁵⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-487.

Berlinguer, was expected to visit Yugoslavia, and that the Yugoslavs were also going to send a high-level delegation to the PCI's congress.⁵⁶⁰

In early 1972, prior to the March congress of the PCI, there were several contacts between the two parties. However, several elaborate reports on the PCI were also written at that time, by the Yugoslav officials in Rome. The first of them was made in late January, by Vučinić, who focused on the topic of the European integrations. PCI's positive and open stance towards the European integrations was noted by the Yugoslavs previously, but this was a first comprehensive report on the issue since 1963. The reason for such new found Yugoslav interest was probably linked to the PCI's withdrawal from earlier statements that the EEC was a hegemony of great powers and monopolies. Vučinić firstly underlined, at the very beginning of the report, that the PCI opposed to the USSR and built its autonomy on this issue. To strengthen its position, the party sought to attract other communist parties, especially the PCF, to have a similar open stance towards the EEC. The essential notion driving the PCI towards such views was the understanding that the integrations were inevitable, hence it was better not only to control them, but to speed up and democratize them. Democratization of the EEC was one of the primary goals of the Italian communists, as they deemed its bodies as not representative and bureaucratic.⁵⁶¹

The PCI also wanted to change the policies of the EEC towards Eastern Europe and Africa, viewing the actual ones as a discrimination against these countries, particularly against those engaged in anticolonial struggle. The PCI's wish was to have a better cooperation between the EEC and COMECON, as the best way to overcome the blocs. In the long run, their aim was to have a united Europe, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains. This unorthodox view of the PCI raised controversies, and many were puzzled how come the Italian party had such a different perspective on the EEC compared to other communist parties in Europe. Three explanations were in circulation: 1) that all of this was just an ideological alibi, and that the PCI wanted to participate in the EEC for pragmatic reasons; 2) that the USSR wanted to, through the PCI, create ties with the European left prior to the CSCE; 3) that the PCI opened itself up to the EEC in order to legitimize its aspirations of entering in the Italian government. According to Vučinić, all of this was true, but, on the other hand, the opening towards the integrations was not

⁵⁶⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-489. Interestingly, a similar treatment was planned for the PSI – its high-level delegation was expected to come, and the Yugoslavs were going to participate at its congress.

⁵⁶¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-490.

a mere tactic, but part of an elaborate and skillful PCI strategy. However, in concluding the report, Vučinić added that the intervention in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet presence in the Mediterranean hampered PCI's intentions to overcome the blocs – thus, the PCI accepted the status quo, and stopped with further theoretical debates on socialism and democracy, focusing on practical political issues.⁵⁶²

On the other side of the Iron Curtain, the situation in Yugoslavia was very turbulent. The national revolt in Croatia shook the foundations of the country, and, despite the propaganda camouflaging, it was obvious that Tito resolved the crisis with centralist and authoritarian decisions, ousting firstly the Croatian leadership.⁵⁶³ Vladimir Bakarić was sent to Italy, in late January, to have a series of meetings with all of the left wing parties (PCI, PSI, PSDI and PSIUP) and reassure them that everything was settled out in Yugoslavia. He gave extensive propagandistic explanations, underlining that the course of democracy and self-management was not going to be changed. Longo, Pajetta and Segre received him at the PCI headquarters, and asked several questions – primarily regarding the situation within the army (i.e. was it nationally divided) and regarding the socio-economic foundations of the crisis. Pajetta added that he had a conversation with Janos Kadar in Budapest, and the Hungarian leader was very concerned regarding the situation in Yugoslavia. Outside of the meeting, Bakarić met the old correspondent from Belgrade, Petrone, who gave him a detailed depiction of the reactions within the PCI regarding the Yugoslav crisis. In his words, the reactions could be summed up to three different types. The first one mainly came from the old cadres, who saw the crisis as an evidence of the wrong way in which the country was going, with the self-management, since 1948. The second type of reactions was positive, as many in the PCI saw the way in which the situation was peacefully resolved in Yugoslavia as the evidence that the country, unlike Czechoslovakia in 1968, was capable of managing its crises by itself. And, thirdly, some were underlining that the relations between the developed and underdeveloped regions and republics within Yugoslavia was the main problem beneath every crisis in the country. However, Petrone emphasized that only the PCI was not worried, unlike the other Italian parties, and had faith in the Yugoslav leadership. On the other hand, the Italian communist feared of repressive and anti-democratic measures in resolving the crisis, as they would

⁵⁶² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-490.

⁵⁶³ I. Banac, “Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State”, in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 588-590.

be detrimental to the communist prestige in the Italian public. They also feared that, if such solutions were to be adopted, Yugoslavia would grow closer to Moscow.⁵⁶⁴

However, the internal Yugoslav crisis had not dominated the interparty relations in their entirety, and other topics were also affronted. Vučinić's report on the PCI's policies towards the European integrations was, in fact, an introduction to the meetings held on 3rd and 4th February 1972, in Rome. The LCY delegation was headed by Vlahović, and three topics were present at the meetings: European affairs (which was the most discussed issue), the situation in Italy and the situation in Yugoslavia. The first meeting was between the Yugoslavs and a delegation consisting of Amendola, Natta, Bufalini, Segre and Peggio, and it was focused on European affairs. Amendola took the word at the beginning, elaborating PCI's views on Europe. Firstly, he underlined that the process of organizing the CSCE could not be successful if it was done only by ten states. In fact, it had to include an agreement between the USA and USSR⁵⁶⁵ and a broad participation of all European states. Secondly, Amendola briefly informed of the unsuccessful meeting in Brussels, held in January, which was intended as a broad meeting of the entire West European left. The crucial problem was the absence of the SPD, and the PCI was focused on obtaining its support, implicitly asking for Belgrade's help in this endeavor. He underlined that the general aim was that of uniting the West European left, unfortunately trapped in its national frontiers and absent from the international scenario, where the capital was dominating. At that point, Amendola briefly depicted PCI's views on European integration, already known to the Yugoslavs from Vučinić's report. It should only be added that Amendola underlined the PCI's

⁵⁶⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-491. Petrone mentioned here something that was corroborated later, in a conversation with Galuzzi. Namely, certain PCI members, who could be labeled as autonomists due to their opposition to the Soviet hegemony within the movement, feared that the Croatian crisis would push Belgrade towards Moscow. These assessments were not unfounded, as the Soviet Union tried to use this opportunity to intervene in the Yugoslav internal affairs. Brezhnev expressed his interest for the crisis and ambitions to "help" Tito in restoring his and the party's central power. Although Josip Broz Tito feared of the Croatian challenge to his power, he was also reluctant to use Soviet assistance in crushing it. Hence, the Yugoslav President managed to resolve the issue by himself. However, he did it in an authoritarian manner which pleased Brezhnev and led to a strengthening of Yugoslav-Soviet relations in the following period. Lj. Dimić, *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, 378; I. Banac, "Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 589-590.

The PCI continued to follow the situation in Yugoslavia, and Boffa visited the country once again, in February. The visit was short, presented as an expansion of his previous research, but Boffa was, in fact, mainly focused on the Croatian issue, and talked about it with Stane Dolanc and Josip Vrhovec. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-493.

⁵⁶⁵ At that time the US National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger was successfully negotiating a missile agreement with the Soviets, and finally agreed with Moscow regarding the summoning of the CSCE. R. D. Schulzinger, "Détente in the Nixon-Ford years, 1969-1976", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 379-381.

opposition to the influence of the United States⁵⁶⁶ and of the international capital in Europe, describing them as the “real dangers” for the continent.⁵⁶⁷

The Yugoslavs responded favorably to these views, even pushing the PCI to be more pragmatic. In short, they agreed that the integrations were inevitable, and Belovski even mildly criticized the “progressive” parties and movements in Europe, saying that the European governments were more active in inter-European collaboration than them, adding that every move in this direction was extremely positive and important for the overcoming of the blocs. Belovski asked what is the PCI’s vision of Europe, and what were the reactions to the PCI’s stance on the EEC – in the party basis, but among other parties as well. Amendola responded to both questions. Firstly, he responded to the second one, saying that the reactions of both the other parties and of the Italian masses were positive. The other parties became more open towards the PCI,⁵⁶⁸ and the masses were interested in the issue of integrations due to the strong migration. Secondly, he responded to the question regarding the PCI’s vision of Europe, saying that the party sees the continent in its geographical limits, adding that “the East lacks democracy, and the West lacks socialism”. Peggio corroborated this implicit critique of Moscow, saying that at a recent meeting with the Soviets regarding the European integrations they proved to be very uninformed and dogmatic regarding the issue.⁵⁶⁹

The second meeting of the Yugoslav delegation revolved around internal issues in both countries. Berlinguer and Longo were present and gave a detailed explanation of the situation in Italy. Berlinguer underlined that the public in Italy was very polarized, disappointedly predicting that it will be only furtherly divided by the referendum on divorce, especially the Italian working class, but added that it was impossible to evade it.⁵⁷⁰ He also added that the strongest capitalist actors were not interested in a revival of fascism, but mid-level industrial players, and that the *il manifesto* group was supported by the state capital. After Berlinguer, Longo talked for more than an hour and a half, also explaining the situation in Italy. He corroborated Berlinguer’s class analysis, saying that the rise of low-level bourgeoisie was causing the rise of the right. His

⁵⁶⁶ A more balanced assessment of the USA’s influence on the European integration in – N. Ludlow, “European integration and the Cold War”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 179-197.

⁵⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-507.

⁵⁶⁸ Amendola then added that Yugoslavia was the best example of how the Yalta bloc division could be bypassed.

⁵⁶⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-507.

⁵⁷⁰ More about the referendum and its impact on the Italian politics – U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell’Italia contemporanea*, 138-140.

prediction was that the PCI would preserve its position in the next elections, adding that the ultra-left actions in Italy were damaging the party, and that the dialogue with the PSI and DC was moving ahead, but slowly. In the situation where the party was forced to be more focused on political issues, and take the responsibility for the country's functioning, his vision was that the syndicates should go more to the left and act on class grounds. Regarding this issue, he added that the other parties were fearing that the communists would fully take over the syndicates. Regarding the internal issues of the PCI, Longo underlined that the party was united before its Congress, which unfortunately coincides with the electoral campaign. He ironically added that, as during the presidential elections of 1968 the PCI was damaged by the intervention in Czechoslovakia, he hoped the Soviets would not make an intervention every year. Finally, Longo informed the Yugoslavs that he would become the party's president and leave it to younger cadres. According to the Yugoslav report, he was very emotional while saying this.⁵⁷¹

The last part of the meeting was dedicated to Yugoslav affairs, more precisely to the termination of the Croatian revolt. The Yugoslavs gave their best to convince their Italian comrades that the situation in Croatia was not a crisis of the system, and that the problems were resolved democratically, through the self-management system, and publicly – the minutes from the most important LCY meetings on the issue were made public. According to the report, the Italian communist leaders listened with attention, but had not asked anything that was particularly interesting. Only a question regarding foreign interests was particularly noted, and the Yugoslavs responded to it by saying that there were foreign powers, both in the East and in the West, interested in destabilizing Yugoslavia.⁵⁷²

Prior to the PCI's congress in March, which received big attention of the Yugoslav party, the issue of PCI's policy regarding the Slovene minority in Italy was once again thoroughly examined by the LCY, in a report written in late February 1972.⁵⁷³ The leitmotif of the report was that the PCI was truly the biggest protector of Slovene national rights – at one point it was explicitly stated that the DC tends to passivize the Slovenes, while the PCI openly fights for their position

⁵⁷¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-507.

⁵⁷² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-507.

⁵⁷³ This report should be understood in the broader context of Italian-Yugoslav relations during 1972. Namely, the Yugoslav diplomacy started posing the unsolved issues in its relations with Italy (i.e. frontier and the minority rights) more aggressively in 1972. The instigators of this approach were the Slovene leaders of the LCY, who, due to their particular national interests, were not willing to delay the negotiation progress. S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 190-196, 232-237. Hence, these issues started to be more present in the LCY-PCI relations.

and views the Slovene national rights as a part of a broader transformation and democratization of Italy. Such stance was very efficient, and the communist party had more Slovenes in their membership than all of the other parties together. The PCI was not just dominant among the politically active Slovenes, but also dominated the Slovene electorate in Italy – a rough assessment was that the 60% of Slovenes in Italy vote for the PCI. The biggest fruits of PCI's efforts on this issue were two drafts of laws, one regarding the overall status of the Slovenes, and the other regarding educational issues. However, the report also stated minor critiques of the PCI on this issue, like the lack of interest of the party's Rome Directorate regarding this problem, or the excessively strong influence of Colli and Vidali on the party's Friuli-Venezia Giulia regional organization. The biggest critique regarded the PCI's relations with the Slovene cultural association, SKGZ, although it was explicitly stated that the relations were very good in overall. However, it was noted that the PCI had a paternalistic approach to the SKGZ, criticizing it for being a non-democratic middle-class organization. Also, the PCI was sometimes opposed to certain individual actions of the SKGZ (like the idea of forming a special committee of the Italian government for the Slovene issue), convinced that the Slovenes could obtain their rights only in a joint struggle with progressive political parties, not on particular ethnic grounds. Obviously, the Yugoslavs thought that the PCI should, on some occasions, support and follow the separate ethnic aims of the Slovenes.⁵⁷⁴

Regarding the unresolved issue of the frontier between Yugoslavia and Italy, the LCY looked at the PCI less favorably. On one hand, in theory, the stances of the PCI were absolutely in line with the Yugoslav views – the Italian communists supported a quick solution, based on the de facto existing state of the frontier; and they criticized the “chauvinistic” influence on the Italian refugees from Yugoslavia, which led to territorial claims towards the Zone B which was under Yugoslav control. On the other side, the Yugoslavs were absolutely dissatisfied with the PCI's practical actions in this regard. While in fall of 1971 Ferri, from the PSDI, publicly spoke about the need to resolve the frontier issue and renounce of Zone B,⁵⁷⁵ the PCI remained silent. Italian communists justified their position by saying that potential PCI public statements on the issue would only galvanize the reactionary forces, and hamper the negotiating process. Also, they were

⁵⁷⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-494.

⁵⁷⁵ More about Ferri's actions regarding the frontier issue in 1971, starting from his visit to Belgrade in April – S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 174-178.

very critical of the PSDI and their actions in this regard. The PCI saw the PSDI as an American and anti-Soviet party, and understood Ferri's action as his courting of the middle-class – they perceived it as Ferry's attempt to present himself as the defender of the Italian national interest, by stabilizing Yugoslavia and the frontier with it in a time when Belgrade was endangered by the Soviets.⁵⁷⁶ The report was concluded with an explicit statement that the PCI should finally, at its following Congress, publicly support the idea of a swift agreement regarding the frontier between the two states.⁵⁷⁷

Prior to the PCI's 13th Congress, the LCY and the Yugoslav embassy in Rome produced two very detailed reports on the situation within the Italian party. The first one was written by the Institute for History of the International Workers' Movement (Institut za istoriju međunarodnog radničkog pokreta) and it focused on PCI's internal policies. The author summarized the PCI's policy as pragmatic and constructive, criticizing the *il manifesto's* radicalism. Obviously, the Yugoslavs were convinced in the adequateness of the PCI's democratic approach to the crisis in Italy, fueled by a fear of right-wing reactionary forces. According to the author, the weakest point of the PCI was the missing alliance with the middle-class. Berlinguer was quoted on this issue, more precisely his stance that without an alliance with the middle class the right will control it and subsequently have an easy task in splitting up the working class. Also, it was noted that the "new majority" policy of the PCI became wider, now including all of the democratic forces in Italy. The Catholic forces were crucial for the success of such strategy and for the PCI's intention to share the governmental responsibility.⁵⁷⁸ On the other side, the socialist PSI was open for the PCI's ideas. However, the old differences within the party continued to exist – Amendola's group (right wing of the PCI) wanted an immediate participation in the government, Berlinguer (center) was more hesitant and Ingrao (left) wanted a governmental agreement that would be more than just a mere transformation of the center-left government. Regarding the DC, the Italian communist were clear that it was not a left-wing party, and viewed it differently than the PSI. However, it was

⁵⁷⁶ Since the Yugoslav views were similar to the ones displayed by Ferri (Belgrade also wanted to stabilize its frontier and have good relations with Italy as a counter-balance to a potential Soviet threat), such argumentation of the PCI officials could not be well-received in Belgrade. On the contrary, it was perceived as excessively sectarian and loyal to Moscow's interests. The Yugoslavs even doubted that this PCI stance in fact mirrored Soviet positions, and implies that the USSR did not want the frontier issue between Yugoslavia and Italy to be resolved – S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 180.

⁵⁷⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-494.

⁵⁷⁸ At the Congress Berlinguer elaborated on this thesis. In line with it, he was even supporting the PSI's intention to be a part of the governing coalition, as long as the socialists do not want to leave the PCI in a permanent oppositional ghetto. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 575.

acknowledged that it was an antifascist party and respectful of the Constitution. Hence, it was believed among the communists that in future political conflicts between the PCI and DC new ideas and perspectives will be born within the Christian democrats. Regarding the PCI's economic policies, it was noted that they consisted more of social reforms than of any viable development policies – they were mostly focused on strengthening the public sector and imposing a democratic control over it. And, finally, regarding the economic policies, the Yugoslavs were interested in the issue of direct democracy in industry, i.e. the Yugoslav idea of self-management. It was noted that Berlinguer was focused more on representative democracy and institutions, than on direct democracy in factories and a change of the country from below. The author added that Longo was more open to this idea. However, it was recognized that the PCI had a positive stance on the issue of direct democracy in industry, and that the extra-parliamentary left and mass movements pushed the PCI towards paying more attention to this issue.⁵⁷⁹

The second report, made at the Yugoslav embassy, also depicted the PCI's internal policies, but gave nothing particularly new compared to the previous report. However, the embassy report focused also on the PCI's foreign policy. Firstly, the relations between the PCI and USSR were analyzed. It was underlined that the link with Moscow remained strong, but that there was no more mythicizing of the Soviet Union. It was also stated that the PCI, despite criticizing Moscow, supported the Soviet Union in every major event except Czechoslovakia. However, the official Yugoslav stance was that, despite this connection, the PCI was truly an autonomous party. The reasons for not breaking with Moscow were several. The PCI officials openly told their Yugoslav comrades that in such a scenario they would become a social-democratic party. On the other side, according to the Yugoslav assessment, there were other motifs: half of the membership was biasedly pro-Soviet, and the Soviet power (in space, military and economy) continued to be a source of strength and self-confidence of the Italian communists. Hence, there was the need to avoid a conflict with Moscow, especially on issues that were not crucial for the PCI, and avoid a split within the party or its social-democratization. The positive progress of the inter-bloc dialogue in Europe made the PCI more cautious, and its earlier anti-bloc orientation and attention to the Non-Alignment slowly faded away.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-506.

⁵⁸⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-506.

However, the link with the USSR blocked the party's entrance into government, and the PCI tried to make certain moves as a counterbalance to the Soviet impact. The first idea was to normalize the party relations with Beijing, but that was not successful. On the other hand, the idea to form a European alliance with the Spanish and French communists was more efficient, despite certain differences between the three parties, and despite the stronger Soviet influence on the PCF and PCE than on the PCI.⁵⁸¹ Also, the relations with the Romanian party were good, and the PCI supported its struggle for autonomy, despite the fact that the use of police force in Romania started to worry the Italian communists increasingly. Outside of the communist movement, as before, the SPD was the crucial ally, and the PCI publicly claimed that it was to be credited for Brandt's Ostpolitik.⁵⁸²

Finally, the report focused on the PCI-LCY relations. Although it was underlined that there were widespread sympathies for the Yugoslav resistance in 1948, and for its current socialist democracy, the lack of PCI's understanding of and interest for the self-management system was pointed out as the weak point of the relations. According to the report, the "technocratic" ideas within the PCI, and the focus of the Italian party on representative democracy and state intervention, were incompatible with the Yugoslav system of direct democracy. Hence, the PCI leaders, Amendola in particular, had no interest in researching more about the Yugoslav system. Some even explicitly thought that the self-management system was a mere defensive reaction to the excommunication in 1948, a sort of a particular Yugoslav deviation in its specific conditions, not a universal socialist model (which the Yugoslavs, obviously, thought it was). Besides Amendola, in general there was little interest of the PCI cadres regarding the Yugoslav system, and every crisis in the country, like in 1971, furtherly discouraged them in this direction. Hence, it was recommended to have some sort of theoretical collaboration which would provoke more attention. The report also analyzed the PCI's stance on the frontier issue, adding nothing particularly new to the previous reports. The PCI's conviction that they would only hamper Moro's attempts to resolve the issue if they were more engaged, and a justification of their silence by the fact that the negotiations were still secret, hence they were not in a position to advocate a solution publicly, were underlined. Finally, the report briefly summarized the PCI's reactions to the

⁵⁸¹ The idea of unifying the Western European communist parties was one of the most important Berlinguer's foreign policy aims at that time - S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 47.

⁵⁸² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-506.

Croatian crisis. The Italian communists were first worried, but then relieved and content with the way in which the issue was solved. However, like before, they perceived a stronger centralization and a strengthening of the party's power as the best way of leading Yugoslavia to communism. Finally, it was underlined that whenever a serious problem or crisis in Yugoslavia occurs, it weakened the autonomist forces within the PCI. Thus it was underlined how important Yugoslavia was for these tendencies within the party - a stable and successful Yugoslavia made the principle of autonomy more viable and attractive for the PCI cadres, and every Yugoslav crisis only strengthened the pro-Soviet servile views.⁵⁸³

In March the PCI congress was held, and Yugoslavia was represented by a delegation headed by Stane Dolanc. As the electoral campaign was in full swing, the internal topics dominated the congress.⁵⁸⁴ The delegation's impressions and key observations did not differ from the previous reports of the Yugoslav officials regarding the situation within the PCI, so there is no need to analyze this further.⁵⁸⁵ A small portion of the congress was dedicated to the international affairs, and the Yugoslavs noted a few important issues. Firstly, that, in comparison to 1971, the PCI officials were now harsher towards China in their public discourse, and milder towards the USSR.⁵⁸⁶ According to the Yugoslavs, this was obviously a result of the Soviet pressures and the pressures of their supporters within the PCI. Secondly, the Yugoslavs underlined that, although the policy of opening towards the West European left was one of the PCI's crucial foreign policy activities for some time now, the Congress served as a platform to, for the first time, pose this issue in the most open and direct manner. And, thirdly, the PCI criticized the official Italian foreign policy (US influence, lack of support to the CSCE and the activities in the Mediterranean),

⁵⁸³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-506.

⁵⁸⁴ According to the Yugoslav delegation, thus the congress was “boring”, and even Pajetta agreed with such remarks. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-496.

⁵⁸⁵ The only new impressions and information that the Yugoslavs had was that the stance of the PCI towards the PSDI softened, and that Longo managed to cut off the idea of General Secretary deputies – as he was leaving the position to Berlinguer, certain members of the leadership wanted to install a deputy to Berlinguer, but Longo successfully opposed to it, stating that it would be an institutionalization of factions within the party.

⁵⁸⁶ The change of stance towards China was not surprising, having in mind that the US President Nixon visited Beijing just days earlier - R. D. Schulzinger, “Détente in the Nixon-Ford years, 1969-1976”, in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 378.

Regarding the more open stance of the PCI towards Moscow, the Yugoslavs noted how Berlinguer, prior to the congress, spoke positively of the USSR's foreign policy – among many Moscow's initiatives he praised, one was the recent Soviet-Yugoslav meeting. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-495.

promising an overcoming of the blocs and a model of socialism that would be new, not a copy of the existing ones.⁵⁸⁷

A lot of attention of the Yugoslav delegation was dedicated to the 49 foreign delegations present at the Congress – mostly European communists, as various socialist parties refused to come, except the Japanese delegation and the SPD’s journalists - who came, but only in the rank of observers. An interesting episode regarding the treatment of the foreign delegations revealed a lot about the PCI’s foreign policy priorities and the Yugoslav place within them, and also about the strong Yugoslav wish to have good relations with the PCI and impact the Italian comrades. In short, as the duration of the congress was shortened due to the electoral campaign, the PCI decided not to have the salutatory addresses of the foreign delegates during the Congress sessions, but to have them at side-manifestations held in various Italian cities. For instance, Dolanc had his speech in Brescia. However, the Soviets protested, and the PCI had to make an exemption. Finding themselves in this position, the Italian communists decided not to give this honor only to the Soviet guests, but also added three more speeches – of the PCF, and of the two Vietnamese delegations. Faced with this information, Vučinić protested,⁵⁸⁸ successfully. Finally, besides the initial four and the Yugoslavs, the PCI invited also the Spanish, Chilean and East German communists, Mozambique’s FRELIMO and Palestinian Fatah to give their addresses during the congress.⁵⁸⁹ The Romanian communists protested unsuccessfully.⁵⁹⁰

The report of the Yugoslav delegation briefly summarized some of the most important points of the speeches given by the foreign delegates. The Soviet one was mostly addressed – according to the Yugoslavs, it was too dogmatic (they spoke about anti-Sovietism and of the USSR as the model for solving the national issue) and too harsh on China (the Sudanese, East German and Japanese communists also attacked Beijing). The PCI officials explicitly told the Yugoslavs that they were not content with the Soviet speech and assessed that it had only damaged their party.

⁵⁸⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-496.

⁵⁸⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-495.

⁵⁸⁹ The PCI had to justify its selection, so it was stated that: the CPSU had an irreplaceable role; East Germany was crucial for the CSCE; the PCF was the strongest working class organization in the West alongside PCI; the Spanish party was fighting fascism, for 30 years, as an illegal party; the Chilean communist had some new and original experiences, important for the entire movement; the Vietnamese, FRELIMO and Fatah were engaged in anti-colonial struggle; and, regarding the LCY, it was stated that it is a neighboring and friendly party, which shared the anti-fascist struggle with the PCI in WWII. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-496. According to the PCI senator Francesco Scotti, it was him who “pushed” the Yugoslav request – which could be probable, having in mind that the Yugoslavs perceived him as one of the most pro-Yugoslav officials in the PCI.

⁵⁹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-496.

Also, the PCI could not have been content with the East German delegate Hermann Axen and his Polish colleague, who propagated closer ties with Moscow (having in mind an article Axen wrote for *Pravda*, the Yugoslavs were suspicious that there was an intention to create a new Cominform), as with the speeches of the British, Irish and Danish communists who criticized the EEC. However, the Yugoslavs also emphasized certain dissonant tones among the communist delegations. The Belgians criticized the lack of democracy in socialist countries, underlined a positive contribution of Beijing to international affairs and were the only ones who explicitly supported Berlinguer's idea of opening to the European left. The Argentinian delegate said that the criteria for internationalism was the stance of a certain party towards Vietnam, and the Yugoslavs noted this in their report, commenting that this was an unusual statement, different from the usual principle that the criteria for internationalism was the relation of a certain party towards the USSR. The Vietnamese delegates were diplomatic, praising aid both from China and USSR, and the Korean delegate talked about independence, equality and non-interference, advocating unity among communists and an end to mutual conflicts.⁵⁹¹

Dolanc gave two speeches, one in Brescia and the other at the Congress, expressing almost identical ideas in both. Like in similar previous occasions, PCI's creative application of Marxism and good relations between the two parties were praised, and the principles of peace, sovereignty and independence were underlined. Besides these usual ideological remarks, Dolanc used the opportunity to comment on some current issues. The US imperialism in Indochina was criticized, the "heroic resistance of Vietnam" praised, and the CSCE process fully supported. Regarding the turbulent situation in the Mediterranean, along with the usual support to the Arab countries and their rights, Dolanc criticized the presence of foreign powers in the region and advocated for a restitution of sovereignty as the only means of stabilization of this conflict-plagued area. He also used the opportunity to comment on the Italian-Yugoslav relations, strongly propagating a swift agreement regarding the frontier, but not in the most explicit manner.⁵⁹²

The Yugoslav delegation was received cordially and was very content – they had the opportunity to talk with the most important PCI officials,⁵⁹³ the speeches were well received, and Dolanc spoke fifth at the Congress, after the Soviet, two Vietnamese and the French delegate. The

⁵⁹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-496.

⁵⁹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-495, 496.

⁵⁹³ Longo was invited to visit Yugoslavia, but he implicitly refused saying that, due to the situation in Italy, it was uncertain would he be in the position to leave the country.

trip to Brescia was also evaluated as very positive, due to the cordial reactions of the local communists, and it was noted in the report that it would be useful to make more visits to local PCI organizations. The Yugoslavs also had many contacts with other foreign delegations, and the meeting with the French, Belgian, and Greece communists were the most important ones. With the French it was agreed that there was a mutual wish to better the relations, and it was expected that this would be the case after Marchais' visit to Yugoslavia. However, the French communists were not content that Roger Garaudy (philosopher expelled from the PCF in 1970 for criticizing the USSR intervention in Czechoslovakia) gave an interview to a Yugoslav review. However, the Yugoslavs had made it clear that this was not an incident, thus implicitly supporting Garaudy. Marc Drumaux, the leader of the Belgian communists whose speech was viewed positively by the Yugoslavs, told in a conversation that when he was in Moscow the Soviets criticized him for trying to establish relations with Beijing, but had not particularly pressured him. While with the Soviet delegate Grishin the Yugoslavs had only a short courtesy conversation, they talked more with both delegations of the Greek communists. The delegate from the faction within the country informed the Yugoslavs that the famous composer Mikis Theodorakis left the party on his own request, which was a big blow for them. Finally, the North Korean delegate spoke positively of the interstate relations, hinting (saying that it was "his belief") that the Yugoslav request for the establishment of interparty relations will be accepted.⁵⁹⁴

In the immediate aftermath of the Congress Ignac Golob, from the LCY's foreign relations department, had a meeting with Brigante Colonna, an Italian diplomat working in the embassy in Belgrade. The meeting was focused on several issues, and one of them was the PCI's congress. Colonna wanted to know what was the Yugoslav evaluation of the congress and of the PCI's autonomy, stating that he personally saw it as a step back, towards Moscow. Golob said that Yugoslavia did not share his position, and reminded Colonna that Berlinguer, in his report, clearly underlined PCI's autonomy and critiques regarding the Czechoslovak issue.⁵⁹⁵

After the Congress, due to the Italian elections and the holiday seasons, the relations between the LCY and PCI were still for a certain period of time. However, the PCI intensively followed the turbulent internal processes in Yugoslavia. In late June, Barioli wrote a report from Belgrade, commenting on the country's foreign policy and the internal opposition to it. In short,

⁵⁹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-496.

⁵⁹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-495.

Barioli underlined how various segments of the Yugoslav society perceived Tito's rapprochement with the Soviet Union as a move aimed at securing his personal power, hence opposed to it, even publicly. The commercial agreements Tito concluded during his visit to Moscow, in early June, were evaluated by some journalists as an extensive and detrimental interference of the President in economic affairs.⁵⁹⁶ Also, in late August, the PCI received a letter, allegedly from some Croatian communists who escaped from Yugoslavia. In the letter the situation in Croatia was compared to the situation in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Hence the authors called the PCI to react in the same manner like it did regarding the situation in Prague, and support the just causes of the revolt against the "Serbian hegemony".⁵⁹⁷

In late August, a meeting between Golob and Segre initiated a dynamic collaboration in the remaining part of 1972. The meeting was primarily focused on bilateral cooperation. Most importantly, Segre informed his Yugoslav counterpart that Berlinguer's visit to Yugoslavia was still possible and had two propositions (both will be accepted and finalized during 1972). The first one was that a LCY delegation visits the Emilia-Romagna region, taken as an example of the PCI's work in a province where the party is very strong; the second proposition was to have a meeting on the Mediterranean issues, similar to the one held between Vlahović and Tortorella (although now Pajetta and Ledda would represent the PCI). Segre also mentioned that the PCI wanted to reinstate the old idea of a left European meeting between communists, socialists and social-democrats. Golob, naturally, supported the initiative, but reminded of the earlier SPD's reluctance in this direction, indicating that this idea was still hard to achieve, proposing a bilateral meeting instead – a meeting between the LCY and various left-wing and other organizations in Italy, with the same topic of European security. As the PCI had a similar meeting with the Polish communists, Segre agreed. Finally, at the end of the meeting Segre informed of the PCI initiative to have a conference of Western communist parties, focused on the EEC, which was going well despite some resistance from the Scandinavian parties. Golob was more than interested in this issue, once again demonstrating the Yugoslav support for the PCI's openness towards the European integrations, and proposed that Amendola visits Yugoslavia and gives a lecture on this topic.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁶ APCI, Esteri, MF 054, p. 186-187.

⁵⁹⁷ APCI, Esteri, MF 054, p. 190-199.

⁵⁹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-500. APCI, Esteri, MF 054, p. 183-184. Although the Yugoslavs supported the PCI in its openness towards the EEC, the Soviets were not content with that policy. In the EEC Moscow saw a threat to the détente and a cohesive factor of the Atlantic alliance. Hence, they wanted that the PCI opposes to the strengthening of the European integration. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 30.

In October, Jure Bilić made a visit to Italy and had contacts with the PCI, PSI, PSDI and DC. The visit was, in fact, very similar to the one Bakarić made in January – Bakarić went with the mission to explain the ousting of the Croatian leadership to the Italian partners, while Bilić had to explain the ousting of the Serbian leadership of the party.⁵⁹⁹ In his talks with the PCI delegation (consisting of Novella, Pajetta, Galuzzi and Cappelloni) Bilić defended the stronger unification of the party, and attacked the extensive liberalization of the market oriented reforms (but underlining that the Yugoslav integration within the global market was still needed and brought numerous positive results), stating that it led to corruption and greater social inequalities. Such problems could have provoked a crisis, hence the LCY was determined to eradicate them. However, Bilić felt the need to emphasize that Yugoslavia was not returning to centralized and bureaucratic forms of governance, and that its course (internally – democracy and self-management; in foreign policy – Non-Alignment) remains stable, determined and unchanged.⁶⁰⁰

Since the events in Yugoslavia were a de facto re-centralization of the party (although the Yugoslavs denied such views, propagandistically elaborating that it was a mere strengthening of the LCY's unity) the major part of the PCI officials could only be content, as they, for years, had been skeptical of the excessive decentralization that took place in Yugoslavia. However, a part of the PCI officials, underlined in the previous reports as the autonomist and pro-Yugoslav wing of the party (their aspirations for stronger PCI autonomy led them to pro-Yugoslav stances), was fearing that this re-centralization of Yugoslavia could lead to stronger ties with Moscow, and, subsequently, loosen the LCY-PCI ties, thus isolating them, the PCI's autonomists. Galuzzi was one of the representatives of this faction, and the Yugoslavs gained the afore mentioned impressions in conversations with him. On the other hand, Novella and Pajetta shared the dominant views within the PCI and thought that Yugoslavia needed a stronger central power. Although, of

⁵⁹⁹ Both events naturally provoked great attention abroad, and the Yugoslavs wanted to have a proactive role and affirm their perception of the two dramatic changes in the Yugoslav party. Although the two events had some similarities – i.e. they were Tito's attempts to restore his central power over the party that was becoming more decentralized and confederal in its essence, there were certain profound differences between the Croatian and Serbian situation. The Croatian leadership was ousted for its national sentiments and the national revolt in Croatia, while the Serbian leadership, led by ex-minister of foreign affairs Marko Nikezić and Latinka Perović (she was a member of the Yugoslav delegation to the PCI's congress in March), was ousted for its "liberal" views. By the label "liberal", it was meant that the Serbian leadership was too market oriented in its economic policies. To this day, in shortage of historiographical contributions, the memoirs of Perović herself, despite the inevitable personal outlook on the issue, remain the most relevant bibliographical reference on this topic. Hence, this short summary of the crisis in Serbia is based on that book – L. Perović, *Zatvaranje kruga : ishod političkog rascepa u SKJ 1971/1972*. [Closing of the Circle : the Outcome of the Political Split Within the LCY 1971/1972], Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1991.

⁶⁰⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-501.

course, they did not advocate for any radicalism in that direction, and were glad that Yugoslavia was loyal to democracy and self-management. Novella, admitting that the Italian communists were initially skeptical towards the self-management, fully supported it now, as he supported the Yugoslav persistence in implementation of this system, adding that the PCI was also implementing similar solutions in Italy, under different names (“participation” or “autonomy”). However, he added that the particular interests that arose in Yugoslavia could only be eradicated by eliminating the inequalities and the conflicting interests in economy – hence, he advocated for a stronger and united leadership of the LCY, as for a stronger central planning in the Yugoslav economy. Pajetta had similar views like Novella, but, once again, made certain provocative comments. This time, commenting on the activities of the Italian political emigration but implicitly referring to the anti-communist activities of the Yugoslav emigration, he underlined that the political emigration becomes a problem only when the situation in the country is not stable. Galuzzi asked about the personal changes in the party and its future plans, adding that the relation between democracy and centralism remains the most important unsolved question of the communist parties. Galuzzi also advocated for more bilateral contacts in the immediate future, and this was understood by the Yugoslavs as his fear of stronger Yugoslav-Soviet relations, which could lead to less contacts between the LCY and PCI. HE also explained why Berlinguer was postponing his visit to Yugoslavia. As the Italian prime minister Andreotti was going to visit the Soviet Union, Berlinguer had to wait - if his visit to Yugoslavia was to be held prior to the two Soviet-Italian visits, it would be perceived as some sort of “spite” of the PCI towards the Italian-Soviet rapprochement. However, Galuzzi underlined that the PCI was still very interested for the meeting and saw it as a means of reviving the relations between the two parties.⁶⁰¹

In accordance with the propositions made by Segre earlier, there were two other contacts between the LCY and PCI in the remaining part of 1972 – the first one was the LCY visit to Emilia-Romagna region in November,⁶⁰² and the second one was the PCI visit to Yugoslavia in December, focused on the Mediterranean issues. Cvijetin Mijatović led the LCY delegation in November, and their impressions from the Emilia-Romagna region were quite positive. In the report it was praised that the regional PCI organization has good cooperation with other parties (it governed the region in coalition with the PSI) and a strong contact with the masses. However, the biggest impression

⁶⁰¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-501.

⁶⁰² APCI, Esteri, MF 054, p. 240-247.

for the Yugoslavs was the system of the agricultural cooperatives in the region, which they found to be very similar to the self-management system in Yugoslavia. Hence, the delegation's strongest suggestion was to further these contacts, and inform the Emilia-Romagna communists more on the situation in the Yugoslav agriculture. However, as the report stated, the PCI officials from Rome were very interested in the situation in Yugoslavia, hence the visit was also used to discuss Yugoslav and Italian issues in Rome – firstly with Novella and some other PCI officials, and afterwards with Berlinguer.⁶⁰³

In the introductory meeting in Rome, with a delegation headed by Novella, the Italian side initiated the conversation by elaborating the situation in Italy. According to them, after the 1968-1970 wave of left-wing revolt, now the right was on the rise, alongside with reactionary terrorism.⁶⁰⁴ Although the Italian communists were hesitant to connect the terrorism with foreign influences, mostly blaming the Italian state for its implicit compliance with the terrorists, they did indicate that some Greek and Ustaša⁶⁰⁵ elements were involved, and that the terrorists mostly came from the South and from the regions bordering with Yugoslavia. The PCI officials also commented on the elections. Firstly, they told that the PCI had a success with 9 million votes, but that the result could have been better. According to Novella, left extremism and some unreasonable strikes in the 1968-1970 period somewhat discredited the Italian left and hampered its electoral success. Secondly, they saw the elections as the final demise of the center-left government.⁶⁰⁶ The DC decided to go to the right, and the PCI was determined to, as its immediate goal, topple Andreotti's government. However, they were not interested in creating a split within the DC, like some within the PCI were before, but only wanted to change the DC's policies. Thirdly, they said that in a case of an eventual PSI-DC collaboration, the socialists, with whom they had great relations now, had to be autonomous. The Yugoslavs asked was the restauration of fascism a real threat, and Novella responded that although some right-wing threats to democracy were present in Italy, the political factors that had acted in that direction were not fascists. Novella then posed the issue of the situation in Yugoslavia. He asked not to be misunderstood, and emphasized that the PCI did not

⁶⁰³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-504.

⁶⁰⁴ Violence and terrorism became important factors of the Italian politics of that time, and, among others, certain right-wing extremists tried to use this situation to end their political isolation. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 122-126.

⁶⁰⁵ Croatian fascist movement which ruled the Nazi puppet state "Independent State of Croatia" during WWII.

⁶⁰⁶ The parties of the center-left government barely managed to get a 51 percent majority - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 137.

have all the relevant information, but explicitly stated that they are not content with the situation in Yugoslavia after Bilić's visit. The PCI wanted to see more planning in economy and a stronger leading role of the LCY. Also, although explicitly stating that they support self-management, Novella asked were there some modes in which the workers could be "helped" in making the right decisions. He referred to decisions that were "good for the development of the country", and advocated for some kind of assistance of the intellectuals to the workers' councils, since the workers could not be completely competent for various types of issues. Regarding foreign policy, Novella noticed a lessening of Non-Alignment activity and asked was this policy going to be relaunched.⁶⁰⁷

At the final meeting in Rome, Berlinguer joined the conversations – he apologized for not being present earlier, as he was occupied with the PSI's congress. Berlinguer talked about the situation in the PSI and in Yugoslavia. Regarding the PSI, his impressions were positive, since the party became openly anti-PSDI, opposed to the DC and opened to the PCI. The negative fact was the rising division within the party. According to Berlinguer, the cause of PSI's problems was the illusion that it was possible to be in the government with the DC, which only pressured them and insisted on anti-communism. However, as Berlinguer concluded, the PCI would not spark a polemic on this issue, but seek to preserve the ties between the two parties and have a fruitful collaboration with the new PSI's leadership.⁶⁰⁸ Regarding Yugoslavia, Berlinguer emphasized that they, in the PCI, were following the situation with great interest and sympathy. He had some shorter questions, regarding the resignations in the LCY leadership and the ultra-left groups in the country. Upon hearing Mijatović's response, Berlinguer concluded that the parties had very similar views, that the interparty relations should be furtherly developed, and that they fully understand Tito's line. At the end of the meeting, since the Yugoslavs implicitly asked the PCI to be more active in supporting an agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia regarding the frontier, Novella responded in a similar way as did many PCI officials before. According to him, if the PCI became more active regarding this issue, it could provoke a stronger right-wing reaction. Hence, in order

⁶⁰⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-504.

⁶⁰⁸ The PSI was particularly important for Berlinguer at that time. As he had, earlier in 1972, exposed his ideas of a broader political unity (not just of the left, but with the Catholics also), he gave great importance to the PCI in achieving this goal. In an article for *Rinascita*, on October 27th 1972, Berlinguer stated that the PSI should play a crucial role in achieving the broader unity, as a mediator between the communists and the Catholics. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 574.

to preserve the interstate relations and the openness of the frontier, it was better if the Italian communists were less publicly engaged on the topic.⁶⁰⁹

From December 10th to 14th, a PCI delegation consisting of Pajetta, Ledda and Loris Galicco visited Yugoslavia. Their main activity was a long discussion with an LCY delegation regarding the Mediterranean, but, prior to it, they had a short meeting with Vlahović and Dolanc. Dolanc and Vlahović thanked for the good coverage of Yugoslavia in the PCI press, adding that “the bourgeois press” in Italy wrote negatively about the frontier issue, some of them even supporting territorial aspirations in the Zone B. However, Dolanc criticized Pajetta who, during the electoral campaign, repeatedly said that the PCI had made efforts to keep Trieste in Italy. Pajetta responded that it was all just part of a campaign, and that no particular meaning should be given to that type of statements.⁶¹⁰

After the initial meeting, the Italians met with Dimče Belovski, Ignac Golob, Berislav Badurina and Ljubivoje Aćimović, and discussed the current state of affairs in the Mediterranean. In the first part of the meeting, the Yugoslavs explained their views, in detail. According to Belovski, the Mediterranean was lagging behind the positive processes in Europe. The best way to change that was to stimulate a comprehensive collaboration which would create a regional unity, hence the Mediterranean would repel the foreign interests and become a subject of international affairs. Naturally, the biggest problem was the Middle East – the continuation of the “Israeli occupation”, the worrying situation in Egypt and the future of Palestine. Since a pan-Mediterranean conference posed the issue of Israeli and Spanish participation, the Yugoslavs were primarily focused on consultations among the Non-Aligned countries of the region, although admitting that the Arab countries had several divisive issues among themselves also. Aćimović spoke of the importance of posing the issue in the international arena, for instance in the UN, and Badurina, as a military expert, talked about the strategic aspects of the topic.⁶¹¹ At one point, the Italian guests asked two questions: is an Israeli retreat possible and is the formation of a Palestinian territory possible. Belovski responded to both questions. Firstly, although Yugoslavia was not advocating for a military solution, in fact it was opposed to it, the strengthening of the Egyptian

⁶⁰⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-504.

⁶¹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-505.

⁶¹¹ Badurina’s key conclusion was the Middle Eastern issue could not be resolved with military power, as the previous experiences showed. According to him, the West was least influential in the region when it had the most troops. He also added that the US military presence was stronger, as their fleet can hit Europe from the sea, while the Soviet army could only control the Eastern Mediterranean.

army was seen in Belgrade as the best way to put pressure on the United States and Israel. Regarding the second question, Belovski underlined that Yasser Arafat, during his visit in Yugoslavia, had explicitly stated that they want a political solution, but do not renounce of using arms. In short, the Yugoslav stance was that the Palestinians should develop their own concept and propose it publicly, since they rejected the offered territories.⁶¹²

In the second part of the meeting, the PCI delegation gave its point of view. Firstly, Pajetta underlined his fear that the possible ending of the Vietnam war could lead the United States to focus on the Mediterranean and, by supporting Israel, exacerbate the crisis in the region. Hence, he advocated for a unification of all the progressive and antiimperialist forces, including China, despite its conflicting relations with Moscow, which could expand the positive European processes to the Mediterranean. However, he underlined that despite all of the improvements in Europe there were some negative events and actions, like when Italy decided to give military bases to US nuclear submarines. In nationalization of oil reserves Pajetta saw the best way to improve the grave economic situation and internal problems of the southern Mediterranean countries, adding that such a solution would not only help these countries, but also damage US imperialism. Despite all the problems these countries were facing, Pajetta was glad that they had not changed their course and “passed to the other side” (i.e. the American side). Although he emphasized the PCI’s dedication to overcoming of the blocs, and agreed with the Yugoslav stance that both fleets, the American and the Soviet, should leave the region, he said that this (i.e. the Soviet presence) was the reality that should be accepted, as the Arab countries needed Moscow’s support. As he furtherly explained, the bloc division should be surmounted, but on anti-imperialist grounds. Pajetta also elaborated on the state of the bilateral relations between the PCI and various Arab parties, not only communist ones, underlining good relations with the Syrian and Iraqi Baathists, Algerian FLN, and even with the Egyptian Arab Socialist Union (ASU). However, he emphasized that the PCI was worried by the situation in Egypt, and wanted to have better relations with ASU in order to influence the Egyptian government.⁶¹³

In the second part of their exposition, the Italian guests talked about the Italian government’s policy in the region and about certain future initiatives regarding the region. Regarding the government’s activity, they underlined that it was balancing between Egypt and

⁶¹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-505.

⁶¹³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-505.

Israel, but motivated by essentially pro-American intentions. Hence, Washington's interests limited the Italian activity in the region. Andreotti's government was described as a step back comparing to the previous one led by Moro. However, the PCI was convinced that the Italian public did not share the government's views. Regarding future Mediterranean initiatives, they: 1) supported the Yugoslav idea of a meeting of Non-Aligned Mediterranean countries; 2) spoke about their initiative to have a Mediterranean meeting in Bologna next year; and 3) asked the Yugoslavs, as an organizer acceptable to all, to organize a consultative Mediterranean meeting and invite the PCI to it, as they were keen to collaborate with every country in the region. However, they underlined that the PCI did not want this meeting to be understood as an opposition to the organizations in which the USSR was active, as they had not wanted to attract any Soviet "suspicion". Pajetta saw this idea as an opportunity for the anti-imperialist forces to meet and discuss the relations between workers' parties and liberation movements, between socialist and Non-Aligned countries. Finally, Pajetta briefly commented on the Italian-Yugoslav relations. He underlined that Yugoslavia was the crucial example for the PCI's propagating of socialism, more important than any other socialist country, as the Italian communists did not want to align Italy with the Eastern bloc. Hence, the Yugoslav relations with other Italian parties were seen as a positive factor by the PCI. Concluding the conversation, Pajetta proposed that the next meeting should be focused on the European left, since the French communists and socialists made an agreement, and since the EEC now included Britain and its Labour party, with which the Yugoslavs agreed.⁶¹⁴

Besides these meetings, the PCI delegation also had other activities. Firstly, they visited the Institute for International Politics and Economy, and made an agreement with the Institute to collaborate in the future (by organizing conferences, lectures and publications, and by exchanging various material) on the topics of the Mediterranean, underdeveloped countries and Non-Alignment.⁶¹⁵ Just a few days prior to the visit Ledda, who was a part of the delegation, informed the Yugoslav embassy in Rome of the content of a letter written by the *Rinascita's* director Chiaromonte, and gave it to the Yugoslavs upon arrival. In the letter Chiaromonte asked for an interview from Tito, during the same month of December, reminding of *Rinascita's* extensive coverage of Yugoslav topics. During the visit, all of the Italian guests strongly supported this idea,

⁶¹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-505.

⁶¹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-505.

adding that it would be very important for the bilateral interparty relations, and for the PCI. Vučinić evaluated the request and proposed that it should be accepted, adding that it would be difficult to reject it since Tito already gave interviews to other Italian press.⁶¹⁶

In December of 1972, Barioli wrote another comprehensive report on the situation in Yugoslavia. According to him, the Yugoslav party managed to pacify the crisis, although its reopening was still possible. The Croatian nationalism was an alarm for the federal leadership, which rang in the moment when the party was losing power and Tito, as the main element of Yugoslav unity, was growing older. In any case, the party reacted, and managed to regain its influence by centralization. However, Barioli predicted that some future expulsions from the party were still possible, as Tito and a group of functionaries around him (Dolanc being the most prominent) reasserted their influence. In his opinion, the next year was going to be a test of the party's prestige. The pronounced goal was to resolve the economic problems, but Barioli was not certain what were the policies in this regard – more planning or more market, or both. Regarding economic issues, Barioli noted that no one wanted to renounce of self-management, but added that there was no elaborated analysis of the factors which caused the severe problems in this system. Regarding foreign policy, the main goal seemed to be a reassertion of Non-Alignment. The relations with the USSR and the socialist countries were evidently improved, but had not constituted a Yugoslav entrance into the Eastern bloc. In fact, according to Barioli, they were a mere economic need – the Western investments were missing and the Western market was too complex for the inadequate Yugoslav products. Hence, Yugoslavia was in dire need of stronger economic relations with the East.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-503.

⁶¹⁷ APCI, Esteri, MF 054, p. 251-258.

Chapter 4: After Chile – The Pinnacle of the Alliance (1973-1980)

Fear of instability and the birth of the compromesso storico

During 1973, the contacts between the PCI and LCY were not as dynamic as in the following years. The biggest reason for that was the Yugoslav crisis and LCY's focus on resolving the internal issues of the party.⁶¹⁸ However, there were some important contacts that will be depicted in the following pages.

On January 5th 1973, a delegation of the Slovene central committee visited Italy and had a meeting with their colleagues from the PCI's Friuli-Venezia Giulia regional organization. The main topic was the way in which the LCY was resolving the crisis in the country. Hence, the Italian communists asked about strengthening of the party's role, the plan for smoothing over of the discrepancies in the economic development of the Yugoslav republics, and the ways in which the masses participate in determining the goals of the reform. Also, they wanted to know if the Croatian national revolt had negatively affected the position of the Italian minority in Yugoslavia, stating that it could be used by the Italian "reaction" in order to limit the rights of the Slovene minority in Italy. According to the Slovene report on the meeting, the Italian comrades were convinced with their explanations, understood that the reform was not an abolition of self-management, but its reassertion. The PCI officials also informed their Yugoslav colleagues about the elections in their region. Their conclusion was that the left was getting stronger, while the center-right government of Andreotti was losing support. Hence, they underlined that the conditions were ripe for a stronger collaboration between the PCI, PSI and the "democrats" within the DC, which was the only viable political solution for the situation in Italy. Finally, at the end of the meeting, the two sides agreed on further collaboration – not just in meetings similar to this one, but also by organizing lectures, collaboration between the PCI and RTV Koper (Capodistria) and economic cooperation.⁶¹⁹

⁶¹⁸ Naturally, this was not the only reason for having fewer contacts during 1973. For instance, the fruitful collaboration between the PCI led regions and Yugoslav republics was blocked by the Italian government. The official explanation was that the government decided, in late 1971, that it had to authorize the visits of the regional authorities to foreign entities. The visit of the Emilia Romagna authorities to Zagreb was underlined as a breach of this decision, as it was not condoned by the government. According to Yugoslav sources, the real reason for such activity of the Italian government was, in fact, linked with the problems regarding the Yugoslav-Italian frontier. S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 270-271.

⁶¹⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-505.

The next important meeting was in April 1973, when a LCY delegation led by Mitja Ribičić visited their Italian comrades. The topics of the meeting were the situation in Europe and the internal situation in Yugoslavia. As the Yugoslav crisis was developing, the meetings between the two parties were not predominantly focused on international affairs, like in the sixties, but regularly dedicated to Yugoslav problems also. The Italian communists were strongly interested to know more about the Yugoslav crisis, and therefore the discussions regarding this issue were heavily featured in the PCI's report.

Ribičić talked extensively about the Yugoslav view on the European situation. Although his rhetoric was not different from the usual LCY views, it was obvious that Yugoslavia, after pacifying its internal crisis, was less critical of Moscow and getting closer to the USSR. Implicit calls for communist unity were present in Ribičić's words. For instance, at the beginning of the meeting, he talked of the "special responsibility" of the socialist countries, underlining that the COMECON had to collaborate with all democratic countries and strengthen the positive processes in Europe. He also agreed with Amendola's positive evaluation of the SPD and the growth of social-democracy in Europe – the evaluation was that, even though this change in the European political life was not leading to socialism, at least it hampered the anti-communist and anti-Soviet views in Western Europe. Ribičić even added that some democratic European governments were helping the Ustaša terrorist in their attacks on Yugoslavia, in order to hinder the rise of social-democracy. Borders between socialist and capitalist countries, like Italy and Yugoslavia, should remain open, Ribičić thought, adding that it would help the rise of left wing tendencies in Europe. He criticized the fact that other socialist countries had rigidly closed borders.⁶²⁰ Ribičić also felt the need to explicitly justify the Yugoslav position towards the socialist bloc. He explained how Yugoslavia was closer to the socialist bloc than to Western capitalism – the country and the party had a strict class-based policy, and they were not equating the two blocs. In fact, he saw the Yugoslav system not as something opposed to the socialist bloc, but rather as an important experience to other socialist countries, with extensive Yugoslav democratization as the crucial *novum*. Regarding Non-Alignment, Ribičić underlined that it was not aimed against the socialist bloc, but identical to the PCI's orientation towards overcoming of the blocs. Finally, he agreed

⁶²⁰ Ribičić, in fact, spoke of the fact that all of the other East European communist countries had a strategy of closing (by strict borders, walls and control of citizens' contacts with foreigners) their nations in order to protect themselves from capitalism. R. Service, *Compagni*, 445

with the PCI's focus on combating the interests of the international capital, saying that in Chile this was a bigger problem than foreign military presence. Also, Ribičić concluded that the US presence in Europe was strong, and therefore President Nixon felt free to visit Moscow and Beijing.⁶²¹

In the second part of the meeting, Ribičić and Pribičević gave a detailed analysis of the situation in Yugoslavia. Ribičić briefly informed the guests of some positive achievements, mainly in economy and development of self-management, but mostly talked about the problems. Firstly, he affronted the issue of the strengthening of the banks. With this process, a class or a group of bureaucrats was formed within the system. This group privately accumulated capital and had their particular interests, thus damaging self-management and creating a gap between the party officials and the working class. Secondly, he denied the accusations of a growing Western economic presence in Yugoslavia, adding that the relations with the West were mere market relations. Thirdly, he talked about the issue of nationalism, which became acute with the terrorist activities of the Croatian Ustaša, both in the country and abroad, where they attacked Yugoslav embassies. Ribičić basically gave a personal and elaborate analysis of nationalism in Yugoslavia and its roots. In his view, the Serb nationalism was the most dangerous one, as the Serbs were the majority in the country. However, he added that the Croatian nationalism was also particularly dangerous, due to its collaboration with foreign factors. The socio-economic bases of nationalism were the already mentioned bureaucratic groups, which advocated "liberal" conceptions and "spontaneity" in economy, neglecting the interests of the masses. Hence, he concluded that the "enemy ideology" had penetrated within these groups, and thus within the party. However, the LCY was conducting a political struggle against them, with legal processes against only (sic!) those who broke the law or had contacts with foreign factors. Finally, Ribičić concluded that the LCY was on the offensive. Its primary goals were economic stability, constitutional reform (which would give more power to the republics) and a further democratization (which would strengthen the working class presence in the party and prevent a "professionalization" of politics). Since the LCY took charge of the situation, the relations with both East and West were improved, and certain hopes that the Yugoslav socialism would collapse, present in the West, were silenced.⁶²²

⁶²¹ APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 417-420.

⁶²² APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 421-424.

Since the Italian public was very interested in the problems at the Yugoslav universities, where a left opposition to the LCY's official course was strong, at the end of the meeting Pribičević focused on this issue. He shortly explained that the party was having difficulty in attracting intellectuals, which led to the rising of a strong opposition at the universities. However, now the party was leading a political attack on this opposition, labeling it as Stalinist and undemocratic.⁶²³ In order to justify the party's attacks on university professors, which were not viewed with sympathy, Pribičević underlined two factors. Firstly, he said that although the LCY supports the freedom of research and artistic expression, it could not permit the use of academic freedoms for anti-socialist goals. Secondly, in order to obtain the sympathies and compassion of the Italian comrades, Pribičević underlined that the opposition at the universities publicly supported the *il manifesto* group. He even added that the PCI's materials on this group, and the modes in which it was combated, were very useful for the entire movement and used by the LCY when dealing with its opposition.⁶²⁴

During the summer, besides the usual vacations of PCI officials, there were some episodes of interparty collaboration deserving mention. Most importantly, Segre met with Golob, in late June, and made an agreement regarding the interparty collaboration in the second half of 1973. Four ideas were proposed but not all of them would be finalized. Firstly, it was arranged that Berlinguer should visit Yugoslavia and meet Tito and Dolanc (this visit was eventually postponed). Secondly, Amendola was to visit Yugoslavia in the fall and give a series of lectures on PCI's European policies. Thirdly, it was agreed that a PCI delegation (the Yugoslavs wanted that it to be led by Napolitano) visits Yugoslavia in September or October, and discuss cultural issues.⁶²⁵

⁶²³ One of the biggest paradoxes of the Yugoslav socialism after 1948 was that the communist party defended its repressive and undemocratic actions by labeling its enemies as Stalinists. In its opposition to Stalinism and the USSR, the LCY was not able to evolve from its Stalinist roots, using a political methodology that was not essentially different, although undeniably less repressive and authoritarian. Hence, one of the professors of the Belgrade University and a key figure in the intellectual dissent of this time, Svetozar Stojanović, stated that the Yugoslav socialism was, in fact, an "anti-Stalinist Stalinism". I. Banac, "Yugoslav communism and the Yugoslav state", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 578.

⁶²⁴ APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 424-425.

⁶²⁵ The Yugoslavs wanted to describe the way in which the bureaucratic tendencies were fought, and how culture was democratized and opened up to the masses. They admitted that elitism and exclusivity were present in the Yugoslav culture, connecting these phenomena with the impact of the bureaucratic and nationalist circles which were hampering democracy in every sphere of Yugoslav society. Thus, the main aim of the LCY's cultural policy was to democratize the culture, include the working masses in it, and create a link between the intellectuals and workers, for the benefit of both (the intellectuals would not be isolated, and the workers would fulfill their cultural needs). Although it was evident that the LCY was obtaining such impact by a direct involvement in the field of culture, this was denied. In fact, it was claimed that the LCY did not arbitrate in cultural issues, and leaves complete artistic and scientific freedom. However, it was admitted that, when those freedoms were misused with the aim of institutionalizing culture and

Finally, it was agreed that the two parties should have meetings regarding the Non-Alignment issues each semester.⁶²⁶

The last important contact in 1973 was on October 16th, when Pajetta and Mechini had a conversation on international affairs with a LCY delegation led by Dolanc. Two dramatic international events, the Yom Kippur War and the coup in Chile,⁶²⁷ prompted this meeting. Before addressing these issues, Dolanc underlined that Yugoslavia was open for the European conference of communist parties, and supported the idea from the start.⁶²⁸ He also added that was the first time they heard for the idea of a global communist conference, and although not able to have an official stance on it, remain open to the idea.⁶²⁹ This was a big change in Yugoslav foreign policy, having in mind that Belgrade previously rejected any meeting of such kind, despite PCI's common attempts to make Yugoslavia participate and form a "liberal" wing of the communist movement with the Italians. Obviously, the Yugoslav-Soviet rapprochement was strong, and Belgrade now felt closer to the communist movement than ever before since 1948.

After this introduction, Dolanc focused on the crisis in the Middle East. In his view, the Arab countries were not willing to stop before obtaining their goal – Israel's retreat to the pre-1967 borders. They were very determined and solidary, and he showed that Soviet arms were superior to American. In such a scenario, where no diplomatic endeavors were fruitful, Dolanc

advocating views that were anti-socialist, the party reacted, "unmasking" these tendencies as reactionary. APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 1221-1230

⁶²⁶ APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 426-428.

⁶²⁷ Chile was a crucial topic for the PCI during those years, both for its foreign and internal policies.

Regarding foreign policy, the Italian communists were very attracted by the de-radicalization of the struggle for socialism in Latin America. The radical Cuba was hitherto uncontested, but a new concept emerged with Allende's Chile, democratic and pluralist – which was crucial for the PCI. Hence, the PCI became more engaged in the continent, and slowly distanced itself from the Cubans and the Soviets, forging links with the non-aligned countries and movements in South America.

This was one of the important linking points with Yugoslavia, as the Latin American experiences had made Berlinguer more inclined to defend the autonomy of the NAM. However, there were still certain elements within the PCI opposed to such Berlinguer's inclination towards Belgrade. One of the most prominent "anti-Yugoslavs" in the party was Pajetta, who could not reconcile with the Yugoslav equidistance towards the blocs, favoring the Soviet positions. For instance, after this visit in October of 1973, Pajetta explicitly stated that there was a need to oppose to the Yugoslav positions, both in the Third World and within the PCI.

Chile was even more important for PCI's internal policy. For Berlinguer, Pinochet's coup was the crucial lesson of the importance of having an alliance with the middle-class. Without it, any success of the communists, even a majority at the elections, would mean nothing. Hence, Berlinguer launched *compromesso storico*.

M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, 228-236, 243-244.

⁶²⁸ As the PCI had worked on a conference of Western communist parties, since May, the CPSU decided to propose a conference of European communist parties, thus overshadowing the PCI's conference, and making it just a preparatory meeting for the bigger conference. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 30.

⁶²⁹ APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 1231.

underlined that the future moves of Washington and Moscow were crucial. Yugoslavia wanted a peace agreement, but conditioned it with Israel's retreats to the pre-1967 borders. The Yugoslavs were therefore dissatisfied with the fact that Moscow was not so vocal in advocating the same idea.⁶³⁰ The question that bothered Dolanc regarded the future moves of the United States. An intervention, aimed at destroying the Arab military potentials, was possible. However, such an action would provoke the Soviets, whose reaction was hard to predict. Moreover, the war posed the issue of Palestine. In Dolanc's view, the Arab countries had to evolve politically and resolve this issue in a constructive manner, not with the previously used policy of "throwing Israel into the sea". Dolanc summarized the Yugoslav stance by saying that Belgrade was satisfied with the military situation in the Middle East,⁶³¹ stressing out the urgent need to pressure Israel into retreating to its pre-1967 borders. However, he also added that there should be no illusion that the internal political situation in Israel could change and bring a new quality to the negotiations.⁶³²

Regarding Chile, Dolanc blamed the socialist countries. He emphasized that Spain invested 30 million dollars into the coup, while the Soviet Union helped Allende's government with only 90 million dollars. Had the socialist help been stronger, the coup would have been impossible, thought Dolanc. Also, he criticized the press in the socialist countries for the way they covered the crisis. In his words, in the first five days of the crisis, the socialist press had not underlined the American imperialism as the key factor, while the Yugoslav press wrote about it since day one. Dolanc added that it was evident that Allende had made some mistakes, primarily by initiating the nationalization of goods without actual power and control over the army and the police. However, he concluded that the time has come to support the anti-imperialist forces, not through conferences and appeals but more directly, in order to prevent any demoralization after the Chilean coup and similar events in the future.⁶³³

The Yugoslav sources regarding Pajetta's visit to Belgrade in October are very scarce, lacking in detail about his conversations with the Yugoslav officials. However, a short note about a conversation between Pajetta and Bilić at the airport on October 18th 1973, provides important

⁶³⁰ The Soviets were, in fact, frustrated with Sadat. This issue was hampering the détente, which bothered Brezhnev. But the Soviets were also frustrated by the fact that Sadat had not informed Moscow on his plans and actions, and was not willing to be contained as Moscow had wished. V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 238-241.

⁶³¹ Such Yugoslav content was caused by the fact that the Yom Kippur War showed that Israel was not invincible, despite the fact that Egypt lost in its second phase - E. di Nolfo, "The Cold War and the transformation of the Mediterranean, 1960-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Volume II*, 251.

⁶³² APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 1231-1234.

⁶³³ APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 1233.

information. According to this document, Pajetta added that he forgot to tell to Dolanc, but informed the Yugoslavs now, that the PCI wanted to send an expert on radio connections to Yugoslavia. This expert was authorized to organize radio transmission from Yugoslavia, which would be used in case of a severe crisis in Italy. After the coup in Chile, the PCI feared that such a scenario was possible. Pajetta reminded Bilić that Longo and Tito had already reached an agreement on this issue earlier.⁶³⁴ Hence, once again fearing a right-wing coup in Italy, the PCI relied on the Yugoslav help in case of a dramatic scenario, which gave a fraternal dimension to the PCI-LCY relations.

The first important contact in the interparty relations during 1974 was in mid-February, when Sergio Segre visited Yugoslavia. This visit was followed by a similar meeting in Bucharest, as Segre wanted to inform the Yugoslav and Romanian parties about the recently held conference of Western communist parties (in Brussels, in late January)⁶³⁵, and, more importantly, about the situation in Italy and the PCI. It was the first direct contact between the Yugoslavs and the Italian party in which the term *compromesso storico*⁶³⁶ not only mentioned, but elaborated as well. Having in mind the importance of this idea for the PCI and for the political life in Italy,⁶³⁷ it is crucial to

⁶³⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-510. In the third chapter it was described how Longo, fearing a right wing coup, asked Tito to allow a small illegal PCI apparatus to function in Yugoslavia and prepare the escape and saving of party cadres in case of emergency.

⁶³⁵ The conference was Berlinguer's initiative, aimed at propagating his idea of a Europe that would be "neither anti-Soviet nor anti-American". At that point, it seemed that the PCF and Marchais were supporting him. The problem was with other, small, communist parties in Western Europe, which were excessively dependent on Moscow, therefore opposed to such ideas. However, the Spanish party supported Berlinguer, which proved to be an important step in forming the Eurocommunist nucleus of PCI, PCF and PCE. S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 46-49.

⁶³⁶ Finding an ideological legitimization in the big compromises Lenin had made (NEP, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk) in September 1973 Berlinguer had launched his idea of a broad alliance between communists, socialists and Catholics. In his three articles published in *Rinascita* during September and October, he gave a detailed rationale for this new direction of the PCI. Making a parallel with the bloody end of the left government in Chile, Berlinguer emphasized that even if the PCI and PSI managed to obtain the majority of votes, they would not be able to form a stable government. Such scenario was impossible due to geopolitical circumstances. Firstly, Italy was part of the American bloc, and that was something that had to be respected (unlike the Greek communists who had failed to learn the same lesson in 1945). Secondly, if the PCI and PSI were to form a government, such exclusively left government would only push other political parties more towards the right. And finally, in Berlinguer's view, as the coalitions the DC had with the PSI and with the extreme right had proven inadequate, the time had come for the PCI to step in.

Berlinguer's idea was rational and intelligent, unusual for an oppositional politician. However, it had two strategic flaws. First, the PSI and its support were taken for granted, and the position and contribution of the socialists in a potential broad alliance were not elaborated substantially. In achieving the *compromesso storico*, the communists were primarily focused on the DC. Second, although the PCI and Berlinguer constantly emphasized the need for a profound and radical reform, a precise and concrete project of those reforms had never been made.

D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 575-579.

⁶³⁷ It was a hitherto unseen openness of the communists towards the government, and a profound change of the PCI's outlook on the DC – it was no more an enemy, nor the "product of US imperialism", but a partner in saving democracy. Despite the initial disinterest, the DC changed its mind and started paying more attention to the new PCI policies,

underline that this meeting opened the topic of *compromesso storico* in the interparty relations. Although, at first, it was overshadowed by the organization of the European communist conference, and even by various international topics later on, *compromesso storico* was naturally one of the key topics in the LCY-PCI relations and Belgrade was always fully supportive of the idea – the Yugoslav stance on it was very positive, to an extent it even made the LCY become closer and more supportive to the PCI.

In his meeting with Belovski (member of the LCY's Presidency) and Obradović (in charge of the LCY's department of foreign affairs), Segre initiated his exposition by explaining the situation in Italy.⁶³⁸ The country was facing a crisis,⁶³⁹ like the entire Europe, and this led to a stronger influence of the United States within the EEC. The PCI's stance was that the crisis facilitated the rise of right-wing politics. Hence, the Italian communists decided to act responsibly and constructively – they had not wanted to overthrow the government before constructing an alternative solution. The PCI criticized the government's decision to raise the wages as inadequate, but also criticized the workers' revolts for their exclusive focus on improving the position of the working class, lacking in care for other aspects of the complex Italian economy. Due to this, a part of the middle-class accepted right wing solutions. Finally, Segre underlined the fear of the Chilean scenario in Italy, based on the apparent similarity of the political structures in the two countries. Therefore, Berlinguer offered the *compromesso storico*, proposing it as the only viable solution for resolving the problems which plagued Italy for thirty years, like the economic imbalance between the South and the North.⁶⁴⁰

In the second part of the meeting, Segre gave a detailed information regarding the Brussels meeting. Having in mind that the wider European processes and interactions, very dynamic at that

particularly Aldo Moro, who thought that the time of conflicts was ended. Moro was the crucial figure within the DC who initiated his party's interactions with the PCI idea. As the crisis was affecting every part of the Italian society, the very different DC and PCI included, it initiated a dialogue, based on one of the rare things that connected the two opposed parties – the Italian Constitution, a united endeavor from 1947. Moro thus tried to give his response and version of the idea, also taking substantial diplomatic actions in that regard – during the CSCE meeting he met with US President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger, trying to convince them in this project, aware of their distrust towards the PCI. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 138-144.

⁶³⁸ The Yugoslavs were very interested in the topic, and proposed a meeting with Berlinguer. This issue was important to Belgrade since, as they had put it, the changes in Italy could impact the relations between Italy and Yugoslavia. APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p.249.

⁶³⁹ As a country dependent on importing raw materials, Italy was particularly affected by the oil crisis of 1973-1974 in comparison to other Western countries. The crisis profoundly changed the country, firstly by imposing the need to save and reduce public expenditure, something completely opposed to the hitherto held economic beliefs and modes of action. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 132-133.

⁶⁴⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-512.

time, substantially impacted the work of every individual communist party, the goal of the conference was to analyze the situation and devise future actions together. Despite the useful work done in Brussels, certain problems arose, and for the PCI the biggest problem was the dogmatism of some parties. Those parties were opposed to the EEC, multipartism and PCI's vision of a Europe that would be neither anti-American nor anti-Soviet. However, the Italian communists were content that they and the PCF led the conference, offering certain aspects of joint policies and opening up the path of Western communists' dialogue with the non-communist left. The PCI also managed to erase the proposed dogmatic phrases from the document, like the attacks on China and propositions for a European and global communist conference. It was also noted that the PCF became more flexible after it improved relations with the French socialists, although some differences with the PCI remained, especially regarding the EEC.⁶⁴¹

Segre also informed his Yugoslav counterparts of certain aspects of PCI's European policy. PCI was primarily focused on collaboration with the non-communist left, seeing it as the precondition for the construction of the Western socialism, different from its Eastern version.⁶⁴² In order to achieve that, Berlinguer sought contacts with various prominent left figures in Western Europe. He secretly met with Bruno Kreisky, tried to meet with Brandt, and had various contacts with Mitterrand. The PCI feared of a halt in the European détente, noticing a decrease of interest for the CSCE in both blocs. Hence, the Italian communists were hurrying to use this opportunity and build left unity in Western Europe. Also, one of the most important PCI European goals was to emancipate the continent from US influence further. Hence, the Italian communists proposed a European communist conference after the Third phase of the CSCE. The Soviets wanted it to be held earlier, so they could use it as a means of hurrying the CSCE process. The Italian communists thought that if that would be the case, the conference would be a mere propagandistic meeting.

⁶⁴¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-513. The Soviet reactions to the conference were implicitly negative. The reason for that was that they feared of a possible coordination/creation of a parallel center between the Western communist parties, and feared of Berlinguer's capacity to attract others in this direction. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 34. The same reasons led the Soviets to attack Eurocommunism almost three years later.

⁶⁴² The main aim of this Berlinguer's policy was to put an end to sectarian outlooks of the European communists. The idea to open towards the non-communist left had two important aspects for Berlinguer, one international and one national. On the international level, he saw it as the best mode of combating social-democracy and building the communist hegemony within the left. On the national level, this idea was an integral part of the *compromesso storico*. The Chilean example of how the lack of agreement between the left and the moderate forces could lead a country in chaos and foreign intervention was crucial for Berlinguer. Hence, that is why he was aimed at constructing a dialogue with the non-communist left and with the moderate forces in his country. S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 49

Hence, the PCI wanted to organize it later, seeing it as a meeting where the communists could discuss the already accepted principles of the CSCE, and, on the other hand, openly and publicly oppose to the presence of military bases on foreign soil and advocate for the overcoming of the blocs. The first support to the PCI's plan came from the Polish and East German parties. The Italian communists wanted the conference to be very democratic, and wanted to initiate with the preparations for it in late 1973 or early 1974. One of the main motives for this PCI initiative was their wish to counter and postpone the Soviet proposition of a global conference. Although the need for international meetings on various global issues (like the relations between the developed and underdeveloped countries) was obvious, the PCI thought that a global communist conference could bring more harm than good in the current situation. Segre also briefly informed of the PCI views on the Mediterranean. Regarding Greece, Ceausescu's visit was very detrimental for the PCI, as the party was strongly against having relations between Italy and Greece. Now, when a leader of a socialist country visited Athens, it became impossible for the Western left to block the contacts of their national governments with Greece. Regarding the Middle East, Pajetta visited Egypt, Syria and Lebanon, and his strongest impression was that the Soviets were passive which Washington knew how to use.⁶⁴³

The Yugoslavs carefully listened to Segre, commenting on several issues. Regarding the Western communist conference, they were very satisfied that the issue of relations between the developed and underdeveloped countries was posed, evaluating it as the crucial problem of international affairs. However, regarding the idea of a European conference, Belgrade had some doubts. In short, Yugoslavia favored broader left meetings, with participation of socialists, social-democrats and liberation movements. Also, the principles of equality, noninterference and of public transparency were crucial for the Yugoslavs. However, the Yugoslavs wanted to clarify that they were not a priori against an exclusively communist meeting. In their words, Belgrade was open to participate at any meeting regarding Europe, and would make its decision solely based on the overarching topic of the conference – for instance, they participated at the Paris meeting on Vietnam, or the Moscow meeting on youth, but declined to participate at the Moscow meeting of the ideological secretaries of the communist parties. Regarding the Middle East, the Yugoslavs emphasized that they did not know much about the relations between Washington and the Arab countries, or about the contacts between Washington and Moscow regarding this issue. However,

⁶⁴³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-513.

Yugoslavia advocated for a just and peaceful solution based on the UN's resolution, the national rights of the Palestinians, and the right of existence for every state in the region.⁶⁴⁴ In their view, the unity of the Arab states was crucial in achieving these goals. Finally, the Yugoslavs briefly informed Segre on the situation in Yugoslavia. According to them, everything was going well – the working class was more engaged in the political life and becoming more powerful, and the party was finding a balance between democracy and socialism. They denied the claims, present in the Western press, that there was a return to Stalinism, and underlined that the party's conflict with professors from the Faculty of Philosophy at the Belgrade University had nothing to do with freedom of expression, but with the professors' political ambition.⁶⁴⁵

The PCI followed the situation at the Yugoslav universities with great interest. As the party's pressure on the university opposition strengthened, one of its informal leaders, professor of philosophy Mihajlo Marković, wrote a pamphlet depicting the fierce attack of the party on this group of intellectuals. The pamphlet found its way to Italy, and Amendola requested a meeting at the Yugoslav embassy, in early March. Amendola informed the hosts that the reactions in the Italian public were strong, and proposed that Luciano Gruppi visits Yugoslavia, focusing on cultural and scientific issues. He added that Gruppi could meet one of the professors from the opposition. The response from the embassy was that this would be unacceptable, and the Italian communists had not insisted further. To counter this proposition, the Yugoslav officials at the embassy proposed that an LCY official comes to Italy and informs of the preparations for the Yugoslav party's tenth congress. This was not immediately proposed to the PCI, but sent to Belgrade for confirmation. Various officials, including Dolanc, agreed that this idea would be better than Gruppi's visit, and the proposition was made.⁶⁴⁶ However, since Cvijetin Mijatović, who was supposed to lead the LCY delegation, got ill, the visit was postponed.⁶⁴⁷

In late May, the LCY held its Tenth Congress. The PCI was represented by a delegation consisting of Galuzzi, Segre and Cuffaro.⁶⁴⁸ Prior to the delegation's arrival, a comprehensive report on the history and current state of LCY-PCI reports was written in Belgrade. Firstly, the report gave a short history of the PCI. Gramsci's legacy, 1956 congress and the Italian road to

⁶⁴⁴ This was an implicit critique of the tendencies within the Arab countries to deny Israel's right to exist.

⁶⁴⁵ APCI, Esteri, MF 046, p. 249-253.

⁶⁴⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-514. APCI, Esteri, MF 076, p. 897.

⁶⁴⁷ APCI, Esteri, MF 076, p. 931.

⁶⁴⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-515.

socialism, struggle for autonomy within the communist movement, opening to other parties in the early seventies, and, finally, Berlinguer's *compromesso storico* from October 1973, were underlined as key points. Secondly, the report gave a short summarization of the situation in Italy. According to the author, the main reason for the acute political and economic crisis was the inertia of the leading political figures in the Italian government, incapable of resolving the burning issues. On the other side, the PCI's efforts were evaluated as constructive, although hitherto unsuccessful. According to the Yugoslavs, the DC was aware of the PCI's importance, but was not yet ready for the *compromesso storico*, and the relations between the two parties were damaged by the referendum on divorce.⁶⁴⁹

Thirdly, the report focused on the Yugoslav-Italian relations and the PCI's role in them. At that time, the relations between Italy and Yugoslavia had hit a low point.⁶⁵⁰ In this situation, as the Yugoslavs had no contacts with the government in Rome, the relations with the PCI were very important, and Belgrade wanted to use them and influence the Italian government through the Italian communists. The PCI was on the Yugoslav side in this event, and harshly criticized the note of the Italian ministry of the foreign affairs, labeling it as an influence of the extreme right and as a part of a wider attack of the European reaction on Yugoslavia. Finally, the report summarized the interparty LCY-PCI relations. They were evaluated as good, with various diverse contacts and exchange of views. The Yugoslav intention was to further developed the relations, with a particular focus on the issues of Non-Alignment (which the PCI supported), Europe and the Mediterranean. On the other hand, certain problems were underlined. It was noted that the PCI did not approve some of the Yugoslav positions – Yugoslav foreign policy was criticized during 1972, and, regarding internal policies, the Italian communists constantly advocated for more planning in the Yugoslav economy. The Yugoslavs also had their critiques of the PCI – they wanted a stronger activity of the Italian communists on the issue of the Italian-Yugoslav frontier, noting that the

⁶⁴⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-517.

⁶⁵⁰ The crisis was initiated by the Yugoslavs, who had furtherly integrated Zone B in Yugoslavia. The most important symbolical act was the placing of signs that indicated that the border between Zone A and B was the official interstate frontier. In response, on March 11th 1974, the Italian government issued a diplomatic note which included territorial aspirations to the Zone B. Hence, "the last Trieste crisis" was initiated. S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 275-310.

socialists were more vocal in supporting a quick solution.⁶⁵¹ The PCI repeatedly evaded to take a stronger stance on the topic, justifying it by “national responsibility” and electoral issues.⁶⁵²

However, in the PCI’s salutatory address to the LCY’s congress, the Italian communists supported the swift solution of the frontier issue, although not in the most explicit manner as the Yugoslavs wished. In the address it was stated that the PCI and LCY had a mutual interest for the good bilateral interstate relations, which have hitherto been the best example of how two states of different systems could cooperate. This example was crucial for the security in Europe, for the CSCE process, for the peace in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and for the new relations, based on equality, between the developed and underdeveloped countries. The PCI also underlined that the vast majority in Italy, all the democratic political forces in the country, saw friendship and cooperation with Yugoslavia as an integral part of Italian foreign policy. Finally, it was explicitly underlined that the mutual respect of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence was the basis of future collaboration between the two states, and that these principles were shared by all of the democratic forces and working masses.⁶⁵³

The road to Canossa or the road to Damascus? The preparations of the Berlin conference

In the second part of 1974, the European conference of the communist parties was the predominant topic of the LCY-PCI relations. Several meetings were dedicated to this issue. The first one was in late July, when Obradović, head of the LCY’s foreign affairs department, met with his Italian and Polish counterparts – Segre and Bogumil Suika. The two guests presented their initiative for a European communist conference focused on peace, détente and collaboration in

⁶⁵¹ However, Belgrade was not satisfied neither with the PCI, nor with the PSI, convinced that they could have done more to influence the Italian government during the crisis - S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 291.

⁶⁵² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-517. The crisis in the relations between Italy and Yugoslavia was intensively followed by the PCI. The Yugoslav point of view was followed through the Yugoslav press in Italian (*La voce del popolo* from Rijeka/Fiume). Also, in late March, the mayors of Yugoslav towns sent letters to their Italian sister cities (primarily run by the PCI), urging them to protest against the conduct of the Italian government and advocate a ratification of the current de facto border line. APCI, Esteri, MF 076, p. 898-930.

⁶⁵³ APCI, Esteri, MF 078, p. 707-713. The issue of the bilateral interstate relations was the most important part of the address. However, beside this, some other issues were also mentioned – the fraternal alliance between the two parties, forged in the joint struggle against fascism; the Yugoslav positive impact on the international affairs and praise for its foreign policy principles (independence and non-alignment, primarily); support to the LCY’s internal policies – self-management, the principle of brotherhood and unity; and, finally, an emphasis of the PCI’s commitment to collaborate with a wide range of democratic and left forces in Europe, already displayed in the victory at the May referendum on divorce. Ibid.

Europe, with a preparatory meeting in Warsaw, to be held in September or October, as the first step. Their idea was to have a free and autonomous discussion of the parties, hence they offered no document as a starting point. Obradović thanked for the information, adding that, although he understood that the PCI and PUWP had not yet fully articulated their views on the issue, he wanted to pose some questions in order to inform his party.⁶⁵⁴

Obradović's first question was what were the motives and aims of the initiative, and would the conference be similar/parallel to the CSCE. Segre responded that the PCI's position was that the conference should not be ideological, but rather focused on practical political issues, primarily on offering a platform of cooperation to all of the progressive forces in the world. Regarding the CSCE, the PCI thought that the conference should come after it, and analyze its conclusions. The topics the PCI wanted to be discussed were the détente, security, cooperation, disarmament, the Mediterranean and overcoming of the blocs.⁶⁵⁵ Segre also underlined that the conference would be an individual event, an analysis of the current state, not an institutionalized meeting in continuity with the previous and possible future conferences. Suika agreed with everything Segre said, although he emphasized a certain continuity with the Karlovy Vary conference, which Segre denied.⁶⁵⁶

The second group of issues Obradović raised regarded the procedure – what would be the modes of determining the aims and of preparing the final document; and, more importantly, how would a consensus be obtained and how would a minority position be treated. Segre answered that the PCI also gave big importance to the same issues. As those issues could not be resolved at that exact moment, they had to be posed at the preparatory meeting in Warsaw. However, based on the PCI's discussion with the PUWP, some views of the two parties concerning the named questions were already clear. The PCI and the PUWP thought that the preparation had to be completely democratic, without an initial agenda. Regarding the minority views, Segre added that there could be two ways of affronting them – the document could consist only of the stances adopted in a complete consensus, or it could also include and highlight the differences between the parties on certain issues, as it was done at the conference in Brussels. Segre was obviously more in favor of

⁶⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-519.

⁶⁵⁵ The PCI also wanted the conference to discuss the relations between Europe and the underdeveloped countries, and to be an opportunity for the Western communist parties, whose role was now more important, to articulate their vision of socialism.

⁶⁵⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-519.

the second option, as he added that it would be better not to hide the differences. Finally, Segre added that the preparations for the conference had to be very democratic and include public discussions, debates of intellectuals and press, and a series of encounters on certain topics. Suika gave a different perspective, underlining that the conference should focus on joint problems, not on interparty disputes or national issues, thus making a consensus more probable. If the conference was to be focused only on certain issues of mutual interests, he was convinced that there would be no disputes.⁶⁵⁷

Obradović thanked for the responses, repeating that he understood why there were no official stances yet. However, he thought that it would be useful to pose some questions. Although the Yugoslavs, not having any formal information earlier, had not discussed the issue in detail, Obradović expressed some personal remarks. His opinion was that Yugoslavia was not opposed to the conference, viewing it as a free exchange of views, which should be democratic and autonomous, even if there were many differences between the parties. For the Yugoslavs, it was crucial to have a public debate and preparation, especially in order to attract other political forces that support the peaceful coexistence. Regarding the document, the Yugoslavs view was that it should not be in an obligatory form, as every communist party is solely responsible to its working class and its people. Due to the traumatic experiences of the 1948 excommunication and attacks on Yugoslavia in subsequent conferences, Obradović insisted on not condemning any individual party, adding that the policies of individual parties should not be object of evaluation in any form. He agreed with Segre that there should be no continuity with the Karlovy Vary conference. However, it was underlined once again that the Yugoslav foreign policy was more open to wider meetings, of various political forces, hence Obradović agreed with Segre that this meeting should not monopolize the topics of peace and security but encourage readiness to work on these issue with non-communists also. Segre fully agreed with the Yugoslav, adding that Obradović expressed his personal views more eloquently than he would be able to do it himself. Suika was of the same opinion, and it was agreed to inform the LCY of further activities of the Italian and Polish communists in this regard.⁶⁵⁸

A Yugoslav report on the meeting written subsequently after it emphasized the differences between the PUWP and the PCI. The Yugoslavs were not satisfied with Suika's mentioning of the

⁶⁵⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-519.

⁶⁵⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-519.

Karlovy Vary conference and with his statement that the conference should be a demonstration of unity and of support to the CSCE decisions. In essence, Suika presented a conference as something that would go smoothly, as if a general consensus of the communist parties was already present. Segre's positions were viewed positively – in particular his openness to public debate and open discussions at the conference, posing the issue of underdeveloped countries, aims of offering a new perspective of socialism in the West. Since Yugoslavia and Romania were notified in person, by Segre and Suika, it was concluded that they truly want a debate and the Yugoslav and Romanian presence. Finally, it was concluded that three issues were going to be problematic – which communist party should be invited from Greece; how much attention will be dedicated to the relations between Europe and the underdeveloped countries; and the issue of Mediterranean (it was already evident that it was important for the PCI and not interesting for the PUWP).⁶⁵⁹

After the meeting of Obradović, Segre and Suika, during the next day, July 29th, Segre individually met with Aleksandar Grličkov (a high ranking official of the LCY – secretary of the party's presidency). Grličkov repeated and corroborated the remarks Obradović made the day before,⁶⁶⁰ emphasizing that the LCY was interested in contributing to the initiative, but not unconditionally. He also underlined that the LCY views were very close to the PCI's, urging for more bilateral meetings on the issue. Segre fully agreed, indicating that the respect for the differences and autonomy was crucial, as several communist parties were beginning to have a stronger impact only after they modified their views in accordance with the national context.⁶⁶¹ He also underlined that it was impossible to request the American withdrawal from Europe without analyzing the situation in the East. Finally, Segre informed that the initiative came from a meeting between Brezhnev and Berlinguer, in March 1973. A week prior to Segre's visit to Belgrade, the PCI was visited by Ponomarev and Zagladin. Although the two CPSU officials agreed with everything the Italian communists said, the PCI had no illusions that everything would run smoothly. In confidence, Segre added that there was a dispute regarding the press release after the CPSU visit – the Soviet officials wanted to underline Marxism-Leninism and proletarian unity, while the Italian side saw this formulation as an implication of a closed system and theory, which

⁶⁵⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-519.

⁶⁶⁰ Advocating: against connecting the conference with previous meeting; against evaluating the stances of individual parties; against having a universal strategy; but for respecting the differences among the parties; and for a broader public discussion in preparing the conference.

⁶⁶¹ The PCI, PCF, communists in Portugal, Spain and Greece.

isolates the communists. Hence, they rephrased it. Finally, Segre proposed a joint LCY-PCI organization of a conference on the Mediterranean issues, and informed of an initiative to have a broad left wing meeting of the EEC countries, adding his predictions that the European communist conference could be held in mid-1975.⁶⁶²

In the second part of the meeting, Segre and Grličkov discussed the issue of the frontier between Italy and Yugoslavia. Segre's information was that the Italian government was now ready to resolve the issue. Allegedly, they were willing to sign an agreement after the CSCE, in order to leave the impression that Italy was not forced to sign it, but rather did it as a support to the decisions of that conference.⁶⁶³ However, he added that the government was very unstable, lacking the political strength to finalize the agreement, hence this postponement should be understood by the Yugoslavs. He also added that he was aware of the LCY's criticism of the PCI's activity on the issue, once again justifying the position of his party by saying that any PCI's stronger activity would only provoke right wing radicalism and hamper the negotiating process. He also added that the PCI was being consulted by the government in regard with the relations with the junta in Chile.⁶⁶⁴

The intensive collaboration between the Yugoslav and Italian communists regarding the European communist conference continued in August. Pajetta firstly met with Vučinić in Rome, on August 20th, and afterwards visited Belgrade and spoke with Dobrivoje Vidić, on August 22nd. In his first conversation, with Vučinić, Pajetta informed that the PCI and PUWP thought that after the Warsaw preparatory meeting, it would be good to organize the next meetings in London and Belgrade. In his view, the PCI had higher demands than their Polish comrades, who were more realistic. Pajetta also informed of his conversation with the Hungarian leader Kadar, earlier in August. According to Pajetta, Kadar was not enthusiastic and did not expect much of the conference. However, Pajetta emphasized that while Kadar and the Polish leader Gierek left a good personal impression on him, he was dissatisfied with Ceausescu, and especially with the "shameful" nepotism in Romania. His general impressions of Romania were negative, and he evaluated that the country was lagging far behind the rest of socialist countries, in many aspects.⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-520.

⁶⁶³ Segre's information was not unfounded, as, despite the public dispute, secret negotiations between Italy and Yugoslavia were initiated at that time - S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 312-317.

⁶⁶⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-520.

⁶⁶⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-521.

Pajetta and Vidić also talked about the European communist conference, but before affronting this topic they briefly commented on the situation in the Mediterranean. Pajetta was rather enthusiastic. He was thrilled by the peaceful political transition in Greece and Portugal, saying that these two events confirmed the PCI's principles of struggle for socialism in the West. In his view, this demonstrated the weaknesses of the NATO, and moved the politics in the region to the left. Finally, he concluded that the named events had also showed that the détente was a weapon of antiimperialist struggle. Vidić slightly disagreed, saying that the détente was not the weapon, but the activity of democratic and progressive forces, on which everything depended. Although he viewed the détente positively, he added that this process had not yet produced a solution neither for the Middle East nor for Cyprus.⁶⁶⁶

In the following part of the meeting, the issue of the European communist conference was discussed. Pajetta underlined that the changes which occurred in the meantime, particularly in Greece and Portugal, posed the need to affront some new questions at the conference – the issue of peaceful transition to socialism and alliance with non-communists; the relation between socialism and democracy; various issues linked to the situation in the Mediterranean – peaceful coexistence, overcoming of the blocs, collaboration with liberation movements, an analysis of the situation in the Arab world. Hence, he saw the conference as an opportunity to debate and research certainly particularly important issues, absolutely not as something similar to the UN, where every delegation would only come, elaborate its position and stop there. Pajetta wanted a real debate which would spark some ideas, not just the European conference as “the lesser evil” compared to the global communist conference. Vidić briefly informed him that the LCY had not yet assumed a formal position, besides insisting on a democratic and autonomous preparation, and proposed further PCI-LCY meetings on the issue. Pajetta accepted it and invited the LCY to send someone to Rome. At the end of the meeting, Pajetta repeated Segre's statement regarding the frontier, defending the PCI's lack of activity on the issue. Vidić commented that a stronger PCI activity would do no harm to anyone, and Pajetta concluded that after the CSCE the timing will be perfect to exert pressure on the Italian government regarding this issue.⁶⁶⁷

Since it was arranged that an LCY officials visits Rome, just a few weeks after Pajetta's visit Grličkov went to Italy. On September 9th and 10th he had conversations with Pajetta, Segre

⁶⁶⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-522.

⁶⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-522.

and Oliva.⁶⁶⁸ At the beginning of the meeting, Grličkov asked about the PCI's stances on the conference, underlining that they were very important for the LCY's decision regarding its participation at the preparatory meeting in Warsaw. Pajetta said that the views of the two parties were very close, although emphasizing that they do not have to be acceptable to everybody, as there were going to be various different positions present in Warsaw. The PCI's aim was to guarantee a free expression of views, prevent any attack on the parties that are not present, and, finally, make an impact on the general views, bringing them closer to the PCI principles. However, the Italian communists had decided not to pose any issues which would undoubtedly lead to conflicts – for instance, Czechoslovakia or Solzhenitsyn, although the party remains opposed to the Soviet conduct in both cases. However, the PCI was determined not to accept any stance that collided with its fundamental views. For instance, the PCI was vigorously in favor of the free movement of people and ideas, hence it could not compromise on this issue. Once again, Pajetta underlined some new questions that the PCI wanted to pose as topics for the conference: multinational companies and the crisis of the capital; Portugal, Greece, Spain and the Mediterranean; the relations between the workers' movement and the Third World; freedom of expression; relations with socialists and social-democrats; equality and noninterference.⁶⁶⁹

While in the August meeting Pajetta was enthusiastic regarding the international situation, Segre gave a more negative assessment of it now. He underlined the lessening of interest for the CSCE in Europe, the negative tendencies in the Mediterranean, and a stronger foreign military presence in Europe (the PCI was particularly fearing that the United States could shift their bases from Greece to Italy⁶⁷⁰). Hence, he thought that all of this should be debated at the conference, and repeated that the PCI insisted on having the conference only after the Third phase of the CSCE. He also posed the issue of the two communist parties of Greece, one in the country and the other in exile, since they most probably did not want to reunite and come together. Grličkov stated that Yugoslavia was insisting on inviting the party that operates within the country, and then spoke of the Yugoslav positions regarding the more general problems of the conference. The Yugoslavs were aware of the differences among the communist parties, hence underlined the need to find the

⁶⁶⁸ APCI, Esteri, MF 082, p. 310.

⁶⁶⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-523.

⁶⁷⁰ Although the PCI was glad that the dictatorships in Greece and Portugal fell, they were not sure that this would be positive for Italy, as it could lead to a bigger US interest in the country, even in the military aspect. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 38.

topics of joint interest. However, for Belgrade, two issues were most important. Firstly, that the conference must present ideas which would be something that the communist movement offers to entire Europe – the conference must not be a sectarian meeting. Secondly, Belgrade was against holding the conference in Eastern Germany, proposing to organize it in Poland. Finally, Grličkov informed of an information obtained by the Yugoslavs, according to which the Albanian party was not invited, while Lister's fraction of the CPE was. Segre denied both, saying that an invitation to Tirana was sent (adding that the Albanian and Yugoslav party were the only ones that had not responded hitherto, and Grličkov promised a response soon), and that inviting the Lister's fraction would be unacceptable for the PCI.⁶⁷¹

Finally, unlike the situation in 1967, the Yugoslavs agreed with the PCI and decided to participate at the preparatory meeting for the conference, held in Budapest, on December 20th 1974. Grličkov, Vidić and Obradović represented the LCY, and Pajetta, Segre and Oliva were the PCI delegates. The two delegations had an encounter on the margins of the meeting, and discussed certain issues that were posed. The first dilemma was should the conference have both a press release and an international appeal, or just one document. Pajetta was confused, since he was convinced that the Soviets already agreed to having just one document, which was also the PCI's stance, and asked for Grličkov's opinion. Grličkov responded that the LCY had not changed its mind and wanted to have only one document, an elaborated press release regarding the activity of the conference. That documents should also include an appeal to progressive forces in Europe, proving that the communist movement was not sectarian, but open for a broader left collaboration. Pajetta agreed, adding that he was not content with certain statements regarding the ideological firmness of the movement. Also, he addressed the proposed ideas regarding the creation of left fronts. Pajetta supported them in the sense that every party, in its state, should work on it, but opposed to the idea of a formal letter, sent from the conference to socialists and social-democrats. He was also dissatisfied with the way in which the European crisis was analyzed – the discourse coming from the socialist countries was triumphalist, as if the crisis was only a Western concern and everything went well in the East. Finally, Pajetta was not pleased with the conduct of the PCF delegation – they attacked the French socialists and talked about the strength of the EEC. The PCI saw the EEC completely different, as an organization in crisis, which could only be saved by democratization, emancipation from the United States and collaboration with the Third World. All

⁶⁷¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-523.

of these issues Pajetta wanted to incorporate in the conference's document. The two sides agreed to have more initiatives regarding the conferences, primarily scientific symposiums. Talking in general about all of the proposed topics, Grličkov underlined their complexity, adding that it was natural to have different perspectives on them. Hence, in line with that complexity and different views, the Yugoslavs advocated for a press release instead of an elaborated document of the conference.⁶⁷²

During 1975, the LCY-PCI relations were rather dynamic and filled with various meetings and initiatives. Naturally, the issue of the European communist conference was the most important ones, but not the only topic that was discussed. Firstly, in January, the PCI invited the LCY to participate in a meeting that was going to be held in April, in Rome. The meeting would be focused on economic cooperation in Europe (particularly in the areas of energetics, science and finance), and it was one of the series of meetings held in order to prepare the European communist conference.⁶⁷³ However, other initiatives were also raised, and on February 4th Pajetta informed the Yugoslav ambassador in Rome of the idea to summon a Mediterranean conference. Pajetta firstly talked with the Algerian president Houari Boumédiène, and proposed that his country organize the conference and form the list of participants (since the issue of participants was always divisive, Pajetta thought that if the Algerians decide on it there could be a bigger chance for success). Since the Algerian president responded positively, Pajetta told him that he will inform the Yugoslavs, to which Boumédiène agreed. Hence, Pajetta gave big importance to Yugoslavia by informing it immediately after Algeria, and asked for a response from Belgrade.⁶⁷⁴

The day after Pajetta's meeting with the Yugoslav ambassador, on February 5th, Umberto Cardi from the PCI's CC was in Belgrade, as a part of the Italian delegation at the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. His presence was used to have an interparty meeting, with Dobrivoje Vidić, and discuss several issues. Vidić firstly positively commented on the preparatory meetings for the European communist conference. He then informed Cardi of a meeting that would deal with the collaboration between Europe and the developing countries, organized by the LCY as a part of the preparatory debate for the European communist conference.⁶⁷⁵ Cardi supported this initiative and said that the PCI will send its representative. He also added that this issue should be

⁶⁷² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-525.

⁶⁷³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-526.

⁶⁷⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-527.

⁶⁷⁵ The LCY also sent a formal invitation to the PCI, on January 17th – APCI, Esteri, MF 202, p. 1295-1300.

discussed with the non-communist left, hence the PCI was organizing a similar meeting regarding the Middle East. The date of it remained unknown, but the PCI expected that, besides them and the LCY, various left forces from Europe would be present, along with representatives of Arab countries and of the Israeli left. Finally, Cardi corroborated Pajetta's information of a Mediterranean conference, saying that since there were positive contacts between the USSR and the Italian government regarding the region. Hence, he believed that there was a positive atmosphere in international relations which benefited the summoning of the conference in Algeria. Vidić thanked for the information, saying that the LCY will discuss these initiatives and decide on its participation.⁶⁷⁶

However, the biggest part of the meeting was dedicated to the Yugoslav-Italian frontier issue. Vidić said that Yugoslavia supported the recent statements made by Moro, Rumor⁶⁷⁷ and the PCI officials, who all emphasized the need to resolve the open issues between the two countries. However, he wanted to know what had Rumor intended by saying that there were some new incentives in the relations. Cardi responded that Rumor was not thinking of anything specific, but more of the growing consensus of the democratic forces in Italy (including the DC and the PSDI) regarding the issue. He repeated the reasons why the PCI was not so vocal on the problem previously, but promised that the Italian communists will, from now on, be more active, adding that the PCI became more influential in the political life in Italy. Finally, Cardi added that the Italian group in the Inter-Parliamentary Union had confirmed, in the previous talks, that the frontier had to be based on the situation from 1954 (hence, in accordance with the Yugoslav aim of formalizing the de facto state of the border), and advocated for a stronger economic collaboration between the two countries. Cardi viewed these statements very positively. Concluding the meeting, Vidić added that the LCY and the Yugoslav public were not content with the campaign against Yugoslavia in the West, focused on the case of eight professors from the University of Belgrade.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-528. According to Cardi, Vidić was very interested in the initiatives. APCI, Esteri, MF 202, p. 1302.

⁶⁷⁷ At that time, important progress had been made in the negotiation process, particularly during the meeting between Aldo Moro and Milos Minić, two minister of foreign affairs, in New York on September 28th 1974. When the new Italian government was formed, both the Prime Minister Moro (in December 1974) and the minister of foreign affairs Rumor (in January 1975) made positive public statements regarding the relations with Yugoslavia. S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 326-336.

⁶⁷⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-528. Cardi's report underlined that Vidić claimed that there was a connection between the anti-Yugoslav campaign and the activities of these professors. According to Vidić, both were aimed at provoking a crisis in Yugoslavia after Tito's reign. However, Vidić added that the measures undertaken against the professors were not harsh, and that the public supported them. Cardi and Barioli were under the impression that there were no tensions in

From February 17th to 19th, a meeting was held in Berlin with the aim of discussing the future document of the European communist conference. Oliva represented the PCI and Obradović the LCY. The Hungarian and Polish party representatives came with an already prepared draft of the document, despite the previously agreed principle of discussing the issue from *tabula rasa*, and hence were met with protests from the Italian, Yugoslav, Spanish, Romanian and Swedish parties. Oliva underlined that there was a need to firstly discuss the character and content of the document, as it was agreed earlier, and all of the named parties supported his position. Obradović gave the strongest support to Oliva. He also opposed to the content of the Hungarian/Polish draft, adding that the proposed text was very similar to the documents from the previous conferences. Despite this inconvenience, Obradović told Oliva, in a private conversation, that he remained content with the meeting. In his report, Oliva identified the LCY as the strongest supporter of the “minimalist conception” – i.e. advocating for the concept that the document should be only a political information. On the other side were the “maximalists”, who wanted a comprehensive political and ideological document.⁶⁷⁹

During those days, more precisely on February 18th, the (in)famous communist leader from Venezia Giulia, Vittorio Vidali, wrote a letter of complaints to Berlinguer. His first complaint regarded the reactions in Yugoslavia to his latest book, *Diario del XX Congresso* – his personal journal from the 20th Congress of the CPSU. According to the letter, he initially had not wanted to respond to the critiques. However, he noticed that, in the meantime, a strong campaign against him was initiated, especially among the Trieste Slovenes. He underlined that the campaign was tolerated by some comrades, despite being nationalistic. Secondly, Vidali complained against the report made by Boris Race, president of the Slovene cultural association, SKGZ, at a conference on minorities, held in Trieste last July. Vidali underlined that some of the views from the report regarding the PCI were unacceptable, since the party led the vast majority of the democratic Slovenes in Italy. Hence, Vidali appealed to the party’s leadership to clarify this issue.⁶⁸⁰

Belgrade, although adding this did not mean that the issue was not serious – APCI, Esteri, MF 202, p. 1302-1303. In any case, this topic continued to be very present in the LCY-PCI relations, since the Western public was very critical of the Yugoslav conduct in the named situation.

⁶⁷⁹ APCI, Esteri, MF 202, p. 1559-1563.

⁶⁸⁰ APCI, Esteri, MF 204, p. 324. Along with the letter, Vidali sent the text of Race’s report. The lengthy report was, in fact, an analysis of the struggle for the national rights of the Slovenes in Italy, from mid-19th century to the present. The report had a certain nationalist tone (understandable, due to the national topic it described). Although the PCI was not directly and explicitly criticized, it was evident that the author was implying that the communists could have done more for the Slovenes, which evidently frustrated Vidali. APCI, Esteri, MF 204, p. 328-410.

The interparty collaboration in March of 1975 was initiated by the PCI's 14th congress.⁶⁸¹ Prior to the conference, the Yugoslav embassy produced a comprehensive report on the situation in Italy and PCI's position in it. The general tone of the report indicated the understanding that the crisis in the country was very profound, and that Italy was more shaken by the crisis than other West European countries. Hence, the PCI proposed more radical reforms, opposing to the austerity measures of the government. Although the Yugoslav officials in Rome shared this position, they were skeptical of the chances of the communists to succeed in endangering the DC's hegemony. The report analyzed Berlinguer's idea of the *compromesso storico*, an alliance between communists, socialists and Catholics. The main intention of the PCI was to, together with the socialists, pressurize the DC into reforming, through contact with the Catholic masses. However, it was noted that there were various sources of opposition to this plan. Firstly, within the PCI itself, whose membership was not fully convinced in the idea – some were completely opposed, some, like Ingrao, wanted to test the idea in the regions first, before implementing on the state level. Secondly, other political parties were also opposed. According to the report, the idea was unacceptable as it endangered the DC's political monopoly and the "class interests of the rich". Also, the socialists were fearing that they would become marginal if the PCI and DC find an agreement. Although the report emphasizes that the internal Italian opposition was the biggest obstacle, it was added that the United States and NATO were also against the idea. However, despite these negative remarks, it was underlined that the communists succeeded in imposing this concept as a point of debate and in strengthening its perspective. Regarding the PCI's foreign policy, it was emphasized that the party advocated for an overcoming of the blocs, but not through individual exiting of national states from the NATO.⁶⁸² Hence, they wanted a strengthening of the détente and of the EEC's autonomy towards Washington, and only through these processes, and eventually, the overcoming of the blocs. Also, it was underlined, as a very positive change, that the PCI now gave substantially bigger attention to Third World issues. However, the Yugoslavs

⁶⁸¹ The only other episode from March worth of notice is the PCI's reactions to the death of Veljko Vlahović. As it was mentioned earlier, Vlahović had strong connections with the PCI due to his decades-long friendship with Togliatti and other PCI officials, forged in the Spanish Civil War and in the Comintern. Hence, the Italian party sent a telegram of condolences and *L'Unità* published it. APCI, Esteri, MF 204, 411-413.

⁶⁸² It was an idea devised by Berlinguer, who tried to reconcile two conflicting factors within it – 1) the fact that the global stability and peace, as the stability of Italy, were dependent on the good Soviet-American relations, which would be undermined by a unilateral exit of a country from one of the blocs; and 2) the principle and ideal of the struggle for overcoming of the blocs, the only viable solution for global stability. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 39-40.

were critical of two aspects of the PCI's Third World policies. Firstly, of the fact that Berlinguer divided these countries in two different types (Third World countries were the oil producers, and the countries which had raw materials, while the others were "Fourth World"), which was not a position shared by Belgrade. Secondly, they were critical of the fact that there was only marginal mentioning of the Non-Aligned Movement by the PCI officials, although when it was mentioned it was in a positive context. Finally, it was added that the PCI had not publicly commented on the idea of a global communist conference, but, in internal communication with the Yugoslavs, expressed the view that there were no conditions for such a meeting.⁶⁸³

The Yugoslav delegation at the PCI's congress, led by Grličkov, was rather satisfied with the reception – the LCY delegation was fifth in order when addressing the congress (after the Soviet, French, Vietnamese and Spanish communists), and was one of the few delegations that had the opportunity to speak with Berlinguer. The impressions of the delegates regarding PCI's policies and stances was essentially the same as the evaluations in the report written by the embassy earlier. However, certain new conclusions or corroborations were made. Regarding the conference itself, Grličkov noticed three concessions that were obviously made after requests from the socialist bloc: 1) Berlinguer underlined that the crisis was not present in the socialist bloc; 2) Berlinguer had not talked about the communist movement and its problems; 3) China was criticized – although the remarks used were not new, but consisted of the usual PCI views, the Italian communists evaded to criticize Beijing in similar occasions before; hence the Yugoslavs concluded that it was probably done on Soviet request. Also, it was noticed that Berlinguer did not address the preparations for the European communist conference, but primarily focused on Western Europe, as the most important region for the PCI. Finally, it was noted that Yugoslavia was mentioned twice in the preparatory documents for the conference– firstly, when underlining the PCI's intention to have good neighboring relations, and secondly, in a part of the document where Berlinguer wrote about the need to be more self-critical regarding the party's activity in the past. Of course, he addressed the 1948 split, when, according to Berlinguer, the PCI made a mistake. However, he also underlined that the PCI was one of the first parties to admit that mistake and revise its views on Yugoslavia.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁸³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-530.

⁶⁸⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-530.

The congress was dominated by an event with which the PCI had nothing to do. Namely, the Christian Democrats were banned from participating at the elections in Portugal, and the Portuguese communists were responsible for this. This event was used to attack the PCI and its vision of the *compromesso storico*, as an example of the shallow commitment of the communists to democracy. Firstly, the DC delegation at the congress, led by Fanfani, left in protest, and, secondly, there was a propaganda attack on the PCI in the following days. Among these attacks, the one of the Republican leader La Malfa was most important for the Yugoslavs, as he underlined that only the Yugoslav and Chinese communist parties were truly autonomous. In such circumstances, Berlinguer had to distance himself of the act made by the Portuguese communists, stressing out that Portugal and Italy were very different – democracy had strong roots and continuity in Italy, while in Portugal that was not the case. However, this distancing from the Portuguese comrades was attacked by the communist delegations at the congress, mainly by the Soviets and French. Hence, during the conversation with Grličkov, Berlinguer asked him about his view of the situation. Grličkov responded that the Yugoslav party fully supported Berlinguer’s way of resolving it.⁶⁸⁵

The most important information from that meeting was that Berlinguer had accepted to visit Yugoslavia. He also wanted to have this meeting soon, in late March. Berlinguer added that this was his personal initiative, as he would like to have a short vacation in Dubrovnik and meet with Tito. According to Grličkov, Berlinguer’s aim was to reaffirm the PCI’s autonomy with this visit, after the afore mentioned campaign which tried to delegitimize the PCI’s autonomy in the eyes of the Italian public. On the other hand, it was underlined that the meeting would be very important for Yugoslavia also, especially since Berlinguer would make the visit shortly after the congress, symbolically proving that he gave big importance to Yugoslavia. In general, the meeting between Berlinguer and Grličkov was cordial. The only minor problem was a statement Berlinguer made in the first days of the congress, in which he gave support to the positions and party line which the LCY “had followed” for years. This formulation led to some doubts in the general public that Berlinguer was, in fact, implying that a change of Yugoslav course was possible. During the meeting Grličkov wanted to clear things out, stating that he was convinced of Berlinguer’s good intentions, but emphasized how sensitive Yugoslavia was on this issue, as there were many speculations present in the West regarding Yugoslavia’s future. Berlinguer understood his position

⁶⁸⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-530.

and promised to change this formulation in his final speech, in order not to leave any room for misunderstandings. He added that the PCI had no doubts regarding the LCY's future, and that those in Italy who have doubts regarding Yugoslavia, and fear of a possible Soviet intervention, were also against the *compromesso storico* and see a Soviet influence in it. Grličkov then underlined that even Tito personally denied such claims of a possible Soviet intervention or stronger Soviet influence in Yugoslavia.⁶⁸⁶

Besides the meeting with Berlinguer, Grličkov also met with Napolitano and talked about the recurring topic of the conflict between the LCY and the professors from the Belgrade's Faculty of Philosophy. The problem became bigger for the LCY as those professors were also in charge of the philosophical group called Praxis and organized philosophical seminars at the island of Korčula, which were internationally famous. Napolitano wanted to meet Grličkov and give him the PCI's point of view. He firstly underlined that the Italian party fully understood the political aspect of the problem. However, the Korčula summer schools were the only place where the problems of contemporary socialism were debated, hence it would be very negative if it was to be abolished. Hence, Napolitano proposed, as the best solution, that the LCY finds a way to "win over" the summer school and impose more influence on it. In that scenario, the PCI was ready to help and include famous Italian, French and various international philosophers in the work of the summer school. He also proposed a further meeting on the issue, in which the whole operation could be organized precisely.⁶⁸⁷ Grličkov only thanked for the proposition, saying that he would inform his party.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-530.

⁶⁸⁷ The gist of Napolitano's proposition shows that the PCI was completely insensitive to the substance of intellectual dissent in Yugoslavia. Their focus was on the Western negative perception of the state repression, which they wanted to mitigate. As Silvio Pons summarized: "Political and intellectual dissent represented a movement that had put on the agenda the question of freedom of thought in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Western communists could not ignore it, although they did not go so far as to make it a central question in their relations with Moscow. Their sensitivity on this point was selective and reticent, and was primarily a generic plea for freedom of expression rather than an attempt to understand the profound reasons for dissent." S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 284-285.

⁶⁸⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-531. Napolitano was very active regarding this issue for some time. A year earlier, on April 19th 1974, he had a similar conversation with Ljubomir Majerić, in which he emphasized that the general public was making pressure on the PCI regarding the summer schools in Korčula and regarding the Yugoslav intentions to fire the professors of the Praxis group. He proposed to evade this scenario, and also offered, like in 1975, a stronger presence of PCI philosophers in the summer school, who would help in combating any "anti-socialist" philosophical conceptions. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-533. However, despite this international interest for the continuation of the Korčula summer schools, the LCY was determined to defeat the Praxis group, and the 1974 summer school was the last one organized. More about the Praxis group and the Korčula summer schools in: *Praxis. Društvena kritika i humanistički socijalizam* [Praxis. Social Critique and the Humanist Socialism], edited by: Dragomir Olujić Oluja and Krunoslav Stojaković, Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung, Belgrade 2012.

Berlinguer in Belgrade: a different vision for communism

Tito responded positively to Berlinguer's asking and the Italian general secretary made a short vacation in Dubrovnik during which, on March 29th 1975, he flew to Belgrade and met with the Yugoslav president. Segre was also present at the meeting, as a Yugoslav delegation which included Dolanc, Grličkov and others. The meeting in Belgrade was initiated by Berlinguer's compliments to the Yugoslav president on his vitality, Tito's question about Longo's health and with a short remark of the Italian general secretary regarding the situation in Italy and in the PCI – he underlined a profound economic crisis in the country, rooted in the system, and the PCI's orientation to, in such dire circumstances in Italy, open itself up to all progressive and democratic forces, including the Catholics, which was the central topic of the recent PCI congress. After Berlinguer's short exposition, the two men passed onto various international topics that were their main interest and the main focus of the conversation.⁶⁸⁹

As the events during the PCI's congress had shown, the situation in Portugal and the actions of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) became a topic of priority for the Italian communists.⁶⁹⁰ Hence, that was the first question discussed in Belgrade. Tito and Berlinguer viewed this issue very differently from the other communist leaders and parties, and this was a fact of big importance, a similarity of views which solidified their relation, a friendship of the two communist "outcasts". Both criticized not just the PCP for its rigidity, but also the Soviet and other parties who supported and even encouraged the Portuguese comrades in their activity. Berlinguer explained how his discussion at the PCI congress with the Soviet delegate Kirilenko not only did not persuade the Italian communists to change their mind regarding the PCP, but even strengthened the PCI in its criticism. According to Kirilenko, the PCP had the support only of the workers in

⁶⁸⁹ Tito was content with such views, strongly supporting the conclusions of the PCI's congress, and the dedication of the party towards gathering all of the progressive forces in Italy. AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-59, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom KP Italije E. Berlinguerom, 29. marta 1975. godine u Beogradu [Note on the conversation between the President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito and the general secretary of the Italian CP E. Berlinguer, March 29th 1975 in Belgrade].

⁶⁹⁰ The stance on the situation in Portugal was crucial in the PCI's relations with the PCE and PCF, i.e. in forming of Eurocommunism. The Spanish comrades agreed with the Italians in criticizing the PCP, while the French supported the Portuguese party. Only in September had the PCF changed its view on the PCP, but it was evident that the French party was adhering to the alliance with the PCI and PCE only loosely. The PCF remained the weak point of Eurocommunism, and the key differences between the Italian and French communists were never overcome. S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 46, 51.

the cities, and of certain intellectuals, while the countryside was dominantly influenced by the Church. Hence, the Soviets estimated that the PCP had 12 to 15 percent of support.⁶⁹¹ This information only led Berlinguer to believe that those were not the conditions for a proletarian revolution, especially not in a country that had not even had the bourgeois and democratic freedoms. As the entire Portuguese left was firmly backed by only a third of the population, and as there were strong foreign interests which made a military intervention possible, Berlinguer was convinced that it was not opportune for the communists to be so radical. Tito fully agreed with everything Berlinguer said, adding that the PCP should be tolerant, not extremist, as its task in the named circumstances was not to conduct a swift revolution, but to push the political life in a progressive direction, and patiently create the necessary conditions for Portugal's road towards socialism.⁶⁹²

The next topic of the conversation was the situation in the Middle East, and Berlinguer wanted to know what Tito thinks of it, especially after the failure of the Kissinger's mission. Besides his general interest, he also posed two precise questions, the first regarding the probability of a new Arab-Israel conflict, and the second regarding the probability of a US military intervention in some of the oil rich countries, since Washington threatened with it. Tito responded by saying that he did not think that the US would intervene, but emphasized that the situation in the region remained very dangerous. Before talking more about it, he mentioned that the crisis in Cyprus (the Turkish call for independence and the conflictual Greek-Turkish relations) implied that the island was going towards a division, which would have strong consequences on the Middle East. The failure of Kissinger's mission was no surprise to Tito. For the Yugoslav president, the most important consequence of it was the indication that Sadat was not fully pro-American. Regarding the US policy in the region, Tito was skeptical that it would change significantly, not only due to Israel's position, but also due to broader US interests in the region and in the Mediterranean. Strengthening of the shaken Arab unity was a priority for him, seeing it as a prerequisite for a fair and permanent solution. Yugoslavia was not expecting much from the Geneva conference, predicting that it would only procrastinate the whole process, which was also

⁶⁹¹ Those predictions were true as, at the first elections based on universal suffrage in Portugal's history, held on April 25th 1975, the PCP won 12.53 percent of the votes – R. Varela, *A People's History of the Portuguese Revolution*, Pluto Press, London 2019, 168-169.

⁶⁹² AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-59, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom KP Italije E. Berlinguerom, 29. marta 1975. godine u Beogradu [Note on the conversation between the President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito and the general secretary of the Italian CP E. Berlinguer, March 29th 1975 in Belgrade].

imminent due to the turbulence in the American political life. All of this suited Israel more than the Arabs. However, the Yugoslav stance remained clear and firm – a just and permanent solution was possible only if Israel retreats from the occupied territories and accepts the forming of a Palestinian state. In that case, the Arab countries would accept Israel also, and a fruitful economic collaboration among them would be possible.⁶⁹³

Tito initiated the next topic, the most important one at the meeting, asking Berlinguer of his views on the international communist movement. In an inspired exposition, Berlinguer expressed his views which were positively new and surprising for the Yugoslavs, more so as they were completely in line with the policies the Yugoslavs propagated to the PCI for a long time, since 1956. Namely, Berlinguer criticized the communist movement for its lack of capability and ideological flexibility to understand and influence certain phenomena that represented a great opportunity for the movement – the strong expansion of the revolutionary processes in the world and the turmoil within the socialist and social-democrat parties in the West. He also labeled as regrettable the monolithic tendencies and the bloc mentality, both present within the movement. Hence the PCI, not just in its national context but also on a broader global scale, was going to continue to advocate for the opening of communists to other forces. Tito was thrilled with such views, underlining that the LCY had been following similar ideas for a long time. Responding to Berlinguer's remark on the expanding revolutionary processes in the world and the movement's incapability of using and impacting those changes, the Yugoslav president underlined how the Yugoslav experiences and foreign policy actions helped the penetration of socialist ideas in Algeria, India and Nasser's Egypt, which happened without an impact of the local communist parties.⁶⁹⁴

Finally, in the last part of the meeting and during the lunch, the European social-democracy, China and US policy towards Yugoslavia were briefly discussed. Regarding the social-democrats, Berlinguer noticed a big turmoil, which led various parties to react differently. Some went to the right, and he feared that it was the case with the SPD. Tito responded by saying that, in his opinion, it was more of a rhetorical than a substantial change in Brandt's party. Berlinguer also mentioned that he did not understand why were the French socialists and communists in

⁶⁹³AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-59, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom KP Italije E. Berlinguerom, 29. marta 1975. godine u Beogradu [Note on the conversation between the President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito and the general secretary of the Italian CP E. Berlinguer, March 29th 1975 in Belgrade].

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

conflict again. As for China, it was only briefly mentioned during lunch, when Dolanc asked Berlinguer why had he criticized Beijing at the PCI congress.⁶⁹⁵ Berlinguer responded that he did not want to express his criticism of Beijing publicly, as he found such actions not useful and reminiscent of the bad old experience with anathemas. However, he had to do it, as the Republican leader La Malfa used the Chinese example, comparing it with the PCI, in order to show the lack of autonomy of the Italian communists. Finally, Berlinguer posed the issue of US policies towards Yugoslavia, adding that the Yugoslav president did not had to respond if the question is indiscrete. Tito responded that Yugoslavia was one of the rare cases where the Americans were being rational and respectful of reality – they supported the independence and non-alignment of Yugoslavia, fearing that if it was to be changed the situation in the region would go out of balance. However, he added that the United States still tried to exert pressure on his country and “gain ground” in it, despite accepting Yugoslavia as it is.⁶⁹⁶

The importance of this visit in the history of the relations between the two parties is difficult to overestimate. Not only that it solidified the friendship between the LCY and the PCI, but at the same time it was a strong incentive for Berlinguer to continue with his unorthodox political evolution, leading him to Eurocommunism.⁶⁹⁷ The mutually agreed view that “‘the existence of a communist movement united by a shared ideology and separate from the rest’ would only respond to ‘a limited range of possibilities’”, underlined by Silvio Pons, opened up new perspectives to Berlinguer. The PCI had a hard time finding allies for its policies, and the LCY was very valuable in this regard, a rarely similar party. However, this alliance had its strong and weak points. The strong point of it was the mutual collaboration with the anti-imperialist movements outside Europe, while regarding the European affairs, and especially in the West European context, Belgrade was not an ideal partner for the PCI.⁶⁹⁸

⁶⁹⁵ As it was mentioned earlier, the Yugoslavs doubted that this was done in order to appease the Soviets, or even on explicit Soviet request.

⁶⁹⁶ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-59, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom KP Italije E. Berlinguerom, 29. marta 1975. godine u Beogradu [Note on the conversation between the President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito and the general secretary of the Italian CP E. Berlinguer, March 29th 1975 in Belgrade].

⁶⁹⁷ As Marco Galeazzi had noticed, Berlinguer was different in his international visits than as the PCI’s General Secretary. At home, he had to mediate between various positions within the party, while abroad he was freer to coherently expose his views. Thus, during his international visits, like during this one in Belgrade, he had views that were clearer and braver than the ones of his party. M. Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non-allineati*, 247-248.

⁶⁹⁸ S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 286.

After Berlinguer's visit, the two parties returned to bilateral consultations regarding the preparations for the European communist conference. Segre and Oliva were going to Berlin, to participate at a meeting of a smaller group of parties which worked on the conference's document (Yugoslavia was not a part of that group, on its own request). However, they wanted to have a meeting with the Yugoslavs, prior to going to Berlin.⁶⁹⁹ On May 9th they it was organized with the Yugoslav embassy in Rome, and the two PCI officials had a short five-hour stay in Belgrade on May 11th, where they talked with Obradović. Segre wanted to inform the Yugoslavs of a problem that emerged in the preparations. Namely, the East German party already offered a draft of the conference document, and the PCI was irritated by this act. The Italians were against this kind of hampering of the democratic and consensual agreement on the issue.⁷⁰⁰ They were keen not to allow it, and informed both the comrades in Berlin and Moscow that this was unacceptable for the PCI. After some consultations, the PCI was under the impression that the Soviets were flexible and ready to resolve this issue, but it remained to be seen in which mode could they do it, since the PCI would not accept a second, revised version of the German draft. Also, the Soviets informed the PCI that the LCY will participate at the Berlin meeting, hence Segre was confused why was that not the case – are the Yugoslavs opposed to the draft version of the document, or they do not want that the conference produces any type of document.⁷⁰¹

Oliva, who was in the delegation that visited the USSR, explained the Soviet positions. His impression was that the CPSU was truly flexible, and did not want to impose a program for the movement, but rather to create a wide platform which would indicate the more general aims (disarmament and the overcoming of the blocs, primarily). He also added that the Soviets were flexible regarding the document's nature, ready to accept certain looser forms, like press release. However, the CPSU was strict regarding one principle aspect of the document – their view was that it should not be solely focused on the aims shared with other progressive forces (which the Yugoslavs and the PCI advocated for), but underline the vanguard aims and position of the communist movement. Regarding the East German draft, although they agreed with it, the Soviets were willing to cast it aside. Moscow's vision of the document was that it should have three parts:

⁶⁹⁹ The PCI feared that the Yugoslavs could withdraw from the process and leave the Italian communists by themselves - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 47.

⁷⁰⁰ In fact, the PCI was not just irritated by the way in which the document was proposed, but by its content also. As Pajetta had put it, during a conversation in Berlin in April of 1975, the document was written "in German translated from ancient Russian" of the Cominform times – B. Valli, *Gli eurocomunisti*, 42-43.

⁷⁰¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-534.

1) the depiction of the current situation, with an emphasis on the forces that are opposing to the détente; 2) the aims of the movement (disarmament, overcoming of the blocs); 3) underlining of the avant-garde role of the movement (i.e. of the fact that the communists are in the first lines of the struggle for the détente and cooperation) and an outlook on the relations with other progressive forces. However, the Soviets had underlined that these were only their views, and stressed out the importance of the Yugoslav presence. Hence, Oliva was convinced that Moscow had a profound interest for the conference and was ready to make compromises. He also informed Obradović of a Spanish draft of the document, which had some flaws (its evaluation of NATO, timid approach to the socialists and social-democrats, viewing Western communism only in function of the Soviet foreign policy) but was better than the German one, and could be improved.⁷⁰²

In the final part of the meeting, Obradović talked about the Yugoslav positions. He said that they were interested in the conference, trying to be constructive and hence sent their theses for the Berlin meeting. However, he emphasized that Yugoslavia had certain limitations, primarily regarding its Non-Alignment foreign policy course, and wanted to wait for the June meeting, and for the document that will be produced there, before making a final decision. This was partly a response to Segre's question why the LCY decided not to participate at the meeting in Berlin, but then Obradović more explicitly stated that the Yugoslavs do not believe that the problems that emerged could be solved in group meetings. Hence, the Yugoslavs decided to act bilaterally, in direct contacts with various parties – Italian, Polish, Soviet,⁷⁰³ Spanish and Romanian. Segre then gave to his Yugoslav comrades a five-page document, an elaboration of the PCI's positions for the Berlin meeting. The Yugoslavs analyzed it, concluding that the positions of the LCY and PCI were very similar, but also noting certain minor differences – the PCI did not mention Non-Alignment, and focused on the political and military aspect of the détente, while the Yugoslav stressed out its economic aspect, and the economic relations. Hence, Obradović stated that more attention should be given to the issue of underdeveloped countries, as this was both in interest of the European working class and in interest of those countries. Segre and Oliva agreed, and, finally, Segre asked not to inform the press of this meeting – he asked for the same regarding the Berlin meeting, in order of avoiding any speculations regarding the presence or absence of certain parties.⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-534.

⁷⁰³ Although Obradović expressed his pessimism, doubting that the USSR would renounce of imposing joint aims in the document, and the Yugoslavs were completely opposed to such intentions.

⁷⁰⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-534. APCI, Esteri, MF 206, p. 412-415.

As Obradović mentioned, the LCY sent a letter to the Berlin meeting, giving its propositional draft of the document. The Yugoslav version emphasized peace, détente, international collaboration, overcoming of the blocs⁷⁰⁵ and the anticolonial struggle. A particular attention was given to the problems of the Third World – it was underlined that the European economic problems must not be solved on the extent of the European working class and of the Third World. According to Oliva's report on the meeting in Berlin, the PCF's representative strongly attacked the Yugoslav draft. He viewed it as a counter-project, as a pact with imperialism, and lacking in fighting morale in the struggle for socialism.⁷⁰⁶ However, the others had not shared his perspective, and some even positively evaluated the Yugoslav propositions. Zagladin, from the CPSU, agreed that the contribution of the liberation movements and of the Non-Aligned countries should be included in the document.⁷⁰⁷

This topic continued to be the dominant issue in the interparty relations. In June, the PCI informed the LCY of a meeting on economic cooperation in Europe, held in Rome. The meeting was, like many others, a part of the preparatory process for the conference. It was held in April, with broad participation, including numerous parties, and the PCI sent a detailed documentation on it to Belgrade.⁷⁰⁸ In late August, Pajetta was spending his vacation in Yugoslavia, so Grličkov and Obradović used this opportunity to discuss the preparations of the European communist conference once again. The meeting was on August 29th 1975. During the conversation, both Pajetta and Grličkov expressed their profound dissatisfaction and frustrations with the preparations of the conference. Pajetta informed the Yugoslavs that the PCI had recently protested against the current state of the process, demanded new ways of organization. It was left to the Soviets to offer these changes during the upcoming Berlinguer's visit to Moscow, and the Yugoslavs agreed that the outcome of this visit was crucial, since Brezhnev spoke little about the conference at a recent meeting with Tito. Pajetta's disappointment was profound. He stressed out how the Italian communists believed that the situation would be different when Yugoslavia got involved, but now

⁷⁰⁵ At that point of the preparations, the LCY and the PCI stood out as the parties who want only a political document, with a strong emphasis on the overcoming of the blocs. Hence the LCY-PCI alliance was growing and being consistent. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 46-47.

⁷⁰⁶ Just five days after this meeting, on May 17th, the PCI's newspaper *l'Humanité* criticized both the LCY and PCI, accusing the two parties of renouncing of the revolutionary perspective – B. Valli, *Gli eurocomunisti*, 44.

⁷⁰⁷ APCI, Esteri, MF 206, 416-473.

⁷⁰⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-535.

it seems that the Soviets only want to repeat the meetings of the Second international. He was profoundly dissatisfied with the Soviet distance from the socialists and social-democrats.⁷⁰⁹

Pajetta said that the PCI changed its mind, and now took the stance that there should not be any document, although he did not, neither explicitly nor implicitly, state that the PCI would not participate if this request was not accepted. Grličkov responded that the LCY wants a political statement, rather than a document. Hence, the Yugoslavs will participate at the September meeting in Berlin, but decide on the participation at the conference later – after the finalization and analysis of the document. He left the possibility, although underlining that the LCY was not particularly eager to do so, of participating at the conference but not signing the document. In the final part of the meeting, the situation in Portugal, the situation in the PCF and an article in *Rinascita* were discussed. Regarding Portugal, Pajetta said that the PCI was very critical of the communists and their leader Alvaro Cunhal. According to him, the Portuguese communists were sectarian, insensitive to the real situation in the country, and just wanted to eliminate other political actors. Grličkov agreed with this view. Pajetta added that Moscow was also responsible for this situation, as it was not willing to accept that the Portuguese road to socialism had to be different, inspiring the sectarian attitude of Cunhal. The PCI was so critical of the communists that it developed contacts with and supported the socialist leader Mario Soares. Pajetta even defended Soares' anticommunism, saying that it was only a reaction to the irresponsible moves of the communist party.⁷¹⁰ Regarding the PCF, Pajetta was also critical, underlining that the party was becoming excessively radical and plagued by internal factional struggles. He added that the PCI-PCF relations were "frozen". Finally, the Yugoslavs protested to *Rinascita*'s publishing of an article on the Korčula summer schools. Pajetta justified this by saying that it was done due to Soviet pressure – Moscow repeatedly criticized the PCI by saying that its press writes about every incident in the USSR, while it justifies similar problems in Yugoslavia.⁷¹¹

On September 16th, a delegation from East Germany visited Rome and had a meeting with the PCI regarding the preparations of the European communist conference. In the following days, the Yugoslav embassy sent an elaborated report on the meeting to Belgrade, based on the information Segre gave to the embassy's official Štefan Cigoj. When talking to Cigoj, Segre added

⁷⁰⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-536. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 48.

⁷¹⁰ Pajetta's stances on the situation in Portugal were formed during his recent and frustrating visit to Lisbon – S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 48.

⁷¹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-536.

that he would like to visit Belgrade soon and discuss these issues in person. The SED's delegation was led by Hermann Axen, and they talked with Berlinguer, Chiaromonte, Segre and Oliva. Axen underlined that a positive atmosphere for the conference was being created, since the CSCE process was going good, as the détente, attributing the merits for these positive processes to the USSR. Hence, the SED wanted the conference to be held during this year, as they were convinced that all the problems could be resolved. He even implicitly stated that the parties could express separate views on certain issues. Axen dedicated a part of his exposition to Yugoslavia, underlining that they understand the Yugoslav special interests (particularly those connected with Non-Alignment), and commented positively on the Yugoslav constructive role in the preparations, as on the conversations the SED had with Tito and Dolanc. Hence, Axen concluded his remarks by advocating for a swift meeting in Berlin, in October.⁷¹²

Berlinguer had not denied that there was a positive progress in Europe, but he was opposed to the idyllic impressions of Axen, emphasizing problems both in Europe and regarding the conference preparation. Firstly, he underlined that the situation in Portugal was a problem, adding that the communist parties look differently on this issue. Although he was opposed to the attacks on communists, he underlined that the communists themselves had to seek a broader consensus, and stop with their discriminatory relation with the socialists. He also added that when this type of conflictual relations between communists and socialists occurred in history it always had negative consequences – it hampered democracy and led to equating of socialism and fascism.⁷¹³ Besides the situation in Portugal, Berlinguer stressed out that the LCY, PCI and some other parties were firmly opposed to certain views and formulations present in the proposed document. He was not certain that it could be solved through dialogue, but feared that any further communication on these issues could only provoke a stronger conflict. Also, Berlinguer viewed the initiatives for a global conference as detrimental. Hence, he underlined that the PCI would like a short press release at the end of the conference, or even a shorter document, which had to include only the views that are acceptable to every party. Berlinguer believed that the LCY could also accept this. Finally, he emphasized that the PCI will continue to discuss and follow the preparations, but make its final decision only after the preparations were over. Axen responded that they support the consensus,

⁷¹² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-538.

⁷¹³ According to Cigoj, this was an implicit response to the SED's claims made at the recent *L'Unità* festival in Florence, where Axen stated that the CIA, NATO and the Socialist International were responsible for the situation in Portugal. Cigoj noted that this part of the speech was excluded from the *L'Unità*'s report.

and do not want to pose the issue of the global communist conference now. However, he added that the SED, in accordance with its party line, wanted to include in the document the specific problems and joint tasks of the communist parties of Europe. Berlinguer concluded the meeting by responding that it cannot be insisted on particular views of a single party if they are in collision with the principles of others.⁷¹⁴

Belgrade swiftly responded to Segre's proposition to come to Belgrade, and on September 30th he spent a few hours in the Yugoslav capital talking with Grličkov and Obradović.⁷¹⁵ Segre firstly talked about the meeting with Axen. He underlined that Axen wanted a meeting of all parties where the document would be discussed, and emphasized Berlinguer's pessimism that this could be successful, as the eight parties that worked on the document had not found an agreement yet. The PCI was even unsure should it participate at a meeting which was summoned without a consensus on the document. Once again, Segre repeated that the PCI prefers to have no document, but is ready to accept a shorter one which would include only the views shared by every participant. Segre also informed of other meetings the PCI had. Firstly, during *L'Unità's* festival in the first half of September, Berlinguer talked with Mikhail Zimyanin, the editor-in-chief of *Pravda*. Since in August the PCI made a request for a meeting between Berlinguer and Brezhnev, to which the Soviets had not responded, Zimyanin asked Berlinguer was he willing to meet only Brezhnev, or could it be someone else. Berlinguer underlined that he only wants to talk with Brezhnev, and Zimyanin responded that he will be in Moscow in October, and that during that month the visit could be organized. The Italian communists were convinced that this was not true, and that Brezhnev was in the USSR during September also.⁷¹⁶

Secondly, Segre informed that Berlinguer met Marchais the day before this meeting – he managed to find out only the information that Marchais will come to Rome in October. The PCI was very interested in fixing the relations with the PCF, since they were crucial for the Western

⁷¹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-538. Axen then went to Moscow and complained that Berlinguer had been intransigent – S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 49.

⁷¹⁵ Interestingly, the two delegations had not talked much on the upcoming debate in the Italian parliament, which started on the next day, regarding the final and definitive agreement on the Yugoslav-Italian border. The PCI supported the agreement – in his declaration, Berlinguer emphasized that this agreement was a national interest, as it was the collaboration with Yugoslavia, socialist and Non-Aligned countries, adding that the agreement was supported by all democratic and anti-fascist forces. Besides the Yugoslav-Italian bilateral perspective, Berlinguer also mentioned that the agreement was important for Europe - it was in accordance with the CSCE, and a contribution to peace and security. APCI, Esteri, MF 208, p. 1911. The issue of the Yugoslav-Italian border was finally resolved with the Ossimo treaties, signed on November 10th 1975 – S. Mišić, *Pomirenje na Jadranu*, 363.

⁷¹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-540.

communist movement and the European conference, but were also important for the situation in Portugal. However, the two parties now had two extremely opposite views on the European conference – the PCF insisted on a document of “class character” and solidarity of the communist parties. Segre doubted that the PCF could change its views substantially.⁷¹⁷ Thirdly, Segre informed of various contacts the PCI had – with the communist parties of Spain and Great Britain, but also underlining the meetings with non-communists. The SPD was, for the first time, sending an official delegation, which would arrive in the following days, and the Belgian prime minister Leo Tindemans organized a meeting with Berlinguer, focused on unity of progressive forces within the EEC. While Berlinguer was happy to discuss with Tindemans, Marchais refused a similar initiative. Grličkov then shortly commented that the meeting in Berlin remained confusing – nobody knew precisely what will be its topics. Besides this, the LCY had many critical remarks regarding procedural issues. Most importantly, regarding the document, the Yugoslavs wanted, like the Italians, that it consists only of the views acceptable to everybody, and refused Axen’s idea of separate views on certain issues.⁷¹⁸

October was marked by dynamic activities and a series of bilateral meetings in Berlin, after the initial multilateral meeting on October 9th. Thus, the LCY and the PCI felt the need to have a bilateral meeting and summarize the events of October. The Yugoslavs invited Bufalini to come to Belgrade and discuss the new draft of the conference document, made by the SED. On November 15th, Bufalini, who was a member of the Garibaldi brigade,⁷¹⁹ met with Grličkov. Bufalini mostly talked, informing the Yugoslav side on the negotiations regarding the document, which happened in October. Firstly, in the joint meeting, held on October 9th and 10th, it was agreed to work on a new draft version. In accordance with this decision, a PCI delegation recently visited Berlin. However, they were unpleasantly surprised that the Germans already had a new draft. Since it was worse than the first one, the PCI refused it completely, not even wanting to change it through amendments. Now, they proposed to create a completely new, and shorter, draft version.⁷²⁰

Bufalini precisely explained what the PCI expects of this new draft: an underlining of the freedom of every party to independently create its own program; a less optimistic depiction of the

⁷¹⁷ The mentioned meeting between Berlinguer and Marchais produced no results, and the two parties remained distant in their views as before - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 50.

⁷¹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-540.

⁷¹⁹ A brigade of the Yugoslav partisan army in WWII, consisting of Italian soldiers who crossed to the partisan side after the fall of Mussolini’s regime in 1943.

⁷²⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-537.

situation in Europe; a call for disarmament, but without the current formulations which implicitly justify the armament of the socialist countries; an emphasis of the overcoming of the blocs at the very beginning of the document; an explicit statement that the détente and peaceful coexistence do not lead to status quo, but enable class struggle; more emphasis on the international cooperation – especially with the Third World, in the struggle against famine and pollution; a revision of the part of the document on the collaboration with the non-communist left – the differences should not be mentioned (Bufalini saw the existing formulations in this regard as an influence of Marchais), and it should not be explicitly stated that the communist are the vanguard of the progressive causes; an emphasis of the principles of independence and democratic freedoms, in line with the CSCE conclusions; the removal of the phrases which equate anti-Sovietism with anti-communism (Bufalini corroborated this view by saying that the document should not leave an impression that the communists understand every critique to them as anti-communism); instead of using the term “coordinated action”, to which the PCI is strongly opposed, they propose the old term of “joint action”; an appeal for the resolving of the crisis in Portugal through the collaboration of communists, socialists and other progressive forces.⁷²¹

However, Bufalini underlined that, though the PCI was opposed to including stances that are not a fruit of a wide consensus, they also do not want a document that would be a pure mix of different and unconnected views. Grličkov fully agreed with the detailed remarks Bufalini made. He added that the equation of anti-Sovietism with anti-communism was, in fact, motivated by the wish to condemn China’s policy towards the USSR. Bufalini was glad that the LCY had such similar stances, hence proposed that, at the next meeting in Berlin, the two party’s delegations coordinate their actions – the PCI would propose a part of these remarks, while the LCY would propose the other ones.⁷²² He added that, naturally, prior to these remarks the PCI will firstly protest against the content of the proposed draft, as against the fact that the procedure was not upheld in its making. Once again, he underlined that there was no need to have a document at every cost, but a shorter press release, or an appeal for disarmament, would also be appropriate. Finally, at the end of the meeting, Grličkov informed Bufalini of the situation in Yugoslavia,

⁷²¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-537.

⁷²² The LCY was the strongest ally of the PCI in preparations of the conference. However, that was a disappointing result for the Italian communists, as they were aware that the two parties represented a minority in the process, and as the PCI, since 1974 and the conference of West European communist parties, hoped to establish a stronger and broader front of allies. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 51.

particularly of the presence of some “Informbiro”⁷²³ subversive elements. Bufalini thanked for the information, adding that he was not well informed on the topic, since the Western press mystified the whole issue of neo-Stalinists in Yugoslavia.⁷²⁴

In mid-November, Berlinguer and Marchais signed the Joint Declaration of Italian and French communist party.⁷²⁵ Cigoj, official of the Yugoslav embassy in Rome, wrote a report on the declaration, and talked with Lina Fibbi (member of the PCI’s CC and one of the authors of the Declaration), in late November. Fibbi explained to Cigoj that the PCF had found itself in a delicate situation – many of its members were not content with the hitherto achieved results, and wanted changes. Among other things, they wanted better relations with the socialists, the communists and the democratic forces of Western Europe. Hence, the PCI assessed that these were important new elements in the PCF’s position, and believed that Marchais wants to lead the party on this new course and end the party’s international isolation. Since the PCI was becoming stronger, both in Italy and abroad, it became more important for the PCF, and imposed the need to launch a new autonomous, democratic and pluralist party line. Fibbi also added that it cannot be excluded that the PCF was fearing of an alliance between the Italian and Spanish communists, which would isolate the PCF, hence decided to join in. However, she admitted that an “opening” of the PCF and closer collaboration was also in PCI’s interest. According to Fibbi, now there was the danger of

⁷²³ Informbiro was the Serbo-Croatian term for the Cominform. After the Cominform resolution of 1948, which excluded Yugoslavia from the communist movement, all of the Yugoslav communists which supported it were labeled as “Informbirovci” (“the Cominformists) or “Informbiro elements” (the Cominform elements). This label was, in fact, an indictment – all of the Informbirovci were perceived as enemies of the state, working for the Soviet Union, and they were, mostly without trials, sent to the notorious labor camps at the islands of Goli Otok and Sveti Grgur, in Croatia. More about this in: I. Banac, *With Stalin against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca NY 1988; M. Previšić, *Povijest Golog otoka* [The History of the Goli Otok], Fraktura, Zagreb 2019.

⁷²⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-537. In late December of 1975, *L’Unità* published several articles regarding several arrests of the “Informbirovci”. The most interesting case was that of Vlado Dapčević. Dapčević’s brother Peko was one of the most famous partisan commanders from WWII, and also the current vice-president of the Yugoslav Parliament. Vlado Dapčević was a long-time communist, arrested in 1948 when he tried to escape to Romania. After serving his jail sentence, he fled to Albania. Afterwards, he lived in the USSR and, finally, in Belgium, becoming a citizen of this country. During 1975 he visited Romania and was arrested. Allegedly, he was meeting a group of Yugoslavs in Bucharest, with the aim of overthrowing the regime in Belgrade. However, he was arrested and extradited to Yugoslavia, despite Belgian protests. APCI, Esteri, MF 210, p. 785-787.

⁷²⁵ This Declaration, alongside with the July meeting between Berlinguer and Carrillo, represented the laying of the foundation of Eurocommunism. However, the relations and alliance between the PCI and PCE were more substantial than this one with the PCF. S. Pons, “The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism”, in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 51. Interestingly, as the focus of the LCY-PCI relations during 1975 was on the preparations of the Berlin conference, the Yugoslav reports neglected the July meeting between Berlinguer and Carrillo.

revival of conservative forces within the French party, but she was convinced that Marchais will succeed in imposing the principles of the declaration at the upcoming PCF congress.⁷²⁶

Along with the report on this meeting, Cigoj summarized the content of the declaration and gave his comments on it. The declaration was primarily inspired by PCI values (pluralism, wide left and democratic alliances on the road to socialism, preservation of the existing democratic freedoms etc) so it was commented in the press as a victory of the Italian communists. Since Fibbi mainly talked about the PCF and its need to open up and accept these principles, Cigoj underlined that the situation was not so unilateral. In fact, he was of the opinion that this was a compromise born out of mutual interest, and strengthened both parties. According to Cigoj, the PCI was well aware that, for the success of its policy based on autonomy and pluralism, it had to be firstly accepted by all Western communist parties. Although a similar document signed with the Spanish party was important, this one with the PCF opened up a wider horizon for the PCI's vision of Western Europe. However, he underlined that the PCI was aware that the declaration had not solved everything, and that the PCF has to work a lot more in the future. However, Cigoj concluded, the Italian communists were convinced that the French comrades were on a good path of democratization, hence they were willing to make some concessions and sign the document.⁷²⁷

Finally, in late 1975, Augusto Livi wrote an interesting and comprehensive report on the situation in Yugoslavia, which deserves to be corroborated here. One of the leitmotifs of the report was that a general expectation of Tito's departure from power, present both in the country and abroad, impacting many issues. Livi divided his remarks in three parts: 1) the campaign against the Informbirovci; 2) a relaunching of self-management and Non-Alignment; 3) distance towards the initiatives for cooperation in the Balkans. In the first part, regarding the so-called neo-Stalinist groups, or "Informbirovci", Livi explained that it was one of the central parts of the Yugoslav propaganda in late 1975. However, besides noticing that the Western media has exaggerated this story, since there were no seriously organized groups but only individuals with similar ideas, he also noticed that, in fact, the Yugoslav government was also inflating this story,⁷²⁸ but purposely. In fact, the Yugoslav government was faced with a much wider and heterogeneous opposition, but labeled all of the opposition as neo-Stalinists, making this simplification for propaganda reasons.

⁷²⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-541.

⁷²⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-542.

⁷²⁸ Especially as the Croatian neo-fascists were more active, conducting several terrorist attacks, underlined Livi.

As Yugoslavia was shaken by a strong economic crisis, many saw the solution in strengthening the central planning and the relations with other socialist countries. As these views jeopardized the two ideological pillars of Tito's power, self-management and Non-Alignment, the government wanted to eradicate this type of opposition, and exaggeratedly presented it as a part of a broad conspiracy, linking it with the marginal pro-Soviet radicals.⁷²⁹

In the second part of the report, Livi emphasized how the Yugoslav authorities relaunched the ideas of self-management and Non-Alignment, in order to distance themselves from the USSR and the socialist bloc. In many statements of the highest officials, the two blocs were equated, and they even talked about a supremacy of the Non-Aligned countries over the socialist bloc. This reiteration of the ideological differences between Yugoslavia and other socialist countries was also important in preserving the country's ties with Non-Aligned countries, especially important as they produced oil. According to Livi, if Non-Alignment and self-management would become something more than just the Yugoslav national road, if they influence other socialist countries, a conflict with Moscow would be imminent. Finally, in the third part, Livi described how Yugoslavia refused both Romanian and Greek initiatives for cooperation. Ceausescu wanted to form an alliance, and introduce Romania to the Non-Aligned movement. The Yugoslavs, by a series of gestures, implicitly showed that they are not interested in such an idea. According to Livi, the Yugoslavs did so as they had not wanted a conflict with the USSR, nor did they wanted to jeopardize their prestige in the Non-Aligned movement – the prestige was based on Yugoslav ideological autonomy, and introducing Romania would be seen by the other members as imposing socialism. Regarding the Greek initiatives for a Balkan conference, supported by Romania and Bulgaria, the Yugoslavs were hesitant, and underlined the ideological differences between the participants. The biggest problem was the Macedonian issue, since the Bulgarians were very radical and aggressive in their territorial claims.⁷³⁰

During 1976, as the European communist conference was approaching, the two parties were now less focused on it, and had the opportunity to discuss various other topics. The first important event in the interparty relations during 1976 happened in late February. A LCY delegation led by Dolanc and a PCI delegation led by Berlinguer were present at the CPSU's 25th congress, and they used this opportunity to meet, at the Yugoslav embassy in Moscow, on February

⁷²⁹ APCI, Esteri, MF 210, p. 777-779.

⁷³⁰ APCI, Esteri, MF 210, p. 779-782.

27th 1976. In the first part of the meeting, the two delegations commented on the Soviet party's congress. Berlinguer noticed that it was identical to the previous one, but Dolanc added that it was his impression that the CPSU was attacking imperialism less than the LCY or the PCI. Berlinguer agreed with that claim, as with the comment that Ceausescu was moderate in his speech. Dolanc then informed the PCI delegation of two problems the Yugoslavs had with the Soviets during the previous days. The first one was that in the USSR existed a group of Yugoslavs who acted subversively against the LCY. He protested against this in a conversation with the Soviets, and now added that creating parallel parties, like in Finland or Japan, was unacceptable.⁷³¹ The second problem was that the Yugoslav delegation was asked to shorten its speech – Berlinguer responded that he was expecting the same, after a call earlier that day, but does not yet know will the Soviets want just a shorter speech, or do they want to change its content.⁷³²

In the second part of the meeting, several international topics were addressed. Firstly, Berlinguer criticized Cunhal, saying that the Portuguese communists had not seized their opportunities due to their arrogance. He also added that the PCP's conduct hampered the progress of the Spanish communists. However, both Dolanc and Berlinguer agreed that it was positive that the Portuguese party was now ready to collaborate with other forces. Secondly, both commented positively on the recent PCF congress, and Berlinguer underlined the rejuvenation of the cadres as a very important step forward.⁷³³ Thirdly, regarding the European communist conference, Berlinguer stated that, in his opinion, the document was not so important, since the congress gave the possibility to, for the first time, address certain issues that were neglected, and to speak freely on them. Finally, Berlinguer informed the Yugoslavs that the Western social-democrats were now

⁷³¹ However, a month earlier, some unnamed high LCY official gave a statement to *L'Unità* that the USSR distanced itself from those who attempted to create a parallel Yugoslav party. APCI, Esteri, MF 212, p. 218. Later, in March, *L'Unità* wrote about the new judicial process against the pro-Soviet groups in Yugoslavia. According to sources in the Yugoslav government, these groups had the intention of forming a new parallel party and were connected with certain foreign elements. APCI, Esteri, MF 228, p. 638-639.

⁷³² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-545. This congress was an important point for the PCI-CPSU relations. During his speech, Berlinguer focused on pluralism and democracy, something that was hitherto unseen in the relations between the two parties. S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 53. Berlinguer was, in fact, responding to Brezhnev's speech, where the Soviet leader criticized the opportunism of certain parties (implicit but clear reference to the PCI) and called for unity of the movement - B. Valli, *Gli eurocomunisti*, 52.

⁷³³ It was not mentioned during this conversation, but in a press article the Yugoslavs expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the PCF congress officially renounced of *the dictatorship of the proletariat*. The article stresses out how Yugoslavia respects the PCF's autonomy, and does not want to impose its views, but the named Marxist principle was underlined as one of the foundations of the Yugoslav revolution. However, the anti-dogmatism and autonomy showed at the congress were commented positively. APCI, Esteri, MF 212, p. 219.

more open to the PCI, and willing to collaborate. Napolitano travelled to London, to talk with the Labour Party, and the SPD was showing interest for a closer collaboration with the PCI. Concluding the conversation, both sides agreed to have a bilateral meeting soon, which would focus on the agreement on fishing made between Italy and Yugoslavia.⁷³⁴

A few weeks later, on March 17th, *L'Unità*'s Belgrade correspondent Silvano Goruppi met with Ronald Strelec, from the LCY's foreign affairs department. Formally, the meeting was organized so Goruppi could inform on his trip to the PCI's central in Rome. Strelec said that the Yugoslavs were content with his work, and both underlined the mutual positive evaluation of the interparty relations. However, the most important part of the meeting was Goruppi's exposition on the relations between the PCI and certain communist parties from the Eastern bloc. He initiated this topic by saying that the PCI was very content with the previous meeting in Moscow, but adding that the Soviets prevented the Italians from having similar meetings with other delegations (they only managed to meet Ceausescu and the Somali delegation). However, Goruppi added that this was not unprecedented, since the treatment of the PCI delegation in Czechoslovakia was even worse. In fact, the PCI's decision was not to send a delegation to their next congress, as the interparty relations were frozen. The bad state of the relations was caused by an incident that occurred in Prague. Namely, the Czechoslovak authorities asked from the eight editors of the Italian department of Radio Prague to spy on their party. They refused it, and the PCI was infuriated.⁷³⁵ Goruppi himself was *L'Unità*'s correspondent from Czechoslovakia for five years, and his impressions about the situation in the country were very negative – he stated that the leadership of the party is mediocre, and rules only by harsh methods. Finally, he added that there were problems in other socialist countries also, and *L'Unità* decided to withdraw its correspondents from Warsaw and Sofia, while the one in Eastern Berlin mostly writes about Western Germany.⁷³⁶

⁷³⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-545. The problems of fishermen were important for the PCI, since many of them were party members. The fishermen often breached the Yugoslav territorial waters, and the party appealed to Belgrade, numerous times in the previous years, asking the Yugoslavs to be less punitive in these cases.

⁷³⁵ In April, the PCI asked the Yugoslavs to accept three Italian communists who worked in Prague. APCI, Esteri, MF 228, p. 641. The most important of them was Oreste Bianchi, who used the alias Natale Buratto. He was a member of the Volante Rossa antifascist paramilitary organization, and fled from Italy in 1949, affronted with criminal charges. From April 1976, with his wife, Bianchi lived in Yugoslavia until the Presidential pardon of President Sandro Pertini, which enabled him to return to Italy in February of 1979. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-575, 586, 591, 595.

⁷³⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-546.

The PCI's relations with the Eastern bloc were in focus of the LCY's attention at that time. Hence, during the congress of the Bulgarian party, the Yugoslav delegate Munir Mesihović met with his PCI counterpart Piero Pieralli, on April 2nd, and asked a couple of questions regarding the issue. Firstly, Mesihović asked Pieralli to inform him about the content of the conversations between Berlinguer and Brezhnev, during the CPSU congress in February. Pieralli responded that the conversation was mostly informative, since Brezhnev wanted to know more about the situation in the Western communist movement (particularly in the PCI, PCF and PCE), and about the situation in the Italian political life (he was particularly interested in the situation in the PSI, PSDI, and the DC's left wing). Brezhnev also talked about the need for unity of the International Workers' and Communist Movement, and Berlinguer responded that there were two preconditions for such unity. Firstly, the state and party Soviet policies had to be harmonized, and secondly, the Soviet stance on the policies of Western communist parties had to be changed. Brezhnev, surprisingly, agreed, so the PCI was under the impression that he does not want a conflict between the Eastern and Western communist parties. Pieralli added that his conversations with the Soviets during this congress made him more convinced in this perspective. Mesihović's second question was related to the mentioned polemics between Eastern and Western parties. He wanted to know had this Bulgarian congress made the polemics escalate. Pieralli responded negatively, but added that such escalation was possible during the congress of the Czechoslovak party, due to the situation in that country.⁷³⁷

The topic of the European communist conference reappeared in the interparty relations with the meeting held on May 26th, between Obradović and Antonio Rubbi. The meeting was organized on PCI's request, since the Italian communists wanted to consult with the Yugoslav comrades prior to their meetings with the Romanian and East German party. At the beginning of the meeting, Rubbi added that Berlinguer will, in the following days, have meetings on this issue with Marchais and Carrillo. Obradović and Rubbi commented the currently proposed document, agreeing that the official stances of both parties regarding it were identical – they noted some improvements, but underlined that certain problems remain and need to be worked on. Also, both parties were noticing that the Soviets tried to re-impose some already rejected formulations. However, for the PCI the main concern was the date of the conference, as late June appeared as a possibility. This was unacceptable for the PCI, since the Italian elections were to be held in the

⁷³⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-547.

same period. Since they expected a stronger role of the PCI after the elections, the Italian communists were keen to move the conference to September, and asked for Yugoslav support in this request. Obradović fully understood the PCI's situation and promised support. However, he added that Tito did say to Axen that he was fine with June, not knowing about the PCI's situation, due the fact that Yugoslavia will be focused on the Non-Aligned conference in July and August.⁷³⁸

Rubbi thanked for the support and added that, although the elections were the primary motive, the PCI also wanted a postponement of the conference in order to change the proposed document. Then he corroborated what parts of the documents were disputable, and Obradović agreed with almost everything. The two most important issues that the PCI and LCY wanted to change were the mentioning of proletarian unity and of anti-Sovietism. The term proletarian unity was disputable for both parties, as this conception was understood differently by various parties. Although they have not explicitly stated it, the problem with this term, like with anti-Sovietism, was that it was historically used for imposing the Soviet hegemony. Finally, Rubbi added that the PCI was very disappointed with the salutatory addresses of its partners, the PCF and PCE, at the SED's congress, since the speeches were full of praise for the USSR, and had not mentioned their differences with Moscow's policies. Obradović noted that, in the case of the PCE, this was probably not a change of the party's stance, but personal views of Ignacio Gallego.⁷³⁹

The interparty collaboration on this issue intensified, and soon after the meeting with Rubbi, Dolanc and Berlinguer met in Rome on June 8th.⁷⁴⁰ The meeting revolved around the problems and positions that were already known from the encounter with Rubbi – the PCI wanted to postpone the conference, not just due to the Italian elections, but also in order to change the document. Due to such stance, they were being pressured from Berlin and Moscow to agree to late June (Axen even falsely claimed, in conversations with other parties, that he had made an agreement with Berlinguer). The LCY fully supported the PCI, despite not having any individual interest for the postponement. At one point of the meeting, Dolanc gave a crucial information to Berlinguer, which completely changed his position. The Yugoslav said that Konstantin Katushev

⁷³⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-548.

⁷³⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-548.

⁷⁴⁰ The European communist conference was the predominant topic of the meeting. Some other issues were mentioned only briefly, at the end of the conversation. For instance, Dolanc criticized the PCI's regional organization in Venezia Giulia (he thought that the old cadres, like Vidali, had some distances towards Yugoslavia, and Pajetta justified this situation by saying that the Rome central is doing its best to form a new core of younger cadres there), and Berlinguer was very critical of the Egyptian leader Sadat.

from the CPSU, in his recent visit to Belgrade, underlined that Moscow sees the meeting in Berlin (to be held on June 9th, a day after this conversation) as an opportunity to finally have an agreement on the document between the disputing parties – Italian, French, Spanish, Romanian, Yugoslav, East German and Soviet. If there was to be no agreement, then the Soviets would accept, as the least favored scenario, that the conference produces only a short and political press release, not a document. Berlinguer was amazed when he heard this information, hitherto completely unknown to him. However, he was extremely pleased that there was a possibility to have a press release, not a document, something which both the PCI and LCY wished for from the beginning. This information profoundly changed Berlinguer's position, hence he stated that now there were two possibilities. If there was to be only a press release, the conference could be held in late June. On the other side, if the Soviets wanted to have a document, then the conference had to be postponed for autumn (as the Yugoslavs were against having it in July and August). Dolanc agreed and promised the utmost support of his party to this position.⁷⁴¹

The conference was eventually held in the named period. It was a success for the Yugoslav and Italian parties, as it was a legalization of pluralism within the movement, which the Soviets failed to understand at first, but tried to contain later on.⁷⁴² At the same time, the term Eurocommunism had entered the public use, as Berlinguer launched it in Berlin.⁷⁴³ Three particularities of the conference, hitherto unseen, were the presence of Tito,⁷⁴⁴ the promotion of Eurocommunism and the content of the final document. The document was a compromise between the “centrists” and the “autonomists”,⁷⁴⁵ but it promoted certain core values of this second group – autonomy of the parties, respect for the free choice of different roads towards socialism, equality in the interparty relations, respect for differences and the voluntary base of cooperation, opening towards the non-communist left. Even Brezhnev seemed to be in accordance. Unlike his dogmatic speech from the CPSU congress in February, he spoke of equality and independence of the communist parties. The Soviet leader even congratulated the PCI on its electoral success, and

⁷⁴¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-549. After the meeting, Dolanc gave an interview to *L'Unità*, focused on the détente and the Yugoslav foreign policy. APCI, Esteri, MF 240, p. 273-274.

⁷⁴² S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 288.

⁷⁴³ Although the PCF preferred the classical term of autonomy of the parties. S. Pons, “The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism”, in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 54-55.

⁷⁴⁴ As the Yugoslav leader had finally decided, after decades of absence, to participate at an international communist meeting, he was given special attention – he sat at the central table with Brezhnev and Honecker, the most important leader and the host.

⁷⁴⁵ Communist parties of Yugoslavia, Italy, Spain, Romania, Great Britain, Belgium, Sweden, Finland and, to some extent, France.

omitted to comment on Berlinguer's interview to *Corriere della sera*, and Berlinguer also chose not to corroborate that issue.⁷⁴⁶ As the principle of autonomy of the parties was ratified at the conference, in the following years the Yugoslav and Italian communists would often cite the decisions of the Berlin conference in their disputes with Moscow, finding that its authority had to be accepted by the Soviet comrades.

After Berlin: the defense of autonomy

Besides the conference, the PCI was occupied with the situation in Italy, after their great result at the elections,⁷⁴⁷ while the Yugoslavs were occupied with organizing the Non-Aligned conference. Hence, the bilateral relations were not so intensive prior to autumn. Their intensive dynamic was revived in October, when Pajetta visited Belgrade and talked with Grličkov, on the 13th, and Dolanc, on the 14th. Many issues were raised and discussed, but it appears evident that the main topic for Pajetta was a polemic which emerged after the conference. Hence, the main part of the meeting with Grličkov was dedicated to this issue. Pajetta initiated the meeting by saying that the PCI was very satisfied with the conference, especially since the international public saw it as an affirmation of the PCI's autonomy. Hence, they were willing to neglect certain articles which appeared in the press in the socialist bloc,⁷⁴⁸ and gave a modified account of the conference. However, he wanted to see what were the Yugoslav positions on the polemic – why was it raised,

⁷⁴⁶ M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 397-409; B. Valli, *Gli eurocomunisti*, 54-56.

⁷⁴⁷ After the electoral success in June, Berlinguer was dedicating to strengthening the PCI's legitimacy in Italy and in the West. In his interview to *Corriere della sera* on June 9, which Brezhnev chose not to mention in Berlin, Berlinguer "stated that the Italian Communists' 'road toward socialism' was more likely to be found within the Western alliance than within the Soviet bloc. He also defined the North Atlantic Treaty as a 'shield useful for constructing socialism in freedom.'" S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 55.

However, Berlinguer's implicit appeals to the Western leaders to accept the possibility of PCI's entrance into the government were not successful. At the Puerto Rico summit of the leaders of the most advanced industrial countries, on June 27th 1976, there was a secret meeting regarding the Italian elections and the future of the PCI. It included US and French presidents Ford and d'Estaing, West German chancellor Schmidt and UK prime minister Callaghan. They had met without Moro knowing about it, and expressed their distrust towards the PCI. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 580.

The Yugoslavs, through their contacts with certain sources from the left wing of the DC, had also been informed of the American pressures against the entrance of the PCI in the governing coalition. P. Dragišić, *Šta smo znali o Italiji?*, 248.

⁷⁴⁸ The attempts to modify the results of the Berlin conference and reassert the Soviet hegemony started as early as on July 5th, when an article on the conference was published in *Pravda*. In this article, the old values of the communist movement, like proletarian internationalism, were strongly emphasized. M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 411-412.

was the USSR trying to reaffirm its leading role since it was not so evident at the conference, and, finally, why does the LCY insist on responding to the polemic.⁷⁴⁹

Grličkov denied that the Yugoslavs were insisting on the polemic. When he asked Pajetta why does he have that impression, Pajetta responded that the Italian communists have not read the Yugoslav articles, but only heard of their existence. Grličkov responded that only two articles on the conference were published, and that both were positively intoned, as the LCY viewed the conference positively. The articles were not in any sense polemical, and the only negative fact underlined in them was the lack of understanding of certain parties for the views of others. In short, Grličkov thought that many parties in the East were, in fact, dissatisfied with the document, and felt the need to reinterpret it. The LCY abstained from responding to such claims, although it was attacked and labeled as a revisionist party in various publications recently printed in the socialist bloc. However, he added that the relations with the USSR were not substantially endangered, and that Brezhnev was going to visit Yugoslavia. Pajetta then asked what were the true intentions of these parties, to attack “the so-called Eurocommunism” or to attack their internal opposition.⁷⁵⁰ Grličkov responded that probably the main aim of the campaign was to underline that the conference’s conclusions were not valid for the relations within the bloc, between the socialist countries. Hence, he expected that there will be no conflict with the Western parties, or a disturbance of interstate relations between socialist countries and Yugoslavia. Both agreed that the Eastern bloc countries were now trying to publicly minimize the differences between the parties, which were evident at the conference. Finally, Pajetta wanted to know what was the Yugoslav position on Romania. Grličkov responded that the Romanians assured Belgrade that they are not changing their strategic aims, but only decided to change their tactics and evade confrontations with Moscow. The Yugoslav-Romanian relations were very good, and mutual differences were respected.⁷⁵¹

The following part of the meeting was dedicated to various international topics. Firstly, the two men talked about the war in Lebanon and the Syrian intervention. Pajetta was very pessimistic

⁷⁴⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-550.

⁷⁵⁰ What Pajetta failed to understand was that these attacks were the initial steps in a process of containing both the Eurocommunism and its influence within the Eastern Bloc. This strategy made itself more visible in the following months, and became one of the most important topics in the LCY-PCI relations. The Soviet attacks on Carrillo’s book *Eurocommunism and the State*, in March of 1977, were the most important aspect of the process, but Moscow used other means also – for instance, the KGB tried to undermine Berlinguer’s position within the PCI. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 288-289.

⁷⁵¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-550.

about the situation and the rise of American influence. He even criticized Yugoslavia for being too passive. Grličkov could only agree with the pessimism, as he also feared that Syria could turn away from the USSR like Egypt. Regarding the Yugoslav activity, he said that, although Belgrade was doing as much as possible, the situation was too complex to have a stronger impact.⁷⁵² Secondly, they discussed the situation in China after Mao's death, both hoping that the new leadership would be more balanced than the previous one. Thirdly, Pajetta was asking about the Non-Aligned conference held in Sri Lanka. Grličkov responded that it was successful, since the two major threats were defeated – an attempt of the big powers to cause a split the movement, using certain divisive issues among the member states (he emphasized Tito's mediation in this regard); and an attempt to radicalize the movement and make it closer to the USSR. Grličkov also added that the biggest strength of the movement was in its clear orientation on economic measures against neo-colonialism. Pajetta was full of praise for the NAM, although adding that it is good that the movement does not have bigger aspirations, since it would be difficult to directly intervene in a series of situations.⁷⁵³ Finally, Grličkov informed of the Bulgarian hostility towards Yugoslavia, and of international psychological warfare against Yugoslavia, based on speculating with the country's future after Tito. Hence, Grličkov told Pajetta that they understand the need of the PCI press to write about certain problems in Yugoslavia, but indicated that this kind of speculation should be evaded, since others used this method to pressure Yugoslavia. Pajetta fully understood the request, adding that such speculations were not present in the Italian communist press, but they will particularly take care of this issue from now on.⁷⁵⁴

On the next day, Pajetta met with Dolanc and mostly talked about the situation in Italy. According to Pajetta, the PCI was in a difficult position – it was being responsible for and supporting the government⁷⁵⁵ which was unpopular and even unaware of the gravity of the actual

⁷⁵² During the next meeting with Dolanc, Pajetta once again asked could Yugoslavia impact the situation more, and got a similar answer.

⁷⁵³ This could only be interpreted as Pajetta's stance that the NAM should not be a military bloc, since this would lead to more complex problems like the war in Lebanon, but was more efficient in its current form.

⁷⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-550.

⁷⁵⁵ The situation Pajetta was referring to initiated in the summer of 1976, with the June elections. The result was ambiguous for the PCI – although they grew to 34 percent (a strong rise of seven percent), the elections had not brought a radical change. In fact, the DC managed to stabilize its electoral fall, as its voters were motivated by the rise of the left, and won almost 39 percent. After the elections, in July, the DC formed the government led by Andreotti which was another ambiguous event for the PCI. On one side, it was an event of great significance for the PCI - by not voting against the government and abstaining, the Italian communists exited from their isolated position in the Italian political life, assuming a part of the collective responsibility in the crisis. On the other hand, this solution was

situation.⁷⁵⁶ Dolanc responded that the situation in Italy was very important for Europe, and offered the full Yugoslav support to the PCI. Pajetta thanked, saying that the biggest support was in the fact that Yugoslavia, such as it is, was a neighboring country which the Italians visit and come back with positive impressions of socialism. He also urged the Yugoslavs to have stronger contacts with the PSI – although in his opinion Craxi was not a great politician, it should be counted on him. According to Pajetta, the Yugoslav impact would be crucial in stimulating the PSI's willingness to collaborate with the PCI. That willingness was present, but endangered in the long-term by the frustration of the socialists with the fact that they were a minority party. Pajetta also commented on the European social-democracy, saying that it was in a crisis and that its downfall would only be capitalized by the conservatives. On the other hand, Dolanc warned of the possibility of a stronger alliance within the Western social democracy. In his view, that would only strengthen the American influence in Europe, hence he advocated for more contacts between the communists and the social-democrats, in order to prevent a solidification of their internal unity. Concluding the meeting, Dolanc asked Pajetta to remind Berlinguer of their idea to visit the Friuli Venezia Giulia region together, as the comrades from Slovenia were thrilled by this plan and saw it as an opportunity to resolve some issues in the region.⁷⁵⁷

In the remaining part of 1976, there were a few meetings and contacts between the parties,⁷⁵⁸ but the most important one was Grličkov's visit to Rome, on December 20th, when he had a conversation with Berlinguer, Bufalini, Segre and Rubbi. In the first part of the meeting, Bufalini spoke extensively on the deep crisis in Italy and the PCI's position regarding it. He

not something substantial and sustainable, far from the ideas exposed by Moro and Berlinguer in the previous years. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 144-148.

⁷⁵⁶ Just a few days after this meeting, the PCI's CC had a session, from October 18th to 20th. Cigoj, from the Yugoslav embassy in Rome, made an elaborate information on this meeting. His conclusion was that, despite the growing discontent in the party's base regarding the support to the government (the discontent was due to the fact that the working class was mostly hit by the government's unpopular measures aimed at combating inflation), Berlinguer did not renounce of his conviction that it is crucial to combat inflation, support the government in this direction, and demand profound reforms as the only viable solution. According to Cigoj, this session of the CC not just confirmed this PCI's orientation, but it showed a more determined and explicit wish of the party to participate in the Italian government. However, this was a risky move, since now the PCI was nor in power, nor in opposition, and this could only strengthen the problems in the party's base. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-552.

Berlinguer gave his support to the austerity measures, although not obtaining a consensual support of the syndicates, seeing them as a chance to only heal the economic situation, in order to create the possibilities of devising a new model of development - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 148-149.

⁷⁵⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-551. Having in mind that Dolanc previously appealed to clear the old cadres from the regional PCI organization, it was evident that he, a Slovene, was very interested in this issue.

⁷⁵⁸ Regarding economic collaboration (bilateral, but the Italian side was also proposing a joint engagement in Africa, in agriculture) – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-553; or regarding scientific collaboration (the PCI asked that Giuseppe Vacca spends a couple of weeks at a Yugoslav institute, for the purpose of research) – AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-555, 556.

indicated the inflation as the main cause and source of every problem the country was facing. And those problems were not small – they ranged from higher crime rates to foreign trade deficit. The PCI's position was complex since, according to Bufalini, the austerity measures were most probably the only possible solution. Hence, the PCI had to support them, and risk losing its prestige within the working class. The complexity of the situation was seen in two phenomena – the PCI was not in power nor in opposition; there was no alternative to the DC government, although this government was incapable of solving the crisis. Both the DC and PSI were instable: the DC was thorn within itself – Fanfani was leading it to the right, and Moro to the left; and the PSI was indecisive – it could overthrow the government, or enter the governing coalition. In such a situation, the PCI was determined to be patient. Its influence grew, and they particularly wanted to see how the Carter administration will look at the issue of including the communists in the government.⁷⁵⁹ Finally, Bufalini added that the PCI, in order to preserve its prestige which was already endangered by the complexity of the internal Italian situation, had to distance itself from the violations of freedom within the socialist bloc.⁷⁶⁰

The second part of the meeting, with Berlinguer, was dedicated to several international issues. Firstly, Berlinguer wanted to discuss the Yugoslav-Soviet and Romanian-Soviet relations. When Grličkov informed him of the content of the meeting with Brezhnev in Belgrade, Berlinguer was surprised and thought that the Soviets wanted too much. Hence, he was wondering did they do so because they had an unrealistic evaluation of the situation in Yugoslavia, particularly of the strength of the pro-Soviet groups in the country. Regarding Romania, the PCI had information that Ceausescu was excessively giving concessions to the Soviets. Grličkov denied this, clarifying that the Romanians just decided not to conflict with Moscow, but, however, remained on their path. Yugoslavia understood that the Romanians, being a part of the Warsaw pact, had some limitations, hence Belgrade supported their new tactics. Secondly, Berlinguer commented on the meeting of the Warsaw pact in Bucharest, where a proposition not to enlarge the military alliances was posed. He understood this proposition as propagandistic, aimed at preventing the Spanish entrance in

⁷⁵⁹ Despite some initial openness of the Carter administration on this issue, this American President played a decisive role in opposing to the PCI's entrance in government and to Eurocommunism – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 290; N. Mitchell, "The Cold War and Jimmy Carter", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III, Endings*, edited by: M. P. Leffler, O. A. Westad, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010, 75.

⁷⁶⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-554.

NATO - something which Berlinguer thought could not happen soon, and if it happened it would not endanger the existing balance.⁷⁶¹

Thirdly, the changes in China were briefly commented on. Berlinguer expressed a strong wish to collaborate with the Chinese party, and informed the Yugoslavs of the information obtained from the Soviets that the new leadership will be more peaceful and pragmatic. Fourthly, regarding the recent conference of the socialist international, Berlinguer agreed with the LCY's evaluation that the centralization of the socialist movement could provoke certain parties to advocate for the centralization of the communist movement. However, Berlinguer was convinced that this would be impossible, since there was a strong and articulated resistance to the already existing conservative forces within the movement. The only substantial impact that the socialist international could make on the PCI's future regarded the PSI.⁷⁶² But, according to Berlinguer, even if the PSI distances itself from the communists, this would only lead to a shift of PSI voters towards the PCI. Fifthly, regarding the situation within the communist movement after the Berlin conference, the PCI officials underlined that the reactions of the parties from the bloc were predictable. However, they were pleased by the fact that, apparently, the conservative forces were divided among themselves – in that sense, they underlined the differences, for instance, between Zhivkov's article against Eurocommunism⁷⁶³ and Kadar's statement from Vienna. Berlinguer was convinced that the conference pushed aside the old cadres and views. Hence, they were emerging now as rigid opinions, from a defensive position, but Berlinguer believed in the supremacy of the progressive forces.⁷⁶⁴

Sixthly, the PCI was very frustrated with the fact that Carrillo and Ibaruri were not allowed to return to Spain. Thus, the Italian party was very active in resolving this issue, and counting on the Pope's assistance. They also thought that the socialist Felipe Gonzales could be of help, and asked the Yugoslavs to put pressure on Gonzales through Brandt. Seventhly, the situation in the Mediterranean was commented, and both sides agreed that, despite various initiatives, it would be

⁷⁶¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-554.

⁷⁶² Berlinguer underlined that he understands why the LCY is concerned with the socialist international's intentions to be more active among the Non-Aligned countries. However, he sincerely added that, in this situation, this issue was not high on the priority list of the PCI.

⁷⁶³ In his article, the Bulgarian leader had equated Eurocommunism with anti-Sovietism, which initiated a harsh debate between him and the three Eurocommunist parties. In the following fierce attacks of the Bulgarian press, Eurocommunism was also equated with anti-communism and anti-Marxism. M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 413-414.

⁷⁶⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-554.

difficult to organize a meeting or a conference, due to big differences among the Mediterranean actors themselves. However, the PCI then proposed its idea to have a Mediterranean meeting in parallel with the CSCE session in Belgrade, it would consist of the European countries that were already participating at the session – Yugoslavia, Italy, France, Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Malta, Cyprus and maybe even Turkey. The meeting would be focused on three issues: expanding the conclusions of the CSCE to the Mediterranean; economic cooperation; and the situation in the Middle East. Grličkov responded that the LCY will think about the idea, but added that there is a need for a clearer platform, and that the CSCE was already dealing with the same issues. Finally, Grličkov informed the Italians that the LCY was not invited to the congress of the Vietnamese party. This was an unpleasant surprise for the PCI officials. They were informed from Hanoi that there will be less guests this year, due to problems with accommodation. However, they had not found this excuse credible, and especially had not expected that Yugoslavia would be excluded by this measure.⁷⁶⁵

The LCY-PCI collaboration was so intensive at that time that only a month later a new LCY delegation visited Italy. The delegation was led by Josip Vrhovec and, from January 23rd to 30th 1977, had various encounters with PCI officials in Rome (Bufalini, Pajetta, Segre, Rubbi etc.), Perugia and the Abruzzo region. The main aim of the delegation was to get acquainted with the *compromesso storico* policy, analyze its evolution, current state and perspectives. In this regard, the conversation with Bufalini and with the regional officials were the most important ones. The report of the delegation was mostly in line with previous information and impressions regarding the PCI policies, but also had certain new elements. Firstly, in conversations with the regional officials, the Yugoslavs saw that the contact with the masses was not always fully developed or emphasized, as the Italian communists were more focused on obtaining power and making a change through the institutions. Some of the PCI officials compared this situation to the problems in the socialist bloc. Secondly, the Yugoslavs were impressed by the fact that the PCI invited other parties and actors to the events and debates it organized, thus demonstrating its democratic character. Thirdly, the PCI officials told that the party was preparing a plan for the reform which will be offered to the public soon. Fourthly, the delegation saw that there were some divisions within the PCI, since a big part of the cadres and party membership were still hesitant towards the

⁷⁶⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-554.

DC, and confused with the policies Berlinguer was pushing. However, it was underlined that the divisions were not an important factor, since no important official left the party.⁷⁶⁶

Besides these information, the delegation explicitly stated in its report that the biggest question and dilemma they wanted to resolve in this visit was: is it possible to democratize and reform a bourgeois state and open the path towards socialism? To this question the PCI officials responded by saying that their imminent goal was only to resolve the crisis and prevent a right-wing authoritarian turn in the Italian politics. They explicitly stated that the majority of Italians were still not supporting socialism, which the PCI was aware of, hence socialism was not an alternative or solution at that time. However, they were also aware that the party was getting stronger and perceived by many as the only actor capable of resolving the crisis. Hence, their strategy was to have a long-term struggle, through compromises not by arms, and in the alliance with all of the democrats, like in WWII. They saw this strategy as the only solution in accordance with the social, political and economic conditions in Italy,⁷⁶⁷ and perceived this period as a chance to only open the possibilities to construct socialism in the future. Also, in the report it was underlined that the PCI does not see the multi-party system as a model applicable everywhere. The Yugoslavs were very content with the PCI's positions, and supported them fully. The last sentence in the delegation's report was very explicit in this regard: "The delegation thinks that if the PCI does not succeed in substantially impacting the development of the Italian society, it [i.e. the Italian society] will imminently go through profound crises, which would have an impact on the relations with our country, on Europe and the world."⁷⁶⁸

Naturally, the visit was also used to discuss certain international and bilateral topics. Since the PCI attended the congress of the Vietnamese communists, and the LCY was not invited, Vrhovec asked Pajetta to corroborate his impressions from the visit. Pajetta firstly underlined that he had not asked anything about the LCY, as he did not find convincing the previous explanations of the Vietnamese regarding not inviting the Yugoslavs. He also added that Yugoslavia was not mentioned at the congress at all. Regarding the general situation in Vietnam, his impression was that the Vietnamese were slowly becoming more connected with the Soviet bloc and distancing

⁷⁶⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-557.

⁷⁶⁷ The Italian communist stated that, in addition to the already complex internal situation in the country, their struggle was furtherly complicated by Italy's international position and by the situation in the socialist bloc.

⁷⁶⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-557.

from the Chinese.⁷⁶⁹ The congress was formal, without any deeper analysis, and his impression was that the Vietnamese were trying to withdraw themselves from any significant international attention. Vrhovec thanked for the information, adding that the Yugoslavs, although not present at the congress, had the same impressions. Pajetta, Segre and Rubbi then gave detailed information regarding their relations with several European communist parties – Cunhal was coming to Rome soon; the PCI was invited to a meeting in Prague, regarding the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*⁷⁷⁰ (they decided to send an official of lower level, and had not heard of the Yugoslav information that the meeting was, in fact, a preparatory meeting for the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the October revolution); the Hungarians explicitly told the PCI that they were determined on being more liberal than the other countries of the socialist bloc after the Berlin conference; the Spanish communists were now less enthusiastic but more realistic, hence the PCI believed that their chances of success in Spain were bigger now. Also, Pajetta informed that the PCI was engaged in mediation between Palestine and Israel. Finally, the Yugoslavs declined the earlier proposed PCI idea of organizing a meeting regarding the Mediterranean.⁷⁷¹ Besides being already occupied with the organization of the CSCE meeting, they stated that the PCI's idea was problematic on two grounds – firstly, it included Bulgaria and Romania, to which the Yugoslavs opposed, and, secondly, Algeria protested against the idea of having a Mediterranean meeting of only European countries. Rubbi agreed, saying that this initiative was not too important for his party anymore.⁷⁷²

Finally, the two parties also discussed some bilateral issues. Officials from both parties praised the interparty collaboration and expressed the interest to furtherly improve it. Vrhovec underlined that the PCI was becoming even more important for the LCY, since a stable and democratic Italy was a vital national interest for Belgrade. Pajetta responded that Yugoslavia was also crucial for the PCI, since its development was better than that of the other socialist countries, thus making it easier for the Italian party to defend the cause of socialism in Italy. However, Pajetta added that the Yugoslavs should be more careful in their conflict with the internal opposition.

⁷⁶⁹ Pajetta also noticed a segregation of the Chinese in Vietnam, as they were not allowed to enroll in the Vietnamese communist party. This was something that created great tensions in the relations between China and Vietnam - C. Jian, "China and the Cold War after Mao", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 193.

⁷⁷⁰ The PCI had feared that there was an intention to make a new center of the communist movement out of this journal - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 75.

⁷⁷¹ The Italian communists proposed earlier to organize a meeting of several European countries on the Mediterranean issues, in parallel with the Belgrade session of the CSCE.

⁷⁷² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-557.

Although he supported the LCY measures, Pajetta added that the Yugoslav press should always keep an eye on the fact that its articles could be easily distorted in the Western media, hence refrain from using certain expressions. On the other hand, Vrhovec stated that Yugoslavia was under strong propaganda attacks, and asked that *L'Unità* gives it a special treatment, different from other socialist countries, and writes less sensationalistic articles.⁷⁷³ Finally, the two sides agreed on a series of activities in future collaboration – most importantly, it was decided that two PCI delegations should visit Yugoslavia soon (one on political and the other on economic issues).⁷⁷⁴

Despite the sincere intentions of both sides to collaborate more, the interparty relations were not so dynamic in the following months. The main reason for that was the fact that the PCI was very occupied with Italian political affairs, which the Yugoslavs fully understood and did not pressure their Italian comrades.⁷⁷⁵ A couple of meetings of lower level were held, and among them, the only one that should be mentioned here was on May 13th, when Franc Popit, president of the Slovenian CC, visited Piedmont and met with Adalberto Minucci, the secretary of the regional PCI organization. Minucci was pessimistic during the meeting, underlining that he was being very straightforward, as the Italian communists were always more open in conversations with the LCY than with other parties. He was concerned about the situation in Italy, as about the situation within the PCI – according to Minucci, the party base was confused with the new direction and passive, and the middle-class was becoming more distanced from the party. He saw the only solution in a government that would consist of all democratic parties, but was skeptical that it was possible, since the DC was convinced that the PCI was losing support. However, the most interesting part of Minucci's views, and the key point of his analysis given to Popit, was a focus on consumerism. Minucci underlined that capitalism had infected the Italian society with consumerism, and admitted that even the PCI was responsible for this, with its focus on the issues of living standard. Hence, Minucci thought that only with an efficient attack on consumerism Italy could resolve its economic crisis.⁷⁷⁶

However, since June, the interparty relations were intensive once again, and several important meeting happened in the remaining part of 1977 – Rubbi visited Belgrade in June,

⁷⁷³ The Yugoslavs were dissatisfied with the work of the correspondent Silvano Goruppi, especially because he had not established a stronger connection with the Yugoslav party. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-560.

⁷⁷⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-557.

⁷⁷⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-561.

⁷⁷⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-564.

Grličkov was in Rome and Pajetta in Belgrade in July, and, most importantly, Berlinguer visited Yugoslavia in October.

During his visit to Belgrade, Rubbi had two important meetings, both on June 10th. The first one was with Grličkov, and focused on the situation within the communist movement – the new Soviet offensive on the Western communist parties and Eurocommunism.⁷⁷⁷ The second one was with Obradović and during it, besides Rubbi's corroboration of the already mentioned issue, other topics were also touched upon. Rubbi initiated the first meeting by underlining that the USSR⁷⁷⁸ was now trying to undermine the results of the Berlin conference, using and imposing certain old forms of relations and outdated views. Firstly, he mentioned that, at the editorial meeting of the *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, but in other occasions also,⁷⁷⁹ the Soviets attacked the PCI, saying that “Eurocommunism”⁷⁸⁰ was a road to a nationalist closing of the parties. Hence, the Italian, French and Spanish communists were in a dilemma should they leave this obsolete and outdated journal, or stay in it and prevent it from becoming a commanding center of the movement. However, Rubbi underlined that this was not only an attack on the PCI, but on all three of the most prominent Western communist parties, and underlined how Marchais was worried by this situation. Grličkov then posed the question of how should it be answered to this

⁷⁷⁷ In late 1976, at a Warsaw Pact meeting, Brezhnev had stated that the Western reaction was trying to separate the West European communist parties from the socialist states. This statement was the beginning of an organized Soviet campaign against Eurocommunism. Many factors led the Soviets to attack this group of parties led by the PCI, like the initial openness of the Carter administration towards them. However, the gist of Moscow's rationale for the attack on Eurocommunism could be summed up as the Soviet fear of “the centrifugal, pluralistic, and critical message conveyed by Eurocommunists”. Worried by the Soviet pressure, the three parties organized a meeting between Berlinguer, Marchais and Carrillo on March 3rd, in Madrid. Although the meeting had not produced any substantial policy contribution, besides the fact that all of the three leaders used the word Eurocommunism for the first time, it was a symbolical defense of their autonomy and a challenge to Moscow. Hence, after this meeting, their conflict escalated, with the Soviets attacks on Carrillo's book *Eurocommunism and the State*. The March meeting represented the pinnacle and the beginning of the downfall of Eurocommunism. The main reasons for the demise can be found in all of the three parties: The PCF was always the least engaged, and after this meeting it slowly returned to its previous orthodoxy and faithfulness to Moscow; The PCE was discredited by its poor electoral result of only 10 percent; And, finally, the PCI also started losing electoral support. Besides this, the poor relations of all the three parties with the social-democracy in their countries were another negative factor – Berlinguer was aware, all along, that the relations with the non-communist left had to be one of the crucial sources of legitimacy of Eurocommunism, and the PCI was the only one of the three parties that had made significant progress in this direction, especially with the SPD. S. Pons, “The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism”, in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 57-60.

⁷⁷⁸ Rubbi emphasized the Soviet role, but added that the SED was also very active in this regard. However, he added that, fortunately the Hungarian communists had not joined this offensive, and were acting very differently.

⁷⁷⁹ Rubbi mentioned how Zagladyn, during his visit to Rome earlier in 1977, accused the PCI of jeopardizing the détente. Interestingly, the Soviet official had not said this in his conversation with Berlinguer, where he emphasized how good the interparty relations were, but told it to another PCI official.

⁷⁸⁰ The quotation marks are from the original document. Up to this point, the Yugoslavs were still using the term in this form.

attack, implying that the polemic with the USSR should not be avoided. Rubbi only stated that, if this campaign continues, the PCI will certainly respond to the accuses.⁷⁸¹

As it was mentioned, Rubbi addressed some other issues in his conversation with Obradović. Firstly, he talked about the PCI contacts with the leaders of the Socialist international – the most important one was the conversation between Berlinguer and Brandt. In this occasion, Brandt told to Berlinguer that they will be more constructive than the USA at the CSCE meeting in Belgrade, talked about his views that the European Parliament needs to have more power, and gave a positive evaluation of the PCI's policy.⁷⁸² In short, Rubbi's impression was that the international was divided within itself, between the socialists and social-democrats, and on the issues of Eurocommunism, Third World, human rights and freedom. At that point, Obradović underlined that the Socialist international was negatively impacting the unity of the Non-Aligned countries. However, in the report, he emphasized his impression that Rubbi had not understood this issue fully, as his party comrades in previous occasions. Secondly, the issue of the Mediterranean conference organized in Malta was discussed. Both parties had negative views on the conference - the PCI was worried by the Libyan influence in Malta, and wanted to emancipate it from it; and the Yugoslavs were primarily opposed to the fact that the Libyans invited some liberation movements from countries that are not Mediterranean, nor have any direct connection with the region. Thirdly, the situation within the PCE was discussed. The Yugoslavs wanted to know was there a conflict between Carrillo and Ibarri. Rubbi confirmed this, saying that the reason for it were Ibarri's pro-Soviet stances. However, he wanted to underline that Carrillo's position was strong and stable, primarily as his view that the democratization is the crucial issue, not the dilemma between the country's system,⁷⁸³ was proven right. Obradović asked what are the predictions for the PCE at the next elections, and Rubbi responded that they will probably win around ten percent of votes. Fourthly, the situation in the PCF was briefly discussed – Rubbi was hoping that the left coalition would win in the elections, but added that the French party still had certain ideological limitations, and was being strongly pressurized by the CPSU. Finally, Rubbi talked about the internal situation in Italy. The issue of left terrorism was very detrimental for the PCI, and Rubbi saw this as a covert operation of the international reaction. He added that all of the

⁷⁸¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-565.

⁷⁸² Rubbi underlined how the CDU was, at that time, one of the most anti-PCI international factors, since they pressurized the DC not to collaborate with the Italian communists.

⁷⁸³ The officials active in the country were insisting on the downfall of Monarchy and forming of a Republic.

democratic parties were trying to find the solutions for the crisis together, but underlined that the DC was, in fact, undermining this process by being too selfish. Hence, since the actual situation primarily affected the working class, there were some tensions present within the PCI.⁷⁸⁴

A month later, on July 12th and 13th 1977, Grličkov made a return visit, and talked with Pajetta, Segre and Rubbi.⁷⁸⁵ The meetings were almost exclusively dedicated to the recent PCI delegation's trip to Moscow.⁷⁸⁶ In Pajetta's words, the delegation went to Moscow with the impression that the Soviets were aggressively trying to make a revision of the Berlin conference⁷⁸⁷ and wanted to discuss this with them. In the meantime, the debate between the Soviets and Carrillo regarding his book *Eurocommunism and the State* arose,⁷⁸⁸ and this was one of the key topics of the meeting. Pajetta underlined PCI's criticism for both sides. Regarding the Soviets, their article from *Novoye Vremya* was unacceptable, as it was an attempt of excommunication. However, for the Italian communists, this article and episode was only a part of the earlier mentioned CPSU strategy of reaffirming its leading role in the movement, which the PCI was strongly opposed to. However, Pajetta also criticized Carrillo, underlining that the PCI does not want to develop any kind of "Eurocommunist" doctrine. However, he underlined that the PCI will defend his right to freely express his views.⁷⁸⁹

Regarding the visit itself, Pajetta said that they were well received in a formal sense, and that it was obvious that the Soviets were trying to be conciliatory and defensive. However, they evaded any kind of dialogue, and had not responded to the PCI's questions on the motives of their attack on the Western communist parties. The Soviets only shortly responded that the book was

⁷⁸⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-565.

⁷⁸⁵ For a shorter account of the visit, based on PCI documentation, see - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 75.

⁷⁸⁶ Besides this issue, several international problems were only briefly discussed (situation in China, the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa), and the PCI officials shortly commented on the situation in Italy. Regarding this, they underlined that the recent agreement made with other Italian parties was less than expected, but not a disappointment. Grličkov asked was it a move towards the *compromesso storico*, and they responded positively.

⁷⁸⁷ Pajetta even said that this was becoming "scandalous".

⁷⁸⁸ As it is mentioned earlier, this book was only the *casus belli*, as the Soviets had already decided, in late 1976, to attack the Eurocommunist parties. However, Moscow was infuriated by the level of criticism of the USSR in Carrillo's book, as by his public statements that "the success of democratic socialism among the Western Communist parties would have a considerable impact on the Eastern bloc and lead to a number of Prague springs." The swift Soviet response to the book, published on May 25th, was enabled by the KGB, as the Soviet secret service had an agent in the PCE leadership and obtained the manuscript in early 1977. P. Preston, *The Last Stalinist. The Life of Santiago Carrillo*, William Collins, London 2015 (ebook), 225-226. These Carrillo's threats for the stability of the Eastern bloc were particularly dangerous for Moscow as the United States had, at the same time, entertained the possibility of assimilating Eurocommunism in order of using to "promote a bigger diversity" in Eastern Europe – S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 69.

⁷⁸⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-566.

not the main cause for the attack on Carrillo, but his constant anti-Soviet campaign – they waited for the elections to end, hence they were posing this issue only now. The Italians responded that this only provoked bigger attention to the book, but the Soviets had no response to this claim. Grličkov then asked were the Soviets withdrawing due to the wide spread resistance to their attacks on other parties, or was it a preconceived strategy. Pajetta responded that it was the first option. However, Grličkov underlined that the *Novoye Vremya* article was an attack on the strategy of Western communist party and the first direct revision of the Berlin conference. Hence, he was asking will the CPSU now attack other parties and attack the principle of autonomous roads to socialism. Pajetta replied that all this started immediately after the Berlin conference, and that the real question was were the Soviets strengthening this agenda. He emphasized that the main cause of such action was the Soviet illusion that the majority of communists in the world are very friendly towards the USSR, and willing to sacrifice their party for Soviet interests. However, on the other side, he was also convinced that the Soviets were well aware that their previous attempts to create parallel parties finished infamously. Segre agreed that everything started immediately after Berlin, but added that now it was in the next phase - the Soviets even said that they have more faith in Western governments than in Western communist parties; and, according to Segre, they were very afraid of worsening of their relations with Washington.⁷⁹⁰

Grličkov then asked was this only a short-term attack, and Pajetta responded that he hopes it is. Grličkov underlined that the parties should be careful and cautious, continue to combat anti-Sovietism and support the détente and every positive step forward in international relations and within the communist movement. However, commenting on the situation with Carrillo, he emphasized that it was not good that the Soviets were trying to divide the General Secretary from the party. Also, in his view, the book was not important, but the attack on a political conception. Pajetta agreed, and also spoke of various Soviet pressures on the PCI – they harshly criticized the PCI’s policy towards NATO, warning them of the possibility that they become a useful “toy of the capitalists”; and they wanted the PCI to change its view on the 1968 intervention, trying to persuade them that the situation in Czechoslovakia was excellent, thus justifying the course undertaken since the intervention. However, Pajetta underlined, and Grličkov strongly emphasized

⁷⁹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-566.

this in his report, that the CPSU should be left to make a dignified withdrawal from the campaign it started.⁷⁹¹

Only half a month later, in late July, Pajetta visited Yugoslavia and continued his conversation with Grličkov. Besides this meeting, he also met with Ali Shukriu, member of the Executive Committee of the LCY's CC, in which they shortly talked about the situation in Albania.⁷⁹² The most important point of the visit was that Pajetta brought a personal letter of Berlinguer to Tito, followed with a note on China. In the letter Berlinguer expressed the PCI's strong interest for Tito's upcoming visit to the USSR, China and North Korea, wishing him success as the visit was important for the causes of peace and for the struggle of the progressive forces. In the note it was elaborated how the PCI wanted and tried, with no success, to have a contact with Beijing. The wish for collaboration was still present, although the PCI did not want to be included in a Chinese conflict with third parties (i.e. the USSR). On the other hand, the Italian party was willing to have a dialogue, to accept critiques and even negative judgments, but not aggressive attacks and excommunications. It was reminded that the PCI had the same standard for China, and had not allowed other parties to attack it in the described manner, for instance during the preparations of the Berlin conference.⁷⁹³ As Pajetta explained to Grličkov, the was, in fact, Berlinguer's appeal to Tito to advocate for a contact between China and the PCI during his visit to Beijing.⁷⁹⁴

Obviously, the Italian communists were very interested in the situation in China, hence Pajetta initiated the meeting with Grličkov by addressing the situation in this country. He was confused by the fact that China was opening itself up to the world, but still remained harshly anti-Soviet. He added that they were so anti-Soviet that, to his astonishment, in a conversation with the Italian foreign minister Forlani, they did not use the name Soviet Union, but always talked about it as "polar bear". Also, the Chinese added that they have changed their stance on the PCI, and now do not call it "servants of socialist imperialism", but only "revisionists". Since Forlani talked about PCI's wish to have contacts with them, the Chinese ironically asked him was he a member

⁷⁹¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-566.

⁷⁹² Pajetta wanted to know why were the Albanians now attacking China and furtherly isolating themselves, was this due to some internal conflict within the party's leadership. Shukriu responded that the Yugoslavs do not know much, but that it appears obvious that everything is allowed in the internal struggles within the Albanian party. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-567.

⁷⁹³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-568.

⁷⁹⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-567.

of the PCI, since he is defending the party so much. The Yugoslavs were more interested in the CPSU-PCE conflict, due to the upcoming Tito's trip to Moscow, and wanted to know more about it. Pajetta then corroborated the impressions of a PCI delegation which visited Spain recently. Although the PCE and many others were disappointed by the fact that the delegation was led by his brother Giuliano, perceived as a pro-Soviet, Carrillo was grateful to the PCI for its strong opposition to the *Novoye Vremya* article. He said that he led an inexperienced party, which could have had made a mistake, but vigorously defended its right to express its views, which he believes were right. Pajetta once again distanced from the content of the book, but, as Grličkov noted, fully supported Carrillo against the Soviet attempts to create a split within the Spanish party. Besides this issue, the delegation was under the impression that the PCE had a stronger impact on the Spanish society than it was its electoral result, and added that Carrillo was advising the socialists to enter the government without them and democratize the country. Regarding the PCF, the situation was not so clear, and Pajetta made no comments on it, except when he said that a recent visit of a PCF Politburo member to Moscow remained mysterious, as neither the Soviets nor the French said anything about it to the PCI.⁷⁹⁵

Grličkov then gave the Yugoslav point of view on the PCE-CPSU conflict. Regarding Carrillo's book, the Yugoslav party was not concordant with everything written in it, but thought that it could be a basis of a dialogue. However, the Yugoslavs were convinced that the book was not the issue here, hence firmly decided not to debate its content with anyone. What they wanted to do was to defend the principle of independence and the principles of the Berlin conference, as to strongly oppose to the attempts of dividing parties from certain individuals (i.e. the Soviet attempt to make a gap between Carrillo and the PCE), or of creating parallel parties. The LCY thought that the CPSU had the right to respond to Carrillo's critiques of the socialist bloc, but in a constructive manner, not with an attempt of excommunication. The *Novoye Vremya* article was, in fact, a revision of the Berlin conference, which was unacceptable for Belgrade. Grličkov then added that the PCI should have defended its position more actively, and said that the Yugoslavs do not know to which extent will the Soviet party withdraw. Pajetta responded that the PCE refrained from any stronger activity, as they were uncertain themselves, and had not wanted to open a direct conflict with Moscow. He agreed with Grličkov that the Soviet attempts to divide some parties were

⁷⁹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-567.

unacceptable, adding that it is absurd that Moscow had decided to create a division in a party so uninfluential as the British one.⁷⁹⁶

In the final part of the meeting, Pajetta informed Grličkov of several international activities of the PCI. Regarding the relations with the Soviets, Berlinguer cancelled his holidays there, as he had not wanted it to be interpreted as a support to Moscow against Carrillo. However, there was a possibility that Ponomarev could come in October, something that Pajetta did not want to happen. He was personally going to visit the USSR, Romania and Bulgaria, and Chiaromonte already visited Hungary, leaving it with positive impressions. Most importantly, Pajetta wanted to talk about the situation in Libya in light of its armed conflict with Egypt. According to Pajetta, Egypt was the aggressor, and he was extremely critical of Sadat. He asked could Yugoslavia help in resolving this crisis, since the possibility of a future armed conflict was still present. Pajetta was interested in this topic as he recently visited Tripoli. His impressions were very positive, and the PCI changed its earlier stance on Gaddafi. After speaking to him, Pajetta saw Gaddafi as mature and rational politician, who wanted to have a stronger contact with the Western communist parties in order to balance the American influence in his country. Also, Pajetta noted that the country was prosperous, but had some critical remarks - he was not in favor of the abolishment of the party system, and opposed to the fact that many Libyans advocated for terrorist attacks against Egypt. According to Pajetta, he managed to dissuade Gaddafi from this option, underlining that it would only work in Sadat's favor. Regarding external actors, Pajetta underlined the positive impact of Boumediene and Arafat, who were trying to mediate, and the negative impact of the Saudis on Sadat, as he believed that Riyadh inspired Cairo to initiate the attacks. Finally, Pajetta concluded that the Arabs were strongly divided, which only worked in favor of Israel and of the United States.⁷⁹⁷

The growing isolation: the two last meetings of Tito and Berlinguer

The final episode of the interparty collaboration during 1977 was at the same time the most important one. On October 4th, Berlinguer visited Yugoslavia with Anselmo Gouthier, and they

⁷⁹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-567.

⁷⁹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-567.

spoke with a delegation led by Tito.⁷⁹⁸ As Eurocommunism was withering away, and despite all of Berlinguer's efforts to build heterogeneous international coalitions, it was evident that Yugoslavia remained as one of the main counterparts of the PCI.⁷⁹⁹ One of the aims of the visit was to hear directly from Tito his impressions from the recently made visits to the Soviet Union, North Korea and China⁸⁰⁰, especially having in mind that the Yugoslav president was asked by Berlinguer to advocate for the establishment of relations between Beijing and the PCI. However, for Berlinguer the main aim of going to Belgrade (and, in the same days to Budapest), was to strengthen the relations with the moderate leaderships in the East, based on the principles of Berlin, as Eurocommunism was becoming severely endangered by the crisis of the *détente*.⁸⁰¹

Before addressing those issues, Berlinguer initiated the meeting by explaining his perspective of the situation in Italy, as Tito wanted to know more about it. Terrorism was the dominant topic.⁸⁰² Tito wanted to know were those terrorists neo-fascists,⁸⁰³ and were they influenced by certain groups from Western Germany, as he heard that they were.⁸⁰⁴ Regarding the first question, Berlinguer responded positively, not denying that there were also left wing terrorists. However, he explicitly stating that the neo-fascists had conducted certain attacks pretending to be

⁷⁹⁸ A short Yugoslav report, written for the purposes of informing the highest LCY officials prior to the visit, underlined three issues. Firstly, it was said that the situation in Italy was becoming more stable after the recent agreement of the six constitutional parties, despite some tensions between the DC and PCI, which emerged from the debates on the nature of that agreement. Secondly, it was underlined that the PCI strongly opposed to the Soviet attacks on Carrillo, defending his right to formulate the policies of his party autonomously, although not defending the content of his book. And, finally, it was emphasized that the LCY-PCI were very good, particularly due to the crucial similarity of views regarding the situation within the communist movement, and regarding the principle of autonomy of the communist parties. AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Informacija o komunističkoj partiji Italije u svetlosti aktuelne situacije i odnosima SKJ i KP Italije [Information Regarding the Italian Communist Party in the Light of the Current Situation and of the Relations Between the LCY and the Italian CP].

⁷⁹⁹ S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 60.

⁸⁰⁰ Tito's visit to Beijing was of special importance for the PCI, as it paved the way for Berlinguer to also visit China, in 1980 – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 292.

This visit was part of a broader Chinese policy of reestablishing ties with Eastern Europe, initiated in the late seventies, and Romania and Yugoslavia were the first Beijing's partner in this activity - C. Jian, "China and the Cold War after Mao", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 192.

⁸⁰¹ S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 78.

⁸⁰² More about the rise of political terrorism in Italy in that period - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 155-165

⁸⁰³ This question was probably influenced by the afore mentioned problems in Yugoslavia with the Croatian neo-fascist terrorism.

⁸⁰⁴ The Yugoslavs had followed the rise of terrorism in Italy with great attention. Their view was that the foreign impacts were dominant, not the local actors. Firstly, in 1974, Belgrade's information indicated that this foreign influence predominantly comes from the United States, and that the CIA played a big role in Italian terrorism. However, subsequent information had changed this assessment, and in 1977 the Yugoslavs indicated the West German politician Franz Josef Strauss as one of the main instigators of terrorism in Italy. P. Dragišić, *Šta smo znali o Italiji?*, 258-263.

ultra-leftists, and implicitly indicated that, in fact, all of these terrorist groups were being controlled by one center, unknown to the PCI. Regarding the second question, the PCI's general secretary confirmed that he had heard similar information, as he had heard of the possible involvement of Strauss. He also mentioned his conversation with Brandt on the issue, when Brandt stated that he does not exclude a possible connection between the terrorists and the West German secret services, explaining that the government does not have the power to control those services completely. Tito was preoccupied that this phenomenon could become global, underlining the Japanese example, and Berlinguer agreed that it was dangerous, especially for the youth. Berlinguer then talked about the political situation in Italy, underlining how the conditions for the PCI's entrance in government were not yet ripe, although, on a positive note, it became clear to everybody that the main Italian problems could not be resolved without the PCI. In that part of the meeting, Tito asked Berlinguer two questions regarding the Italian political life. Firstly, the Yugoslav president asked was the PCI growing or stagnating. Berlinguer responded that it was growing in membership, but faced a lot of resistance. One of the particular problems the PCI had was in its relations with PSI – unlike the situation in the other Western countries, the communists were the dominant partner in Italy, hence the socialists were frustrated with such a position. Secondly, Tito asked about the strength of the “Saragat's party”. Berlinguer responded that it is approximately five percent, and that, although he was losing ground in the party, Saragat's attitude towards the PCI was good.⁸⁰⁵

Concluding the Italian topics, the conversation passed to the recent Tito's visits to the East. However, when talking about the visits, especially of one to Moscow,⁸⁰⁶ Tito firstly focused on

⁸⁰⁵ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika Republike i Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom Komunističke partije Italije Enrico Berlinguerom, 4. oktobra 1977. godine u Karadorđevu [Note on the Conversation of the President of the Republic and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4th 1977 in Karadorđevo].

⁸⁰⁶ During the conversations between Brezhnev and Tito, in August of 1977 in Moscow, the issue of the Western communist parties and of Eurocommunism was discussed. That discussion is very important in understanding the conversations between Tito and Berlinguer, as in understanding the Yugoslav view of the Western communist parties, hence it will be quoted here extensively.

Brezhnev was the first to address this issue and he stated how, despite the various insinuations, Moscow was pleased with the fact that the PCI and PCF strengthened their impact in their countries, using the favorable general conditions. The CPSU followed their actions with interest, and Brezhnev underlined that the creation of the political tactics is an internal issue of each party. The CPSU had different views on certain issues, but does not want to impose them on others. However, they saw as a danger for socialism in the conflictual tendencies present in the relations of the Western communist parties with their Eastern comrades. In Brezhnev's opinion, Carrillo was de facto adhering to anti-Sovietism, and the articles in *Novoye Vremya* were not criticism of the PCE's policies, but of a concrete book written by a concrete author. Opening up a public polemic was the final resort, triggered by Carrillo's actions in the last years. Although supporting the full autonomy of each party, the CPSU advocates the strengthening of the unity of the movement on the basis of internationalism. (In the Yugoslav report, this was noted as a particular sensitivity of the Soviet party to the public critiques of the USSR made by the Western communist parties)

Eurocommunism and the issue of Western communist parties, criticizing the use of this term. Although in Moscow he defended the West European communist parties, at this meeting with Berlinguer he was somewhat different in his approach to the issue. Tito wanted to mildly criticize Berlinguer for two reasons. Firstly, in order of giving him advice on how to evade unnecessary confrontations with Moscow. And secondly, to express his disagreement with the idea of a regional communism.

Hence, Tito initiated the topic by asking why was the term Eurocommunism being used when it was invented by the bourgeoisie. In his words, it led to confusion, as communism was one for the entire world.⁸⁰⁷ And, more importantly, Tito was frustrated that such discussions obfuscated the essence of the issue – the principles of the Berlin conference. Berlinguer responded that even they do not know who came up with the term, that is why they used the formulation “that which is called Eurocommunism”. However, for him the crucial thing was not the term but the essence of the policies of the Western communist parties – the strategies and tactics of these parties were different, but they were connected by similar economic structure, traditions, and the wish to act together, not to create a regional center. According to Berlinguer, that was why “Eurocommunism”, that is its substance as he presented it, became a global topic. Tito confirmed

Tito responded to this by firstly underlining the principles of the Berlin conference, and then spoke positively of the Western communist parties. In his words, Yugoslavia always supported the principles which were present in the activities of these parties (they were autonomously creating their own roads of struggle for socialism; and were opening up to and connecting with other progressive and democratic forces) and led them to gaining more influence in their countries. Although he found the term Eurocommunism as inadequate, the autonomous and creative orientation of these parties was in line with reality. After expressing his regret for the fact that the Soviet journal had attacked Carrillo, he indicated that the polemic was detrimental to the relations between the communist parties and advocated for a peaceful and constructive discussion, on equal grounds.

In the final part of the Yugoslav report on the visit, the issue of West European communist parties and of Eurocommunism was mentioned twice. Firstly, when describing the problems with the press release. The Yugoslavs were eager to include the principles of the Berlin conference in it, and the Soviets were reluctant to do so. According to the Yugoslavs, one of the main causes of the Soviet reluctance was the ongoing campaign against Eurocommunism in the Soviet press, which was not in line with the named principles. Secondly, when analyzing the overall Soviet stance towards Yugoslavia during the visit, which was “softer” than expected, the Yugoslav experts thought that, among other Soviet problems, their conflict with the West European communist parties had put them in a situation where good relations with Belgrade suited Moscow.

Извештај о посети председника СФРЈ и председника СКЈ Ј. Б. Тита СССР-у, 16-24. августа 1977. [Report on the Visit of the President of SFRY and President of the LCY J. B. Tito to USSR, August 16th-24th 1977], in: *Југославија-СССР. Сусрети и разговори на највишем нивоу руководиоца Југославије и СССР 1965-1980 Том 2* [Yugoslavia-USSR. Meetings and Conversations of the Yugoslav and USSR Officials at the Highest Level 1965-1980 Volume 2], edited by Lj. Dimić et al, Arhiv Jugoslavije, Belgrade 2016, 799-805.

⁸⁰⁷ Kadar had also indicated to Berlinguer that it would be better to moderate the universalism of the idea, and to be consistent in refusing the idea of models of socialism – political pluralism was the core idea of Eurocommunism, but like the Soviet model was not applicable in the West, the pluralist model was not applicable in the East. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 78.

it, saying that both in Moscow and Beijing it was addressed. Reiterating that the term was not adequate, and that he said the same to Brezhnev, Tito underlined how he defended the essence of the political activity of the Western communist parties: by praising the implementation of the principles of the Berlin conference, the understanding of the specific local conditions and the creative designing of particular modes of action which are in line with those conditions. He added that he criticized the Soviets for their lack of respect for the Berlin principles, for instance regarding the *Novoye Vremya* polemic with Carrillo. Berlinguer responded that the USSR was trying to hamper the autonomy of the parties, and added that, effectively, Yugoslavia defended “Eurocommunism”, although not agreeing with the term. Tito once again focused on the principles, underlining his praise for the cooperation of the PCI and others with the progressive forces in their countries.⁸⁰⁸

Regarding Carrillo, his impression was that the Soviets were bitter, although he explicitly opposed to the modes of polemic with the PCE. However, he added that he had not read the book, but that if it really was an interference in the internal issues of certain parties, and a one-dimensional critique of a system implemented by some communist parties, that would not be good. In Tito’s words, that is something that should not be posed in a public discussion. Also, he added that it was not realistic to expect that such a powerful country could accept to be criticized publicly, hence he tried to calm the situation during his visit to Moscow. Berlinguer responded that the

⁸⁰⁸ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika Republike i Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom Komunističke partije Italije Enrico Berlinguerom, 4. oktobra 1977. godine u Karadorđevu [Note on the Conversation of the President of the Republic and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4th 1977 in Karadorđevo].

Just a few months later, in his interview for *The New York Times* in March of 1978, Tito had publicly expressed his interpretation of Eurocommunism. His views were expressed similarly as in the conversation with Berlinguer. He stated that Eurocommunism was, in fact, an assuming of responsibility, acting in accordance with the local conditions. Hence, the closer relations between the Eurocommunist parties were a consequence of independence, not a regional model – they were, according to Tito, not offering a model for changing communism, but only wanted to have a more intense exchange of opinions among themselves. Finally, he supported the three Eurocommunist parties, and underlined how the key link between them and the NAM was the struggle for the overcoming of the bloc division of the world.

However, Tito’s criticism of the term was not the only critique of Eurocommunism that came from Yugoslavia. The main ideologue of the LCY, Kardelj, had two problems with the policies of the Eurocommunist parties – their renoucement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and their excessive focus on the parliamentary political action. In his article for *Rinascita*, in September of 1977, Kardelj warned the PCI of the need not to neglect the activity outside of the parliament. Despite this critical remarks of Tito and Kardelj, Yugoslavia was, undoubtedly, supportive of Eurocommunism. Public statements of support were often, and Belgrade saw Eurocommunism as a continuation of the road the LCY paved in 1948, which enabled the Western communist parties to conduct their autonomous policies in the late seventies.

M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 448-452.

polemics had shifted the focus from the book and its ideas to a defense of the Spanish party. The PCI will publish the book, as they publish even things they do not agree with. Tito concluded this topic by giving an advice to Berlinguer regarding the relations with Moscow. As Tito stated, there was no party that has such a rich experience with the CPSU as the LCY had. And, from that experience, he learned that being patient and evading the unnecessary public conflicts is the best mode of resolving the problems with Moscow.⁸⁰⁹

In the final part of the meeting, Tito returned to giving a more general depiction of his visits. In Moscow, Brezhnev showed that he respects Yugoslavia as it is, despite the different previous experiences with him. Also, Tito recognized in him a positive force within the CPSU, and indicated Suslov and Ponomarev (Berlinguer agreed with the criticism of Ponomarev, based on his personal experience) as the most prominent representatives of the bureaucratized Stalinist ideologues, who hampered Brezhnev's positive impact. Hence, although critical on several issues, the Yugoslav president decided to be very diplomatic, or only implicit, when giving such remarks. He also added that neither the Soviets nor the Chinese gave negative comments on the fact that he was visiting both countries. In both occasions he implicitly advocated for their reconciliation by stating that the United States would have not had such a powerful position if Beijing and Moscow were united. This intrigued Berlinguer, and he asked to know more about their reactions and views on the possibilities of a future collaboration. Tito responded that he did not see the preconditions for a bettering of their relations, although expressing his optimism that one day the situation will become different, and their reconciliation will lead to the unity of the movement.⁸¹⁰

After shortly commenting on his visit to North Korea,⁸¹¹ Tito talked about his impressions from Beijing. The reception was very good, and Hua Guofeng personally welcomed Tito,

⁸⁰⁹ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika Republike i Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom Komunističke partije Italije Enrico Berlinguerom, 4. oktobra 1977. godine u Karadorđevu [Note on the Conversation of the President of the Republic and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4th 1977 in Karadorđevo].

Tito's advice had left a strong impression on Berlinguer, and he returned to Rome considering Tito as the principal ally of the PCI - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 79.

⁸¹⁰ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika Republike i Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom Komunističke partije Italije Enrico Berlinguerom, 4. oktobra 1977. godine u Karadorđevu [Note on the Conversation of the President of the Republic and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4th 1977 in Karadorđevo].

⁸¹¹ His impressions regarding the general situation in the country were positive. The main topic of the conversations with Kim Il Sung was the reunification of the two Koreas, especially after US president Carter personally asked Tito to talk about this topic. Kim Il Sung's view was that he wanted to achieve the reunification through negotiations, not by arms, and the two prerequisites for initiating the negotiation process were signing a peace treaty with the United States and the removal from power of General Park in South Korea.

promising to come to Yugoslavia. In Tito's opinion, they have become more flexible than earlier. China was evidently on the path of opening itself up, primarily due to economic reasons.⁸¹² Even when he criticized them, although in a very polite and implicit manner, Guofeng accepted those remarks. For instance, Tito implicitly criticized their actions in Africa by saying that Yugoslavia pays good attention not to support the reactionary forces in the continent, but only the progressive movements, mentioning the case of Angola.⁸¹³ Berlinguer asked whether Hua Guofeng was defending the Chinese involvement in Angola, and Tito responded that the conversation was not so direct, but that Guofeng did mention how Beijing does not like when Moscow gets too involved in Africa. Hence, Tito suggested him to support the same movements as the USSR, in order to combat its influence. Eurocommunism was also mentioned in the conversations, and Tito explained how the PCI and other parties were focused on the local conditions, on the masses, and implemented a broad approach in their policies. Hence, he recommended that they establish relations with the PCI, to which the Chinese had not said anything. However, Tito's impression was that the PCI will succeed in establishing the party relations with the Chinese, as they had become more flexible and open than before. The Yugoslavs, who only had interstate relations, were on the way of establishing the party relations also.⁸¹⁴ During other conversations in Beijing, Tito addressed the Chinese theory of the imminence of a global conflict in the future. Although he unsuccessfully tried to dissuade them, he still noticed that it was possible to discuss with them, unlike before. In general, his impression was that Mao's legacy was formally alive more due to propaganda reasons, than as a true conviction of his successors. Berlinguer was very interested in this Tito's assessment, and the Yugoslav president reassured him that the times in China were changing. Finally, Berlinguer asked whether the Chinese were fearing that a Soviet attack was possible. Tito responded that unfortunately that was true, although the Soviets would not do anything similar, as they have

⁸¹² Tito talked extensively about his impression that China had become oriented on economic growth with its new leadership. However, that shift of orientation from revolution to development was initiated in the final years of Mao's reign, setting this direction for his successors. C. Jian, "China and the Cold War after Mao", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 181-185

⁸¹³ Strangely, this was one of the rare mentions of Angola in the LCY-PCI relations, despite the strong Yugoslav involvement in the country, and despite it being one of the crucial international issues of that era. The Soviet actions in Angola, fueled by the US defeat in Vietnam and the subsequent attractiveness of the Soviet model, initiated a competition between the superpowers in the Third World and signaled the end of the détente - S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume II*, 156.

⁸¹⁴ When speaking of this issue, Tito and Berlinguer had a witty exchange of remarks. Tito laughingly added that "If they have such attitude towards us, then they will go further with it, because we both have the same sins". Berlinguer responded in a similar manner, saying: "When it comes to revisionism, you remain the first", and Tito ironically responded: "That is true, we are the first in that".

become financially overstretched by having so much troops on the eastern border, and wanted to invest those resources in living standard.⁸¹⁵

The interparty collaboration was relaunched in 1978 with a visit of a PCI delegation led by Adalberto Minucci, in early January. The delegation's intention was to get acquainted with the new ideas in LCY's policy, promoted in the preparations for the 11th Congress of the party. As the Yugoslav officials explained, the LCY's aim was to move towards Engels' ideal of the "withering away of the state". In order to do so, in complex internal and international conditions, the Yugoslav communists, led by Kardelj's theory of "pluralism of self-managing interests", wanted to temporarily strengthen the party's role and impose a system that would be neither multipartism nor one-party system.⁸¹⁶ The Italian delegation responded positively to the Yugoslav explanations, stating that Yugoslavia was original in its theoretic conceptions, unlike the other socialist states. The international situation was also discussed. Dobrivoje Vidić talked about the frustrations of Tirana because of the Sino-Yugoslav rapprochement and, once again, criticized the Socialist International for its activity in the Third World. Like in previous occasions, the PCI did not share this Yugoslav fear, and Minucci responded that it does not have the power to create a split within the Non-Aligned Movement. Regarding the situation in Washington, Vidić underlined that the Carter administration was more sensible towards Yugoslav interests than its predecessors, and Minucci added that Brzezinski was more tolerate towards the USSR than Kissinger⁸¹⁷. Finally,

⁸¹⁵ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Zabeleška o razgovoru Predsednika Republike i Predsednika SKJ Josipa Broza Tita sa generalnim sekretarom Komunističke partije Italije Enrico Berlinguerom, 4. oktobra 1977. godine u Karadorđevu [Note on the Conversation of the President of the Republic and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4th 1977 in Karadorđevo].

The relations of the USSR with the West were marked by the same rationale Tito exposed here, in describing the Soviet outlook on China. Moscow wanted to cut its military expanses and expand the trade, as remedies for the unsatisfied consumer needs in the USSR. O. Njolstad, "The collapse of the superpower détente, 1975-1980", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 137-138.

⁸¹⁶ The main idea of this Kardelj's last theoretical innovation was to present the LCY not as a monopolistic party, which it was, but as a broader organ through which democracy was achieved – I. Banac, "Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State", in: *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II*, 592.

⁸¹⁷ Henry Kissinger was a particular "enemy" of the PCI. Fearing of a domino effect in southern Europe, during 1974 and 1975, he was strongly against the entrance of the Italian communists into the national government. In explaining why he would not be in favor of the PCI's entrance into the governing coalition even if the party became fully independent from Moscow, Kissinger made a parallel with the LCY. Namely, he said "Tito is not under Moscow's control, yet his influence is felt all over the world". However, the Carter administration had not changed the situation, despite some initial overtures. In the days when Minucci was in Yugoslavia, the United States had officially taken their stance against the presence of communist parties in West European governments. S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 52, 60.

The Yugoslav press had reacted negatively to that official US statement made in January of 1978, viewing it as a "direct interference of Washington" – P. Dragišić, *Šta smo znali o Italiji?*, 251.

Grličkov stated that there was no dialogue between the communist parties, and stressed out the need to reinitiate it. However, he added that it was positive that the attacks on different roads to socialism and on the principles of the Berlin conference were lessening.⁸¹⁸

On March 1st 1978, Pajetta and Grličkov had a meeting and talked about various international topics. Firstly, Pajetta asked about the current CSCE meeting in Belgrade, and Grličkov responded that it was, in fact, a struggle between the Non-Aligned countries and the superpowers for the realization of the Helsinki document, which the superpowers wanted to obstruct. Secondly, Pajetta talked about PCI's relations with the parties from the socialist bloc. He underlined good relations with the Soviet, Hungarian, East German and even with the Bulgarian party, which left a good impression on the Italian communists during their last meeting. However, he underlined that the biggest preoccupation of the PCI was the lack of freedom, particularly in culture, within these countries.⁸¹⁹ Grličkov responded that the LCY also had good relations with the named parties, besides with the Bulgarian, which still aggressively expressed its territorial claims to Macedonia. Thirdly, the situation in the Horn of Africa⁸²⁰ was discussed. Both agreed that a solution for the crisis in the region should be found peacefully, in direct negotiations. Pajetta added that they had contacts with the Somali president Barre, and advised him to be more moderate towards the USSR.⁸²¹ On the other hand, the PCI expected that Yugoslavia, as the USSR, makes an impact on Ethiopia towards a peaceful solution. Grličkov agreed, saying that Belgrade will try to mediate through the Non-Aligned Movement. Fourthly, Grličkov emphasized Yugoslav frustrations with the Socialist International's attempts to expand to Africa, announcing that Yugoslavia will initiate a counteroffensive and asked for a meeting with the PCI on this issue. He

A year later, at a meeting of the PCI Directorate in February of 1979, Pajetta will have a completely different stance than Minucci regarding the US administration – now, in line with the Soviet views, he saw Brzezinski as more dangerous for global peace than Kissinger, as he was less realist and more idealist. This pro-Soviet outlook on the international relations was not fully shared by Berlinguer, but it had a certain impact on him and on some of the most important officials of the PCI. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 98-99.

⁸¹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-572.

⁸¹⁹ In his visit to Moscow in November of 1977, Berlinguer also focused on democratic values, which was not well received by Brezhnev. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 290.

⁸²⁰ The Soviet involvement in Ethiopia during 1977 and 1978 was, in fact, a proxy war with the United States. The USSR became very engaged in African affairs in the second half of the seventies, seeing a vacuum of power and a chance to assert its influence and ideology. Like in the case of the similar proxy war in Angola, the Soviets had won, but eventually payed the price of victory by Washington's ending of the détente. V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 229, 249-252.

⁸²¹ Barre was, in fact, a long-time Soviet ally, and his country was in war with the neighboring Ethiopia. When Ethiopia switched sides, and from an American partner became pro-Soviet, Barre started courting Washington. With that aim, in November of 1977 he ejected the Soviet personnel in his country and broke relations with Cuba. N. Mitchell, "The Cold War and Jimmy Carter", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 75-80.

also informed of the relaunching of the interparty relations with the Chinese communist party. Lastly, Pajetta talked about the situation in the Middle East, and stated that the PCI expects LCY's presence and contribution at the Mediterranean meeting in Venice. Besides these international topics, at the end of the meeting Pajetta gave his brief depiction of the situation in Italy. He underlined that the interparty dialogue was endangered, and could be possibly ended, despite the PCI's cautious and patient strategy. He blamed the DC for dragging out the negotiations in order to blame the PCI for the situation in the country, and criticized the PSI for its opposition to a broad government, which enabled the DC to be more rigid in the negotiations. He also emphasized that the new leadership of the PSI had no true connection with the working class.⁸²²

The next interparty meeting was in late March, when a LCY delegation, led by Dušan Popović, visited Rome in order to get acquainted with the situation in the PCI. They had the opportunity to talk with several high-level PCI officials – Berlinguer, Pajetta etc. Three internal Italian issues were dominant in the conversations – the joint program of the six parties that was recently adopted, the kidnapping of Aldo Moro and an editorial printed in *La Stampa*. Regarding the program of the reform, the Italian communists stated that it already led to some changes, but were convinced that the government was too weak to fully implement it. Hence, there was a PCI initiative to enter the government, but as they confessed to the Yugoslav comrades, this was only a maneuver. The intention was to pacify the discontent within the PCI and in the working class, and to strengthen the PCI's negotiating position towards the DC, as they were aware, all along, that the DC will not accept it.⁸²³ Regarding the situation with Moro, the Italian communists talked positively of him, as a man of balance within the DC who wanted to have an agreement with the PCI. His kidnapping was deemed as a blow to the democratic order, and they underlined that both the "red" and "black" terror was attacking democracy. As for the Red Brigades, the PCI officials informed the Yugoslavs that they were well organized, and led by Renato Curcio. However, the

⁸²² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-574.

⁸²³ At that time, the PCI's credibility in the Italian political life was higher than ever, due to their support to the unpopular measures, fierce opposition to terrorism and criticism of the USSR. Hence there were some signs of a possible PCI inclusion of the government, and the possibility seemed more realistic than ever. However, the maximum that was achieved was another ambiguous moment. On one hand, the PCI managed to partially influence the program of the new government, and in an unprecedented turn of events even voted for it. On the other side, this vote and support to the government were determined by the kidnapping of Aldo Moro, as they were only a constructive move of the communists in a dire moment for the country. Hence, the kidnapping of Moro initially brought the PCI closer to the government than ever, but his killing had later closed any possibility of having the communists in the government. Hence, with Moro's death, *compromesso storico* was also finished. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 149, 183.

Italian communists were convinced that the Red Brigades were connected with various international and internal actors – firstly with the Red Army Faction, which was directly involved in the kidnapping, and, secondly, with the international reaction and the Italian Mafia.⁸²⁴ Finally, Pajetta informed of the recent *La Stampa*'s editorial, which advocated for a removal of the President, due to the crisis, and replacing him with Fanfani. The PCI saw this as advocating for an autocratic solution, and were disturbed by it. However, Pajetta underlined that, fortunately, Fanfani himself declined this option, evaluating it as conflicting with the constitutional principles.⁸²⁵

Some international issues were also discussed during the visit. Regarding the situation within the communist movement, the PCI was advocating for dialogue, which was nonexistent at that time. As for the Soviet attacks on the PCE, they were wondering why the Soviets attacked only the Spanish, and not the Italian party, commenting that the whole issue was probably just a defensive reaction of the Soviets due to their internal problems. They also informed the Yugoslavs that Kadar and Gierek, in their recent visits to Rome, were not critical of the PCI and Eurocommunism, but interested in the project, or the “experiment” as they put it. On the other hand, it was also evident that, according to the Italian communists, the collaboration among the Eurocommunist parties was insufficient, especially with the PCF.⁸²⁶ Regarding the non-communist left, the PCI once again expressed its wish to strengthen its contact with its. They shared the Yugoslav concerns regarding the activity of the Socialist International aimed at creating a split within the Non-Aligned Movement. However, they also stated that many liberation movements were thankful for the attention this organization was giving to them. Hence, the PCI thought that it would be best to have a coordinated and joined action with the socialists and social-democrats in this regard. They have recently talked with Olof Palme, and he proposed a joint action of the LCY, Swedish social-democrats and the Algerian FLN.⁸²⁷

During the visit, on March 29th, the delegation had a chance to meet with Berlinguer. The PCI's secretary general mostly talked about the situation in Italy. He emphasized several negative

⁸²⁴ More about the kidnapping of Aldo Moro in - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 166-176.

⁸²⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-576.

⁸²⁶ Gierek and Kadar's word were an encouragement for the PCI, after the negative experience in Moscow, in November of 1977, when Brezhnev strongly attacked Berlinguer. The Soviet leader reproached the PCI for not combating efficiently against the NATO and went so far as to make implicit treats to the PCI leadership, by saying that the Italian masses were not supporting the party's policies. Faced with those attacks, Berlinguer tried to, like in March, respond unitedly with Carrillo and Marchais, and relaunch Eurocommunism. The result was disappointing, as the alliance with the PCF proved itself weak, and the death of the détente left no room for dissident movements. S. Pons, “The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism”, in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 59-60.

⁸²⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-576.

factors, and underlined that the program of reform will be met with resistance. However, he also added that it was positive how the DC and the PCI were becoming interdependent and protected the constitutional order together. Regarding the Moro case, he said that it showed the inefficiency of the government, but added that the Italian people and political parties have reacted positively to the challenge, which is crucial in the struggle against terrorism. Regarding the international situation, Berlinguer emphasized the similarities of the two party's stances, and underlined his disappointment with the outcome of the Belgrade CSCE meeting, blaming the USA and USSR for it. As for the Italian foreign policy, he said that it was balanced and that the PCI wanted it to be more active regarding the crisis of the détente. Finally, Berlinguer promised that the PCI delegation to the Yugoslav congress will be very high in rank.⁸²⁸

A month later, on April 21st 1978, Segre and Grličkov were at the PCE's congress in Madrid, and used the occasion to discuss some international issues. Grličkov firstly emphasized the Yugoslav frustrations with the fact that both the Socialist International, with its expansion in Africa,⁸²⁹ and the socialist bloc, by organizing a meeting of the "progressive" members of the NAM, were, in fact, creating ideological divisions within the Non-Aligned Movement. Hence, Grličkov stated, such actions posed the need to offer an alternative to these countries. Segre added that the Italian communists were also worried by the double presence, of the USSR and Cuba, in Africa, and were not sure has the USSR decided to spread its ideology in Africa now. Regarding the Cuban presence, the PCI was opposed to it, adding that it only legitimized the interventions of both blocs.⁸³⁰ When talking about this topic, Segre also informed Grličkov of the recent contacts with the PCF, summarizing them with his evaluation that the French party was questioning its course. Segre also talked about the upcoming Mediterranean meeting in Venice, stating that the USSR was pressuring the PCI on it, and adding that Israel expressed its desire to have a joint mediation of the PCI and LCY towards the USSR. Segre stated that the PCI was willing to do it, since there was some evolution in Israeli politics, as they have understood that having only the American support was not enough.⁸³¹

⁸²⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-576.

⁸²⁹ It was agreed that the two parties will have a meeting on this issue, and maybe even adopt a joint stance.

⁸³⁰ Silvio Pons has attributed these positions to the Yugoslav influence on the PCI - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 88.

⁸³¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-577.

Finally, in the last part of the meeting, Segre talked about the PCI's relation with Czechoslovakia. Firstly, he underlined that they were "courting" the PCI, in order to prevent or minimize the impact of any possible manifestation regarding the 10th anniversary of the Prague Spring – the Gramsci Institute was organizing a seminar on the topic, and the Czechoslovak request to have a delegate of their party present was refused. The PCI clearly stated that the interparty relations will be renewed only when the Czechoslovak party makes certain changes. However, there was a more interesting and important part of the conversation regarding Czechoslovakia, that Grlickov described on a separate document, labeled as highly confidential. In this part of the meeting, Segre underlined that the general public in Italy was very anti-Czechoslovak, and that the right wing media connected Prague with the Red Brigades. He then added, in confidence, that the PCI had evidence that some members of the Red Brigades' leadership were in Czechoslovakia, on two occasions, for 15 days each time. When the PCI asked the Czechoslovak leadership of this issue, they denied it. Also, Segre added that it was possible that the Red Brigades had Czechoslovak arms. Then Segre stated that "the whole thing does not end with Czechoslovakia", but had not explicitly stated who else could be possibly involved in the kidnapping.⁸³²

After this meeting, three months passed without a significant contact, but the next one, in late July, demonstrated how good the interparty relations were. On July 27th 1978, Dolanc met with Giovanni Cervetti at the island of Korčula. The main topic was the PCI's request for financial aid. Cervetti explained that the party was in a bad economic situation, primarily because it had to stop some of its trade activities due to "security" issues. Also, as he put it, there were some "other ways" of resolving the situation, but the party did not want to endanger its autonomy, which was a clear implication that the PCI could but did not want to ask for Soviet aid.⁸³³ Cervetti proposed that this aid come not directly, but through some economic cooperation. Dolanc agreed, adding that this could be resolved in September, but added that the LCY could also give a certain amount

⁸³² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-577. The Yugoslav diplomats across the world had received various information on the possible role of foreign actors in the kidnapping and killing of Aldo Moro. Some, like the information obtained from the Palestine Liberation Organization by the embassy in Beirut, indicated that the CIA was behind it; and others, like the information obtained from an Italian diplomat by the embassy in Lisbon, indicated that the USSR and the Eastern bloc were involved, with the aim of discrediting Eurocommunism and the PCI. P. Dragišić, *Šta smo znali o Italiji?*, 264-268.

⁸³³ In 1978, the PCI took the decision to renounce of Soviet financial aid, something that was completely followed through only in late 1979 - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 114. Hence, the two documented cases of Yugoslav financial aid to the PCI were very similar – in 1969 it was given as the Soviet aid was lessened, and in 1978 as the Italian communists themselves decided to be less dependent on Moscow's financial support.

of money directly to the PCI.⁸³⁴ In addition, Cervetti stated that, in accordance with some previous agreements, the PCI wants to move its small special fond from Switzerland to Yugoslavia. Dolanc agreed, adding that the party could move its archives to Yugoslavia also. Beside this issue, the two men talked about the situation in the Trieste organization of the PCI (Dolanc, once again, was very critical of Vidali), and about the situation in the USSR (Cervetti stated that it was instable, and that, according to information obtained by the PCI, Brezhnev was very ill). Also, Cervetti asked that the Yugoslavs inform them about the conversations with Hua Guofeng, upon the ending of his visit to Yugoslavia.⁸³⁵

As it was arraigned in the Dolanc-Cervetti meeting, the two parties had their next meeting in September, between Grličkov and Pajetta. However, it became focused on a different issue – the Soviet invitation for Berlinguer to visit Moscow. Pajetta stated that this came in an inconvenient moment, as in Italy there was a campaign of questioning PCI's autonomy. As they could not reject the invitation, particularly because a significant part of the membership was opposed to this option, stating that if the party officials go the United States they have to go Moscow. Hence, the PCI's plan was to ask the Yugoslavs to also invite Berlinguer – if he meets Tito, then the impression of the incomplete PCI's autonomy would be less appealing for the Italian public. Pajetta proposed that Berlinguer could come to Yugoslavia after the visit to Moscow, thus allowing him to inform Tito on the conversations in the USSR, which they predicted were going to be important. Also, it was crucial for the PCI that this visit do not endanger their attempts to establish a contact with China, although they were still unsuccessful in this regard. Grličkov's impression was that Pajetta was anxious, since he underlined that the conversations in Moscow will be tough, despite some signs that the Soviets were ready to be more open. Grličkov responded that he will immediately inform Tito, and then inform the PCI, to which Pajetta responded by asking that it be prior to October 3rd, when they will publicly announce that Berlinguer is going to Moscow. Grličkov agreed and stated that, having the campaign in Italy and the Soviet stances in mind, the best thing the PCI could do is to publicly and firmly express its principles.⁸³⁶

⁸³⁴ On October 9th, the Presidency of the LCY's CC decided to give direct financial aid to the PCI. It was left to Dolanc to determine the exact sum. Dolanc decided that 200.000 dollars should be given, and, on December 15th 1978 it was given to Cervetti (in Deutsche Marks – 390.000). AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-585. Besides this help, the LCY also included PCI led companies in several business arraignments in Yugoslavia. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-588.

⁸³⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-579.

⁸³⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-581.

Besides this primary topic, other international issues were also affronted. Firstly, Pajetta informed about the visit of a Vietnamese delegation to Rome – they were very dramatic in describing their relations with China, even mentioning the possibility of war. He added that the Vietnamese publicly attacked Beijing at *L'Unità*'s festival in Genova, and when they were asked why, the response was that the more they attack China more help comes from the USSR. This response “astounded” the Italians. Secondly, both agreed that Ceausescu's idea of a new European communist conference was not realistic and surprising, since there were no earlier information that could hint this. Pajetta added that the initiative was strange, having in mind that “in Berlin we all swore that this is the last time”. Thirdly, Pajetta asked the LCY to support the Algerian initiatives for a conference of the progressive forces of the Mediterranean, and Grličkov responded that Yugoslavia respects them, and despite not participating at the earlier meetings, it still leaves this option open. Fourthly, Pajetta spoke about the situation in the Horn of Africa, based on the intensive contacts of his party with the regional actors – the PCI was convinced that Ethiopia will, despite its current triumphant sentiments, resolve the issue of Eritrea; and he added that the USSR should not isolate the Somali president Barre who is, despite his weaknesses, the best protector of socialism in Somalia.⁸³⁷ Fifthly, Pajetta also spoke of the PSI's attempts to “steal” some PCI voters, but he was not concerned regarding the fact that his party had lost some of its supporters. Finally, he informed the Yugoslavs that the meeting of nine communist parties of the EEC, organized before the elections for the European Parliament, went very bad, as they “could not find an agreement on anything”. Besides these topics, Pajetta also informed that the PCI would like to have a seminar on self-management with Yugoslav experts soon, since the PSI was organizing it also. In his report, Grličkov underlined his disappointment with this suggestion, although he did not tell it to Pajetta. In short, he saw this as a repetition of “the French scenario”, since the French communists were also not interested in the values of this Yugoslav system, but gave it attention only in order to compete with the socialists who were more interested.⁸³⁸

⁸³⁷ Such PCI advice remained overshadowed in Moscow by the events in Ethiopia, where the most important Marxist transformation in Africa was taking place – O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 251.

⁸³⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-581. In late October, the PCI sent a delegation to Yugoslavia, in order to get more acquainted with the self-management system. In the Yugoslav report it was stated that this was the first time the Italian party sent a delegation on this issue on its own accord. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-583. Eventually, in December of 1979, a seminar on Yugoslav self-management was organized by the Gramsci Institute, as a part of the wider series of seminars on systems in the socialist countries. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-602.

The Yugoslavs responded positively to the PCI's appeal⁸³⁹ and, after the visits to France (4th-5th October) and the USSR (6th-9th October), Berlinguer visited Yugoslavia, on October 10th and 11th. The Yugoslav impression was that this visit was an attempt to be more offensive, since the PCI was in a defensive position earlier, and that it had strengthened the party's position both in Italy and abroad. Berlinguer met with Tito in Igalo, a resort on the Montenegrin seaside, where the Yugoslav President spent much of his last days, in medical treatments.⁸⁴⁰

After small talk and a brief information regarding his visit to France,⁸⁴¹ Berlinguer extensively informed the Yugoslav president of his visit to the USSR.⁸⁴² The most interesting part of his conversations with the Soviet officials was when he had expressed his criticism and the situation became heated. Berlinguer criticized the restrictions of the freedom of expression in the USSR, saying that it affected negatively the Western communist parties, but also, more generally, spoke of the lacking democracy. In that sense, he underlined the situation in Czechoslovakia since 1968, and noted that the process of democratization initiated in 1956, at the XX Congress of the CPSU, had been stopped in the meantime. Although the situation was calmed for some time when Suslov spoke of foreign policy (SALT 2, which they believed could be signed during the year⁸⁴³), Suslov returned to the divisive issues, speaking negatively of Eurocommunism, which he saw as

⁸³⁹ A Yugoslav report made shortly prior to the visit demonstrates the Yugoslav sympathies for the PCI. In the report it was claimed that the Italian communists were under strong and unscrupulous attacks from various actors, who unfoundedly questioned their autonomy and dedication to democracy. According to the Yugoslavs, the European and Italian right used every possible mode to attack the PCI, including terrorism. The PSI and its new leader Craxi were also used in this regard, and Craxi strongly attacked the communists. Regarding the great powers, the Yugoslavs viewed their actions as directed against not just the PCI, but against the development of democracy and sovereignty in Italy. AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62, Informacija o položaju KP Italije i i aktuelnim političkim odnosima u Italiji [Information on the Position of the Italian CP and the Current Political Relations in Italy].

The sympathies were mutual as Tito at that time represented "a privileged interlocutor and indispensable support" for Berlinguer - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 92.

⁸⁴⁰ Although it was initially agreed not to issue a press release, since press releases were issued in France and the Soviet Union, Berlinguer asked to do it also for this visit. The press release emphasized the support of both parties to the détente; to the CSCE process; to independent development of African, Asian and Latin American countries; to disarmament; the determination to overcome the economic gap in the world; the importance of the collaboration of communists, socialists, social-democrats and all of the democratic forces; support to the principles of the Berlin conference – independence, respect for the differences, bilateral dialogue; and, finally, a support to the constructive implementation of the Ossimo agreements.

⁸⁴¹ The conversations Berlinguer had with the PCF were focused on the upcoming elections for the European Parliament. Although the meetings were friendly, the differences between the PCI and PCF regarding the European integration were still present. For instance, the issue of entrance of Greece, Spain and Portugal in the organization was posed, and the PCI supported it, while the PCF was against it. In general, the PCI strongly advocated for the involvement of working class organizations in the EEC institutions, in order of reforming them, while the PCF preferred a defensive stance, not the pro-activeness of the Italians. Berlinguer also added that he was ready to collaborate more with the socialists, against the right, in the European institutions.

⁸⁴² As Silvio Pons put it, the visit was "a dialogue of the deaf". S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 290.

⁸⁴³ It was, eventually, signed in June of 1979 – R. Service, *Compagni*, 409.

a bourgeois invention against the communist movement, a means of pushing the Western communist parties towards revisionism and conflict with the socialist countries. He also criticized China, saying that it wanted an alliance with imperialism, and reminding that it had criticized the LCY and PCI vigorously. Berlinguer was disappointed both by the tone and the content of this meeting.⁸⁴⁴

On the next day Berlinguer met with Brezhnev who had the same positions, although he expressed them in a politer manner. Regarding the issue of human rights,⁸⁴⁵ posed by Berlinguer at the previous meeting, Brezhnev underlined that all of the cases that were under international scrutiny had nothing to do with human rights, but were related to persons who either broke the law or were foreign agents. As for the PCI's wish to renew the relations with the Chinese party, he warned Berlinguer that this would not erase the differences and expressed his hope that the PCI will not change its views. Berlinguer then posed the issue of the situation in the Horn of Africa, advocating for a political solution, and Brezhnev agreed with him. Brezhnev also commented on the situation in the communist movement. Similarly to Suslov, he spoke of outside interests, aimed at causing a split. Although he supported the existence of differences in the forms of activity and roads towards socialism, he deemed unacceptable the critiques of the already existing socialist societies. The PCI's leader then felt the need to corroborate the issue of Eurocommunism once more, saying that it is not forming of another center, but only an emphasis on the similarities between the communist parties in the West. He then returned to the issue of human rights, underlining that it was not only important for the Western parties, but for the prestige of the USSR also. Regarding China he stressed out that although the negative aspects of its foreign policy still

⁸⁴⁴ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62.

⁸⁴⁵ It was not unusual that Berlinguer posed such attention to this issue. Human rights became the central topic of the international affairs of that time, and the state of those rights in the USSR and the Eastern bloc delegitimized these socialist countries – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 300. The issue of human rights became dominant after the CSCE. As the Soviets obtained the recognition of the territorial status quo at the conference, they were willing to accept, in return, to include the principle of human rights in the CSCE document. Although Brezhnev had not understood it immediately, this was a move that severely undermined the Soviet empire. The US President Jimmy Carter, elected in late 1976, from the beginning of his presidential term strongly attacked the Soviet Union on this issue, making it a central point in his confrontation with Moscow. This approach surprised the Soviets, who were more used to the pragmatic outlook of Henry Kissinger. S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume II*, 155; N. Mitchell, "The Cold War and Jimmy Carter", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III, Endings*, 71-73; V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 234-234, 254-257.

prevail (primarily, Beijing's willingness to collaborate even with reactionary forces⁸⁴⁶), there were positive changes in its internal policies, which showed an evolution of China.⁸⁴⁷

Tito responded to Berlinguer's exposition by saying that it was good he went to Moscow, better than having a discussion in the press. He mostly talked about China, denying the exaggerated claims in the Soviet press that Hua Guofeng was acting inappropriately towards the USSR during his visit to Belgrade. He also denied Soviet claims that Yugoslavia was selling weapons to China. The Yugoslav president was very frustrated by such Soviet stance, especially having in mind that the thought that Yugoslavia did as much as it could for a reconciliation between Moscow and Beijing. Regarding the Chinese, his impression from Guofeng's mission was that they were evolving, even in their foreign policy. The most important thing was China's opening to the world, and that process should be helped. Hence, in that sense, it was normal that Beijing firstly wanted to establish relations with the national governments, in order to obtain the necessary machines in trade with the West, and neglected the communists, not wanting to irritate the ruling parties. Finally, during lunch, the two communist leaders criticized the Soviet dogmatism and talked about Đilas. Berlinguer asked what was happening with him, and Tito was obviously agitated by the issue – he was very disappointed of Đilas' actions and character,⁸⁴⁸ saying that he acted anti-constitutionally and against the law. Tito's intention was to force him to leave the country, and prevent him in presenting himself as a martyr.⁸⁴⁹

During his visit, the PCI's General Secretary talked also with Grličkov. The two men discussed the visits of Brandt and Felipe Gonzales to Yugoslavia, the situation in China, Albania and Yugoslavia, PCI's stronger collaboration with the Scandinavian social-democracy. However, the conversations mostly revolved around the situation in the PSI. According to Berlinguer, they were using every means to gain more votes, and hoped to obtain ten to fifteen percent in the next elections for the European Parliament. In general, the party was moving to the right, although there were some radical left elements present. Craxi's strategy was to criticize both the PCI and the DC, which destabilized the country in Berlinguer's view. However, they were still reluctant to leave

⁸⁴⁶ Such disponibility of China, a communist country, to collaborate with various capitalist forces against another communist country was one of the strongest evidence of the definitive downfall of communism. Although Berlinguer and other communists were not aware of it, unable to detach themselves from their intimate beliefs, these kind of actions signaled that communism had lost its *raison d'être* – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 282.

⁸⁴⁷ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62.

⁸⁴⁸ Tito reminded of the fact that Đilas was very extreme during World War II, although later he was presenting himself as a moderate and democratic dissident.

⁸⁴⁹ AJ, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62.

the majority because in the national elections they could hope for less votes than in the European ones. The PSI also attacked the PCI internationally, preventing its contacts with the non-communist left, and this was supported by the USA, underlined Berlinguer. Regarding the ideological critiques of Craxi towards the PCI, Berlinguer thought they were incoherent. The PCI's strategy was not to respond to the attacks, in order to preserve the relations in the base, in regional and municipal governments, and in the syndicates. However, Berlinguer stressed out that there was opposition to Craxi, both in the party (De Martino), and abroad (Mitterrand). In Berlinguer's view, Craxi was more active than his predecessors, hence the party's influence rose, but he highlighted his autocratic ways of governing the party, with expulsions of those who think differently. Also, in his view, the PSI's long-term strategy was to revive the center-left government, but they refrained from vocalizing this still unpopular idea. Finally, Berlinguer commented on Craxi's intention to visit Yugoslavia, stating that he wants it for two reasons: prestige and damaging the PCI.⁸⁵⁰

The demise of communism

The first interparty contact in 1979 was caused by an international event. Namely, the Yugoslavs were very interested in the conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia,⁸⁵¹ and launched a diplomatic offensive on this issue. As a part of this activity, Zvonko Grahek, deputy at the LCY's foreign affairs department, went to Rome, Madrid and Paris, from January 16th to 20th, to talk with the PCI, PCE and PCF. In Rome he talked with Segre, Rubbi and Pajetta. To all of the three parties Grahek corroborated the Yugoslav position. Yugoslavia closely followed the confrontations between the two countries, choosing not to take sides but to advocate for a peaceful solution. However, Belgrade was fully aware that the Vietnamese policy was one of hegemony, and when it decided to attack, supported by the East European socialist bloc (Romania excluded), Yugoslavia had to publicly express its position. The Vietnamese attack was considered as an indefensible breach of the principles of noninterference, independence, autonomy and territorial integrity.

⁸⁵⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-582.

⁸⁵¹ Essentially, it was an ideological conflict within the communist movement in Indochina. On the one side there were the Vietnamese, who in alliance with Moscow propagated internationalism, and on the other side the Cambodians, allied with Beijing and inspired by nationalism. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 280. The Vietnamese intervention succeeded in overthrowing the Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot, in January of 1979 – R. Service, *Compagni*, 512-513.

Although the Yugoslavs were also critical of the situation in Cambodia, they underlined that the Cambodian mistakes cannot justify a foreign intervention.⁸⁵²

All of the three parties agreed that this will have negative consequences on the international affairs and peace, and will provoke divisions within the Non-Aligned movement and between the socialist countries. However, there were some differences in views. The PCI officials firstly underlined that Yugoslavia assumed its position as a state, and that the PCI, as a party, has to take some other aspects into consideration. Grahek opposed to this interpretation, saying that the LCY assumed this position as a party, caring about the cause of socialism. The PCI officials also informed how, due to the pro-Vietnamese sentiments which were still very strong, the bourgeois press in Italy used this issue to launch an anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign. Pajetta finally spoke of the USSR's right to have equal military power since there was a danger of a global conflict,⁸⁵³ and gave a rather loose interpretation of the principle of non-interference. Grahek's conclusions were that the PCI was: 1) not convincing; 2) it thought that the situation in Cambodia was already resolved, hence did not want to endanger its relations with the USSR and other communist parties of the socialist bloc, nor peace in the world, on this issue; 3) had not canceled its visit to Vietnam, although the Italian communists added that the delegation will criticize some aspect of Vietnamese policies; 4) they spoke little of Pol Pot's regime, hence Grahek thought that they also were not convinced that it was the main cause of the intervention.⁸⁵⁴

Beside this issue, Grahek talked with the PCI officials (mostly Segre) on the Yugoslav-Bulgarian conflictual relations, the meeting of the communist parties in Bulgaria,⁸⁵⁵ the stance of Western communist parties towards the EEC⁸⁵⁶ and the upcoming PCI congress. Finally, at the end of the meeting, Segre talked about the political situation in Italy. He underlined how, after the killing of Moro, the right wing of the DC gained ground. He compared Zaccagnini's visit to the United States to the one made by De Gasperi, in 1947, reminding of the repercussions of that visit, i.e. the exclusion of the PCI from the government. Hence, this blocked the work of the government, and some decisions were made against PCI's positions – most importantly, the decision to enter

⁸⁵² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-587.

⁸⁵³ He informed Grahek of two letters Brezhnev sent to Andreotti, asking Italy not to sell arms to China.

⁸⁵⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-587.

⁸⁵⁵ The LCY had not participated, and the PCI informed how Suslov told to Berlinguer that they do not intend to organize a global communist conference.

⁸⁵⁶ The PCI officials informed that they had not succeeded in achieving any agreement with the other parties, and that, in fact, only the Spanish party shared their positions.

the European Monetary System.⁸⁵⁷ With an article in *L'Unità*, the PCI protested against this manner of governing. However, Segre added that the PCI does not want to provoke a crisis prior to the European elections, but was more inclined to try to create a unity with the socialists and social-democrats. Finally, Segre commented negatively on the Pope's interference in the Italian political life, and positively on the upcoming visit of President Pertini in Yugoslavia.⁸⁵⁸

Just a half a month later, on February 1st, Budimir Babović traveled to Rome and met with various PCI officials, Berlinguer included. The main aim of his mission was to transmit a Chinese message to the PCI, which the Yugoslavs received a week earlier. In short, the Yugoslav embassy in Beijing was contacted by Chiao Shi (or Qiao Shi), a deputy in the foreign affairs department of the Chinese party, who told that the party has finally decided to reinitiate its contacts with the PCI. Their proposal was to have a direct meeting, which was considered as a better option than a meeting at the Chinese embassy in Rome. Beijing's intention was to organize it soon, in the second half of February, or even before if the PCI wants. He mentioned that Wu Hsueh-chien, also a deputy in the same department, will be in charge of the meeting, since he knew Berlinguer personally from their collaboration in the days of Youth activism in the fifties. The topics of the meeting would be the activities of the two parties in their countries, the international communist movement, and others. Due to the state of current relations, they asked to treat this proposal discreetly. Babović added that the LCY is ready to transmit the PCI's response, and continue with the mediation that has proven itself successful. His impression was that the Italian communists were more than interested in having contacts with Beijing, especially prior to their congress.⁸⁵⁹

Besides this, principal task, Babović also spoke with Guido Fanti, who led the recent PCI delegation to Vietnam. Fanti had a chance to talk with many Vietnamese officials, including Le Duan, who explained that, in the difficult internal situation in the country (food shortage, great

⁸⁵⁷ The PCI voted against it, and the PSI abstained - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 190. This vote had weakened the PCI's pro-European orientation in the eyes of the non-communist left - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 97.

⁸⁵⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-587. The Italian President Pertini visited Belgrade in October 1979, and spoke almost exclusively about international issues (the situation in the Middle East, Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia and the Havana conference of the NAM) with the Yugoslav President Tito. Their conversations were very cordial, and testified to the developed and friendly bilateral relations between the two states. More about the visit in: P. Dragišić, „СФРЈ – Италија: Последњи Титов допринос билатералној сарадњи“ [SFRY – Italy: Tito's Last Contribution to Bilateral Cooperation], in: *Традиција и трансформација. Политичке и друштвене промене у Србији и Југославији у 20. веку. Књига 1* [Tradition and Transformation. Political and Social Change in 20th Century Serbia and Yugoslavia. Volume 1], INIS, Belgrade 2015, 179-193.

⁸⁵⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-590.

differences between the South and North, strong internal opposition) they could have not tolerated the pressures that came from China, with Cambodia serving to Beijing as a proxy. The Vietnamese added that they had offered negotiations to Pol Pot, which he saw only as a sign of weakness. Now, allegedly, there were no Vietnamese soldiers in Cambodia, and the attack was only intended as a pre-emptive strike. However, the Vietnamese feared that the already arraigned Western help to their country will be cancelled. When Fanti asked them are they still a Non-Aligned country, they responded positively, adding that they will meet with the Yugoslavs prior to the Havana conference of the movement, and criticizing Belgrade for its excessive focus on the diplomatic forms in this case, instead of on the real situation.⁸⁶⁰

As the PCI's 15th Congress was approaching, the Yugoslavs felt to need to get more acquainted with its preparations. Hence, Luciano Barca visited Yugoslavia and had a series of lectures on the Congress theses. On February 20th, he had a meeting with Grličkov that was primarily focused on the concept of a “third way” to socialism, defined in the theses for the first time. Grličkov was strongly opposed to this term, saying that it is dogmatic and denies the difference of the roads to socialism, although he understood that the PCI had the need to underline its special road to socialism in Italian conditions. However, the “third way” principle does not only deny the differences within the alleged “two ways” that already exist (one of the socialist countries, and the other of social-democrats), thus also neglecting the particularity of the Yugoslav road to socialism, but it also neglects the importance of the anticolonial revolution in the Third World and the new roads to socialism that had emerged there. Barca tried to convince Grličkov that those were not the PCI's intentions, but he agreed with the criticism of the term, stating that the expression will probably have to be changed.⁸⁶¹ At the end of the meeting, Grličkov briefly reiterated the Yugoslav stance that the Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia as the Chinese one in Vietnam⁸⁶² were both unacceptable breaches of sovereignty, and of the Charter of the United Nations. He added that the PCI looks at it differently, and underlined that the LCY could not accept

⁸⁶⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-589.

⁸⁶¹ The CPSU had also criticized the PCI for this idea, viewing it as an attack on international communist solidarity - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 92.

⁸⁶² In February of 1979 China had a military intervention in Vietnam. Fearing of Vietnamese influence in Laos and Cambodia, and frustrated by the discrimination of the Chinese in Vietnam, Beijing invaded its neighbor shortly, causing to constant conflicts of lesser scale during the Eighties. However, one of the key aspects of the conflict were the foreign policies of the two countries – China looked negatively upon Vietnamese alliance with the USSR, and the Vietnamese although nothing good of the Beijing's rapprochement with the United States. C. Jian, “China and the Cold War after Mao”, in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 193.

any justification for an aggression. Barca responded that the Italian party was also opposed to both interventions, but added that millions of Italians, especially young ones, were very emotional towards Vietnam.⁸⁶³

From March 30th to April 3rd 1979, the PCI held its 15th Congress, in Rome, and the LCY was represented by a delegation led by the party's second man, Stane Dolanc. In the report of the delegation it was underlined that the congress was taking place in a period when the PCI was withdrawing its support to the government, which was already beyond its control, and in a time marked by the fact that the lack of success of the party led it to losing some support. However, the PCI had not renounced of the *compromesso storico*, and continued to advocate for a government made of all democratic parties. The change was that now they wanted a bigger impact, and decided to focus more on the collaboration with the PSI, which was more acceptable for the communist masses in Italy. The focus of the Congress on the external factors, not on the party itself, the Yugoslavs viewed as a successful way to move aside the internal dilemmas of the party. Although the Yugoslavs positively commented on the Congress, saying that it had strengthened the party's position, they did not believe that the PCI's goal of lowering the electoral result of the DC was plausible. Regarding the above mentioned "third way", it was corroborated that Berlinguer redefined this term. However, this expression was viewed by the Yugoslavs as propagandistic not substantial, a new useful solution as the phrase *compromesso storico* was not usable anymore.⁸⁶⁴

The Yugoslav delegation, which was more than content with the way in which it was received (it was stated that the Chinese ambassador, the Soviets and the Yugoslav delegation were the three guests with most attention focused on them), also focused on the international aspects of the congress. Firstly, it was noted that the 102 delegations testified to the strong international position of the PCI. This impression would have been even stronger if Craxi had not prevented that the socialist and social-democrat parties send higher delegations – that was initially intended, as the PCI sought to have their support to enter the Italian government. Secondly, five points of PCI's foreign policy were underlined and seen very positively by the Yugoslavs. 1) The situation in Indochina – although Berlinguer spoke of the tyrannical regime of Pol Pot, the Yugoslavs were content that he had also started criticized the Vietnamese intervention, viewing it as a breach of sovereignty and an inadmissible interference. He also implicitly equated Vietnam and China for

⁸⁶³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-593.

⁸⁶⁴ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-594.

their actions, which was seen negatively by the Soviets. 2) The PCI gave big attention to China and the presence of its ambassador. Although Berlinguer appealed to Beijing to change its flawed perception of the USSR as its main enemy, he underlined that many see a modern and strong China as a danger to peace, while he sees it differently, and emphasized that all depends on how China will be treated by others, including the socialist countries. 3) The Yugoslavs were thrilled that the Non-Aligned Movement was strongly supported during the congress – Pajetta underlined its importance for the overcoming of the blocs and for the respect of sovereignty, warning that no one should try to create divisions or conflicts within this movement. 4) The LCY delegation was also very pleased with the emphasis on the issue of national minorities that was posed, stating in the report that the PCI views on this issue were very close to the Yugoslav ones. 5) Finally, the Yugoslavs underlined Berlinguer’s outlook on the communist movement, emphasizing his dedication to the principles of independence and autonomy.⁸⁶⁵

The meeting also focused on a theoretical innovation of Berlinguer, and viewed it positively. At the Congress, the leader of the PCI opposed to the old notion of the “communist movement”. He corroborated his stance by saying that, in the case of many communist parties, they had stronger relations with some non-communist parties than with certain communist ones. Hence, Berlinguer proposed to replace the mentioned old notion of the “communist movement” with the idea of a new internationalism. This *new internationalism*⁸⁶⁶ was to be founded on a Charter that Berlinguer proposed, and it would be furtherly devised by communists, socialists, social-democrats, liberation movements and others. The Charter would express a strategy for peace, based on the principles of disarmament, economic development of the underdeveloped countries and forming of a new international economic order. The Yugoslavs were very interested in this idea, and expected formal initiatives in this regard soon. Finally, at the end of the report, it was added that the basis of the party still had certain pro-Soviet sentiments, but the leadership was bound to change this, as it was seen in its particularly cordial treatment of the Chinese ambassador and of the Yugoslav delegation.⁸⁶⁷

The next meeting between the two parties was in August, but prior to it, in July, the LCY closely followed the situation within the PCI. Firstly, a detailed information on the PCI’s CC

⁸⁶⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-594.

⁸⁶⁶ More about it in - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 100.

⁸⁶⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-594.

session in early July, focused on the recent elections,⁸⁶⁸ was sent to Belgrade. Secondly, Rubbi informed the Yugoslavs, in late July, that Berlinguer had tried to organize a meeting with Carrillo and Marchais.⁸⁶⁹ Regarding the CC session, the Yugoslav report stated that it was not as dramatic as it was expected by many, and that Berlinguer managed to defend his line, with the aim of entering the government, which was accepted by the vast majority. The only true debate regarded the dilemma between the *compromesso storico* idea and the new “left alternative” which the PSI offered. As it was noted, Berlinguer opposed to the “new left” idea of the PCI-PSI government, but not with the old rationale that even with the majority of seats in the parliament this would lead to a crisis like in Chile. Now, he stated that the 50% plus one result of the PCI and PSI was impossible, that the “new left” policy would only strengthen the DC and push the indecisive voters towards them, and that in such government the PSI would lead the PCI to adopt social-democratic positions. Besides this dilemma, the critiques revolved around the neglecting of the masses and of the party’s membership in the recent period, when the PCI was too focused on negotiations with the DC. Or, as it was summarized in the Yugoslav report, the PCI was affronting the old issue of how to evade being assimilated into the system during a peaceful transition to socialism. Finally, it was also underlined that the DC, as it was then, moving more to the right, was not a party with which the PCI wanted to have an agreement.⁸⁷⁰

The next direct contact between the two parties was on August 1st, 1979, in Belgrade. Rubbi and Oliva were coming back from their visit to China, arranged through Yugoslav mediation earlier, and stopped in Belgrade to inform the Yugoslav comrades on the visit, which was still not public. Although they did not give much details on the conversations, they expressed their content with the fact that future contacts were arraigned. Rubbi thanked the Yugoslavs for their mediation, and asked the LCY to furtherly help this dialogue, by emphasizing, in their future contacts with the Chinese party, the complex conditions in which the PCI operates and its “obligations towards the public”. Also, Rubbi and Oliva underlined their impressions that positive processes were taking place in China, with more realistic and adjustable economic policies. However, they feared that

⁸⁶⁸ The June elections, at which the DC obtained 38 and the PCI only 30 percent of the votes, were, in fact, the definitive electoral loss of the *compromesso storico* - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell’Italia contemporanea*, 190-191, 211.

⁸⁶⁹ The meeting was to be held after Berlinguer’s visit to the Portuguese and Spanish communists, in order to mitigate the differences between the PCI, PCE and PCF. The main problem was the PCF’s stance against giving bigger powers to the European parliament, and against the entrance of Spain, Portugal and Greece in the EEC. At that point, the PCF was still reluctant to have this meeting. AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-596.

⁸⁷⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-597.

the “de-dogmatization” process could become more violent and less democratic. For the two PCI officials it was strange that the Chinese had not mentioned the United States, but they were pleased, and took it as a sign of ideological evolution of the Chinese party, that they had talked a lot and with enthusiasm about Yugoslavia.⁸⁷¹

Almost two months later, a LCY delegation led by Vlado Janžič visited Rome, on September 27th and 28th, and talked on several international topics with Bufalini and Rubbi.⁸⁷² Firstly, with Bufalini, they talked about the 6th Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cambodia, and Berlinguer’s conversation with Brezhnev. Regarding the conference, Bufalini praised Tito’s positions exposed in Havana, adding that he made a strong positive impact on the Italian public,⁸⁷³ and that the PCI thinks Castro had not managed to shift the movement’s orientation.⁸⁷⁴ Bufalini also commented on the situation in Cambodia and on the upcoming discussion in the UN regarding it. Although he stated his personal stance that the PCI had made a mistake by not condemning the Vietnamese intervention swiftly (it had done it only at the party congress in April, and Bufalini underlined that the Yugoslav influence was crucial in this change of position), he added that it would be impossible to vote in favor of Pol Pot. Janžič opposed to him, saying that a principle vote in the United Nations is not voting for Pol Pot. Finally, Bufalini informed the Yugoslavs of the conversations Berlinguer had with Brezhnev,⁸⁷⁵ in which the Soviet leader was not completely uncritical of the situation in the USSR. Brezhnev was very interested in disarmament, fearing that the NATO was imposing an arms race, and interested in bettering the relations between the COMECON and the EEC. Regarding China, he was very critical, doubting

⁸⁷¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-598.

⁸⁷² There also had a short conversation with Cuffaro, a PCI official from Trieste, who informed the Yugoslavs that they feared that President Pertini could, in his upcoming visit to Belgrade, ask for a revision of the economic section of the Ossimo agreements.

⁸⁷³ Just a few days later, on October 9th, Pajetta made a telephone call from Rome, saying that Oriana Fallaci wants to interview Tito, and that the PCI strongly supports this, as it would strengthen the idea of non-alignment in the Italian public AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-600.

⁸⁷⁴ The Non-Aligned conference held in Havana in September of 1979 was, in fact, a clash between Yugoslavia and Cuba regarding the future orientation of the movement. Castro and the Cubans, aided from Moscow, aimed at shifting the movement towards the USSR, while the Yugoslavs wanted to preserve its independence from both blocs. The conference ended with Tito’s victory over Castro and the USSR, thus being the last important diplomatic success of the Yugoslav president. D. Vogetić, „Југославија између Истока и Запада“ [Yugoslavia Between East and West], in: Југославија у Хладном рату, 34-35, V. Petrović, “Havana 1979: Labudova pesma Titove lične diplomatije” [Havana 1979: Swan Song of Tito’s Personal Diplomacy], in: *Tito – viđenja i tumačenja* [Tito – Views and Interpretations], edited by: O. Manojlović Pintar, INIS, Belgrade 2011, 416-436.

⁸⁷⁵ The visit was primarily motivated by the euromissiles crisis, i.e. the intention of the NATO to deploy new missiles in Europe. Despite the earlier tensions in the PCI-CPSU relations, Berlinguer wanted to find an agreement on this issue with Moscow - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 111-112.

that their negotiations with Beijing could bring anything substantial, although the USSR was making an effort. Implicitly, he criticized the PCI for its eagerness to have contacts with Beijing, stating that it only encourages the Chinese anti-Sovietism. He did not speak of the NAM, but Ponomarev stated that they do not have anything against it, that the movement was antiimperialist and included certain revolutionary forces.⁸⁷⁶

After the meeting with Bufalini, there was a separate conversation with Rubbi, primarily focused on the PCI's relation with China. Rubbi firstly stated that two Chinese journalists were coming to visit *L'Unità* and *Rinascita* in the second half of October. Secondly, he explained that in the case of Hua Guofeng's visit to Italy it was possible that he will meet Berlinguer. And, thirdly, Rubbi underlined that the relations between the two parties will be formally established in the spring of 1980. However, despite a general consensus on the principles of collaboration, one problem remained. Namely, the Chinese wanted that the differences between the parties be affronted only in private closed meetings, not publicly. For the PCI, this was difficult to accept, since it strongly defended the right of public criticism in their relations with the CPSU and other communist parties. Besides this, the PCI was not content with some aspects of Chinese foreign policy. Firstly, with the fact that the Chinese were still convinced that a global war was inevitable, although now stated that they are willing to work with progressive forces to evade it, in order to enable China to have its "four modernizations".⁸⁷⁷ Secondly, China saw Western Europe as a bloc aimed against the Eastern Europe, while the PCI saw it as an autonomous actor.⁸⁷⁸ As for the Sino-Soviet relations, like Brezhnev, the Chinese were skeptical regarding the outcome of the negotiations, but hoped, at least, to resolve the issues of economic and trade relations. Besides this, Rubbi also shortly commented on the upcoming trip Berlinguer was going to make to Lisbon and Madrid, to talk to Cunhal and Carrillo. With the Portuguese communists there were certain differences regarding the perception of the socialist countries, USSR and the communist movement, but the relations with the PCE were closer, and Berlinguer was hoping to relaunch

⁸⁷⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-599. Bufalini also stated that the PCI was interested in having a series of meetings in order to devise the Charter of the new internationalism, which Berlinguer mentioned at the 15th congress of the party. Already there was some international interest (from the PCF, Algerian FLN and the PCE), and the PCI expected a strong contribution from the LCY.

⁸⁷⁷ As China was becoming integrated in the international relations and global economy, particularly by establishing formal interstate relations with Washington in 1979, it started to gradually renounce of the principle of imminence of war. At that time, Deng Xiaoping allowed the possibility that there will be no war for a certain time. C. Jian, "China and the Cold War after Mao", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 188-190.

⁸⁷⁸ Viewing Europe as a third and autonomous actor in the internal relations was one of the core values of Berlinguer's PCI - S. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", in: *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III*, 50.

Eurocommunism with Carrillo. It was underlined in the report that Rubbi had not mentioned the PCF in this plan, at all.⁸⁷⁹

In early December of 1979, the Yugoslav embassy in Rome sent to Belgrade a report on the session of the PCI's CC, held in mid-November. One of the main issues of the meeting was the PCI's opposition to the instalment of Pershing and cruise missiles in Italy. The Italian communists thought it was better to negotiate with the Warsaw pact, and ask it to lower its potentials, so NATO would not have to enlarge its own.⁸⁸⁰ However, the main focus of the Yugoslav report was on a recent Amendola's article in *Rinascita*, and the debate on it during the CC session. In the article, Amendola criticized the PCI and the syndicates for their economic and social policies. He emphasized that the syndicates were only fighting for bigger wages, and neglected the big economic issues, programing and planning in economy. Hence, the wages were rising faster than the productivity, and companies which had no viable perspective were preserved. Hence, Amendola labeled the syndicates as being demagogic, and protecting the workers on the extent of the youth and unemployed, and he asked that the strikes should be limited in the future. Amendola also criticized the syndicates for being uninterested, if not indifferent, to the struggle against terrorism.⁸⁸¹

Berlinguer and others initially criticized the article, saying that the working class could make sacrifices only for a viable cause, not for preserving the existing system.⁸⁸² Amendola defended his views, underlining that the inflation was the problem number one, and it was being caused by bigger public expense⁸⁸³ and the rising of the prices of labor. Hence, he stated that the working class should not seek an excuse in the enemy and his activity, or wait for the transformation of the society, but save Italy immediately. The transformation will not come on its own, nor socialism can be built on ruins.⁸⁸⁴ Hence, he appealed to save Italy, before it is too late.

⁸⁷⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-599.

⁸⁸⁰ More about this in - S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 112-113.

⁸⁸¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-601.

⁸⁸² One of the dominant dilemmas in the Italian politics of the seventies, plagued by the economic problems, was who should pay the price for the economic crises, the capital or labor. U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 134. In this discussion Berlinguer, in fact, explained the essence of the PCI's response to that dilemma – the labor could pay a big part of the price, but it, through the PCI as its representative, has to get something in return – a bigger say in determining the future of the country.

⁸⁸³ Raising the public expenditure as a response to the crisis was more present in Italy than in other countries - U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 135.

⁸⁸⁴ This Amendola's stance was in line with the outlooks of the entire Western left – the core idea that capitalism needs to be saved in order to reform it and adjust it to the needs of the working class. D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, 593

According to the Yugoslavs, although Berlinguer repeated his initial stances and warned that such views could alienate the working class from the PCI, essentially there was a consensus at the meeting, despite the dramatic debate. The gist of Amendola's views – sacrifices against inflation and a renouncing of maximalist claims – was adopted, but the oppositional status of the party was reiterated and posed more explicitly than before. Hence, the Yugoslavs concluded that the PCI achieved unity and balance in this meeting, which will help it in coping with the complex dual nature (opposition/government) of its political position in Italy.⁸⁸⁵

At the beginning of 1980, it was already evident that the Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito was seriously ill. Before his death, on May 4th, there were several important contacts between the two parties. The first one was from January 12th to 14th, when Bufalini and Mechini visited Yugoslavia. The two PCI officials had a shorter conversation with Dušan Dragosavac, one of the highest ranking LCY officials, and a longer conversation on international topics with Grličkov. In both conversations, they underlined their affection for Tito, and expressed wishes for his speedy recovery in the name of the PCI and Berlinguer. Dragosavac thanked, responding that the Yugoslavs were also concerned about the President, but tried to persuade the guests that no one in the country doubted in Yugoslavia's future, that the internal situation and the relations between the nations were good, and that the population was ready to fight if anyone attacks the country. However, Dragosavac was concerned regarding the international situation and the possibility of a "hot war". He also added that Yugoslavia was primarily frustrated that "a lot of things" were done in the name of socialism, which was a reference to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, discussed more with Grličkov. At the end of the meeting, Bufalini shortly commented on the situation in Italy. Firstly, when he was informed by the Yugoslavs that the minister of foreign affairs Vrhovec, in a recent conversation with representatives of the Italian ministry, protested to the fact that Yugoslavia was not informed regarding the installation of the "euromissiles", Bufalini supported this. Secondly, he stated that the situation in Italy cannot be resolved without the sacrifices of the working class, but added that the PCI will not ask for this unless it is included in governing the country. If this was not to be case, Bufalini predicted an increase of strikes and terrorism. And thirdly, regarding terrorism, Bufalini asked the Yugoslavs to present to his party

⁸⁸⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-601.

any possible Yugoslav intelligence information regarding the international aspects of the terrorism in Italy.⁸⁸⁶

Prior to the conversation with Dragosavac, Bufalini and Mechini had a long conversation with Grličkov, focused primarily, but not exclusively, on international topics. The first topic was the rising crisis of the détente and the international relations, with a particular focus on the Soviet role. The PCI officials expressed the concerns of their party regarding various Soviet interventions (in the Horn of Africa, South Yemen and Afghanistan⁸⁸⁷) and regarding the Vietnamese interventions in Laos and Cambodia.⁸⁸⁸ Regarding the renewed race in armament, the Italian communists were not sure what caused it - the alleged Soviet military supremacy in Europe, the US's wish to strengthen its hegemony in Western Europe or the interests of military industry. Grličkov agreed that the crisis was worrying, as there was the stronger armament, strengthening of the blocs, interventions and the attempts to divide the Non-Aligned countries. The Yugoslavs were uncertain as all of this was caused by some real destabilization of the military balance, which led the Soviets to feel stronger than the other block and intervene in Afghanistan.⁸⁸⁹ During their visit, Berlinguer called the PCI delegates informing them on an initiative they subsequently presented to the Yugoslavs. Namely, the PCI's General Secretary wanted to issue an appeal for peace, with the emphasis on the principles of sovereignty, independence, noninterference, and calling for a redirection of the means spent for armament towards the Third World countries. Berlinguer wanted to issue this appeal together with the LCY and with the Algerian FLN, due to their specific prestige in the named issues. The Yugoslavs had nothing to say against this initiative,

⁸⁸⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-603, 604.

⁸⁸⁷ The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan later became the ultimate divisive point between Moscow and the PCI and LCY on the other hand. Their strong opposition to the USSR's intervention was not surprising, as the intervention in Afghanistan had a bigger impact on the international relations than the one in Czechoslovakia in 1968 – V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 227-228.

⁸⁸⁸ This was, in fact, the pinnacle of Soviet power. However, at the same time, it represented the USSR's fatal imperial overstretch and, as the PCI reactions also showed, the end of international legitimacy of the Soviet model. V. Zubok, "Soviet foreign policy from détente to Gorbachev, 1975-1985", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 90-93. One of the reasons why the Soviets had not evaded this overstretch was in their unfounded optimism after the great success in Angola and in the Horn of Africa, caused by the rising attractiveness of the Soviet model in the Third World during the seventies – S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 279; O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 105, 241.

⁸⁸⁹ The Soviets were dragged in the conflict by various events both in Afghanistan and in the international arena – Sino-American rapprochement, installation of missiles in Europe, conflict with Washington regarding the Soviet troops in Cuba etc. Hence, it was not a calculate decision, but born through a series of poor judgments and out of Moscow's fear of the "other side". This led to catastrophic consequences for the USSR, both internally and in its foreign policy, ending the détente. V. Zubok, "Soviet foreign policy from détente to Gorbachev, 1975-1985", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 102-104.

adding that a meeting of various communist, socialist and social-democrat parties (they underlined the SPD, French socialists, Spanish communists and socialists) on this issue could be organized. Bufalini and Mechini agreed, stating that the only problem for them could be the PCF's opposition to any contact with the French socialists, as the PCI was still keen not to endanger its contacts with the PCF and thus show to the public that Eurocommunism was down to just two parties. However, they added that they were already frustrated with such PCF requests, which blocked their wider collaboration with the socialists and social-democrats, and that since this would be a meeting on the détente, something dear to Moscow, maybe the PCF would accept to participate.⁸⁹⁰

The second topic of the conversation was the euromissiles crisis. Bufalini shortly explained the PCI's positions in the recent events. Firstly, the party appealed to the Italian government to accept Brezhnev's offer, but the government "succumbed" to the American pressure. However, he added that now the government was making some different statements, underlining that this should be negotiated with Moscow, and re-questioned the instalment of missiles in Italy. Bufalini added that the PCI's views were accepted very good by the public, and that the PSI base supported them on this issue more than they did Craxi, especially since the Pope was also against the installment of the missiles. However, the USSR and other socialist countries reproached the PCI, stating that it should have had been more active in opposing the instalment.⁸⁹¹ The third topic was the initiative of the Polish and French party to have a conference of European communist parties. The PCI had contacts with the PCF and with the Bulgarian party regarding this, refusing the idea. As Bufalini underlined, although advocating for the conference, Marchais and Zhivkov had not insisted or pressured the Italian party to participate. Grličkov responded that the situation with the LCY was different, and that it was strongly pressurized for its opposition to the idea.⁸⁹² He corroborated that the Yugoslavs will not participate in this meeting due to the international situation, the intervention in Afghanistan, the imminent polemic at the conference, and, most importantly, due to the fact that this conference was going to be used for bloc politics. Bufalini added that, besides the LCY and PCI, the Spanish party was also opposed to the conference.⁸⁹³

⁸⁹⁰ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-603.

⁸⁹¹ During the Euromissiles crisis, the Soviet Union strongly counted on a resistance of the Western public to the installment of the missiles. J. Young, "Western Europe and the end of the Cold War, 1979-1989", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 295-296.

⁸⁹² From the report on the meeting, it seems that Bufalini was slightly offended by this remark. He stated that the PCI assumed its position independently, before it knew anything of Belgrade's stance, and will not change it, even if the Yugoslavs do.

⁸⁹³ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-603.

The fourth topic, which was discussed at length, was the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Bufalini underlined that this was a mass and direct invasion, done with unacceptable methods. The PCI was not sure what provoked it – wish to control Afghanistan; fear of spreading of the Islamic fanaticism into the USSR; fear of being encircled by the US, China and Western Europe. Hence, the PCI was against the intervention, and assumed it as the official stance of the party. However, the party was also against the countermeasures taken by the Carter administration, as they feared that all of this could cause further reactions and lead to a global war. According to Bufalini, the party's leadership was united in this decision. However, he underlined three sources of opposition. The first was the most surprising one – Giorgio Amendola. Unexpectedly, as he was known for his unorthodox positions and opposition to Moscow, Amendola defended the intervention, stating that as the next global conflict is near, this move of the Soviets was the right thing to do, like their war with Finland before WWII. The second source of opposition were the “old comrades”, as Bufalini named them, but adding that they are very disciplined and will not create problems, although any criticism of the USSR was painful for them. However, as the biggest problem and strongest opposition on this issue, Bufalini stated the Youth, which asked for a stronger attack on imperialism, and was prone to equate revolution with violence. When talking about these internal problems of the PCI, Mechini added that Berlinguer and Bufalini were advocating the closest possible relations with the LCY, thus implicitly stating that there was also some opposition to the close relations with the Yugoslavs. Bufalini then returned to corroborating the PCI's position, stating that it was close to the ones assumed by the SPD, the French government and Mitterrand and by the left wing of the British Labour Party. He also informed the Yugoslavs on the reactions of the PCF and of the Chinese, during their recent bilateral meeting with the PCI. Marchais was strongly pro-Soviet, saying that the balance of power was shifting in the good direction, towards the socialist supremacy, and added that the reactions in the West were dramatizations of the event, aimed at inspiring the anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign.⁸⁹⁴ On the other hand, the Chinese only briefly commented on the intervention, stating that they hope that the government of Hafizullah Amin will preserve its independence. As Bufalini was under the impression that Belgrade was now more cautious than in the case of Cambodia, he asked for a

⁸⁹⁴ Unlike Tito and Berlinguer, Marchais gave its full support (even appearing on the Soviet television) to both the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the Vietnamese one in Cambodia. Alongside with the disputes regarding the EEC (the PCF's opposition to the Spanish entrance into the organization), this led to the definitive distancing between the PCI and the PCE on one side, and the PCF on the other. M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 433-434.

corroboration of the Yugoslav position in this issue. Grličkov stated that Yugoslavia, like before, assumed a position based on its principles, which was practically identical to the PCI's. He added that in the United Nations Yugoslavia called for an immediate retreat of the Soviet forces, but added that his country is in a complex situation within the Non-Aligned Movement, where many members saw this Yugoslav position as pro-American.⁸⁹⁵

Finally, in addition to informing the Yugoslavs that the PCF wanted to have the conference of West European communist parties in March, while the PCI wanted it to be held later, Bufalini commented on the PCI's relations with the Chinese and Soviet parties. Regarding China, he informed the Yugoslavs that Hua Guofeng met with Berlinguer during his stay in Italy, and stated that he hopes they will meet him soon in Beijing. The Italian communists understood this as an invitation to visit China, and will accept it in the first favorable moment in the future. Bufalini was pleased to underline that, evidently, the Chinese now saw his party as an autonomous one, which does criticize China, but not for Soviet interests. Also, he informed of the results of a recent visit of the PCI Youth's delegation to China. Their impressions were that unemployment was a big problem, and that while Mao's legacy was being "de-mythicized" Mao, personally, was not. Also, they noted a strong interest for the Yugoslav system of self-management, and some experiments in this direction were already being undertaken in China. Finally, regarding the global situation, once again it was noted that the Chinese see the war as imminent, and see the USSR as the bigger enemy than the United States, because, in their view, the Soviet hegemony was rising, while the American one was in its downfall. Regarding the PCI's relations with the Soviets, Bufalini had not talked in detail, but he stated that the recent campaign against Eurocommunism was probably motivated by the electoral result of the PCI, which was understood in Moscow as the party's weakness. However, he stated that only a firm defense of the party's principles could make the Soviets redefine their views. Grličkov responded that Yugoslavia was also under Soviet attack, due to its stances on Afghanistan and on the European communist conference. He also added that the Yugoslav relations with the neighboring countries, Albania included, were very good, except with Bulgaria which continues to have territorial aspirations in Macedonia. Bufalini then added that, in his recent conversation with Pajetta, Zhivkov underlined that there was a strong crisis in Yugoslavia, and that the mutual relations were not hampered only due to the Macedonian issue.

⁸⁹⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-603.

According to Bufalini, this statement implied that the Bulgarians were preparing an anti-Yugoslav campaign of a wider scope.⁸⁹⁶

At the end of the meeting, some internal and bilateral issues were shortly commented. Bufalini stated that the global crisis, as the one in Italy, once again posed the issue of PCI's entrance in government. This was met with strong resistance, primarily seen in the assassination of Piersanti Mattarella. Grličkov also commented on the crisis in his country, but emphasizing that the situation was under control – that the work of the collective leadership was successful, and that the relations among the Yugoslav nations were good. Bufalini then asked was the West trying to destabilize Yugoslavia, to which Grličkov responded negatively but ambiguously, stating that the EEC was not ready to resolve the economic issues it had with Yugoslavia, and that the Western countries were not efficiently combating the terrorism of Yugoslav emigres. Finally, it was agreed that the two parties have a bilateral meeting, since there were certain problems with the realization of the Ossimo agreements. Namely, there was some resistance in Trieste to the creation of the mixed Industrial zone provided by the agreements.⁸⁹⁷

Prior to Tito's death, there were two more meetings in the interparty relations that deserve to be mentioned. The first one was in Ljubljana, on February 18th 1980. It was organized on Pajetta's asking, and he met with Franc Popit, the president of the Slovene Central Committee of the party. Firstly, they discussed the health of Tito, and Pajetta underlined the admiration of the Italian communists for the Yugoslav President. He also stated that they were convinced of the Yugoslav stability in the following period. Secondly, the recent PUWP congress was discussed. Pajetta and Popit agreed that it was evident that the Polish communists, although advocating for both, were not convinced neither in the need for a European communist conference, nor in the validity of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. However, Pajetta added that Suslov's speech showed that the Soviet policy was becoming more rigid.⁸⁹⁸

Upon saying that, he presented an issue that was in fact the main motivation for this meeting. As Pajetta underlined, the LCY was the first party to be informed of this, and he asked that this information remain highly confidential. Namely, the CPSU sent a very harsh letter to the

⁸⁹⁶ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-603.

⁸⁹⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-603.

⁸⁹⁸ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-606.

PCI, reproaching them for their views on the intervention in Afghanistan.⁸⁹⁹ The Soviets underlined that the PCI's stance was not in line with proletarian internationalism, and implicitly, by emphasizing the divisions within the PCI on this issue, threatened with interfering in the party's internal affairs. Then, the Italian communists responded with a letter in which they reiterated their stance, giving strong arguments for it. They emphasized how, initially, the Soviets reassuringly spoke of situation in the Amin's regime, while now they were saying that it was a counter-revolution all along. Also, the PCI repeatedly asked who called for the Soviet intervention, and repudiated Soviet claims that the countries who voted in the UN for their retreat from Afghanistan were, in fact, supporting the United States.⁹⁰⁰ The Italian party underlined that the Non-Aligned countries voted according to their principles. Finally, the PCI warned the Soviets, although in a polite manner, that any interference in their internal affairs will not be permitted. In the meantime, Ingrao met with Ponomarev in Moscow, and Pajetta did not know the precise content of the conversation, but from a phone call with Ingrao he only found out that the conversation was tough, and that the Soviets defended their actions by underlining the NATO's armament as their principal motive.⁹⁰¹

Pajetta then asked Popit of the state of the Yugoslav relations with the Soviets, and Popit stated that the Soviets refused to have any high-level contacts, despite Yugoslav initiatives. Later that day, during the informal dinner, the two men engaged in an informal but interesting discussion regarding the Soviet Union. Popit bluntly stated that the USSR is working against the interests of socialism, and that their only aim was to expand their territory. Pajetta responded that he absolutely does not agree with that, but agreed that, objectively, the current actions of the USSR were not in the interest of socialism. He then criticized the Chinese influence on the international situation, adding that he does not understand why was Beijing taking such course. Popit also criticized some aspect of the Chinese foreign policy, especially its support to the NATO, but added that "there is

⁸⁹⁹ The conflict between the PCI and CPSU regarding Afghanistan was one of the decisive moments in the history of their relations. It became the definitive point of rupture, as it led to the end of the Soviet financing of the PCI. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 291-292; S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 115-118.

⁹⁰⁰ The Soviet intervention Afghanistan led the United States to strongly respond to Moscow, drastically severing ties between the two states. After years of détente and complex relations between the two superpowers, this event imposed a return of pure bipolar relations, understood in Washington as a fight between good and evil. N. Mitchell, "The Cold War and Jimmy Carter", in: *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 83-86.

⁹⁰¹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-606.

something true” in the Chinese thesis that a dying imperialism is less dangerous than the one that is expanding.⁹⁰²

Bufalini came to Yugoslavia once more, on March 20th 1980, in a time when the Yugoslavs were the only significant allies of the PCI.⁹⁰³ He firstly met with Grličkov, and at the beginning of the meeting expressed the compassion of the Italian nation with Tito. He also expressed the gratitude of his party for the fact that Longo was awarded with the Yugoslav Order of the People’s Hero medal. However, the main aim of the visit was to inform the Yugoslavs on the situation regarding the European communist conference. Four days earlier, the PCI was visited by a delegation of the PUWP and PCF officials, who insisted on holding the conference. In order to persuade the PCI, they said that it would only be focused on the disarmament, and gave them a draft of the short appeal on disarmament, which would be issued at the end of the conference.⁹⁰⁴ They explicitly stated that other issues, especially the controversial ones, would not be posed. Despite their insistence, Berlinguer opposed to the idea on several grounds, but primarily by emphasizing that this would only be a propaganda move and hamper the détente. In his view, in order to achieve concrete results in disarmament, the communists had to cooperate with other forces, and those forces would be alienated by a conference of this type. Although Berlinguer had not explicitly stated that the PCI will not participate, Pajetta did it the next day. However, Bufalini added, the party’s Directorate had not yet adopted a formal stance, and some in the party think that it would be better to go and voice out the critiques – regarding Afghanistan and the principles of independence and sovereignty. Hence, they wanted to know what were the LCY’s and PCE’s views on the issue.⁹⁰⁵

Before corroborating the Yugoslav position, Grličkov wanted to have a definitive information was the PCI participating at the conference or not, and Bufalini responded that, although the party’s Directorate had not yet discussed the issue, it is certain that they will not participate. Grličkov then responded that, although the same PUWP-PCF delegation was going to come to Belgrade, the LCY remains firm in its decision not to participate at the conference. In fact, this decision was already made by the party, and Tito’s signature was the only thing missing.

⁹⁰² AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-606.

⁹⁰³ S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 118.

⁹⁰⁴ Bufalini gave a copy of it to the Yugoslavs, in confidence. Although admitting that there were some interesting ideas in it, he underlined that the biggest problem of the document were the things that were evaded (i.e. the armament of the Warsaw Pact countries). AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-608.

⁹⁰⁵ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-607.

Hence, Doronjski, who was the leading the party and the state due to Tito's illness,⁹⁰⁶ will sign it. Grlickov underlined several reasons why the Yugoslavs were determined not to participate. Firstly, the international situation was becoming worse – the USSR was still present in Afghanistan and the competition of the blocs was stronger. Secondly, they saw the conference as an attempt of the Warsaw pact countries to use the European communist parties. In this regard, they fully agreed with Berlinguer's rationale that the disarmament must be fought for in wide alliances with other progressive forces, not by a sectarian closing within the communist movement. And finally, the Yugoslavs emphasized that they do not want to participate, as their presence at the conference in Paris would endanger the Yugoslav independence and international position, isolating it from the progressive forces.⁹⁰⁷

Eventually, the PCI and the LCY had not participated at the conference,⁹⁰⁸ striking another blow to the Soviet hegemony in the communist movement. However, the strength of their subversive alliance was fading away with Tito's death, as it was the case with the international prestige and impact of Yugoslavia. Berlinguer, Pajetta and Bufalini attended the funeral,⁹⁰⁹ with over a hundred of the most influential politicians in the world, paying their respects to the man who not only symbolized Yugoslavia, but became the sole factor keeping together his party and his state.

The impact he had left on the PCI and particularly on Berlinguer is best summed up a TV interview Enrico Berlinguer gave in 1983:

“Minoli: Which living Italian politician you respect the most?

Berlinguer: Pertini.

Minoli: And which living international politician?

⁹⁰⁶ During that day, Bufalini also had a short conversation with Doronjski, in which the same topics and stances from the conversation with Grlićkov were repeated.

⁹⁰⁷ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-607.

⁹⁰⁸ As the Spanish, British, Swedish and Romanian parties. M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 434.

⁹⁰⁹ AJ, 507/IX – 48/I-609. In his memoirs, Pajetta gave an emotional depiction of that day: “I saw Tito only a few times for brief discussions on the sidelines of a congress of the League of Communists and during the conference of the European communist parties held in Berlin. But the truest encounter with him I experienced on the day of his funeral: one of the most emotional moments in my life of an internationalist militant. Night and day, the huge crowd was waiting to see his coffin. Delegations arrived from all around the world. I remember the parading of the heroic First Proletarian Brigade, at the head of the procession with its red flag and its ribbon in the colors of Yugoslavia. Together with the greatest world statesmen there were the communists, the socialists, liberation movements from all around the world. I remember the roar of machineguns used by the working-class militia to fire salvo performing the last salute: the kings and emirs were standing up, as were Mrs. Thatcher and Brezhnev, the Chinese representative, heads of all states, ministers and generals from all armies. They were all standing up, listening to *The Internationale*.” G. Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest Praga Varsavia*, 49.

Berlinguer: It's hard to say. If you had asked me few years ago, I would have said Tito; and some years before that, I would have said Ho Chi Minh. Nowadays I don't feel particular admiration for any politician, although I do respect many of them: Kadar, for instance."⁹¹⁰

⁹¹⁰ G. Fiori, *Vita di Enrico Berlinguer*, Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari 2014 (ebook), 283.

Conclusion

Initiated by the October revolution and ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the relations between Yugoslav and Italian communists were a rich historical phenomenon. These relations reflected the crucial global topics of the “short 20th century” – the revolutionary impulses of the interwar period, World War II and antifascism, the Cold War and the demise of communism. Still, the global circumstances and processes were not the only factors defining this collaboration, but also the national contexts of Yugoslavia and Italy. Despite sharing the universalist ideology of Marxism, the LCY and the PCI were deeply rooted in their local realities. That is best seen in the way how Yugoslav-Italian interstate relations (primarily the war between these two countries, diplomatic dispute over Trieste, and the post-1968 rapprochement between Rome and Belgrade) deeply affected the collaboration of the two communist parties.

Having this in mind, the relations between the LCY and the PCI could have not been stable and linear. Hence, they were ambiguous. On one hand, it was a history of contacts, similarities, shared ideology, even friendship and alliance. But, at the same time, misunderstandings, opposing views or profound differences, conflicts and excommunications were also, sometimes even dominantly, features of the relations between Yugoslav and Italian comrades.

Such ambiguity and a lack of stability were particularly characteristic for the relations between the two parties before the sixties. The interparty relations were initiated by Togliatti's tutorship at the congress of the CPY in 1928, in Dresden. There, in the name of the Comintern, the Italian communist leader decided on the faith of the Yugoslav party – he resolved the factional struggles, imposed ideological solutions, named officials, indicated to the “immature” Yugoslav revolutionaries what was the “right path”. The wartime followed, and from Spain to WWII the two parties were united in a fraternal and devoted struggle against fascism. Within that brotherhood, during WWII, a seed of vanity emerged, as the Yugoslavs, hitherto students, wanted to become the new tutors. Struggle for power, influence and prestige were dominant features of that emerging conflict between the Yugoslav and Italian communists, but they were not crucial. More than anything else, the ideological differences separated the parties.

On one side stood Togliatti, a man who had an astounding carrier in the Comintern, assuming the highest positions within the organization. This experience led him, in addition to his revolutionary zeal, to develop a political wisdom, a complex understanding of geopolitics and of

the international position and national political tradition of Italy. Hence he emerged as a moderate, in a communist sense, and patient politician, burdened by the contradiction between his wish for a revolution and understanding of the factors which prevented it. On the other side stood Tito, a man who was very different, almost opposite, to the *realpolitik* foreign policy artist he became in the fifties. Unlike Togliatti, he did not rise to the top of the Comintern or other centers of powers, thus incompetent in understanding let alone conducting global politics. The only experience he had was one of jail, struggle and war. And, from those traumatic years he emerged victorious. The victory in the war (against the democratic and fascist forces in the country and against the foreign occupiers) fomented Tito's irrational hope that everything was now possible and that, after the successful revolution in Yugoslavia, the global revolution was within reach. Nothing sums up this sentiment better than a chant of the Yugoslav partisans from that time: "Comrade Tito deserved the entire Balkans, the entire Balkans and a part of Europe!"

With such different experiences, despite being fervent communists, Tito and Togliatti had to have different views, which were bound to lead them towards confrontation and conflict. In that regard Trieste was only the tip of the iceberg, the strongest point of the conflict which was, in fact, based on broader differences. As Silvio Pons put it, Tito and Togliatti were the most prominent representatives of two very different and conflicting currents within the international communist movement. Togliatti was part of the "right wing" of the movement, which wanted a continuation of the wartime alliance with the West. He adhered to those views due to his *realpolitik* outlook on the international arena, deriving from the Comintern years, but also due to his recent experiences in Italy. He understood that the only chance for revolution in the country was the continued cooperation and peace between the USSR and the West. In line with his irrational radicalism in the aftermath of the war, Tito was in the "left wing" of the movement, which wanted to continue with the territorial expansion of communism and immediately clash with capitalism.

Moscow exacerbated these differences, as the Soviets themselves were unsure which of the two directions should be followed. They "floated" between the two ideas, sometimes supporting Tito in his aspirations and reproaching Togliatti for his reluctance to help the radical Yugoslav comrades, and other times limiting Tito and denying him support for his expansionism in Trieste, Albania and Greece. 1948 was the crucial year in which Moscow had finally opted for the *realpolitik* of the right wing. The Yugoslav principles were irreconcilable with this choice, hence the Yugoslav party was forced to either adjust or take the path of a pariah. Not willing to renounce

its autonomy, the CPY chose an imminent clash with the global communist movement. The Italian communists joined the conflict with Yugoslavia, but not as an unwilling aide of the Soviet hegemony, as was sometimes the case. This time, they were convinced supporters of Moscow, opposing to the “immature” radicalism of the Yugoslav comrades. Due to that autochthonous anti-Yugoslav sentiment, Moscow could have not found a better and more persuasive propagator of the conflict with Tito than Togliatti, who therefore played a big role in the 1948 schism.

Hence, a full and frontal confrontation between the Yugoslav and Italian communists was imminent. The level of the conflict included harsh verbal attacks, but also the most severe acts a communist party can do to another communist party – support to the factional struggles and divisions within it, as Yugoslavia did with Magnani and Cucchi, even financially aiding their defection. It seemed that the hostility between the two parties had reached a point of no return. However, despite the bitterness of the venomous conflict, certain factors and nuances appeared, which were indications of the closer relations that came in the following decades. Namely, the Yugoslavs had noticed that the PCI treated them differently than other communist parties. Only the PCI refrained from the most brutal and vulgar accusations and kept the polemic, despite the hostility, in the realm of political and ideological argumentation. This indicates that for the PCI, unlike Moscow and other parties, the Yugoslav radicalism, rather than autonomy, was the main problem. It would be exaggerated to say that the PCI had understood and supported the CPY’s aspiration of autonomy at that time, but certain nuances indicate that that this was not the core issue for the Italian communists. These nuances grew into something after Nikita Khrushchev “gave the green light” to renew relations with the Yugoslav party, in 1955.

Undeniably, the PCI started to collaborate with the Yugoslavs only after the Soviet permission, and three years later, in 1958, stopped doing so on Soviet request. However, when Moscow did propagate and allow the relations with Belgrade, the PCI demonstrated a different stance towards Yugoslavia, showing that at that point there were many important similarities between the two parties. This was most evident in the way how the Belgrade and Moscow declarations, signed between the two states and parties, inspired Togliatti to launch his idea of polycentrism. Although ended by Kremlin, the relations between the Yugoslav and Italian communists from 1955 to 1958 showed that much had changed since 1948, none more so than the Yugoslav comrades. A new Tito had emerged in the meantime, completely opposite to the one that had marched towards Trieste, aiming at Austria. “Cast into the fire” of the international arena in

1948, Tito emerged as a master of *realpolitik*. Leading up to 1956, he shifted towards Togliatti's views. Paradoxically, Tito was ostracized for his ultra-leftism, but now emerged as a staunch supporter of the principles of the "right wing" of the communist movement. In a way, he became a stronger and more successful defender of those views than Togliatti had ever been. Tito was not only promoting a collaboration with the capitalist West in order of achieving peace and gradual progress of socialist ideas, like Togliatti, but practically demonstrated how that and much more could be done. While Togliatti was unsuccessful in directing Italy towards socialism, Tito was already making certain progress in directing various Third World countries away from capitalism and towards the Marxist principles.

This new autonomous and moderate Tito was interesting to Togliatti. Hence, their collaboration in 1956 strongly indicated the potential for an alliance, eventually forged in 1964. As they became more similar than ever, the potential for their collaboration expanded, and they needed each other. For Tito, despite all the conflicts with the USSR and international alliances made with others, Togliatti was an important potential ally in achieving something that was his true ideological desire. Namely, Tito wanted to reform the international communism, and "come back" to the movement on his own terms, deeming that it belonged to Yugoslavia as much as to the USSR. On the other hand, Togliatti also needed Tito in order to reform the movement on the basis of one core idea – autonomy, the right of every communist party to, by itself and without Moscow's interference, freely decide on its ideological path.

The turbulent decades of parallel conflict and collaboration were followed by the early sixties, which proved to be a watershed in the relations between the LCY and the PCI. From 1962 onward, the development of the relations was constant, based on the similarities in crucial views and in the mutual need for cooperation. The history of the relations between the Yugoslav and Italian communist since the early sixties is mostly one of mutual endeavors to reform communism and impose party autonomy as the most important principle of the international communist movement. However, this constant improvement of the relations was neither unambiguous nor linear. During the sixties and the seventies, misunderstandings, differences, distrust and conflicts were also present, but were overshadowed by the productive and mutual struggle for autonomy. The struggle to reform communism was a contradiction in itself, like every reformism. It was burdened by the wish not to become social democrats, despite the readiness to confront the Soviets. Although several scholars have somewhat convincingly argued that, in fact, both parties were

social democratic in various aspects (particularly for the PCI's internal policy), they had a strong urge, derived from the basis of their political identity and self-understanding, not to renounce the communist label. Greater autonomy the LCY enjoyed did not mean that only the PCI was hesitant to break ties with Moscow. In a way, the two parties were Soviet "prodigal" sons and remain inextricably linked even when dissenting. That was the main, albeit ambivalent, direction of the development of LCY-PCI relations since 1962.

The slow beginnings of the interparty collaboration in 1962 and 1963 were determined by Togliatti's caution not to, after previous negative experiences, go too far before a full and stable Yugoslav-Soviet rapprochement. However, both Tito and Togliatti soon realized that they shared mutual interest. The Yugoslav leader called Togliatti to come to Belgrade, once again offering help in his struggle for autonomy. Unlike the 1956 meeting, Tito was now focused more on China and the Third World, only implicitly and indirectly questioning Soviet hegemony. Togliatti accepted the call, in order to strengthen its position and autonomy, endangered by the isolation in which the PCI found itself at that time. Furthermore, Belgrade was also important as a bridge towards the Third World, after the recently held first conference of the non-aligned countries. In January 1964 the two men had their last encounter which cemented the interparty relations for decades to come. By focusing mostly about the Global South and China, and talking little about Moscow, Tito, in fact, encouraged the changes in the final years of Togliatti's life. Many collaborators of the general secretary of the PCI later confirmed that this meeting had greatly impacted on the famous *Memoriale di Yalta*, which was essentially a challenge to Soviet hegemony in the communist movement, a promotion of autonomy of the parties and of different roads to socialism as the best way of achieving global dominance of socialism. Particularly important was Tito's advice to cast away the dogmatic schemes and creatively approach the Third World in order to spread socialism in it. Hence, their mutual struggle was not a mere egoistic wish to strengthen their autonomy, but a mutually shared belief that autonomy was a prerequisite for the global cause of spreading socialism.

Based on such firm foundations, the collaboration of the two parties moved forward from 1964. That road was not always linear, as the subsequent years showed. Shaken by the death of its legendary leader, the PCI struggled to find stability and direction. In such circumstances, maintaining a dissident alliance with Belgrade and challenging Moscow was not possible, but the interparty collaboration remained dynamic, opening up room for improvement. The new important

step forward came in late 1966. As Longo and the party became stronger, they returned to the Memoriale and fought for its principles, viewing Yugoslavia as an important partner. Although the PCI was closer to Moscow at that time, in 1967 it tried to lure back the Yugoslavs into the movement, but not in order to accept Soviet hegemony. Longo's idea was that of reforming the movement together, in a progressive alliance at the European communist conference in Czechoslovakia. He tried hard and failed, as the Yugoslavs rejected this idea and choose not to participate. However, Longo did not give up, and continued to develop collaboration with the Yugoslavs, despite that failure. At that time, he and many other PCI officials expressed in their private conversations in Belgrade that Yugoslavia gave them hope, in a time of disillusionment with the state of socialism in other Eastern European countries. In Yugoslavia they saw openness, more democracy, self-criticism, creativity – which all came as a sight for sore eyes compared to the problems of the socialist bloc, perceived as painfully distant from the communist ideals.

In such context, came the Prague Spring and the subsequent Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. It brought the LCY and the PCI more together than ever – both acted against the Soviet decision to intervene strongly. That did not come by chance, but as a result of both parties' intense contacts with the reformist Czechoslovak comrades. Both parties, autonomously, came to the conclusion that the attack on Prague was an attack on themselves, and an attack on communist reformism. The Czechoslovaks were fully aware of that also, and this is why they plead for joint help from Tito and Longo. Hence, the Yugoslav and Italian party collaborated and became critical of Moscow in their conversations more than ever. They entertain even the possibility of collaboration with China, despite their previous support of Moscow in its conflict with Beijing.

However, such close collaboration did not prove long lasting. It had some initial results as Yugoslavia gave direct financial aid to the PCI, for the first time since 1948. Both parties' incapability to fully distance from Moscow and the international communist movement, led to a deterioration of the relation. Firstly, the Yugoslavs were disappointed in the Italian comrades as they silently backed off from challenging Moscow, and went back to having closer relations with the CPSU, distancing themselves from Belgrade. As it was noted in a Yugoslav report, the PCI got closer to Belgrade only when it moves away from the USSR, and vice versa. In the early seventies, the process went in the opposite direction. The Italian communists firstly became disappointed with the USSR, due to problems caused by the democratic deficit in the Eastern Bloc, and then with Yugoslavia, which got closer to Moscow as it was plagued by internal national crisis. Many

autonomists within the PCI were particularly concerned with such a turn of events, fearing that if the Yugoslav autonomy from Moscow failed, the autonomist tendencies within the Italian party would have less chances of surviving and strengthening.

During 1974, the relations went back on track. Yugoslavia was stronger, after pacifying the crisis. The PCI got stronger by devising the *compromesso storico*, which gave a clear direction and, with all its flaws and contradictions, was more coherent than any earlier PCI idea. The initiative for a European conference of communist parties emerged, and both the Yugoslav and Italian communists were willing and ready to accept this challenge and promote their ideals. The PCI, as always, wanted to seize the opportunity to reform the movement. The LCY, unlike previous decades, succumbed to PCI's pleas to participate and act in a reformist alliance. The reasons for Belgrade's decision were numerous: strengthening the *détente* and the Yugoslav newly found interest for Europe being the principle ones, but also the fact that Yugoslavia became increasingly dependent on Moscow. Hence, both parties needed the reform of the movement and relied on each other in order to achieve it. On such basis, there was an efficient LCY-PCI collaboration in the preparation of the conference. They were frustrated by the strong resistance of other parties, but continued to push relentlessly for obtaining a ratification of their mutually shared principles.

On the road to the Berlin conference, Berlinguer visited Belgrade in March of 1975, symbolically demonstrating the privileged status of the LCY. The visit turned out to be more than successful. Several factors brought Berlinguer and Tito together, making their alliance not coincidental. More than anything, their shared view of the key issue of the movement at that time – the communist party of Portugal, demonstrated the closeness. While the entire movement supported the radicalism of the Portuguese communists, the moderate Tito and Berlinguer, opted towards revolutionary *realpolitik*, and branded Cunhal's actions as pointless mistakes, which highlighted his lack of realistic perceptions and adventurism. Hence, Tito and Berlinguer stood out within the movement, characterized by their reluctance to embrace irresponsible calls for arms and understanding of the limits posed by the bloc division of the world, which prevented "easy" revolutions in Western Europe. Hence, they strongly grew closer to each other, and the 1975 visit became comparable to the one made by Togliatti in 1964. The success of the meeting between Berlinguer and Tito became an incentive for stronger LCY-PCI collaboration in preparations for the Berlin conference. The two parties defended their principles even stronger than before, and obtained a big success in the East German capital in the summer of 1976. It seemed that the

international communist movement was changing, and that independence and autonomy of the parties were finally and fully accepted.

The illusion of victory faded away swiftly. After accepting the dissent in Berlin, turning a blind eye to certain LCY and PCI principles, Moscow prepared its counteroffensive. In order to re-establish their hegemony, the Soviets attacked Eurocommunism. The PCI accepted the challenge and stood up for itself joined by Spanish and French comrades. In order to widen the front of defense, Berlinguer once more came to Yugoslavia, in late 1977, seeking Tito's support. The Yugoslav president had not disappointed him, not only by the support in that meeting, but also defending Eurocommunism some months earlier in conversation with Brezhnev in Moscow. Moreover, during his recent trip to China Tito opened up a door in Beijing for the PCI. In Tito's words, China seemed different than in the time of Mao. Both he and Berlinguer hoped that it could be a new foreign policy pillar for them and a productive member of the international community, which could help in limiting the Soviet impact. However, although the support was unhesitant, Tito had some critical remarks for Berlinguer. He disagreed with the term Eurocommunism but also with its broader ideological implications, as he opposed forming of a new regional center and canonizing particular models of communism, but also not very inspired by the principle of political pluralism, although he fully understood why the Western communist parties had to follow it. However, those mild critiques were not crucial, as was his advice to Berlinguer that in relations with Moscow the best approach was to be firm in principles but softer and more active in communication. In his final years, Tito believed in the illusion that an agreement with Moscow was possible. His decades of experience in relations with the CPSU, filled with conflicts and collaboration, led him to think that it is crucial to communicate with Moscow, convince it, and understand the "vanity" of a superpower. Tito believed that by doing so he managed to make a substantial progress with Moscow, and recommended the same approach to Berlinguer. But the future of PCI-CPSU relations was not as bright, since the PCI was a party isolated in the international communist movement with Tito and the Yugoslavs as their only true ally.

After this meeting, Tito's hopes became evidently unfounded – Moscow lost control, criticized the Sino-Yugoslav rapprochement, attacked Berlinguer more harshly. This topic dominated the final meeting between Tito and Berlinguer, in late 1978. The mutual feelings towards the USSR were bitter, and this was only an overture to upcoming chaos of Soviet interventionism. The intervention in the Horn of Africa did not concern the Yugoslav and Italian

comrades much. The pro-Soviet Vietnamese one in Cambodia triggered an alarm in Belgrade, which was always sensitive to issues of Third World and sovereignty. The PCI initially did not share the Yugoslav concerns, but joined them eventually. Prior to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the USSR and Castro attacked Yugoslavia within the Non-Aligned Movement, trying to push the movement to more aligned positions. Tito, in his final act of diplomatic excellence, wins at the Havana conference of the NAM, and the Italian communists supported Belgrade, not Moscow. The ambiguities, however, remained for a few months, as Berlinguer went to Moscow to harmonize stances regarding the Euromissile crisis. Finally, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan cleared out the situation and resolved all ambiguities. For the vast majority of the global public, and the PCI and the LCY as well, this intervention was unjustifiable, an aggression that compromised every progressive principle. Hence, the Yugoslav and Italian parties declined to participate at the European communist conference. They became pariahs, detached fully from the international communist movement and Moscow, but also from their illusions of reform communism.

The early Eighties were, in a symbolical manner, the end of many factors which determined the LCY-PCI collaboration. The international communist movement and communism itself experience the beginnings of its complete demise, Eurocommunism ended and Tito died. Just four years after the seeming victory in Berlin, the two parties became disoriented and wander through the Eighties waiting for their end. On its deathbed communism had also killed its reformism, once again demonstrating how paradoxical was the faith of its prodigal sons, the Yugoslavs and the Italians. Without Moscow and the international communist movement, which they tried to reform/undermine so passionately, their existence was impossible. In a way, they proved Khrushchev's cynical statement made in a conversation with Tito right, that Yugoslavia would not be able to play its autonomous diplomatic non-aligned game if there was no Soviet Union. The Yugoslav and Italian communists were not able to play their diplomatic game of rebellion against Moscow without the *détente*, when Moscow was isolated by the West and plagued by its imperial overstretch.

The previous pages focused on the role of Moscow, present even when it was not mentioned, and on the relation towards it in the LCY-PCI collaboration. Without any doubt, the triangle Moscow-Belgrade-Rome was the key framework of the collaboration between the Yugoslav and Italian communists, hence the crucial topic of analysis in the thesis. However, it was

not the only factor that determined the relations between the two parties, and there is a need to underline other important aspects, which are already present and depicted in detail in all of the four chapters.

The Third World, with a particular focus on the southern Mediterranean, was the most important amongst them. Having in mind the strong orientation of Belgrade towards the Global South, and the rising PCI interest to be more included in this new international political arena, it is no wonder that this topic was very frequently present and influenced on the LCY-PCI relations. In his book *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati*, Marco Galeazzi paved the way for interpreting the LCY-PCI collaboration on Third World issues, defining it as a Yugoslav impact on the slow but continuous path of the PCI in emancipating its Third World policies from Moscow. This thesis was aimed at, by use of the abundant Yugoslav documentation inaccessible to Galeazzi, expanding on his interpretation and showing how Yugoslavia clearly, explicitly and intentionally aimed at emancipating the PCI from Moscow on this issue. Since the early sixties, the Yugoslav aim was not only to emancipate the Italian comrades from Soviet interests, but also from Soviet dogmatic preconceptions and views on these non-European realities. Yugoslavia also advocated for a more flexible approach to building socialism in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In a way, the Yugoslav approach was one of cultural relativism, strongly focused on understanding cultural and political differences between Europe and other continents. Hence the key Yugoslav advice was the one Tito give to Togliatti in 1964, while advocating the support for liberation movements, and not the local communist parties, and underlining the need to approach them as equals, without any condescending illusions.

The road of the PCI towards accepting these principles was long and turbulent, plagued by the not so rare withdrawals of the Italian communists to more dogmatic positions. Galeazzi ended his research in 1975, but this thesis tried to show how, in the final years of the seventies, the process Galeazzi indicated ended successfully, with a stronger emancipation from Moscow of the PCI's Third World policies. In that sense, 1979 was the most important year, in which, as it is indicated earlier, the PCI supported the non-aligned perspective on the interventions in Cambodia and Afghanistan. But more important was the PCI's support to Yugoslavia, in its struggle for leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement against the USSR and Cuba. This proved more than anything that the Italian communists had finally aligned with the Yugoslav views and principles of non-alignment.

One of the crucial Yugoslav non-alignment principles was overcoming the bloc division, and the PCI was, in fact, by supporting Yugoslavia supporting that. Naturally, it would be a severe overstatement to imply that the Yugoslav influence was crucial in the PCI's assuming of this principle. The Chilean socialist experience and the fall of Allende were most important in that regard, and served as an example which made Berlinguer draw the lesson of the need to, contradictorily, overcome the blocs but without endangering the global stability. Thus the PCI belatedly evolved towards positions similar to Belgrade's *realpolitik*, but in an autochthonous manner. However, Yugoslavia's role in this evolution of the PCI principles was not insignificant. Although it did not influence it in the most direct manner, Belgrade was at least a helping pillar and support to it, as an ally and one of the rare communist parties that had similar views. The two parties also shared a principal strategic error in their devotion to the overcoming of the blocs – their most intimate belief was that, despite all the differences, critiques and conflicts, the Eastern bloc was less detrimental to the planet than its Western counterpart. Like in the case of the resistance to Soviet hegemony that was depicted earlier, until their more definitive separation in 1980, in their struggle for the overcoming of the blocs the LCY and the PCI were still the sons, even though prodigal, of the October revolution.

The last international topic that deserves to be summarized in this conclusion is Europe and the détente. With the détente European affairs appear as an important factor of the interparty collaboration in the seventies. Before further elaboration of this topic, it is crucial to underline that, as Silvio Pons noticed, Yugoslavia was not the ideal European partner for the PCI, and, from the Italian perspective, this was one of the weak points of the LCY-PCI alliance. In that sense, PCI was more important to Yugoslavia, than vice versa. Prior to the seventies, Belgrade was not so interested in Europe, orientating its foreign policy primarily towards Asia and Africa. This was based on an assessment that the political situation in Europe was “frozen”, without any significant dynamism or important changes in the international relations within the continent. With the détente, the situation substantially changed, and Yugoslavia reactivated its European foreign policy from 1970. On the other side, the PCI also saw big opportunities in the CSCE process and tried to help in it. Both parties saw this new situation as an opportunity to strengthen stability, but also as a chance to impose smaller actors like themselves, their autonomy and influence.

For the Yugoslavs, the détente was crucial, as a possible guarantee of the endangered stability and sovereignty of their country. The Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and the

subsequent internal crisis in Yugoslavia had shook the foundations of Tito's regime. The Yugoslav leaders feared a Soviet intervention in Yugoslavia and of the American tacit support to it, like in the Czechoslovak case. Hence, for Tito the détente was a process in which Yugoslavia should be actively involved, and strengthen its undermined position and the legitimacy of his power through it. For the PCI, the détente was of no lesser significance. As Silvio Pons underlined, the Eurocommunist strategy of the Italian party was a product of the détente. Eurocommunism emerged in the dialogue between the blocs, and the relaxation of the international relations was the only possible scenario which enabled it to exist. It is no wonder that it also died with the end of the détente.

As both parties were inextricably linked to it, they fully and mutually supported the détente. It was a catalyst for LCY-PCI collaboration, enabling them to assume a stronger position against the Soviet hegemony. The key event in that sense was the Berlin conference. Without the détente, it would be very unlikely that Belgrade would change its stance after several decades and participate in a multilateral communist meeting. This turn of events indicates a crucial parallel with the 1967 European communist conference, an example of how the PCI became more important for Yugoslavia. In 1967, the PCI needed the LCY in order of reforming the European communist movement, but the Yugoslavs declined. In the mid-seventies, the Yugoslavs needed them as well. As the Yugoslavs were reluctant to participate, the Italian comrades were the only ones who could help in making this participation more fruitful. As the détente ended in late seventies, both the Yugoslav and Italian communists renounce the illusions of reforming communism.

Besides the previously described international factors which determined the interparty collaboration, certain bilateral issues were also influential, thus worthy of an analytical summary. In the beginning of this summary and in the first chapter much is said regarding the interstate Yugoslav-Italian relations, particularly about the Trieste issue, and their impact on the LCY-PCI collaboration. In the period after 1962, this continued to be an important aspect. Initially, in the sixties, Belgrade prioritized its relations with the government in Rome, and particularly with the PSI, over the collaboration with the PCI. The socialists were Belgrade's primary partner in Italy at that time, and they were financed more constantly and earlier than the PCI, who received its first financial aid in 1969. The Yugoslavs saw the center-left project as better for Italy and better for the Yugoslav interests than a possible PCI alternative.

Naturally, the dominant aspect of Yugoslav-Italian problems which influenced the LCY-PCI collaboration was the unresolved issue of the interstate border. As serious negotiations began in the late sixties, the Yugoslavs had constantly asked their Italian comrades to publicly and strongly support an agreement which would be a ratification of the existing state of the de facto border, an unpopular solution in Italy. The Yugoslav insistence was caused by its frustrations, particularly of the Slovene leaders, with the slowness of the negotiation process. What particularly caused this frustration was the fact that the relations with Italy were not new, but very problematic for Yugoslavia since its founding in 1918. Tito's socialist Yugoslavia inherited this problem from the democratic monarchy, which failed to resolve it in its two decades of its existence. For the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Italy was the crucial geopolitical problem and source of instability, and despite his efforts, King Aleksandar failed in obtaining an agreement with Mussolini. The problems of the socialist Yugoslavia with Italy were not as complex as the ones of the kingdom, but, mainly due to Tito's radicalism in the late forties, the issue of the frontier remained open and troubling. Hence it was a Yugoslav priority, and Belgrade expected a strong contribution of the fraternal PCI in resolving it.

Despite the Yugoslav insistence, the PCI had a different stance on the usefulness of an active campaign on this issue. This PCI stance was in fact wiser and rational, something the Yugoslavs failed to understand in their preoccupation with the problem. The Italian communists had two prevailing arguments for deciding not to be more publicly engaged. Firstly, they had already been constantly expressing their unequivocal support to the ratification of the de-facto border line. Secondly, and more importantly, the PCI predicted that, if it becomes more publicly involved, it would only provoke a stronger reaction of the right, thus hampering the negotiations and making things more difficult for the DC, the party that had to take responsibility and resolve the issue. But the PCI had not only helped the agreement with its cautiousness, but also by a series of concrete contributions. Firstly, as a party that represented almost a quarter of the Italians, with its constant support to the agreement the PCI helped in legitimizing and promoting this solution to the Italian public. Secondly, the PCI was the party that did most for the Slovene minority in Italy, and had the support of the majority of Slovenes, despite the fact that Belgrade initially preferred the PSI, and sometimes even the PSDI. However, the PCI's strategy proved itself useful, especially during the tensions between Belgrade and Rome in 1974. By its clear support to the agreement, and its right assessment to evade an exacerbation of the public polemic, the PCI gave an important

contribution to the process which enabled the main actors, particularly the DC, to finally resolve the issue in 1975.

Aside from the frontier issue, Belgrade was constantly interested in the Italian political life, and had partnership with various parties. Unlike the afore mentioned favoring of the PSI and of the center-left governments in the sixties, in the seventies the PCI became the primary Yugoslav partner in Italy. With the emergence of the crisis in Italy, and of Berlinguer's *compromesso storico*, the Yugoslavs shifted their positions towards a full support of the PCI, hoping for its entrance in the Italian government. The PCI was then seen by Belgrade as a mature and responsible party which understood and respected the complicated national conditions. Its propositions and contributions to the Italian political life were assessed not just as very positive, but as the only chance for resolving the rising crisis in the country, the prerequisite of stability. And stability and sovereignty of Italy were seen as a Yugoslav national interest. Basing their views on such grounds, the Yugoslavs understood the attacks on the PCI as attacks on Italian sovereignty as a whole. In the Yugoslav view, foreign actors, both the United States and the Soviet Union, were the crucial obstacle in the PCI's way towards governing. Similar was the perception of terrorism, as a tool of foreign interest that was not just used to prevent the PCI from leaving the opposition, but also in order to furtherly undermine the Italian stability and democracy.

Beside all the main topics and frameworks of collaboration between the LCY and the PCI during the sixties and the seventies, in which agreements and closeness prevailed, there was one final aspect of bilateral collaboration that will be depicted here, and in which the differences between the two parties were evident and had not been changed by fruitful cooperation. Namely, the two parties had opposing views on economic issues and solutions for Yugoslavia and Italy. Although the Yugoslav system was essentially centralized, the proclaimed values and aims of it was to construct an economy that would be socialist, but market oriented and decentralized. Self-management was the key idea of that economic direction, emphasizing the need for a democratic and free impact of the working class in economy, without an excessive intervention of the state. Although this was, essentially, a propagandistic idea, not even nearly achieved in practice and an expensive failure, it was very popular among many leftists in the world, as an illusion of a possible third economic way, and strengthened the Yugoslav prestige. Hence, despite its inefficiency, it became an obsession for the Yugoslav communists.

On the other side, the PCI's economic vision was very similar to the ones of the entire West European left, and it saw in the centralized state intervention the only remedy for the economic problems. Hence the Yugoslav decentralization and self-management were not attractive for the Italian communists, and they criticized it on numerous occasions – for instance, Togliatti explicitly showed his lack of interest for self-management in 1964. Besides the support for centralism in the economic sphere, the Italian communists also, on several occasions, demonstrated their support for political centralism – advocating for a stronger role of the LCY in governing of the country, or by sympathy for Ranković expressed in an internal report. As the Yugoslavs fetishized self-management, they were frustrated by the lack of interest for it on the part of the Italian comrades. Hence, even in the moment of the strongest alliance, in late seventies, Yugoslav officials expressed their profound disappointment in the fact that the PCI is not interested in the key idea of the Yugoslav system, unlike the PSI.

After summarizing the various aspects of the LCY-PCI relations in the sixties and the seventies, its results appear as complex and ambiguous. In the most important field, which was crucial in forging the alliance between the two parties, the reform of the international communist movement, the final result was almost a complete failure. With their mutual activity, the two parties had broadened their autonomy and even achieved some seemingly substantial results during the mid-seventies. But, they had failed in significantly reforming and rejuvenating communism, thus being more of helpless observers of its demise than its saviors. In other aspects of collaboration, like the Third World, Europe and Yugoslav-Italian relations, failures were more present than successes. In the Third World, mostly by the Yugoslavs, certain progress was made, but the principal aim of creating alternatives for the post-colonial societies was not achieved. Despite their inclinations towards the principles of the LCY and the PCI, the Third World countries were faced with great difficulties and forced by the circumstances to adhere to one of the blocs, which gave them efficient protection and support. In Western Europe the situation was similar. Both parties, but particularly the PCI, were eager to collaborate with the non-communist left and open new “left horizons” for Europe. The socialist and social-democrats occasionally cooperated, even closely, with Berlinguer and Tito, but never seriously endangered their loyalty to the capitalist West by creating an alliance with the Italian and/or Yugoslav communists. Regarding the Yugoslav-Italian relations, the situation seems more positive for the two parties – through their collaboration they had managed to contribute to the border agreement. However, the DC was crucial in this regard,

and the PCI had not succeeded in entering the government, which was a Yugoslav wish. Hence, even in this area there were failures or only partial success.

However, this first and negative impression neglects several important factors. Most importantly, that the Yugoslav and Italian communist parties were two actors from the periphery who managed to overcome the structural limitations of their positions, imposed by the seemingly monolithic bloc division of the world during the Cold War. There are several reasons for defining Yugoslavia as a peripheral actor. It was a small country, of limited demographic and economic power, situated in Southeastern Europe, a space that was for centuries a passive battleground of the great powers. Besides that, since 1948 the Yugoslav party was clearly on the periphery of the communist movement. The PCI was also on the periphery of the movement, as a party that had not conducted a revolution. But the PCI also appears to be on the periphery in a broader global context – it was an oppositional party, far from government due to it being a communist party in a country firmly positioned within the Western capitalist alliance, and, finally, as it was financially dependent on Moscow.

Despite being on the periphery, the LCY and PCI in these two decades, both by themselves and mutually, tackled the crucial global issues and challenge the superpowers. Actively (sometimes in conflict) they had interacted with Moscow, Washington, the détente and the Third World. Although their palpable achievements were not substantial, both parties contributed significantly to the dialogue and stability in Europe and in the Third World, both doing so in a responsible and rational manner, within the framework of Marxism. Not being as dogmatic as the other communist party, the LCY and PCI had built contacts and understanding between diverse peoples and ideological movements, focusing on peace and stability. The case of Portugal in the mid-seventies best depicts this approach, as well as the LCY-PCI contribution to the resolving of the Yugoslav-Italian frontier issue. And the two parties contributed to stability and peace in a manner that was disproportionate to their actual strength.

Having all this in mind, it can be concluded that with their approach that was rational, responsible and based on *realpolitik*, the LCY and the PCI had a productive collaboration, which went beyond a bilateral framework, and gave broader contributions. Eventually, these two parties shared the destiny of their ideology, and vanished with the Berlin wall. Still, despite being limited by their communist identity, the collaboration of the two parties had two significant achievements. Firstly, it contributed to stability and peace in Europe and the world, during the decades marked

by bipolarity and its overt threat of war. And, secondly and finally, the Yugoslav and Italian communist parties and their mutual collaboration were, despite having only partial success in this direction, the strongest representatives of an illusionary, but inspiring to many, hope that a different communism is possible.

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