

Explaining Yugoslavia's Turn to Non-Alignment

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Relentless in the ideology of Josip Tito's Communists was the pursuit of independence. Through periods of foreign dependence it would become more muted, but remained the driving force of their actions – even to the exclusion of more dominant, threatening powers. Whatever naiveties they held about the possibilities for independence in a bipolar world were blown away upon the expulsion from the Soviet camp that drove them into neutrality. That their independence endured, even becoming the defining feature of their accomplishments, is testament to the talent of their statesmen, the irrepressible need to survive, and their intense desire to effect greater change. Their instinct for survival had dictated their turn to neutralism, but it was their ideology – unparalleled in its experience of global affairs – that turned them to nonalignment.

The turn to 'neutralism'

Throughout the Second World War, Yugoslavia underwent an unequivocal strategic rebalance, predicated by the ideology of its conquerors. In 1945 this was not unusual; in fact, several powers that had been closely associated with the Western Allies had, following the war, switched to the Soviet side. The most important detail of Yugoslavia's switch from an Allied Kingdom to a Socialist Federal Republic was that unlike Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and others, Tito's partisans had liberated Yugoslavia with minimal help from the Soviet Red Army, and as such considered their right "to follow a more independent socialist course" as earned (Fursenko and Naftali, 2006, p.22). Immediately following the conclusion of the war, Tito's communists embarked on a radical program of Stalinist reforms; rapid industrialisation mandated a near doubling of investment in industry and, with that, the nationalisation of 80 percent of what little had survived the war (Heuser, 1989, p.215; Wilson, 1979, p.45). The American Foreign Office would conclude in 1948 that Yugoslavia was "the undoubted prize pupil of all the Eastern European states within the Soviet orbit – the most monolithic" (Heuser, 1989, p.19). Their greatest difficulty, however, lay in getting the Soviets to notice; indicative of their relationship was Milovan Djilas's visit to the Pan-Slavic Committee in Moscow. A "naked instrument of the Soviet Government," Djilas was disturbed "by its impotence and superficiality, and above all by the fact that it could not open the way for me to the Soviet Government" – it was clear from here onwards that their relationship would be distinctly one-sided (Djilas, 1962, p.28).

While relations between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies enjoyed what Djilas called their "wartime honeymoon," Yugoslavia's claims to Austrian Carinthia and the Italian city of Trieste – claims opposed by Britain and the United States – met with vacillating Soviet support, and the order from Moscow to evacuate Yugoslav forces from Austria when no similar demand was made of their supposed enemies (Djilas, 1962, p.96; Heuser, 1989, p.100; Wilson, 1979, p.35). Western observers concluded nonetheless that the two were one and the same, and that Yugoslav claims could *only* be "part of the expansionist strategy of the Soviet Union" (Heuser, 1989, pp.18-19). Despite these discrepancies, the Soviet Union's situation at this time was highly favourable. Until the point of British and American involvement, they had paid little attention to the Yugoslav cause during the war, but it did not cost them dearly (Djilas, 1962, p.14); they nevertheless inherited a regime that swore an unrequited love to the "homeland of socialism," and considered itself inseparable from the world Communist movement (Djilas, 1962, p.12). Though an agreement had been made between Churchill and Stalin toward "an approximately equal share of influence in Yugoslavia" after the war, "within a year the British had lost most of it" (Heuser, 1989, p.18). The Cold War lines were clearly drawn at this point, both politically and economically, for a combination of the war's destruction and the ephemeral "dream of complete industrialisation" left Yugoslavia highly dependent on trade and loans from the Soviet

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Union (Ulam, 1952, p.62).

The Realist scholar, Kenneth Waltz, wrote of the “common vulnerability” that high dependency for that which they rely on entails – a relevancy, given that in 1947 approximately 48 and 52 percent of Yugoslav imports and exports respectively were accounted for by the USSR (Waltz, 1979, p.106; Heuser, 1989, p.215). He concludes that the two most common reactions to such circumstances are “imperial thrusts to widen the scope of their control,” and “autarchic strivings toward greater self-sufficiency;” Yugoslavia’s attempt at the former had met with lacklustre support from the USSR, while the latter would become a policy of unparalleled necessity (Waltz, 1979, p.106; Wilson, 1979, pp.44-45). A catalyst to this process, the Soviet Union’s increasingly exploitative trade requirements furthered Tito’s desire for self-sufficiency (Wilson, 1979, pp.44-45). Tito’s independence can be understood for it was unlike “any other Eastern European Communist party [which] relied on the USSR’s backing in every respect, and did not have the support of an army and a police or the personal allegiance of the vast majority of the Party members” (Heuser, 1989, p.69). At a time when Stalin’s main focus was the consolidation of his recent conquests, a proud Tito who refused to allow “his security, military and economic apparatus to be penetrated by agents of the Kremlin” – “the real basis of the Soviet grievance against him” – would not go unpunished (Heuser, 1989, p.23; p.58).

As Duncan Wilson writes, the ‘Yugoslav way’ was “evolved by a political decision, mainly as the result of compelling economic circumstances” (Wilson, 1979, p.82). And indeed, the “policy of ruthless self-interest” the Soviet Union employed—“even towards its allies” – was becoming more evident in the period immediately following the war (Wilson, 1979, p.42). The ‘political decision’ Wilson refers to was prompted by Stalin’s own, for by 1948—having “grown impatient with the Yugoslav leader” – he had decided Tito must be replaced by “more ‘internationalist’ Communists,” beginning with an effective propaganda coup that saw the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije, KPJ) evicted from the Comintern (Fursenko and Naftali, 2006, p.22; Ulam, 1952, p.136). While still deeming there to be “sufficient healthy elements” within his party, ‘Titoism’ was decried a “Menshevik heresy,” dependent not on revolutionary vigour but vulgar populism – remarks that initially took Tito by surprise (Wilson, 1979, p.59; p.55). He was personally equated with the dissident Leon Trotsky, they both having “declared war on the [Communist Party of the Soviet Union],” and both having “started with accusations of the CPSU as degenerate, as suffering from the limitations inherent in the narrow nationalism of great powers” (Heuser, 1989, p.23). A claim Edvard Kardelj met with his own, that “the Soviet government cannot always be seen as the interpreter of contemporary aspirations for peace and democracy” (Kullaa, 2012, p.176). Needless to say, a denunciation that invoked the USSR’s two greatest heretics – the populist Menshevik party, and Trotsky—would not be resolved quickly. It culminated in a total embargo of trade with Yugoslavia, and it is not surprising that such a personal dispute soon escalated: in 1948 Stalin had said “I shall shake my little finger and there will be no more Tito”, a threat not lost on the latter, who later replied in similar terms, imploring Stalin to

“[s]top sending people to kill me [...] If you don’t stop sending killers, I’ll send one to Moscow, and I won’t have to send a second” (Wilson, 1979, pp.66-67; Fursenko and Naftali, 2006, p.25; Service, 2004, p.592).

Such relations were to be expected, given Stalin’s “weak grasp of reality,” as Jeremy Smith writes, according to whom “the split with Yugoslavia was a completely unnecessary consequence of Stalin’s arrogance” (Smith, 2011, p.11). The economic blockade was disastrous for Yugoslavia: in 1947 and 1948 exports to the Soviet Union had accounted for 48 and 51 percent respectively, in 1949 they had fallen to 14 percent, and to nothing whatsoever by 1950 (Heuser, 1989, p.215). Imports, upon which Yugoslavia’s industry and military depended, fell almost identically, the simultaneous drought that occurred in 1950 reducing *all* agricultural output by a minimum of 25 percent (some by as much as 50 percent) only escalating the crisis (Heuser, 1989, p.215). As devastating as the blockade might have been, its effects were temporary, while relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union would never again be amicable.

The shortages inflicted by the Soviet blockade forced Yugoslavia to exchange one dependency with another, and in 1948 Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aleš Bebler “moaned to the British Minister of State, Hector McNeil, about the economic problems of Yugoslavia, [‘any] assistance which [Britain] could give towards improving their economic position would be of most vital importance” (Wilson, 1979, pp.66-67; Heuser, 1989, p.83). Aid in all forms was rapidly forthcoming, from the \$299 million through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

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(UNRRA), to grants and loans from individual states – Britain's contribution in 1949 amounting to \$36 million, and a further \$20 million from the American Export-Import Bank (Heuser, 1989, p.219). Simultaneous trade agreements were signed, meaning that of the 51 percent hole left in Yugoslavia's exports market, Western states went from absorbing 37 percent of Yugoslav exports in 1948 to 72 percent in 1949 and 82 percent in 1950 (Heuser, 1989, p.215). These agreements were so readily assembled for Tito, "not because he was regarded as a friend or an ally, but because his existence was seen as a thorn in the flesh of Communist unity" (Heuser, 1989, p.85). Indeed in 1949 advisor to President Truman and later ambassador to Yugoslavia, George Kennan, wrote that "Titoism as a disintegrating force in the monolith should be stimulated and encouraged by all devices of propaganda" (Heuser, 1989, p.64). This was, for the West, a Cold War battle in which Yugoslavia was a pawn; it was imperative that the flagship of the disintegrative idea they were promulgating—socialism outside of the USSR – was kept afloat, however artificially (Heuser, 1989, p.87).

Attached to these loans were very few strings. It was hoped in the West that "in the long run political and even strategic connections might develop from the economic links," and while a policy of "combined pressure and persuasion," published on September 1st 1949, *hoped* for "the adoption of more democratic characteristics by the existing regime," few held their breath (Wilson, 1979, pp.122-123; Heuser, 1989, p.60). The British in particular were wary of forcing Tito into the Western camp, for fear it would impact the chance of "multiplication of the Yugoslav incident" (Heuser, 1989, p.67; p.57). They were content with letting Tito "sit on the fence", a "privileged policy which few states can realistically follow": the Yugoslavs would become adept at maintaining equidistance from each bloc, to their great benefit (Heuser, 1989, p.67; Thomas, 1987, p.5). Kardelj, now Minister of Foreign Affairs, recognised this when he wrote that

"if US political conditions were accepted by the Yugoslavs, this would be a victory for the USSR who could then show evidence that Yugoslavia, by leaving the Socialist camp, had been forced to submit to Western dictates" (Heuser, 1989, p.99).

As such, the KPJ "gave wide publicity to the fact that Western aid and assistance was being granted without requests for either material or ideological concessions" (McVicker, 1957, pp.23-24). It was of their own volition that Stalinism was branded "bureaucratic and un-Marxian," the "most reprehensible form of capitalism in which the state became the 'private' owner of the means of production and exploited the workers in an even more systematic fashion" (McVicker, 1957, p.21). This was followed swiftly by the Basic Law on Workers' Self-Management, an abandonment of Stalinist policy by which all industry and agriculture would be locally administered by collectives with elected directors. With this law Tito drew a line under bureaucratic state socialism and embarked upon his own more liberal path *between* the ideologies of the two blocs.

This was not a transition to the capitalism Tito still held in such low regard; in every respect "a 'monolithic' Communist party was in the near background," and Tito regularly insisted that "there are adequate federal powers to keep the new open market in Yugoslavia from becoming an 'anarchic market'" (Wilson, 1979, p.72; Neal, 1954; p.237). Nevertheless, these reforms certainly represented a general slackening in the Stalinist dogmatism for which he had until recently been known, for when Tito was quizzed about the scriptural 'purity' of these reforms, he replied "[w]e are not concerned about [...] whether they are called socialist or not. What we need is more agricultural production – more bread. We are trying to find means of getting it" (Neal, 1954, p.236). This officially marked the beginning of Yugoslavia's turn to what Rinna Kullaa terms 'neutralism;' the precursor to nonalignment, it was a "foreign policy of post-war compromise acted out at a time of continuing political uncertainty" (Kullaa, 2012, p.181). The model for this policy was found in Finland, a state which had been resisting Soviet annexation since the end of the war, but was also evident as far abroad as Southeast Asia, where it constituted "the only plausible defence against becoming a Chinese sphere of influence" (Kullaa, 2012, p.175; Allison, 1988, p.136). As such it necessitated a political rebalance of the erstwhile loyalty to the Soviets and hostility to the West; most pressingly, this helped "open the way for support from the West, which seemed increasingly necessary from summer 1950 on" (Wilson, 1979, p.69).

However, having shrugged off one overbearing superpower, Tito held no desire to be ensnared by another, as his foreign policy record in this period demonstrates. He clung to the Yugoslav claim to Carinthia until Soviet retraction of

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support (having been appeased by allied concessions over ex-German property) made it impossible (Heuser, 1989, p.100). The Trieste issue was finally settled in 1954 by Koča Popović, who had replaced Kardelj as Minister for Foreign Affairs, facilitating an extension of Yugoslav territory – something the West and the Soviets had both opposed (Kullaa, 2012, p.174; Heuser, 1989, p.102). On the recognition of Ho Chi Minh, the communist leader of North Vietnam, despite Americans protestations Tito explicitly said he would not countenance “interference from any quarter,” and would not compromise on his “position with the ‘progressive forces of the world’” (Heuser, 1989, pp.98-99). Only on the matter of aiding the Greek communists in their civil war did he appear to concede to pressure, for when the British delegation requested he “abandon his assistance to the Greek guerrillas,” they received intelligence reports that indicated he had done so, though Yugoslav aid had already been greatly reduced, and Tito had indicated a willingness to compromise to the American delegation a year earlier (Heuser, 1989, pp.89-90). On the matter of defence pacts, Tito had first signed the Yugoslav-Bulgarian Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Assistance in August 1947, when Yugoslav domination of the Balkans seemed favourable (Heuser, 1989, p.33). However, when in 1948 further integration was proscribed by Stalin in an attempt to “introduce the ‘Trojan horse’ of the Bulgarians into the Central Committee of the [KPJ],” and “secure a firmer grip on Belgrade,” the Yugoslavs did all they could to delay and eventually scupper the deal (Heuser, 1989, p.34). The next Balkan Pact would be negotiated in 1954 and made it possible to associate Yugoslavia with Greece and Turkey – two members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance, guaranteeing them some modicum of security without demanding their own formal membership (Kullaa, 2012, p.174).

In assessing these events, Stephen Walt’s *The Origins of Alliances* is instructive, for while a traditional Realist interpretation would proscribe the ‘bandwagoning’ with the nearest great power, he contends that “states ally to balance against threats rather than against power alone” (Walt, 1987, p.5). Clearly while the Soviet Union presented the most immediate threat – “manoeuvres on the Yugoslav-Hungarian and Yugoslav-Romanian frontiers [made] the possibility of an invasion [...] by no means remote” – Tito had balanced this by joining the Pact (Wilson, 1979, p.63). It is important here to note the hierarchy of international actions, for if – as Carl von Clausewitz said – “war is a continuation of politics by other means,” then politics is often the continuation of economics (Mearsheimer, 2001, p.18). Economics would play an enormous role in Yugoslavia, and its pressures and inducements should be considered no less a threat to Tito’s survival than any other. While militarily Tito was safeguarded, economically he had merely switched dependencies, for the retraction of US aid could still wreak havoc in his nascent domestic order – as Wilson observed, the “two-way interaction between Yugoslav foreign and domestic policies” was a defining feature (Wilson, 1979, p.2). Similarly, when Walt writes that “ideology is less powerful than balancing as a motive for alignment,” this was demonstrated by the Balkan Pact, for in the face of Soviet aggression, the fact that Tito’s ideology precluded alliances with the West was subordinated to the necessities of survival (Walt, 1987, p.5; Niebuhr, 2011, p.147). These were necessary steps, for as John Mearsheimer affirms, “survival dominates other motives because, once a state is conquered, it is unlikely to be in a position to pursue other aims” (Mearsheimer, 2001, p.31). Nevertheless, Tito’s urge to diversify his dependence and reaffirm his ideology would be the defining character of his foreign policy herein.

As demonstrated, Yugoslavia was not hard done by in terms of foreign policy and, despite their precarious position, regularly achieved their aims; only in Carinthia were they forced to reconcile themselves with their lowly status. Evident too, is that Yugoslavia pursued a relatively independent foreign policy even before the split with Stalin, and was well aware of its own core interests, irrespective of its ideological aspirations. Only survival had necessitated the turn to neutralism. Stalin himself had said in 1927 that “we can build socialism in the [Soviet Union]. But in order to do so we first of all have to survive”; the same reasoning was adopted at birth by the KPJ, their unanimous victory in the Second World War having borne testament to that.

The turn to ‘nonalignment’

The joining of the Balkan Pact was a masterstroke of Yugoslav neutralism for, as far as is possible in such affairs, it allayed fears of a Soviet invasion, given the threat of NATO retaliation. Indeed, as Thomas Schelling wrote, by this time the US had “an implicit obligation to support Yugoslavia, perhaps Finland, in a military crisis” (Schelling, 1973, p.52). Some recognition of this fact must have influenced Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchëv, into pursuing a rapprochement with Yugoslavia as a matter of urgency. The strategic significance of Yugoslavia was not lost on

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either bloc. To the West, it represented “a shield for the defence of Italy, a pillar propping up the Austrian mountain redoubt [...] and the Greek northern line of defence” (Heuser, 1989, p.212). As the transcripts from July 1955's Central Committee Plenum of the CPSU reveal, Yugoslavia was declared “the strongest country in Europe,” for “not one state in Europe has an army like Yugoslavia's” – which, originally on Stalin's orders, had been advised to dwarf all those in the region (Khrushchëv, 1955b; Allison, 1988, p.95). Khrushchëv's suggested strategy comprised of making “sure that Yugoslavia does not enter the North Atlantic bloc,” and that it leaves the Balkan Pact (Khrushchëv, 1955a). On the matter of enticing Tito back into the Soviet bloc, he was nonetheless wary of the KPJ's propensity to “speak out against the USSR at any time on all and sundry issues,” that would seem to preclude any close alliance (Khrushchëv, 1955a).

The result of this was that in 1955 Khrushchëv signalled to Minister of Defence, Georgy Zhukov, that “Yugoslavia was the first place where [the] new policy of peaceful coexistence would be put into practice” (Fursenko and Naftali, 2006, p.28). Khrushchëv personally blamed Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vyacheslav Molotov, for the endurance of the Soviet embargo two years after Stalin's death, an act well-aligned with his “generally callous treatment of the entire Soviet bloc” (Fursenko and Naftali, 2006, p.25). Molotov, an old-guard Stalinist “intransigent in his view of the capitalist West,” and “no less implacably opposed to any deviation on the part of Communists,” would not last long under Khrushchëv, nor would any of his ilk (Brown, 2010, p.236). The doctrine that would succeed them was one of “patient pressure,” the equivalent of America's “combined pressure and persuasion,” and would facilitate a steady rapprochement between Tito's Yugoslavia and Khrushchëv's Soviet Union (Fursenko and Naftali, 2006, p.32; Heuser, 1989, p.60).

If Tito's lurch westward symbolised the onset of neutralism, Khrushchëv's rapprochement was its zenith. With the Soviet Union “no longer regarded as hostile or threatening” both blocs competed by relatively equal means for Yugoslav favour (Rubinstein, 1970, p.66). Indeed, the relaxation of Soviet dogmatism saw many gains. In July 1955, Molotov had stated concern that “Yugoslavia's position on a series of issues (for instance, on the German issue) has been closer to the position of the Western powers than to the position of the USSR” (Khrushchëv, 1955a). By 1956, Tito and Kardelj had promised Khrushchëv that they would side with the Soviet Union in support of East Germany and its claim to West Berlin (Kullaa, 2012, p.175). Even predating Soviet concerns regarding Yugoslav membership of the Balkan Pact, by March 1955 “Yugoslavia preferred to shelve any efforts to infuse life into the Balkan Pact, in part because of the rising difficulties between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, but *primarily because Yugoslavia's situation had completely altered*” [emphasis added] (Rubinstein, 1970, p.66). Similarly, Djilas's domestic multi-party system which had failed as early as 1953 now saw little chance of resuscitation because Tito was “unwilling to give the Soviet leaders any further cause to say that Yugoslavia had deserted the road to Communism” (Wilson, 1979, p.2). Indeed, as early as August 1954 Tito had made it clear that a rapprochement – on Yugoslavia's terms – would be welcome, writing that “we have noticed with satisfaction that you write [...] about respect for the principle of non-interference into affairs of other countries. This will certainly be favourably received by our peoples and thus facilitate the proper development of our relations”; relations that were officially re-established in June 1956 (Tito, 1954; Rubinstein, 1970, p.67).

Some within the KPJ toyed with the idea of returning to the socialist camp, “their inherent emotional attachment to the Soviet Union and to the internationalism implicit in Marxist-Leninist ideals” being reason enough (Rubinstein, 1970, p.66). However, as the Yugoslav scholar Ranko Petković would later write, for Tito's regime to do so would have meant “reconcile[ing] itself with the gradual loss of freedom and independence and of the right to determine independently its way of internal development” (Niebuhr, 2011, p.146). Hungary would be the trial by which Yugoslav neutralism would ossify and Yugoslav non-alignment would be born. Indeed, the Hungarians in October 1956 had formed the impression from recent Soviet ‘thaws,’ and the peaceful accession of the popular Władysław Gomułka, that “the Soviet army would not intervene to defend Stalinist leaders against other more nationally-minded Communists” (Wilson, 1979, p.104). On the 1st of November, having been “steadily pushed towards an extreme National Communist position,” Imre Nagy officially declared Hungary's neutrality (Wilson, 1979, pp.104-105). In an act that further revealed the rarity of successful bids for neutrality, the insurrection was crushed “in order to preserve one-party Communist rule,” initially with the express support of Tito, Kardelj, and ambassador to the USSR, Veljko Mićunović (Kullaa, 2012, p.175). The diary of Molotov's successor, Dmitri Shepilov, records a conversation with Mićunović, in which Tito is recorded to have asked, “What sort of revolutionary is Nagy? What sort of communist is

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he if leading workers, communists and public officials were hanged and shot with his knowledge?" (Shepilov, 1956). Shepilov's diary also records Soviet indignation that the KPJ and Yugoslav public were decidedly against the intervention, for as Wilson writes, the inconstant Yugoslav response "was a compromise which satisfied no one" (Shepilov, 1956; Wilson, 1979, p.105). As Khrushchëv recalls in his memoirs,

"[Tito] surprised us somewhat by the support he gave us. In our view he took a good position [...] this strengthened and confirmed our opinion once again that Tito was a good Communist and a man of principle" (Khrushchëv and Khrushchëv, 2007, p.540).

However, in the immediate aftermath of Tito's later condemnation of the Soviet intervention, Khrushchëv admits that "once again, we ended up clashing with Tito," and that "I spoke a couple of times against Yugoslavia, against Tito, and against his policies. And they paid us back in the same coin" (Wilson, 1979, p.105; Khrushchëv and Khrushchëv, 2007, p.541). On this occasion Kardelj was first to speak out against the Soviet Union, and in similarly harsh terms to those employed after the first split, when he said "the attitude of the USSR towards Yugoslavia is enough to show that the Soviet government cannot always be seen as the interpreter of contemporary aspirations for peace and democracy" (Kullaa, 2012, p.176). Yugoslavia's strategy from this moment on would seek, again, "to increase its own independence," this time by focusing its efforts "on non-Communist states beyond the Soviets' immediate purview" (Kullaa, 2012, p.176). The turn to non-alignment was not sudden, indeed the building of embassies abroad had begun with the first split, their numbers nearly doubling from 53 in 1948 to 91 in 1958 (Kullaa, 2012, p.177). However, the changing nature of Yugoslavia's regional security gave the turn a new sense of immediacy. The invasion of Hungary had "revived concern about Soviet military power" in Yugoslavia, power which had until recently lain dormant in the region (Niebuhr, 2011, p.162). Nevertheless, the balance endured; the West was indefinitely tied to supporting Yugoslavia militarily, for strategically it was paramount to the region's security, as well as financially, for while economic gains from granting Yugoslavia credits were minimal, the "more generally accepted argument" was that "a clear refusal to help would drive Tito back into Khrushchëv's embrace" (Heuser, 1989, p.212; Wilson, 1979, pp.122-123). On the other hand, by this time the US had shown itself to be no less bellicose than the USSR; it was intensifying the war in Vietnam, whose leadership had been systematically assassinated until a preferred candidate emerged, and increasingly "considered the only really safe non-Communist to be an avowed anti-Communist; those claiming neutrality, like India [and Yugoslavia], were not to be trusted" (Young, 1991, p.102; pp.107-108; p.43).

As demonstrated by Tito's letter to Khrushchëv, non-interference in the domestic affairs of the somewhat-stable Yugoslavia was of unparalleled importance. Thus far, promises to this end from either power had been broken repeatedly; the threat of Soviet invasion had been more than abundant, and American strategies for combatting 'World Communism' had "[made] nonsense of Western talk about non-interference in other countries' internal affairs as upheld by the UN Charter" (Heuser, 1989, p.211). However, looking to the third world and its nascent associations, Yugoslavia "found a forum where she could assume a prominent position, without fear of interference in her affairs from the other powers she was dealing with;" equals or not, the powers of the third world were "not interested in meddling with Yugoslav politics" (Heuser, 1989, p.207). However, while security remained the chief concern, there were other reasons for an expanded foreign policy, not least the possibility of allaying Yugoslavia's considerable domestic troubles.

Indeed, following the second split, just as after the first, Wilson's observed "two-way interaction between Yugoslav foreign and domestic policies" came into play again (Wilson, 1979, p.2). The broadly liberal efforts at destalinisation following the first split had, by the early 1960s, led to a desperate situation in which "too many enterprises competed for too few export markets," and it was from here that the desire to trade with the "third markets" arose (Wilson, 1979, p.138; pp.165-166). This competition – in addition to debt repayments – was forcing the cost of living up, and as Richard Niebuhr concludes, "economic ties with the nonaligned countries had the potential to solve Yugoslavia's difficulties in providing its citizens with a good standard of living" (Wilson, 1979, p.138; Niebuhr, 2011, p.160). Evidently, Yugoslavia needed to expand its export markets, but as Waltz had noted and Yugoslavia had experienced, dependence comes at a cost, while economic autarky "is not a realistic option for a state with a population which is not very large" (Thomas, 1987, p.8). While delinking from the international economy was not realistic, increasing *interdependence* with Third World states was highly attractive, and Yugoslavia would pursue this fervently through both trade deals and credit lending.

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Here the traditional Realist dialogue is superseded by one more tailored to fit. Stephen David's theory of 'omnibalancing' incorporates the "need of leaders to balance against both internal and external treats in order to survive" (David, 1991, p.7). In addition to this Niebuhr states that in Yugoslavia, at such times when living standards were stagnant, domestic legitimacy in the regime could be bolstered "through foreign-policy victories," especially those deemed ideologically "different and meaningful," of which there is no better example than the establishment of a third bloc in international affairs (Niebuhr, 2011, p.159). Indeed, there was more to be gained by this new foreign policy strategy than commerce; agreements were "political as well as economic," for credits lent on favourable terms could compete with Western and Soviet bloc countries, but also "reap some of the uncertain harvest of 'political goodwill'" (Rubinstein, 1970, p.211). Many of their first alliances in the Third World were initiated by Yugoslavia's vast arms trade – a by-product of their gargantuan armed forces (Wilson, 1979, p.123). Niebuhr goes further, writing that beyond trade and goodwill, party elites held a deep desire to export the Yugoslav ideology, and that "pronouncements of self-determination were a critical first step" to its promulgation (Niebuhr, 2011, p.151; pp.165-166). Indeed, "Tito believed that economics had the power to influence political change" – the entire history of his regime was testament to this fact – and thus "he encouraged Third World leaders not only to adopt Yugoslav products but also to accept Titoism as a credible ideology worthy of imitation" (Niebuhr, 2011, p.151).

Tito knew the politics of influence well – much of the Hungary debacle had been down to Tito's desire to maintain good standing with the regimes of Poland and Hungary, a fact the Soviet Union was aware of when it "rejected Tito's implication that Yugoslavia could serve as any kind of model to the Warsaw Treaty States" (Wilson, 1979, pp.105-106). Nevertheless, Niebuhr does him a disservice by painting Tito in so stark a 'Realist' light. Regardless of Walt's contention that the association between alignment and ideology is exaggerated, ideology certainly acted as a strong repellent as Niebuhr rightly states, "for ideological reasons [...] reforms could never bring Yugoslavia into line with the competing model offered by the West" (Walt, 1987, p.181; Niebuhr, 2011, p.147). Niebuhr's accusation that Tito desired to proselytise – without establishing why, precisely – harbour similar implications to that of Ronald Reagan's 'evil empire,' that Soviet expansion was for expansion's sake. However, similarly to how Tito's early economic reforms, those that hacked away Stalinist bureaucracy and control, were "inspired by the honest desire to make their system work as painlessly as possible," his proselytising can also be viewed in the light of one who earnestly sought to redress world economic affairs, and saw in his own "independent way to socialism" and "national independence vis-à-vis the Great Powers" the means to achieve this lofty aim (McVicker, 1957, p.29; Wilson, 1979, p.123).

Kenneth Waltz, a realist scholar with little time for lofty aims, compares directly the 'society of states' with the market of a decentralised economy, calling them both "individualist in origin, spontaneously generated, and unintended." Systems in which "the individual unit acts for itself, and from the coaction of like units emerges a structure that affects and constrains them all" (Waltz, 1979, p.90). The important thing is that from such a system of states two superpowers had arisen, each with distinct ideologies of 'liberation,' but both had similarly come to dominate all others, both politically and economically. In both cases "ideology was subordinated to interest," and America and the USSR began to behave "more like traditional great powers than like leaders of messianic movements" (Waltz, 1979, p.172). While the political side to bloc domination was overt and characterised by occasional flashpoints, the economic conflict was less explicit and more akin to a constant war of attrition in which gains are measured in relative, not absolute, terms. In such a system, the Third World had been integrated with the world capitalist system creating "a division of labour on world scale" by which "less developed countries produce the primary commodities and the developed counties produce manufactured goods" (Ghosh, 2001, p.83). The Kingdom of Yugoslavia had certainly experienced this, and Tito's government "believed profoundly in their own thesis – for which many facts spoke – that the resources of the old Yugoslavia had been exploited by foreign industrialists" (Wilson, 1979, p.45). Nevertheless, still convinced in 1945 of their master's ideological purity, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivan Šubašić, would invite the "assistance of Soviet specialists in exploration and exploitation of the ore and oil reserves of Yugoslavia," while simultaneously dispelling any prospect of "foreigners" engaging in such "exploitation of the natural riches of Yugoslavia" (Šubašić, 1945). Before their political awakening, this was how willingly Yugoslavia would submit to such a system. Only in August 1946, when Iran – whom the Yugoslavs considered "a semi-feudal country" – was treated to a far more lenient oil deal than the Yugoslavs, did the "absolute faith" in the Soviet Union "as an example and an ally" begin to waver (Wilson, 1979, p.48).

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The stark realisation the Yugoslavs arrived at was one in tune with the Marxist critiques of imperialism they had inherited from Lenin: that “the world consisted of a ‘core’ of dominant nations and a ‘periphery’ of dependent ones” (Seers, 1981a, p.15). The earliest mass recognition of this had been at the Bandung conference of 1955, and while Yugoslavia had not attended, it had paid great attention to its results. As a conference it had failed, its discussions of autonomous Third World political and economic goals disrupted and obfuscated by ideological in-fighting between those who represented the respective blocs (Mortimer, 1984, pp.8-9). Nevertheless, Tito recognised the potential for a global movement, and, against the backdrop of an increasingly hostile Cold War of the early 1960s, declared that “the fundamental interest of the developing states was to act against the bloc system, [...] to organise those countries resolutely opposed to the pressures of both camps” (Mortimer, 1984, p.12). In embarking upon this quest, Tito appealed to the most influential attendees of the Bandung Conference, those he had steadily been cultivating relationships with since 1948: namely India’s Jawaharlal Nehru, Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Burma’s Ba U (Kullaa, 2012, p.177; Wilson, 1979, p.123).

Just as the Prime Minister of Indonesia, Ali Sastroamidjojo, had pursued the most influential leaders of the Third World – the “Colombo powers” – to organise the Bandung Conference, Tito pursued the titans of the Third World, Nehru and Nasser, the latter being accorded the responsibility of determining the conditions for membership (Mortimer, 1984, p.7; p.12). The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was to be predicated on “a foreign policy of national independence based on peaceful coexistence,” the support for “national liberation movements,” and an eschewing of the “multilateral military alliances [...] and bilateral alliances with the great powers” (Mortimer, 1984, p.12). Most importantly, it would be to the exclusion of the “dominant” states and their lackeys, hence why, of the 29 states at the Bandung Conference, only 16 were admitted to the NAM’s 1961 conference in Belgrade, though their numbers were supplemented by six newly-independent African states, as well as the Algerian provisional government in exile, Cyprus, and Cuba (Mortimer, 1984, pp.12-13). While Tito and Nasser saw anti-colonialism as the primary goal of the Movement, Nehru’s main interest was Cold War mediation; this represented the differing interests incorporated by the NAM, even among its ‘elites;’ however, in comparison to Bandung, the Belgrade Conference’s attendees were markedly “more inclined to challenge the Western powers’ role in the developing world” (Mortimer, 1984, pp.13-14). The declaration issued at Belgrade stated primarily its desire to see a “world where the domination of colonialism-imperialism and neo-colonialism in all their manifestations is radically eliminated” (NAM, 1961). Given that Western-bloc states were those primarily responsible for colonialism, and that the USA was chief investor in the institutions that perpetuated neo-colonial control, it is no surprise that the NAM’s crusade was perceptibly more anti-Western than anti-Soviet (Thomas, 1987, p.199).

Thus it was no surprise that the two blocs responded as such, the Soviets being first to acknowledge the NAM as an “established and numerically significant component of the international order”, because of their belief that “with the shifting of the global ‘correlation of forces’” the NAM states would soon align with Moscow (Allison, 1988, p.1; p.3). Robert Mortimer wrote in 1984 that, “until quite recently, to speak of the Third World in international politics was to identify an arena of great-power competition, not an actor” (Mortimer, 1984, p.1). The Soviet conviction perpetuated this belief, and, in regarding “neutralism and non-alignment [...] as an integral component of the competitive struggle between East and West, rather than a disengaged influence on this struggle,” missed the mark completely (Allison, 1988, p.3). Hence their dissatisfaction when “efforts to exploit non-alignment to deny Western states military and political assets” were less successful than in earlier decades (before the NAM was working against them), and their accumulative frustration evident in the NAM’s subjection to “more persistent Soviet criticism for their alleged passivity” (Allison, 1988, p.7; p.33). Needless to say, Yugoslav prominence in the movement also attracted Soviet ire, and Khrushchëv records in his memoirs that it “didn’t always fit in well with our foreign policy, [...] it annoyed us” – especially Yugoslavia’s refusal to join the Warsaw Pact, bound as it was to eschew such allegiances (Allison, 1988, p.32; Khrushchëv and Khrushchëv, 2007, p.542). By the 1970s, the Soviet Union was begging the NAM to forego any further institutionalisation, and to “ensure in every way that their original decision against forming a ‘third bloc’ is upheld” (Allison, 1988, p.61). However, for the Third World this was not a ‘third’ bloc, but a second: a coordinated body of dependent states seeking freedom from their great power dominators.

For the US, great power rivalry had meant the “boundaries between anti-colonial and Cold War politics became increasingly blurred” (Young, 2005, p.15). They largely ignored the NAM’s protestations, and its policy of containing communism – often by “installing or supporting compliant dictatorships, particularly in Vietnam and Latin America” –

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only intensified during this period (Young, 2005, p.15). Its policy towards Yugoslavia throughout the post-war period had demonstrated much of its power; in 1948 the Central Intelligence Agency had—against explicit presidential orders—gone ahead with a plan to overthrow and possibly kill Tito, though it was abandoned following the split with Stalin (Heuser, 1989, p.45). Its economic might, too, was displayed when the “bait of trade and economic aid” was the first tool used to drag Yugoslavia towards the Western camp (Heuser, 1989, p.67). Indeed, as late as 1970 there was no sign that the NAM had forced the US to abandon these tactics, for Chile (a NAM member by 1973) saw the “*casus classicus* of foreign intervention” (Seers, 1981b, p.137). US corporations had made an abortive attempt to prevent Salvador Allende from taking office, but, as an example of how “purely economic conflicts rapidly become highly political,” an official US ‘policy of destabilisation’ was adopted, incorporating support for Chilean strikers, a partial embargo on Chilean goods, and a *de facto* restriction on American loans to Chile, as well as material support for the military that would later overthrow Allende (Seers, 1981b, p.137). That the United States would utilise embargoes for the purpose of regime change just as readily as the USSR had with regard to Yugoslavia only confirmed the view that the two blocs were one and the same.

However, in their quest to “develop a strategy similar to a strike” as some form of redress to the often-predatory advances of the global North, it was not until 1973 that such a strategy was first deployed (Mortimer, 1984, p.2). In protest at the fourth Arab-Israeli war, the members of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC) – all bar one of whom were NAM members in 1973 – quadrupled the price of oil, ushering in what Mortimer, perhaps optimistically, called the “politics of a New International Economic Order” (Mortimer, 1984, p.3). As Waltz records, the effects on Western Europe’s energy supply (roughly 60 percent depended on oil, 41 percent of which came from the Middle East) were disastrous, while the effect on the United States was more muted (17 percent and 2 percent respectively [Waltz, 1979, p.221]) (Waltz, 1979, p.153). Nevertheless, the OPEC model of cartelisation and producer associations – a subdivision of the Non-Aligned Movement – proved itself to be a significant economic bloc; the tragedy was in how few successful recurrences would be seen following this action (Waltz, 1979, p.; Evans, 1981, p.125). Similarly, though the NAM “did not operate with the highly disciplined bloc voting of the communist states,” they did “reach an impressive degree of cohesion and were clearly identifiable as a distinct group” at the United Nations (Willets, 1978, p.109).

By the time of the Belgrade Conference in 1961, Yugoslavia possessed a great many exceptional statesmen. They had faced the threats and inducements of two superpowers, but had nonetheless carved their own strategic and ideological route between them, forced as they were by their instinct for survival, to neutralism. They had cast aside ideologies and alliances alike, yet stayed true to their own, which flowered in the security offered it by neutralism. It was by this merit they were afforded a leadership role in the nascent NAM – “testament to the persuasiveness of their ideas, the ability of their officials, and the exemplariness of their behaviour” (Rubinstein, 1970, p.81). And from this position – their security accounted for – they would eagerly pursue their more lofty aims, the promulgation of their individualist path to socialism, the cessation of bloc competition, and the radical elimination of predatory colonialism.

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