

A TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP?

A TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP?
FRANCE AND YUGOSLAVIA IN THE COLD WAR WORLD, 1944–1969

By KATARINA TODIĆ, M.A., B.A. (Hon.)

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in
Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University DOCTOR OF ARTS (2015) Hamilton, Ontario (History)

TITLE: A Traditional Friendship? France and Yugoslavia in the Cold War World, 1945–1969

AUTHOR: Katarina Todić, M.A., B.A. (Hon.) (McMaster University) SUPERVISOR: Professor

M. Horn NUMBER OF PAGES: xi, 320

Lay Abstract

This investigation contributes to studies of post-1945 Europe and the Cold War by examining Franco-Yugoslavian relations in the period 1944–1969. The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 did not function as “year zero” and rather than abandoning their “traditional friendship” that had been forged in the First World War, capitalist France and communist Yugoslavia revived their “traditional” forms of cooperation despite the onset of the Cold War. As each sought to exploit the revival of the friendship for its own purposes, the foreign policies of the two countries, elaborated by their leaders – General Charles de Gaulle and Josip Broz Tito – took remarkably similar paths. Although the revival of the “traditional friendship” demonstrates that the political and ideological division of Europe after the Second World War was fluid, it was the ideological underpinnings of the two leaders’ foreign policies that precluded any meaningful form of cooperation during the Cold War.

Abstract

This investigation contributes to studies of post-1945 Europe and the Cold War by examining Franco-Yugoslavian relations in the period 1944–1969. In analyzing the diplomatic, economic, military, and cultural relations between the two countries, this dissertation argues that contrary to dominant narratives, neither the destruction wrought by the Second World War nor the ideological divide imposed by the Cold War swept away pre-1945 structures. Rather than jettisoning their “traditional friendship” that had been forged in the First World War, after the defeat of Nazi Germany France and Yugoslavia revived their many forms of cooperation despite the radically changed political landscape. That each sought to exploit the friendship for its own gain was not surprising. While it has been assumed that France quietly retreated from its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe after 1945, this work argues that until 1966 Yugoslavia was an important site for the reclamation of French power and prestige vis-à-vis the British and Americans. Although Yugoslavia’s claim to international status was its leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement, its security concerns remained in Europe. Consequently, it sought to capitalize upon its friendship with France for a variety of purposes, including to facilitate the legitimization of the new regime and its territorial claims against Italy, insurance against German resurgence, and cooperation on the international stage.

Belgrade’s desire for cooperation with France stemmed from the similarities between “Gaullism” and “Titoism.” The crucial ideologically-derived differences between the two, however, precluded any meaningful form of collaboration. In addition to reintroducing ideology into the realism-dominated field of Cold War studies, the evidence in this dissertation – that both France and Yugoslavia remained invested in the “traditional friendship” – demonstrates that the post-1945 political and ideological division of Europe was porous.

Acknowledgements

This project could not have come together without the assistance of many individuals. I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Martin Horn, for his mentorship over the years and guidance during this project. He, along with Dr. Tracy McDonald and Dr. Pamela Swett, provided critical feedback on chapter drafts. I would also like to thank the History Department staff, in particular Wendy Benedetti and Debbie Lobban, for their assistance, as well as my friends and colleagues in the graduate program at McMaster University for their encouragement throughout the various stages of the dissertation process.

I could not have conducted my research without the assistance of the staff and archivists at the Archive of Yugoslavia, the Archive of the Yugoslavian State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, the Historical Archive of Belgrade, the Archives of the French Foreign and Defense Ministries, and the French National Archives. I owe a special thanks to my grandparents, Mirjana and Vladimir Vasić, and my aunt, Jelena Anić, for ensuring that I never went hungry during my stays in Belgrade.

Equally indispensable was the support of my parents, Vesna and Dejan Relić, who encouraged me to follow my passion; my husband and best friend, Aleksandar Todić, for his love and support; and my dear friend, Samantha Sandassie, who never shied from sharing dessert and a bottle of wine to help calm the nerves of a graduate student.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------|
| Lay Abstract | iii |
| Abstract | iv |
| Acknowledgements | v |
| List of Tables | vii |
| List of Abbreviations | viii |
| Declaration of Academic Achievement | xi |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Chapter 1: Trieste for a Copper Mine? May 1944–June 1948 | 37 |
| Chapter 2: “A Policy of Presence,” June 1948–June 1954 | 81 |
| Chapter 3: From Rapprochement to Isolation, June 1954–January 1959 | 144 |
| Chapter 4: The Crisis Years, January 1959–August 1962 | 204 |
| Chapter 5: The Tito of the West? August 1962–April 1969 | 246 |
| Conclusion: A Traditional Friendship? | 302 |
| Bibliography | 308 |

List of Tables

| | |
|---|-----|
| Yugoslavia's Trade with France, 1946–1948 | 62 |
| French Contribution to Tripartite Aid to Yugoslavia, 1951–1954 | 106 |
| Elementary and High School Students Learning Foreign Languages in Yugoslavia, 1959 | 256 |

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|--|
| A CK SKJ | <i>Arhiv centralnog komiteta Saveza Komunističke Jugoslavije</i> (Archive of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia) |
| AJ | <i>Arhiv Jugoslavije</i> (The Archive of Yugoslavia) |
| A KMJ | <i>Arhiv kabineta Maršala Jugoslavije</i> (Archive of the Cabinet of the Marshall of Yugoslavia) |
| A KPR | <i>Arhiv kabineta Predsednika Jugoslavije</i> (Archive of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Yugoslavia) |
| AN | <i>Archives Nationales</i> (National Archives) |
| A SIV | <i>Arhiv Saveznog Izvršnog Veća</i> (Archive of the Federal Executive Committee) |
| CAP | Common Agricultural Policy |
| CGT | <i>Confédération Générale du Travail</i> (General Confederation of Labour) |
| CNIP | <i>Centre National des Indépendants et Paysans</i> (National Centre of Independents and Peasants) |
| CNR | <i>Conseil National de la Résistance</i> (National Council of the Resistance) |
| CPY | Communist Party of Yugoslavia (<i>Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije</i>) |
| DGRC | <i>Direction Générale des Relations Culturelles</i> (General Direction of Cultural Relations) |
| DSIP | <i>Državni sekretarijat za inostrane poslove</i> (State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs) |
| EDC | European Defence Community (“Pleven Plan”) |
| EEC | European Economic Community |

| | |
|------|---|
| EFTA | European Free Trade Association |
| ERP | European Recovery Program (“Marshall Plan”) |
| FLN | <i>Front de Libération Nationale</i> (National Liberation Front) |
| FNRJ | <i>Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavije</i> (Federal National Republic of Yugoslavia) |
| FRG | Federal Republic of Germany |
| GATT | General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade |
| GDR | German Democratic Republic |
| GPRA | <i>Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne</i> (Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic) |
| IAB | <i>Istorijski arhiv Beograda</i> (The Historical Archives of Belgrade) |
| JNA | <i>Jugoslovenska narodna armija</i> (Yugoslavian People’s Army) |
| LCY | League of Communists of Yugoslavia (<i>Savez Komunista Jugoslavije</i>) |
| MAE | <i>Ministère des Affaires Etrangères</i> (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) |
| MLF | Multilateral Force |
| MRP | <i>Mouvement Républicain Populaire</i> (Popular Republican Movement) |
| NDH | <i>Nezavisna Država Hrvatska</i> (Independent State of Croatia) |
| NOB | <i>Narodnooslobodilačka borba</i> (The Fight for National Liberation) |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OEEC | Organization for European Economic Cooperation |

| | |
|------|---|
| PCA | <i>Parti Communiste Algérien</i> (Communist Party of Algeria) |
| PCF | <i>Parti Communiste Français</i> (French Communist Party) |
| RPF | <i>Rassemblement du Peuple Français</i> (Rally of the French People) |
| SFIO | <i>Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière</i> (French Section of the Workers' International) |
| SHD | <i>Service Historique de la Défense</i> (Defence Historical Service) |
| SIV | <i>Savezno izvršno veće</i> (Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia) |
| UDBa | <i>Uprava državne bezbednosti</i> (State Security Administration) |
| UFAC | <i>Union Française des Anciens Combattants</i> (French Union of War Veterans) |
| UJF | <i>Udruženje Jugoslovena u Francuskoj</i> (Association of Yugoslavs in France) |

Declaration of Academic Achievement

Katarina Todić is the sole author of this dissertation.

Introduction

On November 11, 1930, a monument was inaugurated in the Yugoslavian capital of Belgrade. Situated in a park inside the ancient fortress of Kalemegdan in the heart of the city, it features an allegorical female figure atop a massive pedestal with the inscription, “*A la France.*” The work of the internationally-renowned Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović, the monument commemorated the “traditional friendship” that was forged through the Franco-Serbian fraternity of arms on the Salonika Front of the Great War, and symbolized France’s continued protection and patronage of the multiethnic Yugoslavian kingdom.¹

Fifteen years after the inauguration of the monument Europe lay in ruins, and France and Yugoslavia found themselves on opposite sides of a continent divided between two mutually antagonistic socioeconomic systems, each of whom offered its own vision of progress. The monument, though, survived, and so too did the Franco-Yugoslavian relationship, shaped by the past. The evolution of the “traditional” Franco-Yugoslavian relationship in the post-1945 period forms the subject of this dissertation. Conventionally, the superpower struggle has dominated the historiography of the Cold War, while the conflict itself also cast a long shadow over the study of post-1945 European history. Although Yugoslavia was technically “in front of” the Iron Curtain since it was not a member of the Warsaw Pact, its leadership remained unquestionably Marxist. A study of Franco-Yugoslavian relations after the regime change in the latter is fruitful in examining not only how the “traditional friendship” evolved after 1945, but also how middle powers with different socioeconomic systems conducted bilateral relations in the Cold War.

The conventional scholarly interpretation depicts 1945 as a caesura, year null. The concept is borrowed from the popular German belief that 1945 was “Zero Hour” (*Stunde Null*), a

¹ Stanislav Sretenović, “Le monument à la France à Belgrade: La mémoire de la Grande Guerre au service de l’action politique et diplomatique,” *Vingtième Siècle, Revue d’histoire* No. 115 (2012/3), 31–38.

break with the Nazi years that facilitated the German people's rehabilitation and emphasized the continuity of West Germany's membership in "the West."² The concept of "Zero Hour" has been applied to the studies of Europe and the Cold War, and has led to a propensity to emphasize the final year of the Second World War as a watershed.³ While the focus on 1945 rightly speaks to the impact of the Second World War upon the modern world, it gives rise to two problematic tendencies. Firstly, it reduces "Europe" to Western Europe in a narrative of (either self- or Marshall Plan-induced) reconstruction, prosperity, reconciliation, and integration. In these accounts, Communist and Slavic Eastern Europe is implicitly "othered."⁴ Secondly, the story runs that the post-Second World War polarization of Europe swept away pre-1945 ties and structures. There has always been something peculiar about such a portrait. Although the scholarship has hitherto largely ignored France's post-1945 relations with Eastern Europe (or has otherwise bemoaned the retreat of French power from the region),⁵ in contrast to the received

² Stephen Brockmann, "Germany as Occident at the Zero Hour," *German Studies Review* Vol. 25, No. 3 (Oct., 2002), 477–478. East Germany also carved out a "usable past" by, as Sean Forner explains, "trading on leftists' resistance and persecution to disavow all continuities, claim an unequivocally anti-Nazi identity, and legitimate Communist rule." See Sean A. Forner, *German Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democratic Renewal: Culture and Politics after 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 9.

³ One of the most prominent voices to challenge the tendency to periodize European history along the 1945 divide has been Mark Mazower. See Mazower, "Changing Trends in the Historiography of Postwar Europe, East and West," *International Labour and Working-Class History* No. 58 (Fall, 2000), 276.

⁴ Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 428–445; Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945–1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 462–502; Julius W. Friend, *The Linchpin: French–German Relations, 1950–1990* (New York: Praeger, 1991), 2–39. For the combination of "long-standing medieval prejudices with cold war rhetoric" in the "othering" of Eastern Europe see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 162.

⁵ Works on France's Eastern relations in the post-1945 world are generally few and far between, since most focus on France's relations with Western Europe and the United States. For Franco-Soviet relations see Georges Bortoli, *Une si longue bienveillance: La France et l'URSS, 1944–1991* (Paris: Plon, 1994), 8–27; Julie M. Newton, *Russia, France, and the Idea of Europe* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 1–23; Mikhail Narinskiy and Maurice Vaïsse, eds., *Les crises dans les relations franco-soviétiques, 1954–1991* (Paris: A. Pedone, 2009), 5–8. For France's relations with the satellites see Lincoln Gordon et al., *Eroding Empire: Western Relations with Eastern Europe* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1987), 188–231; Richard Sacker, *A Radiant Future: The French Communist Party and Eastern Europe, 1944–1956* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1999), 9–10. While not the work of an academic, the most comprehensive volume on France's relations with Eastern Europe in terms of chronological and geographical scope is Thomas Schreiber, *Les actions de la France à l'Est, ou les absences de Marianne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000). Schreiber lamented the loss of France's position in Eastern Europe and sought to "sound the alarm" on the French failure to exploit Francophilia the region since the fall of the Berlin Wall. (foreword, unpaginated).

narrative this dissertation shows that Franco-Yugoslavian relations, built upon a century of cultural, economic, and political ties, did not completely or suddenly cease after the Second World War. These ties originate in the First Serbian Uprising of 1804–1813, which was the first nationalist insurgency in the Ottoman Balkans and was inspired by the French Revolution. After Serbia's de facto independence from the Sublime Porte in 1830,⁶ its small Habsburg-educated elite looked not to the autocratic Austrian empire but to democratic France as a model for state- and society-building.⁷ In addition to serving as a sociopolitical model, in the late nineteenth century France also became patron of the Serbian army.⁸ However, the “traditional friendship” between France and Serbia/Yugoslavia was consecrated in the First World War when in the winter of 1915/16 the Serbian army retreated across the Albanian mountains in the face of a combined Austro-Hungarian, German, and Bulgarian offensive. The Serbian army, along with the state apparatus and civilian refugees, arrived on the Albanian coast where survivors were taken by the French to the Greek island of Corfu. The French rebuilt the Serbian army, and the two nations fought side by side on the Salonika Front, where they triumphed in 1918. In Serbian collective memory this series of events is known as the “Golgotha and resurrection” of the nation, and in this narrative the French function as “saviours.”⁹

The creation of Yugoslavia in 1918 more than doubled the territory controlled by Belgrade, and France promptly sought to capitalize upon the new state, incorporating it into the

⁶ Serbia became de facto independent from the Ottoman Empire after two uprisings: the first, led by Djordje “Karadjordje” Petrović, from 1804–1813; and the second, led by Karadjordje's rival, Miloš Obrenović, from 1815–1817. The Serbian Principality was established after the two uprisings (collectively known as the Serbian Revolution), and was recognized by the Ottomans in 1830. The Sublime Porte maintained a military presence in the principality until the 1860s, and Serbia's de jure independence was recognized at the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

⁷ Dušan T. Bataković, “La Serbie et la France: une alliance atypique,” and “Le modèle français en Serbie avant 1914,” Dušan T. Bataković, ed., *La Serbie et la France, une alliance atypique: Relations politiques, économiques et culturelles 1870–1940* (Belgrade: Institut des études balkaniques, 2010), 7–8, 13–100.

⁸ Draga Vuksanović-Anić, *Stvaranje moderne srpske vojske: Francuski uticaj na njeno formiranje* (Beograd: Mala biblioteka, 1993), 5–8.

⁹ Katarina Todić, “In the Name of Father and Son: Remembering the First World War in Serbia,” Joachim Bürgschwentner, Matthias Egger, and Gunda Barth-Scalmani, eds., *Other Fronts, Other Wars? First World War Studies on the Eve of the Centennial* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 444–450.

Little Entente and carving out a strong economic presence.¹⁰ French capital predominated in Yugoslavia's public finance and banking sectors, as well as the mining, transportation, and electro-chemical industries.¹¹ However, German economic competition, interrupted by the Great War, resumed in 1925 and accelerated with the coming to power of Adolf Hitler in January 1933.¹² France's international position and Yugoslavia's hopes in its Great Power "saviour" were both undermined by the assassination of the Yugoslavian King Alexander I and French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou in Marseille at the hands of the Italian-sponsored Ustashas in October 1934.¹³ Franco-Yugoslavian relations consequently cooled in the second half of the 1930s. As Europe descended into war, both countries' armies swiftly capitulated to the invading Germans (in May 1940 and April 1941, respectively) and endured four years of occupation (and a brutal civil war in the case of Yugoslavia). Bilateral relations were restored quickly in 1945, but deteriorated again in the period between the onset of the Cold War in 1947 and the Tito–Stalin split in June 1948. Until the mid-1960s the French maintained an interest in their traditionally privileged economic and cultural position in Yugoslavia. Until de Gaulle secured France's international position by consolidating the European Economic Community (EEC) around the Paris–Bonn axis, reasserting his position within the Atlantic Alliance, and elaborating the French nuclear *force de frappe*, French Fourth and Fifth Republic leaders used their country's position in Yugoslavia to reassert France's continental position by working to exclude British and American cultural and economic influence. That the Yugoslavs, too, did not abandon their

¹⁰ For Franco-Yugoslavian relations in the interwar period see Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske 1918–1941* (Beograd: INIS, 2006); François Grumel-Jacquignon, *La Yougoslavie dans la stratégie française de l'entre-deux-guerres (1918–1935): Aux origines du mythe serbe en France* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1999); Vuk Vinaver, *Jugoslavija i Francuska između dva svetska rata* (Beograd: ISI, 1985).

¹¹ Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, "La présence économique de la France en Yougoslavie, 1918–1940: Intérêts, enjeux, portées," Bataković, ed., *La Serbie et la France, une alliance atypique*, 558–566.

¹² David E. Kaiser, *Economic Diplomacy and the Origins of the Second World War: Germany, Britain, France, and Eastern Europe, 1930–1939* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 5–12.

¹³ Vojislav Pavlović, "L'attentat de Marseille, 1934: La fin symbolique d'une alliance atypique," Bataković, ed., *La Serbie et la France, une alliance atypique*, 575–578, 595.

interest in political, economic, and cultural relations with France for a number of reasons after 1945, despite the regime change, further confirms that the years immediately following the Second World War were not a *tabula rasa* and that the Iron Curtain was not impermeable.

An examination of Franco-Yugoslavian relations in the period 1945–1969 also facilitates a reconsideration of the Cold War from the continental margin, since both countries were in many ways outliers of their respective blocs: while the Yugoslavs refused to bend to the Soviets, French leaders sought to carve out autonomy from Washington. Both countries also had ambitions beyond their own national and regional spheres, which they were able to parlay into a substantial degree of international influence in the 1960s: the Yugoslavs’ bid to mediate – between the superpowers, and between the First and Third Worlds – in the 1950s, and to lead the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1960s and 1970s; and de Gaulle’s quest to rediscover French power and prestige (or *grandeur*, in his parlance) on the global stage. The means and short- to medium-term aims of both Tito and de Gaulle’s designs were therefore the same: to challenge the bipolar Cold War order by ending superpower hegemony and the Soviet–American armed standoff.

Lastly, this dissertation reintroduces an ideological element into a field dominated by realist accounts of state behaviour. Tito and de Gaulle’s long-term aims were, of course, very different. While both leaders exhibited pragmatism and lateral thinking, their ideological world views shaped their interpretations of the world and the ultimate aims of their foreign policies. While Tito supported “progressive elements” (that is, sought to promote socialism) in the Third World, de Gaulle wished to see communism “rolled back” from Eastern Europe. Therefore, even for the middle powers the Cold War was fundamentally an ideological conflict, or as historian Michael Latham termed it, “a struggle over the direction of global history and the definition of

modernity itself.”¹⁴ Despite the similarities of Tito and de Gaulle’s positions in the international order and aims of bringing an end to the Cold War, it was ideology that undermined any potential for international cooperation between the two countries.

The Cold War: From Orthodoxy to Post-Revisionism, From Realism to Ideology

The study of the Cold War has understandably been dominated by analyses of superpower relations, and Western historiography has naturally focused on the United States. With the breakdown of the Grand Alliance came the traditional orthodoxy, shaped by the American diplomat George F. Kennan, who called for the “containment” of the Soviet Union.¹⁵ While not monolithic (disagreeing on periodization, the role of ideology, and other points), the orthodox school holds that Soviet aggression and expansionism led to the collapse of the anti-Hitler alliance and to the Cold War, prompting American action to defend the “free world.”¹⁶

The revisionist controversy began in 1959 with William Appleman Williams’ criticism of the United States’ own “Open Door” policy of capitalist–imperialist expansionism from the end of the nineteenth century onward, and his argument that the Soviet Union could not alone be held responsible for the onset of the Cold War.¹⁷ As the bipolar world order stabilized after the Berlin and Cuban Missile crises, a post-revisionist view emerged. The latter has been dismissed by some as simply “orthodoxy plus archives.”¹⁸ While accepting the orthodox tenet that Soviet expansionism lay at the heart of the origins of the Cold War, its leading voice, John Lewis Gaddis, moved away from his predecessors’ preoccupation with assigning blame. He bridged

¹⁴ Michael E. Latham, “The Cold War in the Third World, 1963–1975,” Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 259.

¹⁵ Timothy J. White, “Cold War Historiography: New Evidence Behind Traditional Typographies,” *International Social Science Review* Vol. 75, No 3/4 (2000), 36.

¹⁶ Lloyd C. Gardner, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Origins of the Cold War* (Waltham: Ginn-Blaisdell, 1970), 43; Louis J. Halle, *The Cold War as History* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967), 1–2.

¹⁷ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962 c1959), 229–232.

¹⁸ John Lamberton Harper, *The Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 88.

orthodoxy and revisionism by acknowledging the existence of an American empire, albeit a defensive one, as well as Stalin's lack of an ideological blueprint for a world revolution.¹⁹

As J.P.D. Dunbabin wrote, the post-revisionist Cold War school is “a very broad church.”²⁰ With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emergence of the European Union, and the challenges posed to America's status as sole superpower, scholarship moved beyond an exclusively American source base and came to consider the roles played by factors other than the Soviet–American conflict. Supporting the revisionist argument of American imperial expansion yet challenging it along with the triumphalist interpretation of the “historic” process of European integration, Geir Lundestad made a case for the consensual nature of the far-from-omnipotent Washington's “‘empire’ by invitation” and “‘empire’ by [European] integration.”²¹ Marc Trachtenberg further challenged the notion of bipolarity in his seminal realist work, *A Constructed Peace*. He argued that the crux of the Cold War was not the Soviet–American ideological conflict, but the German question. Proceeding from the hypothesis that the early Cold War period would have been quite stable had it been purely bipolar, Trachtenberg traced the source of instability to the absence of a peace treaty over Germany in 1945: a treaty that would come in ersatz form only in 1963 with the de facto acceptance of the two-Germany status quo after the resolution of the Berlin crisis, thanks to which the world order was at last stabilized. In his account there was room for French, British, and West German

¹⁹ John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 353–361. Gaddis has since shifted toward more traditional interpretations of the Cold War, placing the blame for the onset of the war squarely upon Stalin and communist ideology. See Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 290–293.

²⁰ J.P.D. Dunbabin, *The Cold War: The Great Powers and Their Allies*, 2nd edition (New York: Pearson Education, 2008 c1994), 7.

²¹ Geir Lundestad, *The American “Empire” and Other Studies of U.S. Foreign Policy in a Comparative Perspective* (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1991), 54–56; Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945: From “Empire” by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 77–102. For the “triumphalist” school of European integration see Elie Barnavi and Krzysztof Pomian, *La révolution européenne, 1945–2007* (Paris: Perrin, 2008), 8, 234–268; Corinne Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil, eds., *Le traité de l’Elysée et les relations franco-allemandes, 1945–1963–2003* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2005), 9–11; F. Roy Willis, *France, Germany, and the New Europe, 1945–1963* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), vii, 32.

agency (albeit based on narrow and often selfish interests), unlike in those of earlier American Cold War scholars.²²

Alessandro Brogi further explored America's relations with its Western European allies as a two-way street, arguing for the role of "reciprocal manipulation" in the shaping of the Cold War system. According to Brogi, the French and Italians pursued the "appearance of leverage" as a means to achieving "actual" power and security guarantees, as well as providing much-needed domestic political consensus in the war-torn countries. American policy, in turn, which was far from oppressive, unilateral, and monolithic, provided domestic legitimacy to the national leaders and enough national self-esteem to allow them to come to terms with their diminished status, thus strengthening the Atlantic Alliance.²³

In recent decades it has become evident that the international relations-driven realist approach, which emphasizes power politics and the interest of states, and rejects the revisionist interpretation of the United States as an imperialist power, leaves little room for a discussion of the role of ideologies.²⁴ While Trachtenberg contended that neither superpower was a "prisoner" of its ideology and more often than not prioritized *Realpolitik* over dogma, as Odd Arne Westad explains, it was the end of the Cold War through the implosion of the Soviet Union that undermined the realist "balance of power" explanation of the Cold War.²⁵ While Dunbabin has argued that ideology and geopolitics were both equal prerequisites for the conflict, Nigel Gould-

²² Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), vii–x, 107–117, 348–352, 368–374. Scholars (Harper among them) have disagreed with Trachtenberg's assessment that the bipolar world order was essentially stable. Trachtenberg himself has since revised his earlier conclusions, arguing that there was no "deep stability" to the Cold War system even after 1963 because the military problem (the nuclear parity and conventional disparity between the Soviets and NATO) was never fully addressed. See Trachtenberg, "The Structure of Great Power Politics, 1963–1975," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 486–502.

²³ Alessandro Brogi, *A Question of Self-Esteem: The United States and the Cold War Choices in France and Italy, 1944–1958* (New York: Praeger, 2002), 1–9, 259–260, 267–270.

²⁴ Nigel Gould-Davies, "Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1 (Winter, 1999), 92.

²⁵ Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 4; Odd Arne Westad, "The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 4–5.

Davies criticized realism on the grounds that its proponents have denigrated the role of ideology because they did not wish to admit that the United States, too, was moved by dogma much like the Soviet Union.²⁶ Therefore, Gould-Davies argued, “we should understand the Cold War as a conflict not between the interests of two superpowers – what Arthur Schlesinger terms a ‘Greek tragedy’ – but between their ideologies, its inevitability arising from the clash of faiths on both sides, making for a ‘Christian tragedy.’”²⁷

In addition to the reintroduction of the ideological factor in the last decade, another new development in Cold War studies has been a move toward a global approach. Tony Smith shifted the paradigm by arguing for a pericentric framework in which “junior members” of the international system had the power to not only temper the Cold War but, just like the superpowers, also possessed and exercised their ability to expand, prolong, and intensify it: an inevitable danger when ideological convictions combined with the passions of nationalism and local or regional interests.²⁸ Emphasizing the role of ideology but focusing on superpower agency, in his study of the global Cold War Westad argued that the United States and Soviet Union were driven to own the concept of European modernity to which both saw themselves as heirs, and to thus assert their respective ideologies and world views as universal.²⁹ While some scholars see Hitler’s bid for world power as the “last gasp of European imperialism,”³⁰ to Westad it is the Cold War that may be seen in the future as “one of the final stages of European global control.”³¹

²⁶ Dunbabin, *The Cold War*, 611; Gould-Davies, “Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War,” 94–109.

²⁷ Gould-Davies, “Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War,” 108–109.

²⁸ Tony Smith, “New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* Vol. 24, No. 4 (Fall, 2000), 567–583.

²⁹ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4.

³⁰ Mark Mazower, *Hitler’s Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008), 2.

³¹ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 5.

While there is merit to Smith and Westad’s global approaches to the conflict, one may rightly wonder whether everything that happened in the world between the end of the Second World War and the fall of the Berlin Wall could be subsumed under the rubric of the Cold War.³² This brings into question the very definition of the conflict. Was it purely a bilateral showdown between the United States and the Soviet Union? If it was in fact a “Christian tragedy” or a clash of socioeconomic systems, could it be argued that it began not in 1947 but in 1917? John Lamberton Harper characterized the Cold War as a quasi-messianic competition between socioeconomic systems. Building from Westad’s interpretation of the war as a Soviet–American struggle for the concept of European modernity, he likened it to the Protestant Reformation wherein two branches of the same civilization came into conflict. Despite this, Harper argued that it would be misleading to date the beginning of the Cold War to the establishment of the Soviet Union because neither the origins nor the shape of the conflict, which began in 1946–1947 and stemmed from a change in Western policy, were inevitable (an argument that is implicit in the school of the primacy of ideology and in Williams’ economic determinism). Despite its origins, however, in Harper’s analysis the mostly realist superpower leaders relegated ideology to the domestic sphere from 1947 onward.³³

Richard Saull criticized the realist approach and tendency of the international relations school to subsume the Cold War under the heading of general great power (or exclusively superpower) competition, thus downplaying the distinctiveness of the conflict which was characterized by a clash of two social systems after 1917: and which, most tellingly, ended only

³² Many fields, such as decolonization studies, take a “reductionist” approach to the Cold War, limiting it to a series of key events and de-emphasizing its importance to 20th-century global history. Westad, “The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 7. For a notable example of this approach see Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

³³ Harper, *The Cold War*, 1, 24–29, 36–38, 244.

with the collapse of one of those systems.³⁴ Migrating from history to political science, however, Trachtenberg defended the realist approach. He questioned the tendency of the detractors of realism to assume that power politics invariably lead to conflict, as well as the proclivity of historians to assume that cooperation between states is difficult, even in cases where interests coincide. He ultimately argued that “realism is at heart a theory of peace,” and that conflicts arise not when states exercise power politics, but when they do not exercise enough.³⁵

The historiographical debate on the origins of the Cold War remains open, although a consensus is emerging over the need to account for the role of ideology and its interaction with power politics as the source of conflict.³⁶ Although this dissertation is not directly concerned with the origins of the Cold War, it proceeds from the view that it was fundamentally an ideological and multipolar conflict, albeit one that had an important geopolitical component. While the Cold War had important pre-1945 roots, dating its onset to the immediate post-First World War period is problematic as this fails to account for the various iterations of fascism, which cannot be dismissed merely as reactions to socialism or as extreme versions of capitalism (because, particularly in the case of National Socialism, communism and capitalism were rejected in equal measure).³⁷ The view taken in this dissertation is that the immediate causes and defining characteristics of the Cold War – the threat of nuclear holocaust, the unravelling of the Grand Alliance over the German question, and the division of Europe – stemmed from the aftermath of Hitler’s defeat. Nevertheless, greater dialogue between historians, political

³⁴ Richard Saull, *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War: The State, Military Power and Social Revolution* (London: Frank Cass, 2001), xv, 1, 209–210.

³⁵ Marc Trachtenberg, *The Cold War and After: History, Theory and the Logic of International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 3, 21, 42–43.

³⁶ White, “Cold War Historiography,” 42.

³⁷ For the Nazis’ rejection of both capitalism and communism see Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 3, 134–145. For the internecine struggle between communism, fascism, and capitalism see Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000 c1998), ix–xii, 396–398.

scientists, and sociologists is needed to integrate a series of matters: ideology with state interest; political rivalry with strategic conflict; and domestic systems with international roles.³⁸ However, one important advance has been made: Saull’s call to historians to not collapse the Cold War into a uniquely Soviet–American conflict and to thus ignore the roles played by other states has been answered, particularly by historians of France.³⁹

*Postwar France: A Reluctant Ally?*⁴⁰

The turn of the twenty-first century has seen scholarship move away from the centrality of the Cold War toward a reunification of the history of the two halves of a divided postwar Europe.⁴¹ It is the post-revisionist approach to the Cold War that permits an examination of the agency exercised by the middle powers, including Yugoslavia and France. For France, according to Frédéric Bozo, the “essential problem” of French foreign policy since 1945 was the difficulty in reconciling Great Power ambitions with the means of a thoroughly weakened nation.⁴² This internal frustration is what frequently led to turbulent relations with its American and British allies. In the Anglosphere in the 1950s and 1960s, commentators’ political, ideological, and national passions ran high over France’s perceived tempestuousness. However, Cold War détente gave rise to more sober analyses. Political and generational differences, source bases, and points of analysis aside, the scholarship on Cold War-era French politics displays one overarching trend: that the country’s foreign policy since the Second World War has been guided by a constant national interest – continental and imperial prerogatives, as well as the preservation of

³⁸ Saull, *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War*, xvi.

³⁹ Saull, *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War*, 36, 210.

⁴⁰ The title is borrowed from Michael M., Harrison, *The Reluctant Ally: France and Atlantic Security*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.

⁴¹ Mazower, “Changing Trends in the Historiography of Postwar Europe, East and West,” 275–281. Cf. Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005); Keith Lowe, *Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War II* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2012).

⁴² Frédéric Bozo, *La politique étrangère de la France depuis 1945* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), 3–10.

the country's Great Power status – rather than ideological concerns. Thus the history of post-1945 France cannot be understood within the narrow parameters of the Cold War alone.

In the orthodox historiography of the Cold War, the French only found a voice in Anglo-American diplomatic and academic circles from authors sympathetic to the nation yet critical of the Fourth Republic that was deemed no better than its “decadent” predecessor.⁴³ One such author was the London-based Russian émigré Alexander Werth, who sought to explain what “deep historical and psychological reasons [have made France], at least until very recently, such an “unsatisfactory” partner in the Free World.” Emphasizing the political and psychological continuities between the Third and Fourth Republics, he argued that what made France such an “unsatisfactory” partner in the Western Alliance was the fact that by the mid-1950s it had not yet recovered from the damages of 1918 and the “moral collapse” of 1940, rendering Paris “excessively mistrustful and suspicious” of other countries’ motives and ideologies.⁴⁴

With Gallophobia running deep in the Anglophone world after the return of de Gaulle, who was determined to challenge American hegemony in Europe and beyond, the Franco-German political scientist Alfred Grosser implored Paris, London, and Washington to “call an emotional truce so that the man and his policies can be analyzed calmly and rationally.”⁴⁵ He reminded his readers that France, unlike the United States, did not enjoy the luxury of having its national and ideological interests coincide. Instead, Grosser argued, there was a continuity in the foreign policy aims of the Fourth and Fifth Republics, both of whom sought security, equality, and independence for France.⁴⁶

⁴³ For an example of the “decadence” school of the Fourth Republic see Georgette Elgey, *La république des illusions, 1945–1951, ou La vie secrète de la IVe République* (Paris: Fayard, 1965), 507–510.

⁴⁴ Alexander Werth, *France, 1940–1955*, xix–xx.

⁴⁵ Alfred Grosser, “General de Gaulle and the Foreign Policy of the Fifth Republic,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944–)* Vol. 39, No. 2 (Apr., 1963), 198.

⁴⁶ Grosser, “General de Gaulle and the Foreign Policy of the Fifth Republic,” 198–212.

The Europeanist Guy de Carmoy disagreed with the notion that de Gaulle represented a continuation of Fourth Republic foreign policy by more abrasive means. Seeking to deflate the cult of the General, Carmoy praised the Fourth Republic for its ends (its frank preference for the Western bloc and its quest for security through the integration of West Germany into a continental framework in continued association with the United States), but not for its inability to appreciate its limitations, capitalize upon its scarce resources, and commit itself to continental and Atlantic affairs. Criticizing de Gaulle for failing to grasp the magnitude of the Soviet threat while head of the Provisional Government in 1945–1946, Carmoy blamed him for the turbulent foreign policy of the Fourth Republic, whose leaders had internalized his axiom that “empire equals grandeur.” Fear of losing the colonies and of being charged with “treason” by the man who had led the Resistance paralyzed governments which would have otherwise dispensed with France’s colonial burdens. Apart from condemning de Gaulle for halting “Schuman’s Europe” for the sake of the pipedream of a “Gaullist Europe” and for weakening the Atlantic Alliance (upon whose strength and protection his aims depended), Carmoy also faulted him for the evident failures of his risky policies which, contrary to his desires, only served to augment the weight of the United States and West Germany in world affairs.⁴⁷

Grosser and Carmoy attest to the divisiveness which de Gaulle inspired even among his contemporary countrymen, much less the rest of the world. Did de Gaulle continue or break with the foreign policy of the Fourth Republic? Did he have a coherent and feasible grand design or did he possess narrower, more selfish interests? Did he aim to weaken, or to reform and strengthen, the Atlantic Alliance? Did he accomplish anything of merit apart from infuriating his ostensible allies? Was it reasonable or excessive for him to demand equal say in NATO? Did he

⁴⁷ Guy de Carmoy, *The Foreign Policies of France, 1944–1968*, trans. Elaine P. Halperin (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), 23, 59–80, 182–189, 309, 481.

genuinely believe in the higher principle of European integration, or was the EEC just one more tool with which to augment French power and prestige? Were his policies an objective success or failure? The scholarship has long diverged on these questions but a consensus, stemming from Maurice Vaisse's seminal work, *La Grandeur*, is forming in favour of continuity between the Fourth and Fifth Republics, the existence of a clear and ambitious Gaullist grand design that had the potential to succeed, as well as the centrality of the General as a figure in the process of European unification.⁴⁸

In addition to the focus on France's role in European integration, much scholarship on postwar France is also devoted to Paris's relationship with Washington. One of the first revisionist scholars to criticize America's policy toward France was Irwin M. Wall. Arguing that Paris was not overly concerned with the Soviet menace, Wall contended that Washington's meddling, "unprecedented outside of colonial relations,"⁴⁹ was inchoate and ineffective, succeeding only in alienating the French because the Americans could not see beyond their anti-communist (and Gallophobic) blinders. Ultimately, not even the mighty hegemon could force France to relinquish its colonies, illustrating the structural limits of Washington's power. Hence it was inevitable that the myth of the "200-year Franco-American friendship" would founder upon the rock of "reciprocal antipathy."⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Maurice Vaisse, *La Grandeur: La politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle, 1958–1969* (Paris: Fayard, 1998). Although Vaisse argued that de Gaulle's designs more often than not resulted in failure, at least relative to his lofty ambitions (674–677), other scholars have since argued for various degrees of success of Gaullist policy. Cf. Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 3–5; Frédéric Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: De Gaulle, the United States and the Atlantic Alliance*, trans. Susan Emanuel, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 246–250; Julian Jackson, *De Gaulle* (London: Haus Publishing, 2003), 134–139; Mark Kramer, "De Gaulle and Gaullism in France's Cold War Foreign Policy," Christian Nuenlist, Anna Lochner, and Garret Martin, eds., *Globalizing de Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958–1969* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010), 2–17; Michael Sutton, *France and the Construction of Europe, 1944–2007: The Geopolitical Imperative* (New York: Berghahn, 2007), 2–5, 327–328.

⁴⁹ Irwin M. Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1945–1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 204.

⁵⁰ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, 6–9, 35–61, 300.

Wall further concluded that despite the mutual animosity between France and the United States, both countries ultimately achieved what they had sought: a mutually satisfying resolution to the German problem. France obtained the essential integrated defence network it had sought via the doomed European Defence Community (EDC) but without the problematic supranationality and West German access to nuclear arms; across the Atlantic, Washington at last acquired French acceptance of the rearmament and integration of the FRG.⁵¹ The question of how the supposedly incompetent Fourth Republic obtained a settlement so satisfactory to its own interests (that is, allaying its security concerns by containing West Germany without appearing to do so through the process of European integration) was taken up by Jasmine Aimaq. Stepping away from the Cold War, she inserted the EDC into the context of postwar colonial politics, and argued that the French exploited contemporary political realities (the German question and Cold War security concerns) to satisfy an old imperialist ambition. Aimaq characterized the aborted EDC as a “masterpiece” that was not fundamentally about Europe at all, but one that allowed Paris to wrest control of the process of German rearmament away from Washington, thus providing the French with much-needed diplomatic leverage in order to retain control over Indochina.⁵²

While perhaps going too far in her rehabilitation of the Fourth Republic and her portrayal of the EDC as a “masterpiece,” Aimaq did emphasize the agency of the Western European powers as well as Washington’s reliance on its smaller European partners: something that is often absent in English-language Cold War accounts.⁵³ The challenge of inserting Europe into the Cold War narrative was further taken up by William Hitchcock, who reprimanded scholars

⁵¹ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, 294–295.

⁵² Jasmine Aimaq, *For Europe or Empire? French Colonial Ambitions and the European Army Plan* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1996), 230–233, 242.

⁵³ Aimaq, *For Europe or Empire?*, 239.

who used exclusively American sources to explain distinctively European phenomena, such as the EEC. Challenging Wall's claim that Paris could do little to extricate itself from Washington's clutches, Hitchcock called for the rehabilitation of the Fourth Republic because it rejected the American imperialist framework and successfully altered it by "punching above its weight," thereby contributing substantially to the process of Western consolidation.⁵⁴

In Hitchcock's analysis, both the German and Russian threats were taken seriously in the French capital. Michael Creswell, however, challenged both Wall and Hitchcock on several points. Insisting that the French elite and public were not of one mind, Creswell argued that the politicians saw Moscow as the biggest threat but propounded anti-German rhetoric for domestic consumption. Distinguishing between the public and private rhetoric of France's leaders, Creswell argued that Wall and Hitchcock had portrayed France as too obdurate when in fact Paris's well-designed policies were guided by a clear-headed view to national interest. Yet he also borrowed from Aimaq and Hitchcock, taking the rehabilitation of the Fourth Republic the furthest by arguing that it played a crucial role in actively shaping the Western European Cold War system, and if Washington did not simply 'bypass' Paris, it was because genuine discussion was taking place and because the French capital was crucial to the "dual containment" of Moscow and Bonn.⁵⁵

Although the scholarship on post-1945 France has shown that Europe must be integrated into the Cold War narrative while simultaneously "taking off the Cold War lens" so as not to subsume all of post-Second World War European history into the Cold War alone, the revisionist rehabilitation of the Fourth Republic has recently been called into doubt. In his examination of

⁵⁴ William Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 7–9, 73, 203–206.

⁵⁵ Michael Creswell, *A Question of Balance: How France and the United States Created Cold War Europe* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2006), ii–ix, 26–34, 165–168.

French civilian and military leaders' handling of the conflict in Indochina, David Mark Thompson has shown that they were “prisoners of a self-imposed delusion that they could resurrect the nation as both a European and Asian power” through the creation of a national Vietnamese and supranational European army and the use of American aid. In Thompson's analysis, the Fourth Republic is guilty of failures to choose between Europe and empire and to find solutions, whether political or military, to decolonization.⁵⁶ While the pendulum is swinging away from the rehabilitation of the Fourth Republic, it remains to be seen where the debate will settle. Although this dissertation does not belong to the “decadence” school, it recalibrates the excessive rehabilitation of the Fourth Republic. The evidence presented makes the case for a weakened nation on the defensive in its former sphere of influence, not against the Soviets or West Germans, but against the British and Americans who needed to be kept off the continent if France were to regain its grandeur. While qualifying the Fourth Republic's rehabilitation, in analyzing its relationship with Yugoslavia this work also highlights the continuity between the Fourth and Fifth Republics' policies and ambitions.

Native-Language⁵⁷ Studies of Yugoslavia in the Cold War: Demystifying Tito?

With the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of Yugoslavia came the challenge to the canonization of Tito and the re-evaluation of his role and legacy. Turned into a scapegoat by many after 1991, some “demystificationist” literature verged on defamation, prompting Tito's grandson to sue author Miroslav Todorović for his controversial biography, *Hohštapler (The*

⁵⁶ David Mark Thompson, “Delusions of Grandeur: French Global Ambitions and the Problem of Revival of Military Power, 1950–1954” (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2007), ii–iii, 335–352.

⁵⁷ While most of the works surveyed here are in Serbian (ekavian) and/or are written by ethnically Serbian scholars, some are in Croatian and/or are written by ethnic Croat scholars. “Native-language” is used here as shorthand for Serbo-Croatian regardless of an author's ethnic affiliation.

Impostor).⁵⁸ Presently the historiography continues to demystify the enigmatic leader and the facts of his regime that had been suppressed between 1945–1991 (such as his own tactical “collaboration” with the Germans, not unlike the “collaboration” for which he executed his Chetnik opponents).⁵⁹ However, as the first post-socialist generations come to adulthood and as Slobodan Milošević functions as the *persona non grata* for many in the former Yugoslavia, there has been a move toward more level-headed analyses of Tito’s place in Yugoslavian and Balkan history that eschew present-day political instrumentalization.⁶⁰

The native-language historiography of Yugoslavia in the Cold War has been influenced by the accounts of Communist Yugoslavian contemporaries and their ideologically-informed writing on the country’s non-aligned foreign policy, international significance, and role in the development of the Third World-based Non-Aligned Movement.⁶¹ With the tremors of the 1990s the ideological shackles were removed, while the emphasis on the significance of Yugoslavia’s unique foreign policy and international role has remained. The literature has thus far been heavily focused on the period 1948–1955, “the ‘black box’ of Yugoslavian historiography” that was instrumental to the development of the country’s non-aligned foreign policy. Hagiographic and other contemporaneous accounts of Yugoslavian diplomacy (such as those by Edvard Kardelj and Leo Mates) that mythologize the Non-Aligned Movement and emphasize Yugoslavia’s distinction from the Soviet Union, have given rise to the popular misconception

⁵⁸ Vladimir Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija: Studije i dokumentarni prilozi* (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 19–21; Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Tito, Yugoslavia’s Great Dictator: A Reassessment* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992), 109.

⁵⁹ Pero Simić and Zvonimir Despot, eds., *Tito, strogo poverljivo: Arhivski dokumenti* (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2010), 16.

⁶⁰ Todor Kuljić, *Tito: Sociološko-istorijska studija*, 2nd edition (Zrenjanin: Biblioteka polis, 2005 c1999), 21–23.

⁶¹ Ljubodrag Dimić, “Historiography of the Cold War in Yugoslavia: From Ideology to Science,” *Cold War History* Vol. 8, No. 2 (2008), 286. For the centrality of the Asian-born Non-Aligned Movement to Yugoslavia’s diplomacy as well as the significance of Yugoslavia to the Cold War see Edvard Kardelj, *The Historical Roots of Non-Alignment*, 2nd edition, ed. Nikolaos A. Stavrou (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), 21–26; Leo Mates, *Nesvrstanost: Teorija i savremena praksa* (Beograd: Izdanje instituta za međunarodnu politiku, 1970), 517–519.

and “foundational myth of Socialist Yugoslavia” that the movement was born during the Tito–Nasser–Nehru summit on the Yugoslav leader’s island retreat of Brioni in July 1956.⁶² Much of the scholarship follows this received pattern of emphasizing the pivotal point of the mid-1950s. The dean of this field is Darko Bekić, whose seminal 1988 study is one of a handful of native-language works that made use of Western (in this case, American) archival sources. Bekić made the case for Belgrade’s quest to break its period of post-Cominform Resolution “autocephaly” by pursuing close but less than satisfactory relations with the West from 1950 onward, prompting Belgrade to once again reorient its diplomacy. He thus identified the year 1955 as “the prologue of non-alignment:” a year that was equally decisive for Yugoslavia and its diplomacy as 1948 had been.⁶³

At the time of Yugoslavia’s collapse, many works condemned Yugoslavia’s non-aligned foreign policy as one that shifted it away from the developed world, tethered it to the Third World, and thus led it to economic peril and civil war.⁶⁴ In his 1990 monograph, Dragan Bogetić sought to decode the “black box” in order to dispassionately appraise Communist Yugoslavia’s foreign policy. He contended that the roots of the country’s non-alignment could be traced to the Yugoslavian Communist Party’s interwar and wartime efforts to remain independent of Moscow, from the specificity of Yugoslavia’s internal development, as well as to the “chicken and egg” relationship between the Yugoslavian variant of socialism and non-alignment (the latter being

⁶² Tito met with Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India (1947–1964) and Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of Egypt (1956–1970) on Brioni. For the “Brioni myth” in English-language literature see Peter Lyon, “Non-Alignment at the Summits: From Belgrade 1961 to Havana 1979 – A Perspective View,” *The Indian Journal of Political Science* Vol. 41, No. 1 (Mar., 1980), 134; Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 75. For native-language literature see Dragan Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme Alžirskog rata 1952–1964*. (Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, 2009), 243. For a critique of the myth see Vladimir Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 130; Tvrtko Jakovina, *Treća strana Hladnog rata* (Zagreb: Faktura, 2011), 38–39.

⁶³ Darko Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu: Odnosi sa velikim silama 1949–1955* (Zagreb: Globus, 1988), 11–13, 37–59, 97–103, 670–671, 749.

⁶⁴ Dragan Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike 1956–1961* (Beograd: ISI, 2006), 7–8.

crucial to the domestic implementation of the former, and the former precluding “blocism” and reinforcing the tendency toward non-alignment). Bogetić thus made the case that neither 1948 nor 1955 were the caesurae they seemed to have been for Yugoslavian diplomacy, and occupied the middle ground between the *Primat der Innenpolitik* (Kardelj, Mates, *et al.*) and *Primat der Außenpolitik* (Bekić) schools of Yugoslavian non-alignment.⁶⁵

In focusing on non-alignment, the bulk of the native-language scholarship places Tito in the centre and casts Yugoslavia’s foreign policy vis-à-vis the two superpowers. Vladimir Petrović focused on Tito’s central position amid a cluster of institutions devoted to diplomacy, which included the Presidential Cabinet, the Foreign Ministry, the Parliamentary Commission for Foreign Affairs, and the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. In addition to Tito’s central position, his “nomadic personal diplomacy” and routinization of charisma served to legitimize his regime at home and abroad. Petrović contended that Tito’s push to broaden and institutionalize non-alignment as a global progressive movement stemmed from the twin crises of 1956 (Suez and Budapest) which had rendered bankrupt his post-schism policy of international mediation. He argued, however, that Yugoslavia’s non-aligned foreign policy was not as immutable after the 1961 Belgrade Conference (the conventional way of periodizing the inauguration of the Non-Aligned Movement) as had been previously thought because Tito’s personal diplomacy continued to influence it.⁶⁶

Bogetić’s studies of Yugoslavian foreign policy in the period 1952–1971 further detail the travails of Yugoslavia’s less than satisfactory relations with its Western partners, particularly the United States. The latter was concerned that Tito might return to the Soviet bloc and so tried

⁶⁵ Dragan Bogetić, *Koreni jugoslovenskog opredelenja za nesvrstanost* (Beograd: ISI, 1990), 6–16, 33–72, 238–243.

⁶⁶ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 7–19.

to integrate Yugoslavia into NATO via the Balkan Pact with Greece and Turkey. It was Tito's determination to preserve his country's independence that spurred the move toward bloc equidistance and non-alignment.⁶⁷ The distinction between Yugoslavia's non-alignment and the Non-Aligned Movement, however, is clearly drawn and rightly so, while the notion that the Non-Aligned Movement was formed on Brioni in 1956 has been questioned. Bogetić in particular makes the case that Belgrade opted for non-alignment in 1955 in response to increasing Western suspicions and the limited nature of the Soviet rapprochement, while the initiative to establish a movement of extra-bloc states only came in 1959, when Yugoslavia found itself once again isolated from East and West.⁶⁸

One shortcoming with the native-language body of work on Cold War-era Yugoslavia is the restricted use of sources, both primary and secondary. Engagement with Western secondary sources (which are rarely translated and are difficult to come by) and consequently with Western historiographical debates is limited. So too is access to Western archives – no doubt due to the economic difficulties in Serbia which leaves little money for research grants – although scholars are increasingly making use of British material.⁶⁹ France does feature in the narrative of some of these works, most notably those of Bogetić, as well as in Aleksandar Životić's study on Yugoslavia and the Suez Crisis. However, for the most part French archival material is not utilized, while some scholars – notably Vladimir Petrović's monograph on Yugoslavia's Middle Eastern policy in the period 1946–1956 – omit France completely from their narratives.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad 1952–1955: Jugoslovensko približavanje NATO-u* (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 2000), 8–10, 261–266.

⁶⁸ Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*, 43–50, 309–314, 349–363.

⁶⁹ As mentioned, Bekić used American sources for *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*. More recently, Aleksandar Životić has utilized British archival material (Životić, *Jugoslavija i suecka kriza 1956–1957*, Beograd: INIS, 2008). Dragan Bogetić, however, referenced American primary sources only via translations of Lorraine M. Lees and John Lewis Gaddis in *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*.

⁷⁰ Vladimir Petrović, *Jugoslavija stupa na Bliski Istok: Stvaranje jugoslovenske bliskoistočne politike 1946–1956* (Beograd: ISI, 2007), 7–10.

Serbian-language studies on Franco-Yugoslavian relations mainly focus on the “traditional friendship” in the pre-1945 period.⁷¹ The limited work on post-1945 relations has been undertaken by the political scientist Dragan Petrović, notably on the bilateral relationship during the Algerian War (1954–1962). Relying exclusively on Yugoslavian archival sources and writing with a view to present-day Serbian politics, Petrović condemned the Communist leadership and its undemocratic decision-making process, whose policy toward Algeria (as well as reservations toward the EEC) did not have broad popular Serbian support, and which caused unprecedented damage to the Franco-Yugoslavian alliance that otherwise had the potential to remain strong even after 1945.⁷² He further emphasized the robust non-ideological foundations of the long-term continuity in bilateral cultural relations that only on occasion was jeopardized by political–ideological tensions over Algeria. While recognizing that the French were motivated by both the “traditional friendship” and concerns of prestige, he was critical of Tito’s efforts to extract material benefit from cooperation with France.⁷³ By emphasizing the continuity of Franco-Serbian ties that were only temporarily severed by the (non-Serbian) Tito and his Communist regime, Petrović is clearly addressing the current (yet hardly new) debate in Serbian politics on the country’s future orientation: East or West, Russia or the EU.

English-Language Studies of Yugoslavia in the Cold War: Moving Beyond 1948 and 1991

A tremendous amount of English-language literature on Yugoslavia is devoted to the country’s collapse, and to a much lesser extent, to the Tito–Stalin split of June 1948. A far smaller number of studies discusses Cold War-era Yugoslavia without foreshadowing the civil

⁷¹ Cf. Ljiljana Aleksić-Pejković, ed., *Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi povodom 150 godina od otvaranja prvog francuskog konzulata u Srbiji* (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 1990); Bataković, ed., *La Serbie et la France, une alliance atypique*.

⁷² Dragan Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme Alžirskog rata*, 13–14, 385–387, 397.

⁷³ Dragan Petrović, *Kulturna politika francusko-jugoslovenskih odnosa 1949–1959* (Beograd: Institut za političke studije, 2006), 12–13, 148.

war. Many pre-1980 books were written by authors who had visited, and were personally connected or sympathetic to, Yugoslavia, such as Stephen Clissold and Fred Singleton, who had both served in Yugoslavia during the Second World War.⁷⁴ As in native-language historiography, reappraisals of Tito came after his death, most notably Nora Beloff's work deconstructing the "seven myths of Tito" – that he was a patriotic visionary; that the Partisans had liberated Yugoslavia without Soviet assistance; that "Churchill was hoodwinked" into seeing the Partisans as brothers in arms; that he was David to Stalin's Goliath in "saying no" in 1948; that in its non-alignment Yugoslavia had ceased to be loyal to Moscow; that he brought "brotherhood and unity" to Yugoslavia; and that workers' self-management had worked.⁷⁵

Scholarly studies based on Western archives first began emerging in the late 1980s, although they were typically told from Western perspectives due to barriers of language and physical access to Yugoslavian archives for many Anglophone scholars. Two of the most notable of such works are those by Beatrice Heuser and Lorraine M. Lees. Along with John R. Lampe, Russell O. Prickett, and Ljubiša S. Adamović's study of Yugoslav–American economic relations since 1945, they deal with the familiar theme of the tension between *Realpolitik* and ideology. Using American, British and French archival material and emphasizing policymakers' perceptions, Heuser made the case that the three Western powers overestimated Stalin's omnipotence and misread the origins and consequences of the Tito–Stalin split, which they interpreted not as Stalin's bid to rein in the ambitious Tito but as the Yugoslavs' conscious effort at emancipation. Thus believing that the Yugoslav case would inspire armed popular rebellion

⁷⁴ Stephen Clissold, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, 1939–1973: A Documentary Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975); Fred Singleton, *Twentieth-Century Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), xii. For Clissold's wartime and postwar stay in Yugoslavia see K. F. Cviic's review of his book in *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944–)* Vol. 52, No. 3 (Jul., 1976), 451.

⁷⁵ Nora Beloff, *Tito's Flawed Legacy: Yugoslavia and the West, 1939–1984* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1985), 15–220.

elsewhere in Eastern Europe, they first sought to “contain” communism by exploiting Yugoslavia as an ideological wedge and, when that failed, by attempting to co-opt it into NATO’s Eastern wall. In this system, the main beneficiaries of Western policy were the Yugoslavs themselves.⁷⁶

Lees also examined Western policy toward Yugoslavia in the early Cold War, focusing on American efforts to “keep Tito afloat” after 1948, and concluded that both parties set aside ideological conformity for the sake of mutual benefit: Washington gained a geopolitical advantage while Belgrade obtained economic and military aid that would last until 1958.⁷⁷ Similarly, Lampe, Prickett, and Adamović found that the bilateral economic relationship followed a pragmatic pattern and remained positive and mutually beneficial despite ideological differences and the political vicissitudes of four decades of cold war.⁷⁸

In recent years those studying the Cold War have moved away from a focus on Yugoslav–American relations.⁷⁹ A promising shift toward not only Yugoslavia’s relations with other states but also toward other types of relations is being led by internationally-educated academics from the former Yugoslavia. Svetozar Rajak has helped move the field away from realism and a preoccupation with the 1948 split. In a study of Yugoslav–Soviet relations in the period 1953–1957 that emphasizes the importance of ideology, Rajak used the process of normalization between the two countries as a case study on the relationship between imperial centre and periphery, and the power that the smaller party can wield over the hegemon and on

⁷⁶ Beatrice Heuser, *Western ‘Containment’ Policies in the Cold War: The Yugoslav Case, 1948–1953* (London: Routledge, 1989), xi, 20–22, 42, 209.

⁷⁷ Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1997), xiv, 235–236.

⁷⁸ John R. Lampe, Russell O. Prickett, and Ljubiša S. Adamović, *Yugoslav–American Economic Relations since World War II* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), x, 13–25.

⁷⁹ For native-language studies of Yugoslav–American relations see Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi 1961–1971* (Beograd: ISI, 2012), as well as Tvrtko Jakovina’s studies, *Socijalizam na američkoj pšenici, 1948–1963* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2002) and *Američki komunistički saveznik: Hrvati, Titova Jugoslavija i Sjedinjene Američke Države, 1945–1955* (Zagreb: Profil International, 2003).

the world stage. In his analysis the reconciliation, however transient it may have been, conditioned the processes of the de-Stalinization of the Soviet Union and the satellite belt, as well as Yugoslavian non-alignment, and by extension Belgrade's relations with the Western powers.⁸⁰ In addition to Rajak's influential work, a recent crop of literature sheds light on the figure of Tito and the extent of not only his ambitions, but his pragmatism and shrewdness as a statesman who, despite his unwavering ideological commitment to Marxism, sought to subvert superpower hegemony and Cold War bipolarity from the conflict's earliest years.⁸¹

The Non-Aligned Movement: Did the World Need Yugoslavia?

Both native- and English-language scholarship is in agreement that Yugoslavia began pursuing a neutralist policy from the mid-1950s onward that was centred around Afro-Asian non-alignment that emerged at the Bandung Conference in 1955.⁸² For many observers in the 1960s and 1970s, the emergence of Yugoslavia's new diplomatic course coincides and is synonymous with the Non-Aligned Movement. When this is taken together along with the myth of Tito playing David to Stalin's Goliath and the international geostrategic importance of Yugoslavia to the West, especially in the first decade and a half of the Cold War, the end result is an elevation of the Non-Aligned Movement and an exaggeration of its significance. In this iconography, the Tito–Nasser–Nehru summit meeting on Brioni that supposedly signalled the birth of the movement occupies a central place.⁸³

⁸⁰ Svetozar Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, Comradeship, Confrontation 1953–1957* (London: Routledge, 2011), 1–15, 201–218.

⁸¹ Jovan Čavoški, "Overstepping the Balkan boundaries: The Lesser-Known History of Yugoslavia's Early Relations with Asian Countries (New Evidence from Yugoslavian/Serbian Archives)," *Cold War History* Vol. 11, No. 4 (Nov., 2011), 557–570; Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, "The Yugoslavian Communists' Special Relationship with the British Labour Party, 1950–1956," *Cold War History* Vol. 14, No. 1 (2014), 23–46.

⁸² Rinna Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 16.

⁸³ See n.43.

Not all scholars who have examined the Non-Aligned Movement have done so from an exclusively Yugoslavian perspective. Peter Willetts emphasized the distinction between non-alignment as a foreign policy principle and the Non-Aligned Movement as an international collective undertaking. He examined the effectiveness of the Non-Aligned Movement as a whole, analyzing its participation patterns in the United Nations. Most importantly for our purposes, Willetts argued that it was not until the late 1950s that the leaders of Yugoslavia, India, and Egypt began to coordinate their policies and that neither of the three leaders had sought to assume the forefront of a Third World movement of any sort.⁸⁴ While in Yugoslavian literature Tito is exalted as the founder and leader of the Non-Aligned Movement, Guy Arnold accords that title to Nehru and his responses to international pressures to align India with the West. According to Arnold, Tito's significance to the movement derived from the fact that he drew his international authority from his demonstration of independence from a superpower in the Cold War: the conflict that was the movement's *raison d'être*. In Arnold's analysis, the Belgrade Conference signalled the inauguration of the movement because it obliged the Great Powers to recognize it as such.⁸⁵

Scholars have sought to uncouple the emergence of Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policy from the launch of the Non-Aligned Movement, although the debate on the precise inauguration of the movement and on its effectiveness is not settled. Peter Lyon contended that the movement could not have emerged at the "ad hoc" Belgrade Conference in 1961 and therefore had to have prior origins: on Brioni. However, since it petered out after the first summit, it is inappropriate to speak of it as a coherent movement prior to the Lusaka Conference

⁸⁴ Peter Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement: The Origins of a Third World Alliance* (London: Frances Pinter, 1978), xiii, 3, 58–109.

⁸⁵ Guy Arnold, *The A to Z of the Non-Aligned Movement and Third World* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), xxix–xxx, 297.

of 1970, where it was institutionalized.⁸⁶ Academics from the former Yugoslavia also disagree on the specifics of the movement's emergence. Dragan Petrović subscribes to the “myth of Brioni.”⁸⁷ Rajak dates the launch of the Non-Aligned Movement to 1961 and emphasizes the centrality of the Belgrade–New Delhi axis, but rightly challenges the received orthodoxy's Promethean account of Yugoslavian non-alignment. He argues that Yugoslavia's “refusal to join either camp was not the result of a pre-conceived, coherent political concept,” and that the non-aligned course was only “gradually conceptualized through a careful search of opportunities and allies in the international system.”⁸⁸ Bogetić and Životić, however, have challenged the significance of both the 1956 Brioni and 1961 Belgrade summits. They argued that the movement was not inaugurated in the Yugoslavian capital because most participants feared superpower repercussions should the movement evolve into a “third bloc,” and were reluctant to ally with a Yugoslavia that was on bad terms with both superpowers in 1961. Instead, like Lyon, Bogetić and Životić contended that the movement was not de facto launched until the Lusaka summit.⁸⁹ It should be noted that few historians from the former Yugoslavia devote themselves exclusively to the Non-Aligned Movement and questions of its effectiveness, since presently its lifespan exceeds the Yugoslavian primary source availability.⁹⁰ However, most recently the Croatian scholar Tvrtko Jakovina has built on Westad's work, making the argument for a global Cold War by proxy on the periphery, and making the case for the effectiveness of both Yugoslavia's own international role as well as that of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1970s

⁸⁶ Lyon, “Non-Alignment at the Summits,” 134–139.

⁸⁷ D. Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme Alžirskog rata 1952–1964*, 243.

⁸⁸ Svetozar Rajak, “In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs: Yugoslavia's Road to Non-Alignment,” Ljubodrag Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu 1945–1955: Slučaj Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Katedra za istoriju Jugoslavije Filozofskog fakulteta, 2005), 84–96.

⁸⁹ Dragan Bogetić and Aleksandar Životić, *Jugoslavija i arapsko-izraelski rat 1967*. (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 80–81; Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi 1961–1971* (Beograd: ISI, 2012), 35, 291.

⁹⁰ Yugoslavian diplomatic sources are declassified on a 30-year basis.

and 1980s, despite the excessive (and costly) ambition of the leader of the former and the idealism of the leaders of the latter.⁹¹

A central question in the field of Yugoslavia and non-alignment continues to be the debate between *Primat der Innenpolitik* and *Primat der Außenpolitik*. Contemporaries such as Kardelj and Mates emphasized the centrality of the uniquely-positioned Yugoslavia to the Non-Aligned Movement, the Non-Aligned Movement to Yugoslavian diplomacy, and the importance of both to the wider world. The most recent crop of post-disintegration works – those by Bogetić, Vladimir Petrović, Životić, and Jakovina – emphasize the primacy of foreign policy in determining Yugoslavia’s non-aligned course. The reasons for this range from the need for Belgrade to differentiate itself ideologically from Moscow after 1948, to concerns of international prestige, as well as a simple lack of options by 1958–1959 after bouts of isolation from both East (after the fallout over Tito’s condemnation of the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956) and West (when relations cooled due to the Soviet–Yugoslav rapprochement of 1955–1956). In other words, in these realist accounts Yugoslavia’s non-alignment and Third World turn were primarily conditioned by the international situation.⁹² With the ongoing Western fascination with Yugoslavia’s implosion, however, more recently some Western scholars have underlined the primacy of the domestic in determining Yugoslavia’s diplomacy. Gilles Troude has argued that the rapidly-growing Yugoslav Muslim population (Kosovo Albanians and Bosnian “Muslims by nationality”) was key to Tito’s calculations of maintaining power domestically by deepening ties with his Muslim Third World partners.⁹³ Along with Troude,

⁹¹ Jakovina, *Treća strana Hladnog rata*, 21–28, 640–651.

⁹² Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 309–314; Jakovina, *Treća strana Hladnog rata*, 31–35, 650; Petrović, *Jugoslavija stupa na Bliski Istok*, 183–184; Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 313.

⁹³ Gilles Troude, “La Yougoslavie titiste vue par les diplomates français (1955–1974),” *Balkanica: Annual of the Institute for Balkan Studies* XL (2009), 169.

Sabrina Ramet and Robert Niebuhr have also argued that concerns of domestic legitimacy drove the Yugoslavian Communists to non-alignment.⁹⁴

The most recent and ground-breaking study of Yugoslavia and non-alignment, from which this work proceeds, was conducted by Rinna Kullaa. In addition to making the argument for a less “Tito-centric” view of decision-making in Yugoslavia which acknowledged the role played by the long-serving Foreign Minister Konstantin “Koča” Popović, she presented a Eurocentric explanation for the development of Yugoslavian non-alignment. In her account, it was neutralist Finland in the late 1940s and early 1950s that provided the inspiration for Yugoslavia’s own neutralism. Instead of emphasizing the importance of the Bandung Afro-Asian conference of 1955 and the Brioni summit of 1956, Kullaa contended that the Non-Aligned Movement was born only after the Suez and Budapest crises of autumn 1956. In contrast to the bulk of the native-language literature which claims that Yugoslavia was well on the road to non-alignment by 1955–1956, Kullaa argued that Belgrade’s non-alignment remained Eurocentric until 1959, when Yugoslavia found itself once again isolated on both sides in a reprise of 1948, at which point its leadership opted for a Third World-based course and the Non-Aligned Movement proper.⁹⁵

The consensus thus far in both native- and English-language scholarship is that many of the Yugoslavian “myths of non-alignment” – including the foundation of the movement on Brioni as well as Tito’s supposed “invention” of it – are inaccurate.⁹⁶ Further, the majority of accounts emphasize realism and the primacy of foreign policy, outnumbering those that underscore ideology and the primacy of domestic policy. While domestic concerns cannot be

⁹⁴ Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918–2005* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006), 185–186, 599; Robert Niebuhr, “Non-Alignment as Yugoslavia’s Answer to Bloc Politics,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter, 2011), 178.

⁹⁵ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, xiv, 14–22, 175–180.

⁹⁶ Niebuhr, “Non-Alignment as Yugoslavia’s Answer to Bloc Politics,” 164–165.

completely dismissed, this dissertation combines *Primat der Außenpolitik* with ideology – that is, Tito’s quest for ideological consistency – in the shaping of Yugoslavia’s foreign policy from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s. It also reconciles Belgrade’s continental and Third World tendencies and makes the argument that the two orientations were not mutually exclusive. Rather, although Tito looked to the Third World for reasons of both *Realpolitik* and ideology, he did not discount the importance of Europe to Yugoslavian security. Similarly, the Foreign Ministry under Koča remained focused on Europe although it, too, accepted the “Third World turn” in 1959. Instead of choosing between Europe and the Third World, the Yugoslavs aimed to bridge the two by leading the Non-Aligned Movement and attempting to co-opt France into it.

Franco-Yugoslavian Relations: France’s Eastern Grandeur and Yugoslavia’s Continental Gaze

The general aim of this study is to revise our understanding of both French and Yugoslavian foreign policy in the first half of the Cold War through an examination of bilateral political, economic, and cultural relations. With regard to France, this dissertation makes the case for a continuity of French interest in Eastern Europe after 1945 and of foreign policy between the Fourth and Fifth Republics. Both Fourth Republic leaders and de Gaulle (until 1966) used the “traditional friendship” and their “traditional place of prestige” in Yugoslavia as a means of reclaiming France’s Great Power status, chiefly by working to exclude the British and Americans from Belgrade. As for Yugoslavia, this work challenges the dominant historiographical trend of confining the country’s Cold War history to the Third World-based Non-Aligned Movement. It shows that the Belgrade leadership did not feel obligated to choose between Europe and the Third World, and that Yugoslavia’s non-aligned foreign policy and leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement were not incompatible with Europe. Far from renouncing the continent, as some have argued, Belgrade remained committed to it, in particular to France, whom it pursued

as a trade, continental, and international partner in the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, this study argues that both French and Yugoslavian foreign policies were shaped by ideology to a large degree. For both Paris and Belgrade the Cold War remained, in its essence, an ideological conflict. While geopolitical bipolarity proved to be negotiable in the 1960s, the ideological duality remained uncompromising, ultimately preventing Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation and limiting both Tito and de Gaulle's abilities to mobilize both halves of Europe as well as the Third World to definitively challenge superpower hegemony and overcome the Cold War in the second half of the 1960s.

This study draws on the archives of France and the former Yugoslavia. However, there exists a dearth of Yugoslavian sources, and it poses a problem on two fronts: one, as Vladimir Petrović has pointed out, is the politically-mandated inaccessibility or non-existence of archival material; and two, beyond Bogetić's monograph on Yugoslav–American relations in the period 1961–1971, and his joint work with Životić on Yugoslavia and the Six-Day War, there is very little recent secondary literature on Yugoslavian foreign policy after 1961. Although enough material exists at the Archive of Yugoslavia to allow for a reasonable reconstruction of the country's policies toward France beyond what the voluminous diplomatic papers tell, the conclusions on Yugoslavia in Chapter 5 are necessarily provisional.⁹⁷

This work is comprised of five chronological chapters. Chapter 1 traces the bilateral relationship from the end of the Second World War to the eve of the Tito–Stalin split of June 1948. It examines France's efforts to preserve its economic position in Yugoslavia, despite its distaste for the new regime, as a means of salvaging its Great Power status that had collapsed with the swift defeat of May 1940. It also makes the argument that Tito's Marxism did not preclude his interest in France, even one that was governed by the Christian Democratic

⁹⁷ Petrović, *Jugoslavija stupa na Bliski Istok*, 15.

Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP). The new Yugoslavian leadership co-opted existing Francophile sentiments in Yugoslavia in order to promote ties between the two “peoples” (that is, the working classes), and placed hopes in French legitimation of the new regime and support of its claims to neighbouring Italian and Austrian territory. While relations stalled in 1947 as the Cold War set in, the situation vastly improved after the Tito–Stalin split. As Chapter 2, covering the period June 1948–June 1954, illustrates, with Yugoslavia obliged to turn West for economic survival after the schism with Moscow, the two French Christian Democratic Foreign Ministers, Georges Bidault and Robert Schuman, overcame their aversion to communism in order to participate in the tripartite Anglo-Franco-American aid to Yugoslavia as a means of remaining competitive on the international stage. To do so, the French relied on a defensive “policy of presence”: the resurrection of the rhetoric of the “traditional friendship” as a means of protecting their economic, cultural, and military position against the British and Americans. The new Yugoslavian leadership, too, maintained an interest in France, which was a key propaganda battleground against Yugoslav anti-Communist émigrés, both Croatian and Serbian. While it welcomed economic and military aid from France, whom it preferred as a partner to the British and Americans, official tensions between Belgrade and Paris were rife due the former’s poor relations with Rome and the Vatican. This led the Communist leadership to successfully seek out allies in other segments of French political life: namely Socialists, anti-Stalinist Communists, Radicals, and leftist Gaullists. Despite official tensions, Yugoslavia’s interest in exploiting French sympathies for material gain and diplomatic support over Trieste facilitated a maintenance of relations. Mutual security interests – the Soviet threat, the German question, and American hegemony – further brought the two countries together, particularly during Pierre Mendès France’s premiership (June 1954–February 1955).

Chapter 3 covers the period from the Franco-Yugoslavian rapprochement under Mendès France to a souring of relations under de Gaulle in January 1959. In the rapidly-changing international climate of the mid-1950s, Mendès France's successors were reluctant to formally ally themselves with Belgrade, despite their desire to maintain their position in that country and exploit its growing influence in North Africa for their own benefit. This chapter also shows that despite the emergence of Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policy, throughout the 1950s Belgrade remained attuned to the European continent, the source of its primary security concerns. Its conception of non-alignment, therefore, was far from extra-European or exclusively Third World-centred, and its "active neutralism" did not render a deepening continental engagement and overtures to Asia, Africa, and Latin America mutually exclusive. However, Belgrade's rapprochement with Moscow, the Suez Crisis, and the developing conflict in Algeria strained relations between Yugoslavia and Socialist-governed France.

An intensification of the Cold War in 1956–1962, marked by the Hungarian and Suez crises of 1956, mounting tensions over Berlin from 1958 onward, and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, was accompanied by an ideological hardening in both Paris and Belgrade. The Socialist Premier Guy Mollet took a reactionary stance on France's colonial troubles in Algeria, while Belgrade became committed to anti-colonialism and offered support to the Algerian *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) while urging negotiations. Although they initially greeted de Gaulle's return with optimism and a rapprochement became perceptible in the second half of 1958, by January 1959 Belgrade found itself at a diplomatic impasse, isolated once again from the East due to a resumption of ideological polemics with Moscow, from the West in general as a result of its ambivalent relationship with the Soviet Union, and from France in particular due to its moral and material support of the FLN.

Chapter 4 spans the period from January 1959, Yugoslavia's "Third World turn," to the normalization of Franco-Yugoslavian relations in August 1962, after de Gaulle had severed them in February over Tito's support of the FLN. It charts the lowest point in post-1945 Franco-Yugoslavian relations. For France, Yugoslavia remained a key battleground for French economic and cultural presence upon which to bolster its international prestige. Meanwhile, in the early 1960s Tito first became confronted with the tensions between his push for ideological consistency, which rendered imperialist France a nemesis, and the emerging similarities between "Titoism" and "Gaullism" that could not be denied. Over the course of the decade, both leaders sought to bring an end to the superpower condominium and armed standoff by carving out greater international roles for themselves. While Tito co-led the Non-Aligned Movement with Nehru (to 1964) and Nasser (to 1970), and sought to mobilize Third World sentiment against superpower domination, de Gaulle seized control of the process of European integration, challenged Washington's hegemony, and made overtures to the Soviet bloc in an effort to make himself and his country central to the process of reaching détente and ending the Cold War.

Chapter 5, spanning the period to the end of de Gaulle's presidency, argues that the Yugoslavs pursued a rapprochement with France not only for matters of continental security (as reassurance in the case of West German nuclear rearmament), but also with the aim of co-opting France, a fellow European power, into the Afro-Asian-dominated Non-Aligned Movement. Despite their agreement on a great number of international questions, de Gaulle, on account of his anti-communism, personal dislike of Tito, and disdain for small countries, never aspired to engage with Yugoslavia or the Non-Aligned Movement. While the incompatibility between the two leaders' long-term aims – the promotion of socialism in the Third World and the rollback of communism from Eastern Europe, respectively – ultimately prevented any form of cooperation

in perpetuating a multipolar world order and ending the Cold War, it was the ostensible success of the General's policies – French harnessing of the EEC, the withdrawal from NATO, and the elaboration of the *force de frappe* – that meant a loss of French political will to remain culturally and economically engaged in Yugoslavia after the “the Gaullist zenith” of 1966.⁹⁸ It was not France's post-Second World War weakness but rather its strength, compounded by the inflation and economic decentralization in Yugoslavia in 1964–1966, that sounded the death knell of French engagement in Southeastern Europe.

Note on Text and Terminology

This work uses the Latin Serbo-Croatian script with diacritics for Yugoslavian names and places, as well as the ekavian (*ekavski*) pronunciation variant for orthography (e.g., *veće* instead of *vijeće*). Exceptions have been made where English names or established conventions for transliteration and Anglicized pluralization exist (e.g. Belgrade, Chetniks, Ustashas).

This work follows the convention set by Anglophone scholars of postwar France of using the non-italicized “grandeur” in reference to de Gaulle's concept of French power and prestige (*la politique de grandeur*). The term “Third World” is used in its Cold War definition, that is, to denote the nations that belonged to neither the First World (the Western bloc and NATO), nor to the Second World (the Soviet bloc and Warsaw Pact). The more commonly used today phrase “developing world” is eschewed because it rings anachronistic when used in the context of the 1950s and 1960s.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 97.

⁹⁹ For recent usage of the term “Third World” in the Cold War context see Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 4–5; Latham, “The Cold War in the Third World, 1963–1975,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 259.

Chapter 1: Trieste for a Copper Mine? May 1944–June 1948

Introduction

The historiography of France in the second half of the 1940s is predominantly focused on its relationship with the West in the emerging Cold War and the beginnings of European integration and, to a lesser extent, on decolonization.¹ Apart from works on Franco-Soviet relations, little scholarly work has treated official France's relations with the Popular Democracies in this period, and it seems to be an article of faith that they were virtually non-existent during the Fourth Republic.² With regard to the historiography of Yugoslavia the Tito–Stalin split understandably dominates the scholarship, which both before and after the June 1948 caesura limits “the West” to the United States and Britain.³ To address these lacunae, this chapter sheds light on Franco-Yugoslavian relations from the end of the Second World War until the Tito–Stalin split. It examines the narrowly self-interested approach that France and Yugoslavia took to the bilateral relationship: France's efforts to preserve its material position in Yugoslavia

¹ For the Cold War and European integration see Michael Creswell, *A Question of Balance: How France and the United States Created Cold War Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 165–168; William Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 203–204; B.A. McKenzie, *Remaking France: Americanization, Public Diplomacy and the Marshall Plan* (New York: Berghahn, 2005), 232–239; John W. Young, France, *The Cold War and the Western Alliance, 1944–1949: French Foreign Policy and Postwar Europe* (London: Leicester University Press, 1990), 228–230. For French decolonization see Fredrik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 2012), Parts I–III; Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Making of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 55–81.

² For works on Franco-Soviet relations see Georges Bortoli, *Une si longue bienveillance: La France et l'URSS, 1944–1991* (Paris: Plon, 1994), 8–27; Julie M. Newton, *Russia, France, and the Idea of Europe* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 1–23; Mikhaïl Narinskiy and Maurice Vaïsse, eds., *Les crises dans les relations franco-soviétiques, 1954–1991* (Paris: A. Pedone, 2009), 5–8. For France's relations with the satellites see Lincoln Gordon *et al.*, *Eroding Empire: Western Relations with Eastern Europe* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1987), 188–231; Thomas Schreiber, *Les actions de la France à l'Est, ou les absences de Marianne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 7–14; Richard Sacker, *A Radiant Future: The French Communist Party and Eastern Europe, 1944–1956* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1999), 9–10.

³ Cf. Darko Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu: Odnosi sa velikim silama 1949–1955* (Zagreb: Globus, 1988), 59–76; Beatrice Heuser, *Western 'Containment' Policies in the Cold War: The Yugoslav Case, 1948–1953* (London: Routledge, 1989), x–xix, 43–49; John R. Lampe, Russell O. Prickett, and Ljubiša S. Adamović, *Yugoslav–American Economic Relations since World War II* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 13–25; Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), xiii–xiv.

as part of its broader attempt to salvage its Great Power status (or grandeur, in Gaullist parlance) that was placed in question by the consequences of the Second World War; and the Yugoslavian Communists' attempts to secure international recognition for the new regime and its territorial claims against Italy and Austria through France, the 'cornerstone' of the West, as well as to maintain the "traditional friendship" between the two "peoples" (that is, the proletariat) as a means of advancing the long-term international communist agenda. In conducting their relationship in the disordered landscape of the first few postwar years, both relied on improvisation and pragmatism and appealed to the traditional friendship to achieve their respective aims. Despite the narrowly self-interested and ad hoc nature of the relationship in the period 1944–June 1948, the revival of relations in familiar pre-1945 forms invites us to reconsider 1945 and 1948 as caesurae in Yugoslavia's relationship with the West in general and France in particular. Already practicing a degree of latitude from Moscow, Tito's position on France was ambivalent, and the traditional periodization of the Stalinist period (1945–June 1948) and "pro-Western" period (1948–1955) obscures the nuances of the relationship between France and Yugoslavia. In the interregnum between the end of the Second World War and the start of the Cold War the dividing line between the Soviet and Western spheres of influence remained porous, particularly in the fields of culture and economics, while ideological concerns, despite the lesser immediacy of their aims, remained present in the mind of the new Yugoslavian leadership.

A Tale of Two Countries

Europe, September 1944. War had been raging on the continent for over five years. Having landed in Normandy on June 6, the Allies liberated Paris and continued pressing east toward Berlin. Atop the Trocadéro the building of 1, rue Delessert, with a terrace offering a

spectacular view of the Eiffel Tower, was under occupation. Two men, identified only by their aliases “Gazivoda” and “Slobodan,” had entered the long-vacated residence of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and claimed it on behalf of the Yugoslavian liberation movement that was attached to the communist-influenced foreign resistance branch of the *Forces Françaises de l’Intérieur* (FFI).⁴ Despite warnings that their occupation was “irregular” and that no diplomatic immunity would be accorded them, “Gazivoda” and “Slobodan” refused to relinquish the building and the sizable quantities of munitions and explosives and a Simca automobile they found there.⁵ The struggle for the postwar order was on.

In Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito’s Partisan forces were quickly taking control of the country as the Wehrmacht retreated. Belgrade was liberated on October 20 but the Germans and their Croatian allies entrenched themselves on the Syrmian Front which held until April 1945.⁶ As the Front collapsed, Croatian and Slovenian collaborators fled to Austria to surrender to the British, only to be forced back to Yugoslavia and into the arms of the Partisans.⁷ In France, where the Occupation was much less brutal, so too was the collaborationist purge, although it was the prompt intervention of the authorities that kept the number of summary executions in France comparatively low.⁸ Meanwhile, the extent of human displacement wrought by the war became clear. Almost 200 Slovenians, including 77 children, who had been forcibly relocated from Yugoslavia first to Poland and then to Lorraine by the Germans as part of their attempt to rearrange the ethnic map of Europe, now found themselves at the already-crowded Yugoslavian

⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 3, “Note,” Folio 5–6, 27.09.1944.

⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 3, “Occupation de la légation de Yougoslavie,” Folio 19–20, 26.10.1944.

⁶ Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Hitler’s New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 241.

⁷ Keith Lowe, *Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War II* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2012), 254–262.

⁸ Jean-Pierre Rioux, *The Fourth Republic, 1944–1958*, trans. Godfrey Rogers (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987 c1980), 32. The seminal work on the purges in France is Peter Novick, *The Resistance versus Vichy: The Purge of Collaborators in Liberated France* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968).

Red Cross headquarters in Paris, where they joined countless forced labourers who had been liberated in Germany, all of whom required repatriation.⁹ In Yugoslavia, 400 “*malgré nous*” (French citizens who were drafted into the Wehrmacht) from Alsace and Lorraine and another 289 from the Saar were interned.¹⁰ Although French military officials were allowed to enter Yugoslavia to search for French nationals, they were denied entry to the POW camps themselves.¹¹ Fifteen French North African prisoners of war found themselves in a Zagreb camp in May 1945, while 2,500 Yugoslavian Muslim prisoners of war were held in Iraq by the Allies, denounced by Yugoslavia’s new regime as “quislings and fascists.”¹² In Eastern Serbia, some 30 French engineers and their families corralled themselves in the French-built copper mine at Bor (which had been expropriated by the Germans), anxious to be repatriated and to avoid being interned in Yugoslavian prisons or labour camps.¹³

Such was the chaotic situation across the continent. But out of the destruction so complete that it is perhaps best described as “anti-creation,” a semblance of order emerged remarkably quickly.¹⁴ General Charles de Gaulle, leader of the Free French forces, seized authority and formed a government of “national unanimity” based on the program of the *Conseil National de la Résistance* (CNR).¹⁵ Tito established a coalition government through an

⁹ DSIP, PA, 1945 F-9, “Mesečni izveštaj Jugoslovenskog Crvenog Krsta u Parizu,” Doc. 119, 05.02.1945.

¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 80, “Alsaciens et Lorrains internés en Yougoslavie,” Folio 27, 26.07.1945.

¹¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 80, “Mission en Yougoslavie du Commandant Hartmann,” Folio 36, 06.10.1945. After French officials were denied entry to the camps, the Yugoslavs claimed that their own search for French nationals yielded no results. Subsequent French requests to inspect the graves of fallen German soldiers in Yugoslavia were refused because the graves of those who fell in German uniform on Yugoslavian territory were not marked.

¹² For the Zagreb camp see MAE-N, Série B, Carton 25, “Liste des déportés nord-africains, récupérés dans un camp de Zagreb, le 21 mai 1945.” For Yugoslavian Muslim POWs in Iraq see AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-3 A, Note from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, 28.01.1948.

¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 80, Telegram from Ankara (Saint-Hardouin) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 3, 05.01.1945.

¹⁴ Lowe, *Savage Continent*, 11.

¹⁵ Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, 43–49.

agreement with the government-in-exile's Prime Minister, Ivan Šubašić, and the Communist-led Popular Front won Yugoslavia's first post-war election in November 1945.¹⁶

*French Recognition of the "Second Yugoslavia"*¹⁷

Official Franco-Yugoslavian relations had ceased in August 1941 when the Germans ordered the severance of diplomatic and consular relations between the two rump states.¹⁸ De Gaulle's provisional government, although continuing to recognize and support the Yugoslavian government-in-exile in London, was not optimistic about its future as a struggle for internal control raged in Belgrade between monarchists and communists. Acting on the advice of leftist Yugoslavian expatriates, in October 1944 de Gaulle's government downplayed the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Marseille assassination of King Alexander I and French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou, which took place annually in front of the Karadjordjević monument near the Porte de la Muette in Paris.¹⁹ The following spring de Gaulle sent a military mission to Yugoslavia, led by General de Peyronnet, until the arrival of the new French Ambassador, Jean Payart, in August.²⁰ In the meantime, he accepted the government-in-exile's Ambassador, Marko Ristić.²¹ Although the Americans interpreted the June 1944 agreement between Tito and Šubašić as "an almost unconditional acceptance of Partisan demands," de

¹⁶ Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder*, 297–298.

¹⁷ The country was known as the *Demokratska federativna Jugoslavija* (DFJ; Democratic Federal Yugoslavia) until November 1945, when its name was changed to *Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavije* (FNRJ; Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia) to reflect the overthrow of the monarchy. In 1963 it became the *Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija* (SFRJ; Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

¹⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 3, "Note a.s. du Bureau d'Administration des Yougoslaves," Folio 91–112, 30.04.1945.

¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 27, "Note: 10ème anniversaire de l'assassinat du Roi Alexandre de Yougoslavie," Folio 1, 05.10.1944.

²⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 37, "Note pour le Ministre: Yougoslavie," Folio 113, 29.10.1945.

²¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 37, "Note pour Monsieur Coulet," Folio 93–96, 16.05.1945.

Gaulle's Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault, continued to tread carefully but correctly toward the Royal Government until its formal demise a year and a half later.²²

The fact of the communist revolution was met with simultaneous disapproval and resignation in Paris. De Gaulle had been a supporter of General Dragoljub "Draža" Mihailović, the leader of the Serbian Royalist resistance, the Chetniks, and who, like de Gaulle, was an alumnus of the prestigious French military academy of Saint-Cyr. Mihailović, who was featured on the cover of *Time* in 1942 as leader of "[what] has been probably the greatest guerrilla operation in history,"²³ was by the end of the war an embattled man. He was angered by "'perfidious Albion,' who required Serbs to fight to their last drop of blood without adequate assistance," and who "betrayed" him in 1943 by supporting Tito and the Partisans.²⁴ Believing that "since the fall of France, the Serbs were left without any real friends," Mihailović turned to de Gaulle, who in March 1943 awarded him the *Croix de guerre* with palm.²⁵ In his thank-you message sent to de Gaulle in London, Mihailović assured him that it was:

...a comfort to know that in our time of extreme trials France remembers its friends of yesterday and of eternity. [...] I impatiently wait to once again see France in all of its glory and former grandeur. I am convinced that France will regain its place of honour in the world and that it will benefit, as it has in the past, from the good deeds of its immortal spirit.²⁶

The belief persisted in official Serbian circles that France could once again be the nation's saviour as it had been in the First World War, only this time it would spare the nation from "the English and the Russians who would impose Bolshevization upon the Serbs by force, the consequences of which would be the continuation of civil war and the extermination of the

²² Cordell Hull quoted in Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 3.

²³ "The Eagle of Yugoslavia," *Time*, 25.05.1942.

²⁴ Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder*, 166, 189.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 166.

²⁶ AN, 3AG/261, Message from Draža Mihailović to General de Gaulle, Doc. 6367, 11.03.1943.

Serbs.”²⁷ However, there was little that de Gaulle and the French could do to practically assist the Chetniks by the end of 1944. Given France’s “delicate position” in Yugoslavia after the overthrow of the monarchy, the Quai adopted a policy of supporting the opposition – a role mandated by “the sincere friendship that the Serbs have always had for us” – even though it was clear to all that France could gain nothing from antagonizing the new regime.²⁸ A ministry note to Bidault urged caution and attentiveness to Yugoslavia’s territorial claims against Italy (the Venezia Giulia and the port city of Trieste) and Austria (Carinthia and the city of Klagenfurt) for two reasons: one, so as to not inadvertently alienate both Belgrade and Moscow; and two, in the hopes that French support of some of Yugoslavia’s legitimate territorial grievances would result in greater influence over the Tito regime.²⁹

The capture, trial and execution of Mihailović in March–July 1946 sent a wave of indignation through the ranks of anti-communist Serbs in Yugoslavia and in the diaspora, and appeals to the French government flooded in.³⁰ French leaders were aware of their inability to intervene in the settling of Yugoslavian domestic scores, where opposition to Tito came from both religious and secular nationalist circles and was fueled by the Communist Party’s (CPY) persecution not only of its political opponents, but also of organized religion and its “ridiculous superstitions.”³¹ For our purposes, Tito’s campaign against the Catholic Church in Croatia and Slovenia provides insight into official France’s willingness to ignore the realities of Communist Yugoslavia for the sake of salvaging its material position, and is treated below.

²⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Telegram from Cairo (Lescuyer) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 8–9, 13.11.1944.

²⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, “Note pour le Ministre: Yougoslavie,” Folio 35–39, 29.10.1945.

²⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, “Note pour le Ministre: Yougoslavie,” Folio 35–39, 29.10.1945.

³⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 26, Telegram from the Serbian National Defense Council of America to the President of France, Folio 376, 17.06.1946.

³¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from th Zagreb Consul (Radenac) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 114, 30.12.1948.

The MRP and Tito's Campaign against the Vatican

In November 1945 de Gaulle was elected head of government but his poor relationship with the National Assembly worsened over a vote on military expenditure in December, and culminated with his resignation in January 1946.³² A brief period of “*tripartisme*” between the Christian Democratic *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (MRP), the Socialists (SFIO) and Communists (PCF) ended with Socialist Premier Paul Ramadier’s expulsion of the Communists from government in May 1947. With the Left fractured the MRP rose to power, ushering in a period of “*troisième force*,” a “third way” between Gaullism and communism.³³ Of significance was the MRP’s long tenure at the Quai d’Orsay, as well as the nature of the decision-making process at the French Foreign Ministry, where ministers had considerably more authority and responsibility than their British and American counterparts.³⁴ With the exception of the Socialist Léon Blum’s brief tenure in December 1946, from September 1944 to June 1954 the post of Foreign Minister was held by two MRP men: Georges Bidault, a distinguished *résistant* who served as chairman of the CNR after the murder of Jean Moulin; and the Luxembourg-born Robert Schuman, who would come to prominence as a “father” of the European Union.³⁵

As the only French resistance movement that succeeded in transforming itself into a political party after 1945, the MRP had its roots in thinker and politician Marc Sangnier’s efforts to bring together the Christian Left in the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair. With political Catholicism split again during the Second World War between right-wing *Pétainistes* and left-wing *Résistants*, after 1945 the Catholic Church endorsed the resistance-born MRP in an attempt

³² Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, 61–62.

³³ Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, 97–132.

³⁴ Heuser, *Western ‘Containment’ Policies in the Cold War*, xvii–xviii.

³⁵ Jacques Dalloz, *Georges Bidault: Biographie politique* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1992), 81; Sylvain Schirmann, ed., *Robert Schuman et les pères de l’Europe: Cultures politiques et années de formation* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2008), 11.

to reconcile the schism and mask its own questionable record under the Vichy regime.³⁶ The party attracted a base of rural and petty bourgeois Catholics, although its top echelons were less homogeneous: a disparity that was camouflaged for a time by unanimity over foreign policy.³⁷ The party's leadership ranged from the devout Catholic bachelor Schuman to the Leftist Gaullist Léo Hamon to Bidault, who was very much like de Gaulle himself: a devout man from a bourgeois family who was infatuated with history and was fueled by a "patriotic faith."³⁸ Bidault continued de Gaulle's foreign policy after the General's resignation and followed the Quai's suggestion that France support Yugoslavia wherever possible in order to profit politically and economically. But for Bidault, a cool acceptance of the communist regime more often than not translated into frequent displays of impatience and general unpleasantness toward Ambassador Ristić.³⁹ And Tito's persecution of the churches in Yugoslavia had the potential to make this cool acceptance difficult to maintain, especially while seeking to defend France's economic and financial interests against nationalization.

In postwar Yugoslavia the religious landscape was complicated by wartime events and Tito's domestic power-political considerations. The country's citizens belonged to three major faiths. Serbs, Montenegrins and Macedonians observed Orthodox Christianity, and together they accounted for just under half (49%) of Yugoslavia's total population in 1946.⁴⁰ Roman Catholic adherents formed the second-largest religious community, consisting of Croats and Slovenians, as well as the sizeable half-million Hungarian minority. (The equally numerous Catholic *Donauschwaben* Germans were evacuated by the retreating Germans, while those who remained

³⁶ Russell B. Capelle, *The MRP and French Foreign Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1963), 8–14.

³⁷ Capelle, *The MRP and French Foreign Policy*, 34.

³⁸ Dalloz, *Georges Bidault*, 101.

³⁹ DSIP, PA, 1946 F–25, Letter from Ristić to Simić on his conversation with Bidault, Doc. 5220, 20.04.1946.

⁴⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 34, "Note a.s. L'état yougoslave et les religions," Folio 148–151, 08.02.1946.

were later expelled by the Yugoslavs.⁴¹⁾ The third-largest and most rapidly-growing religion was Islam, practiced by Bosniaks and Kosovo Albanians. Although communism mandated an equal repression of all religions, wartime events and domestic concerns necessitated a pragmatic approach. In the words of Charles Boutant, the French Consul in Split, Tito's aim was not to punish believers but to paralyze religious power through intimidation. Although Yugoslavian Muslims had collaborated with the Nazis – most notoriously in the Waffen SS *Handschar* and *Skanderbeg* divisions – the centrality of Bosnia to the Partisans' support base, as well as Tito's plans for a Balkan Federation with Albania and Bulgaria, required prudence. Thus for the Islamic community, the weakest and least organized of the three major faiths, a handful of swift show trials were deemed sufficient.⁴² One notable example was the 1946 trial of two *vakuf*⁴³ directors. The two men were accused of “usury at the expense of the Muslim poor” and received lenient sentences by communist show trial standards: three years and one year of forced labour, respectively.⁴⁴

Tito also proceeded pragmatically with the Orthodox Church. The terror unleashed by the Ustasha regime in the Independent State of Croatia proved to be a “gift” to Tito as it drove many Serbs, especially in Bosnia, to the ranks of the Partisans who were far more effective than the Chetniks at resisting the Axis.⁴⁵ One third of the Serbian Orthodox clergy was killed during the war and hundreds of churches were destroyed.⁴⁶ By the time the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Gavrilo returned to Yugoslavia from Dachau in November 1946, the new constitution separating

⁴¹ Christopher A. Molnar, “Imagining Yugoslavs: Migration and the Cold War in Postwar West Germany,” *Central European History* Vol. 47 (2014), 144.

⁴² Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918–2005* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006), 198.

⁴³ A *vakuf* (*waqf*) is an Islamic charitable religious endowment.

⁴⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 35, Letter from the Split Consul (Boutant) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 113–116, 18.12.1946.

⁴⁵ Živko Topalović, *Tito et Kominform: Yougoslavie de 1941–1949* (Paris: Editions du Groupe Socialiste Yougoslave, 1949), 23; Lowe, *Savage Continent*, 252.

⁴⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 34, “La situation de l’Eglise Orthodoxe Serbe” (from *Le Monde*), Folio 96, 20.12.1945.

church and state had been proclaimed and local pressures for the autocephaly of the Montenegrin and Macedonian churches were mounting.⁴⁷ The ill and ageing Patriarch thus opted for a course of “contacts, entente, good will and communication” with the new regime, although rural priests were loath to obey.⁴⁸ For his part, Tito claimed that he personally wished for the Patriarch to return because, unlike his Catholic counterparts, the Patriarch “as a Yugoslav ... felt an obligation to improve the situation and believes that the Church must be Yugoslavian, that is to say, Slavic and national.”⁴⁹ Historically lacking the dogmatic and structural cohesion of Catholicism the Orthodox Church, divided along national lines and without a supranational leader, proved more amenable to the communist recruitment of “popular priests.”⁵⁰ In turn, the powerful Catholic Church and its wartime complicity was the Communists’ principal target: and a major focus of reports from the French Ambassador and Consuls to the Quai.

The Ustasha regime, led by Ante Pavelić, had unleashed a program of ethnic cleansing on a scale rivalled only by the Germans during the Second World War. Supported by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini since the early 1930s, the Ustashes espoused an ideology “drawn from extreme Croatian nationalism, from Italian Fascism and German National-Socialism, from Catholic clerical authoritarianism and from HSS [Croatian Peasant Party] peasantism,” according to which the Croats were not South Slavs but Eastern Goths.⁵¹ With Italian sponsorship the Ustashes and the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) carried out the Marseille assassination in October 1934.⁵² Following Yugoslavia’s capitulation in 1941 the Ustashes established the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* or NDH), the

⁴⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 35, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 157–165, 05.03.1947.

⁴⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 37, 10.12.1947.

⁴⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 13, 11.08.1947.

⁵⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 34–36, 11.11.1947.

⁵¹ Pavlowitch, *Hitler’s New Disorder*, 25.

⁵² Vuk Vinaver, *Jugoslavija i Francuska između dva svetska rata* (Beograd: ISI, 1985), 277.

borders of which included the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as eastern Syrmia, meaning that its territory stretched to Belgrade. The establishment of the NDH was initially welcomed by the Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac. Although Croatia's bishops were guarded and even hostile to the regime as they feared that its brutality would harm the cause of Catholicism, many priests approved of it and "individual clerics [became] Ustasha adherents, active as theoreticians, propagandists, officials, and even killers. Many more simply watched with satisfaction" the destruction of the Orthodox Church in Croatia and Bosnia.⁵³ In the face of Communist indictments of collaboration, Stepinac became "symbol and flag for 80% of Croats," according to Maurice Rivoire, the French Consul in Zagreb.⁵⁴

For the new Yugoslavian regime, breaking the Catholic Church's hold over Croatia and Slovenia proved to be difficult. Tito needed to punish the Church for its wartime deeds but he also needed to win over the Catholic peasantry in order to implement agrarian reform.⁵⁵ In this task he was confronted with the problematic reality of religious devotion in Yugoslavia. Conventional wisdom holds that religious devotion flourishes in economically undeveloped regions, while secularism dominates in prosperous areas. In Yugoslavia the reverse was true. According to official statistics for the early 1950s, 86.4% of the population were believers, while the remaining 13.6% professed atheism. The highest rates of atheism (18.4%) were found in the sparsely-populated and woefully underdeveloped Montenegro, while the greatest number of believers (88.4%) was found in Slovenia, described by the French Ambassador as "a region of uncontestable prosperity and in a stage of advanced civilization."⁵⁶ As a general rule, Orthodox

⁵³ Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder*, 34.

⁵⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 34, Letter from the Zagreb Consul to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 66, 05.11.1945.

⁵⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 34, Letter from the Zagreb Consul to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 140, 27.01.1946.

⁵⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 143, Letter from Ambassador Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 997, 09.08.1953.

regions were less devout than Catholic and Muslim ones, and Tito's targeting of the Roman Church galvanized the Catholic population – and the Vatican.

Archbishop Stepinac was convicted of treason and war crimes and was sentenced to sixteen years of forced labour in October 1946. Ambassador Payart likened it to the trials of Mihailović in Serbia and of Bishop Gregorij Rožman in Slovenia in terms of its effect on the opposition, and although he described the trial as less than fair, he admitted that the Catholic Church was being much more obstinate in Yugoslavia where it was determined to hold on to positions that it had long abandoned in Western Europe.⁵⁷ Communist charges of the Church's complicity with the Ustashas against the people and the new state were given credence in February 1947 when six Franciscan monks planted explosives in a Croatian factory. The resulting blast killed a number of workers. The French Consul in Zagreb assured the Quai that "as improbable as it may seem, this attack, which so shook Zagreb at the beginning of the year, was well and truly hatched at a Franciscan monastery in Dalmatia."⁵⁸ Two of the monks responsible were sentenced to death along with two known Ustashas, while the other four monks and a young female accomplice received prison sentences of varying lengths. The Consul assured the Quai that the trial verdict was surprisingly sober and that the authorities did not want to excite religious sentiment despite the softened but unremitting surveillance and control of the Church in Croatia and Slovenia.⁵⁹ But just as the Serbian opposition abroad appealed to the French for help, so too did Croatian émigrés. The Munich-based Croatian Catholic Academic Association *Stepinac* sent a letter to President of the Republic Vincent Auriol in May 1948, urging him to speak out to "awaken the world's conscience" to the Croatian people's struggle

⁵⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 35, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 43–49, 17.10.1946.

⁵⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from Radenac to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 239, 10.08.1947.

⁵⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from Radenac to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 239, 10.08.1947.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 395, 04.07.1947.

against “the bloody tyranny of communism.”⁶⁰ Enclosed with the letter was a brochure entitled “*Plus de lumière!*” (“No more light!”⁶¹), providing an alleged text of Tito’s secret speech detailing his plans to destroy the Croatian opposition, and a map claiming the Yugoslavian territories occupied by the NDH, Hungary and Italy during the war as the rightful and historical limits of Croatia.⁶²

Although Auriol did not respond to this request, the Yugoslavian authorities were under no illusions about the fact that Fourth Republic governments were hostile to the new state.⁶³ The Quai maintained that Tito’s allegations of the Church’s collusion with the Ustasha regime was merely a pretext for action inspired by Moscow’s “anti-Roman attitude.”⁶⁴ While Bidault indicated to Ristić in April 1946 that he was little interested (or bothered) by the negative way in which the MRP organ *L’Aube* was writing about Yugoslavia, in May 1948 he did emphasize to the Ambassador that the arrest of Stepinac left a negative impression in France and alluded to the difficulties that Paris would have in supporting a country that “throws archbishops into prison.”⁶⁵

The story of Yugoslavia, France and the Catholic Church will resume in Chapter 2; however, in the immediate post-war years the persecution of the churches remained an issue that the Christian Democrat Bidault was content to overlook for the sake of the far more pressing temporal and material concerns pertaining to French prestige that needed to be addressed.

⁶⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, Letter from the Croatian Catholic Academic Association *Stepinac* to Vincent Auriol, Folio 72–73, 19.05.1948.

⁶¹ Note on translation: The construction “*plus de quelque chose*” is shorthand for “*il n’y a plus de quelque chose.*” Thus the phrase “*plus de lumière*” translates into “no more light,” although it does also literally translate into “more light.”

⁶² MAE, Série Z, Carton 36, “*Plus de lumière!*” Folio 74–75, 19.05.1948.

⁶³ DSIP, PA, 1945 F–9, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 1314, 27.08.1945.

⁶⁴ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, “Note pour le Ministre,” 12.01.1946.

⁶⁵ DSIP, PA, 1946 F–25, Letter from Ristić to Simić on his conversation with Bidault, Doc. 5220, 20.04.1946.; A KMJ, I-3-b/213, Letter from Ristić to Tito, 27.05.1948.

Initial Calm: The Restart of the Traditional Friendship and French Efforts to Regain their Position in Communist Yugoslavia, 1945–1946

Alain Souleille has argued that the Second World War created a *tabula rasa* in Franco-Yugoslavian relations and that until the Tito–Stalin split the relationship yielded to the imperatives of the emerging Cold War, bypassing the context of the “traditional friendship.”⁶⁶ However, despite ideological differences and latent animosities over the church question, until mid-1946 there were promising signs of normalization thanks to Tito’s overtures and the Quai’s resolve to salvage France’s economic position. Immediately after liberation, the Quai made moves to ensure that France continue to play “an important intellectual and moral role” in Yugoslavia.⁶⁷ An October 1945 Quai report confirmed that despite the Soviet grip Yugoslavia was “the closest Slavic country to us” and that “without allowing ourselves to be discouraged by the extremism of its current regime, we must work patiently to regroup our friends and regain the privileged position which we have held for so long.”⁶⁸ In other words, appealing to the traditional friendship and “regrouping its friends” in Yugoslavia was an economical way of buttressing what remained of France’s cultural and moral presence in Eastern Europe.

The Quai’s cultural section, the *Direction Générale des Relations Culturelles* (DGRC), was established in April 1945. Secluded at the top floor of the Foreign Ministry building, its respectable 1945 budget fell precipitously with inflation in 1946. Headed by Louis Joxe, future Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Quai Secretary-General, it espoused an optimistic way of thinking about the promotion of culture. Although the “loss” of Eastern Europe came as a shock, the DGRC was seemingly unaware of the ascendancy of English as the world’s *lingua franca*

⁶⁶ Alain Souleille, “Quelques aspects des relations franco-yougoslaves de 1944 à 1949,” Ljiljana Aleksić-Pejković, ed., *Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi povodom 150 godina od otvaranja prvog francuskog konzulata u Srbiji* (Beograd: Istorijiski institut, 1990), 331–333.

⁶⁷ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, “Note pour le Ministre,” 12.01.1946.

⁶⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 37, “Note pour le Ministre: Yougoslavie,” Folio 113–117, 29.10.1945.

and continued emphasizing the promotion of the French language via the construction of cultural centres and reading rooms in Europe and beyond.⁶⁹ But the legend of Yugoslavia's self-liberation was quickly gaining currency in the West, and French intellectuals were no exception. This complicated the DGRC's work of promoting French culture in Yugoslavia through its interwar networks, as evidenced by the case of Dr. Jean Mousset.

Mousset, Professor of Slavic Studies at the Sorbonne, was director of the French cultural institute in Belgrade on the eve of the war. He returned to France in 1940 and joined the Resistance. Leaving France for Portugal, London and Algiers, he worked as a liaison between Free France and the revolutionary Yugoslavian forces and founded the *Association France–Yougoslavie* in Paris in coordination with the Yugoslavian Committee (a body of Yugoslavian nationals who were active in the French Resistance).⁷⁰ In June 1945 he wrote to the new Yugoslavian authorities asking that he be allowed to stay in the country for a few months and publish his findings upon his return to France.⁷¹ His request was granted and Mousset traveled to Yugoslavia despite General de Peyronnet's objections, where he joined the French legation and became a liability for the Quai.⁷² As part of the Quai's traditional way of nurturing cultural relations, Bidault awarded over 100 bursaries to Yugoslavian liberal arts students.⁷³ But with the legation understaffed the Quai had no choice but to appoint Mousset and his associate to grade the written exams and hold oral exams for bursary applicants. Payart warned Mousset after the

⁶⁹ Alain Bry, *La Cendrillon culturelle du Quai d'Orsay, avril 1945–décembre 1998* (Paris: Broché, 1999), 13–39, 223–224.

⁷⁰ Alfred Fichelle, "Jean Mousset," *Politique étrangère* No. 3, 1946, 11^e année, 318; MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 288, 27.04.1946. For the link between the Yugoslavian Committee's successor, the UJF, and the *Association France–Yougoslavie* see Saša Ilić, "Francuska propaganda u Jugoslaviji: Kulturna akcija Francuske u očima UDB-e 1953. godine," *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju* God. 10, Sv. 1/3 (2003), 266.

⁷¹ DSIP, PA, 1945 F-9, Letter from the Yugoslavian legation (Kapičić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 2717, 25.06.1945.

⁷² MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, "Note pour la Direction d'Europe," Folio 13, 03.07.1945.

⁷³ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, "Note pour le Ministre," 12.01.1946.

latter delivered a radio speech and wrote an article for the Belgrade daily *Politika* in which he deviated from Paris's official position on Yugoslavia's claim to Trieste and described interwar France as a "greedy, disgusting creditor nation."⁷⁴ In conversations with the new Yugoslavian authorities Mousset claimed that the French embassy was a "fascist den" and that *maquisards* were conspiring to overthrow the "traitor" de Gaulle.⁷⁵ Ordered by the Sorbonne to return, Mousset failed to comply and continued to present the Quai with *faits accomplis* which the latter could not overrule lest it provoke incidents with the Yugoslav authorities.⁷⁶ Having conducted the bursary tests in "a very incorrect manner," Mousset circumvented the embassy and wrote to the Faculty of Law in Paris. He had awarded bursaries to 30 students, most of whom were CPY members (of those 30, the embassy only approved of three). He also awarded 30 bursaries to students who were born to one French parent (some of whom did not qualify for financial assistance), despite being told to only select 18.⁷⁷ To the Quai's relief Mousset left Yugoslavia in October 1945 (and died the following year), and the "*querelle de bourses*" did not cause permanent damage between the French embassy and the Belgrade authorities which Mousset had clearly wished to provoke. Happily, Payart and the embassy's secretary, Jean-Marie Soutou, met with Yugoslavian officials and were able to adjust the results of the bursary competition.⁷⁸

The successful management of the "*querelle de bourses*" was made possible by Tito's agreeable disposition toward France. From Moscow's perspective, France was the cornerstone of the West's defence system and therefore had to be prevented, through proletarian revolution, from "becoming a bridgehead of the Western alliance in Europe."⁷⁹ Tito undoubtedly shared this

⁷⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 21, 11.09.1945.

⁷⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Letter to Payart from [illegible], Folio 52, undated.

⁷⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Letter to Payart from [illegible], Folio 50–51, 03.10.1945.

⁷⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, "Lettre du 3 octobre pour Monsieur Payart," Folio 52–54, undated.

⁷⁸ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, Letter from Soutou to Louet, 30.10.1945.

⁷⁹ Sacker, *A Radiant Future: The French Communist Party and Eastern Europe*, 9.

view and in 1945–1946 he was also mindful not to sour relations with the West so as to not create complications for Moscow.⁸⁰ But his interest in France also stemmed from narrower concerns, as well as a degree of acrimony toward the Soviet Union. The tensions that culminated with the schism of June 1948 were evident as early as 1944 (discussed below). Tito’s decision to “upgrade” the Western allies reflected his disappointment with Moscow and his desire to gain international recognition as a respectable statesman leading a legitimate government, not simply as an ultra-leftist revolutionary.⁸¹ Thus at the third AVNOJ⁸² session held in August 1945, he proclaimed that “the re-establishment of normal diplomatic relations between our Government and liberated France is in progress. Nothing stands in the way of the most amicable cultural and economic collaboration between the people of France, enamoured with liberty, and the people of Yugoslavia.”⁸³ Three weeks later Payart met with the Marshal, whom he evaluated as “a man of sane temperament and vigour and of a realist mind. He is able to disengage himself from ideological considerations. ... I found [him] very understanding.”⁸⁴ However, there were limits to how far Tito was willing to engage politically with the West. The Franco-Yugoslavian friendship treaty, which had been signed in 1927 and was renewed in 1937, had expired in 1942.⁸⁵ With Franco-Soviet relations unfolding as though the Franco-Soviet friendship treaty of December 1944 did not exist, there was to be no postwar Franco-Yugoslavian treaty.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske 1918–1941* (Beograd: INIS, 2006), 284.

⁸¹ Rinna Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 5; Ivo Banac, *With Stalin Against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 13.

⁸² Tito established the AVNOJ (*Antifašističko veće narodnog oslobodjenja Jugoslavije*; Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia) in November 1942. Its federalist program became the foundation for the second Yugoslavia.

⁸³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Telegram from the French embassy in Belgrade to the Foreign Ministry, Folio 26, 09.08.1945.

⁸⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Telegram from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 29–32, 28.08.1945.

⁸⁵ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, “Note pour le Ministre,” 12.01.1946.

⁸⁶ Schreiber, *Les actions de la France à l’Est*, 25.

Although the French interpreted the Belgrade street renaming campaign (thoroughfares named after Georges Clemenceau, Aristide Briand, and Raymond Poincaré were now named after Stalingrad and Yugoslavian communist heroes) as evidence of Tito's intention to break the "traditional friendship," Yugoslavian officials continued to speak regularly in favour of their country's friendship with France.⁸⁷ In July 1945 Massigli wrote to Bidault that the Yugoslavian Ambassador to London, the Croat Ljubo Leontić, spoke sincerely of the relationship between the two countries and of Yugoslavia's desire for a rapprochement with the Western European powers.⁸⁸ In a speech to the National Assembly (*Skupština*) in April 1946, Tito's mention of the traditional friendship between the two peoples was met with energetic applause.⁸⁹ But in the first half of that year, signs of Yugoslavian frostiness were beginning to emerge due to tensions over Trieste. In 1945 de Gaulle pronounced that Trieste was historically and ethnically an Italian city and should remain so.⁹⁰ The Yugoslavs, however, supported French claims to the Ruhr. In their view, their own quest to consolidate Yugoslavia's northwestern borders and France's bid to consolidate its eastern frontiers were part of the same struggle, and the lack of French support on the matter was a disappointment.⁹¹ A few days after Tito's speech to the National Assembly, word came from the Yugoslavian Ambassador to Warsaw that Payart was sending reports to Paris in which he presented the political and economic situation in Yugoslavia "in the worst possible light."⁹² As part of its campaign against the Quai's policy on Trieste, the PCF alleged that Payart was a *provocateur* in league with Vlatko Maček (the politician who had successfully campaigned for Croatia's semi-autonomy on the eve of the Second World War and who took up

⁸⁷ DSIP, PA, 1953 F-27, "Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi," Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

⁸⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 3, Letter from Massigli to Bidault, Doc. 1696, 13.07.1945.

⁸⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 37, Telegram from the French embassy in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry, Folio 249, 03.04.1946.

⁹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 37, Memo from the French Foreign Ministry to the French embassy in Belgrade, Folio 106, 24.07.1945.

⁹¹ DSIP, PA, 1946 F-25, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Bebler), Doc. 3356, 13.03.1946.

⁹² DSIP, PA, 1946 F-25, Telegram from Ljumović to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 3941, 07.04.1946.

residence in France in 1945) against Tito's government.⁹³ At this time an important distinction, present since 1945, was becoming even more pronounced in Yugoslavian rhetoric. In his April speech to the Assembly, Tito stated that while the French people desired close political, economic and cultural relations with Yugoslavia, the French government and its representatives in the United Nations showed much less understanding on the international stage: a clear allusion to the lack of French endorsement of Belgrade's claims to Trieste.⁹⁴ Thus while Tito insisted that the French government make a commitment to supporting Yugoslavia (thereby indicating that the future of the relationship hinged on the French attitude), so too the French maintained that the future of the relationship depended on the development of the new Belgrade regime and the evolution of its policy toward "non-Slavic" (that is, non-communist) countries.⁹⁵ In other words, France's Yugoslavian policy was dependent upon the extent to which Yugoslavia, divided 50/50 according to the Churchill–Stalin Percentages Agreement, would remain independent of Moscow. French policy thus confronted two central problems in Yugoslavia. On the regional front, Tito's claims to Trieste and his plans for a Balkan Federation would, in the eyes of the Quai, benefit the Soviet Union at the expense of Western influence in Southeastern Europe (when in fact the Balkan Federation was a challenge to Soviet policy⁹⁶). Domestically, Tito's policies, "corresponding certainly with the Kremlin's designs" according to Quai staffers, meant that Western influence was being forced out and that the old Serbian bourgeois circles – who were "France's numerous and faithful friends" – were vanishing.⁹⁷

⁹³ DSIP PA, 1946 F–26, Letter from Ristić to General Velebit, Doc. 3501, 15.10.1945.

⁹⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Telegram from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 393, 02.04.1946.

⁹⁵ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, "Note pour le Ministre," 12.01.1946.

⁹⁶ Slavoljub Cvetković, "The Balkan Federation and the Cominform," Petar Kačavenda and Djoko Tripković, eds., *Jugoslovensko-Sovjetski sukob 1948. godine: Zbornik radova sa naučnog skupa* (Beograd: ISI, 1999), 65.

⁹⁷ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, "Note pour le Ministre," 12.01.1946.

Despite the emerging political tensions, mutual sympathies between the two countries continued to grow on a popular level. When the PCF deputy Marcel Cachin visited Belgrade on the occasion of the International Workers' Day in May 1946, his speech was delivered in a Jacobin vein, not in a Marxist or Stalinist one, and the crowd's spontaneous renditions of *La Marseillaise* and chants of "Vive la France!" reaffirmed popular sympathies for France.⁹⁸ The Yugoslavian Consul in Marseille, Milivoje Pandurović, confirmed that the French people's prewar sympathies for the Yugoslavian people had translated into sympathies for the new Yugoslavia.⁹⁹ A particularly stirring episode attesting to this surrounded the Yugoslav memorial in Villefranche. In summer 1943 the Germans brought a battalion of Yugoslavian SS conscripts to a training camp outside the Pyrenean town of Villefranche-de-Rouergue. The group of some 400 men were, in official Yugoslavian parlance, "Catholic and Muslim Croats," and were placed under the command of Yugoslavian *volksdeutsche* officers. On the night of 17 September a rebellion broke out in the camp and as punishment 24 men were shot and buried in a mass grave. It was said that locals came to lay flowers at the burial site that very night. Another 86 men were killed in battle or died from mistreatment at the hands of camp officials. Of those who survived, many returned to Yugoslavia and joined Partisan ranks.¹⁰⁰ The new Yugoslavian authorities erected a monument on what was privately-owned land before purchasing the small plot on which the marker stood, while the Villefranche commune purchased a broader swathe of land around the memorial to ensure that it remained public and undisturbed. The local authorities

⁹⁸ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 66, 07.05.1946.

⁹⁹ DSIP PA, 1948 F-50, Annual report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 42642, 07.01.1948.

¹⁰⁰ DSIP, PA, 1950 F-27, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Jakšić) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 10130, 26.09.1950.

continued to tend carefully to the memorial and held annual commemoration ceremonies for decades after: a display of genuine Franco-Yugoslavian friendship.¹⁰¹

Despite the continuity in popular mutual sympathies, the new Belgrade regime was hypersensitive to any signs of French contact with, or support for, the “reaction,” Serbian or otherwise. As Ristić explained, Serbian political émigrés had connections to French military, police, financial, industry, and other circles. In bemoaning the loss of Serbian primacy in the new Yugoslavia they lent the impression that the country was no longer a friend to France.¹⁰² In an interview with writer Jean Richard Bloch, Tito clarified that although he believed in the traditional friendship between Yugoslavia and France, it had been misused by “reactionaries” in both countries and that “there is a big difference in the traditional friendship if the speaker is a reactionary or a democrat.”¹⁰³ Tito’s swift destruction of the opposition in the November 1945 elections meant that the old Francophile elites were disappearing from positions of power. France’s tentative support of its “old friends” was therefore yielding no results, especially as the Communists began co-opting Francophile elements. The new Yugoslavian leadership sought to repurpose the traditional friendship for the sake of promoting deeper ties between the French and Yugoslavian “peoples” (that is, the proletariat), which in the long term, theoretically at least, would strengthen the international working-class movement and bring about revolution. The interwar *Société des amis de la France (Društvo prijatelja Francuske)* was the only interwar friendship organization to be resurrected after 1945. Renamed the *Société des relations culturelles Yougoslavie–France (Društvo za kulturnu saradnju Jugoslavija–Francuska)*, its aim was to promote French culture in Yugoslavia in a “non-reactionary” way. It was analogous to

¹⁰¹ DSIP, PA, 1965 F–39, Letter from the Marseille Consul (Radović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 437178, 20.09.1965.; DSIP, PA, 1968 F–37, Note from the Marseille Consul (Brković) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 435121, 25.09.1968.

¹⁰² DSIP, PA, 1947 F–37, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 2443, 12.02.1947.

¹⁰³ AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/27, “Razgovor Maršala Tita sa francuskim piscem Žan Rišar Blokom,” 22.11.1946.

Mousset's *Association France–Yougoslavie*, and its mission was to “work through all means possible to reinforce the friendship which unifies the French and Yugoslavian peoples and to assist in the maintenance of the closest of cultural and social relations.”¹⁰⁴ The association was founded by Professor Siniša Stanković (a member of the Federal Presidium) and a group of university professors, some of whom had been French *boursiers* in the interwar years. Stanković (not a *boursier* himself) presided over the constitutive meeting, with Tito's top men – Foreign Minister Stanoje Simić, Vice-President of the Federal Government Edvard Kardelj, Vice-President of the Federal Presidium Moša Pijade, and General Ivan Rukavina – in attendance, along with Payart. Stanković explained to Payart that after Tito's April speech to the Assembly, a group of Francophile university professors gathered the courage to ask for Stanković's assistance in establishing the association. To test the proverbial waters, Stanković issued an article in *Glas (The Voice)* making the case for friendship between the two peoples (with the obligatory denunciation of imperialist and reactionary elements). As his article incited no polemics, the project was cleared to proceed. Stanković also assured Payart that the association would remain open to members of the extinct interwar association, “without too much political ostracism.”¹⁰⁵ However, the association would not prove to be particularly active. While Payart initially took interest in the organization, part of its mandate was to develop relations with the PCF. The existence of these liaisons quickly incurred the displeasure of the French embassy that then, according to the Yugoslavs, began “gathering around itself reactionary elements from the ranks of ‘true friends of France’ with the intention of conducting its policy [of recuperating its prewar positions] through them.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 109–112, 24.04.1946.

¹⁰⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 109–124, 24.04.1946.

¹⁰⁶ DSIP PA, 1952 F–26, “Jugoslovensko-francuski kulturni odnosi,” Doc. 417502, undated.

Although non-governmental forms of transnational relations were far from proscribed, those which stemmed from interwar bourgeois circles were closely monitored and co-opted. When in 1946 the *Ecole Polytechnique* and the *Musée de l'Histoire Naturelle* organized the fiftieth-anniversary celebration of the discovery of radioactivity, an invitation was sent to the President of the Serbian Royal Academy. In his stead the Belgrade authorities sent a politically correct member of government.¹⁰⁷ Tito, however, was not only concerned about domestic reactionaries and known collaborators because the danger posed by hostile propaganda abroad was just as great, especially when aimed at Yugoslavian economic émigrés. Of the 18,000-strong Yugoslavian community in France, almost one third consisted of Slovenian miners who had migrated to the French northeast in the interwar period.¹⁰⁸ According to the Yugoslavs, in every mine in France there were former Chetnik and Ustasha officers, as well as condemned war criminals, who were agitating against the new Yugoslavia.¹⁰⁹ In July 1946 the Yugoslavian embassy warned the Quai about organizations such as the *Association des étudiants tchetniks*, and provided it with a list of 55 names of dissident activists (all Serbian reactionaries, with the exception of two Ustashas) and urged the French authorities to be vigilant about the threats they posed.¹¹⁰ It was therefore not surprising that on the occasion of the one-year anniversary of Mihailović's execution the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry accused one of France's most influential dailies and the semi-official Quai organ, *Le Monde*, of a pro-Chetnik bias. Writing in protest to its director Hubert Beuve-Méry after the paper ran the headline, "Marshal Tito Unable to Overcome All Resistance," the Yugoslavian embassy's press attaché Vuk Dragović argued

¹⁰⁷ DSIP, PA, 1946 F-26, Letter from the *Comité de patronage du cinquantenaire de la découverte de la radioactivité* to the President of the Serbian Royal Academy, Doc. 12630, 04.10.1946.

¹⁰⁸ DSIP, PA, 1946 F-27, Note by Dr. Jovanović on Yugoslavian émigrés in France, Doc. 6838, 11.12.1945.

¹⁰⁹ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-50, Monthly report from the Marseille consulate (Franc) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 4582, 27.12.1947.

¹¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 82, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 21-27, 27.07.1946.

that Mihailović was a traitor, a reactionary, and an “*agent de patrons*,” and likened him to Pétain. Appealing to the need to ‘nurture the plant’ of the Franco-Yugoslavian friendship, Dragović pointed to the discrepancy between *Le Monde*’s writing on Mihailović while just a week earlier the PCY organ *Borba* had commemorated Bastille Day. This was consistent with Foreign Minister Simić’s view that the Yugoslavs were the only ones making an effort in the bilateral relationship and that the French had not shown “any interest” in establishing political or cultural relations with them.¹¹¹ In fact, the federal publishing house *Jugoslovenska knjiga* had ignored French offers of technical and other literature.¹¹² Similarly, French efforts to realize a cultural convention and reopen the formerly church-run French-language schools in Belgrade and Skopje, as well as the French institute in Belgrade, failed because culture was neither a practical priority nor an ideological prerogative for Tito.¹¹³

After *Le Monde* reprinted Dragović’s letter, the press attaché insisted that this was done on Quai instructions to embarrass Yugoslavia’s young diplomacy.¹¹⁴ Fortunately the economic aspect of the bilateral relationship seemed to hold more promise. Long before the split with Stalin, Tito was striving to balance his country’s trade between East and West for two reasons: one, because the Soviet Union could not absorb all of Yugoslavia’s agricultural and industrial surplus;¹¹⁵ and two, Tito refused to see Moscow exploit Yugoslavia for its own economic

¹¹¹ For the *Monde* article see Jean Schwœbel, “Le Maréchal Tito n’a pu venir à bout de toutes les résistances,” *Le Monde*, 23.07.1947. For Dragović’s appeal see DSIP, PA, 1947 F–37, Letter from the Foreign Ministry to the Yugoslavian embassy, Doc. 43261, 24.05.1947.

¹¹² DSIP, PA, 1947 F–36, “Zabeleška o razgovoru pomoćnika Načelnika Polit. odeljenja druga Latinovića sa g. Barbier, trg. atašekom francuske Ambasade i Dessiry, prvim sekretarom francuske Ambasade,” Doc. 46238, 18.02.1947.

¹¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Telegram from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 188–191, 05.01.1947.

¹¹⁴ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–35, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Dragović) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 414537, 30.07.1947.

¹¹⁵ Vincent Auriol, *Journal du septennat, 1947–1954*, Vol. II (Paris: Armand Colin, 1974), 181–182.

benefit, as it was doing with other satellites.¹¹⁶ In November 1945 Tito reached out to the French, a gesture Payart evaluated as sincere.¹¹⁷ As it was in its interest to ensure that Yugoslavia was not completely in Moscow's political and economic clutch, France became one of the first countries to resume its trade with Yugoslavia. A 12-month trade and payment agreement was signed in Paris in June 1946. It was extended by another six months in 1947, rescheduling its termination date to December 31, 1948. Trade figures (not including French aid) in the first three postwar years were as follows:

| Yugoslavia's Trade with France, 1946–1948 (in thousands of dollars) | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Year | Imports | Exports | Total |
| 1946 (Jun.–Dec.) | 54 | 572 | 626 |
| 1947 | 4,200 | 2,304 | 6,504 |
| 1948 | 6,080 | 4,406 | 10,486 |

Yugoslavian exports chiefly consisted of raw and semi-processed materials (copper, tin, zinc, hemp) and some foodstuffs (corn, hops, prunes, tobacco, and pork products), while it imported finished goods, machinery and chemical products for purposes of reconstruction and industrialization, particularly for the mining, metallurgical, and textile industries. The bulk of Yugoslavia's trade was with metropolitan France, although limited trade with the Maghreb (mostly Algeria) also occurred.¹¹⁸ Trade recovered steadily due to mutual interest, since both sides were keen on preventing Belgrade from fully falling into the Soviet sphere.¹¹⁹ However, this meant that, much like in the interwar period, Yugoslavia's imports from France outpaced its

¹¹⁶ Heuser, *Western 'Containment' Policies in the Cold War*, 21. Apart from refusing to tailor Yugoslavia's ambitious Five-Year Plan of industrialization to Soviet needs, Tito also tempered collectivization (which only started in earnest after the Tito–Stalin split). The violent enforcement of collectivization began after the split in order to deflect Soviet charges of heresy. Never on the same scale as that of the Soviet Union, the program faltered. Decollectivization began in 1953, although other forms of cooperative agriculture persisted. For collectivization in Yugoslavia see Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias*, 4, 186–196; Desimir Tochitch, "Collectivization in Yugoslavia," *Journal of Farm Economics* Vol. 41, No. 1 (Feb., 1959), 26–29.

¹¹⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 45–46, 24.11.1945.

¹¹⁸ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, Report on bilateral relations, Doc. 18382, 31.08.1955.

¹¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Note from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 45–46, 24.11.1945.

exports.¹²⁰ While the trade imbalance fell slightly between 1947 and 1948, trade was disrupted by French labour unrest in 1947–1948.¹²¹ Growth was further hamstrung by French apprehension regarding Yugoslavia’s “quasi-chimeric” Five-Year Plan for industrialization.¹²² Nevertheless, the situation on both the diplomatic and economic fronts remained calm until late 1946–early 1947, when two developments placed a great strain on Franco-Yugoslavian relations: the intensification of international tensions marked by the onset of the Cold War; and the passing of the Yugoslavian law on nationalization.

From Outward Calm to Reciprocal Intransigence: The Cold War Begins, 1947–1948

Before 1941 French capital was dominant in Yugoslavia, although the precise extent of its supremacy has been debated. Assessments range from a 1940 study which concluded that French capital claimed the top spot among foreign capital investors, while a 1958 study contended that it was in fourth place. The most recent assessment from 2006 argues that in the interwar period French capital was the second-largest foreign presence in Yugoslavia, after private American capital.¹²³ French capital predominated in Yugoslavia’s public finance, cement, glass, mining and hydro-electric industries.¹²⁴ With the prospect of nationalization looming after 1945, the French government’s chief concerns were the following assets: the copper mine at Bor in Eastern Serbia; the Peć gold mine in Kosovo; a series of coal mines owned by the *Société des Charbonnages de Trifail* (which included Trbovlje in Slovenia); and the holdings of the *Société Hydroélectrique de Dalmatie* (which the *Société des Phosphates Tunisiens* had taken over from

¹²⁰ The trade figures for 1949–1951 are remarkably balanced due to increased French imports from Yugoslavia in a bid to “keep Tito afloat.” The trade imbalance increased again in 1952 with Yugoslavian imports of war materiel.

¹²¹ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–50, Monthly report from the Marseille consulate to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 414622, 08.05.1948.

¹²² MAE, Série Z, Carton 23, Letter from the French embassy in Belgrade (Epinat) to the Foreign Ministry, No. 952, 29.09.1948.

¹²³ Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske*, 268–277.

¹²⁴ Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske*, 13–19.

the Genoa-based *Terni* in 1929¹²⁵). Bor was one of the largest copper mines in Europe. Its prewar output was 40,000 tonnes annually and was France's principal source of copper.¹²⁶ Before 1941 the majority of the mine's shares had been owned by *Mirabaud, Puerari & Cie.*, and the vice-president of the *Société des Mines de Bor*, Marcel Champin, was a personal friend of Vichy minister Pierre Laval. Laval concluded the sale of the mine to the Germans with the 'ambassador' to occupied France, Otto Abetz, in November 1940. With the sale, 81.83% of the mine's shares came into the ownership of the *Preußische Staatsbank*, while the remainder was left to private French and Swiss holders.¹²⁷ In 1944 the Soviets confiscated Bor and gave it to the Yugoslavian people "as a gift."¹²⁸ In March 1945 a member of the French military mission to Yugoslavia, Captain Blanchard, met with Pavle Jakšić, Chief of Staff of the Fourth Yugoslavian Army and a graduate of the *Ecole Supérieure d'Optique* in Paris. According to the latter, it was agreed that Bor (as well as the shipyard at Split built by the *Ateliers et Chantiers de la Loire à Saint-Nazaire*) should fall under Yugoslavian ownership as confiscated enemy property.¹²⁹ But the French government begged to differ. In Paris in 1945 Kardelj paid a visit to de Gaulle who, during the brief encounter, emphasized the "exceptionally great importance that France attache[d] to the Bor question" no less than twice.¹³⁰ Having acquired the German shares of the mine, the French government now claimed it as national property and in December 1945 it appointed a new board of directors. The Yugoslavs argued that Vichy's sale of the mine to the Germans did not represent a "betrayal of French national interest" but was instead a means of easing the occupation burden on France. The matter was thus not one of German appropriation

¹²⁵ Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske*, 291.

¹²⁶ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, "Note pour le Général de Gaulle: Biens et intérêts français en Yougoslavie," 09.12.1945.

¹²⁷ Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske*, 277–284.

¹²⁸ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, "Note pour le Général de Gaulle: Biens et intérêts français en Yougoslavie," 09.12.1945.

¹²⁹ DSIP, PA, 1945 F–9, Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Jakšić to General Velebit, Doc. 512, 26.03.1945.

¹³⁰ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, "Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi," Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

and therefore, as far as the Yugoslavs were concerned, the mine was exempt from the January 1943 United Nations declaration against the nationalization of property confiscated by the enemy. From the Yugoslavian perspective the French had lost all moral rights to Bor since they had directly benefited from its sale.¹³¹ Despite their own inflexibility, the French accused the Yugoslavs of intransigence. In 1945 the Yugoslavian government announced that it was willing to establish a joint Franco-Yugoslavian committee to study the matter, while the French remained unyielding in their insistence that nationalization would “uncontestably be a plunder of French interest.”¹³² They protested the “brutal eviction of foreign interests” from Yugoslavia and Tito’s refusal “to grant our just claims,” as well as the Yugoslavian rejection of the French proposal to send a new cohort of qualified and politically acceptable cadres to replace the mine staff that the new authorities had expelled.¹³³

A full two years passed between the liberation of Yugoslavia and the nationalization of foreign-owned enterprises and properties: a substantial amount of time compared to the speed with which nationalization was carried out elsewhere in Eastern Europe. In addition to the large industrial enterprises, private property – everything from plots of arable land in Macedonia and Slovenia to villas in Belgrade’s affluent Dedinje quarter – of over 50 private French citizens was affected by nationalization.¹³⁴ French religious holdings were also seized, such as the church-run French schools in Belgrade and Skopje and the Trappist monastery of Maria Stella near Banja

¹³¹ Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske*, 283–284.

¹³² AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, “La question des mines de Bor,” undated (1945).

¹³³ AN, 457AP/97, Fond Georges Bidault, 875-1 A, “Note pour le Général de Gaulle: Biens et intérêts français en Yougoslavie,” 09.12.1945.

¹³⁴ MAE–N, Série B, 79PO/75, “Liste des biens français atteints par la réforme agraire,” 05.04.1949.; *Ibid*, “Liste des biens immobiliers appartenant à des personnes physiques ou morales françaises atteintes par la loi yougoslave du 28.4.1948, complétant la loi de nationalisation,” 05.04.1949.

Luka.¹³⁵ The confiscation and nationalization campaigns proceeded slowly due to several factors, not least of which was the authorities' unpreparedness for dealing with the matter. (It was not uncommon for confiscated equipment to be left rusting in marshalling yards, such as the machinery from a French-owned textile factory in Smederevska Palanka.¹³⁶) But perhaps the biggest reason for the tardiness, according to Momčilo Mitrović, was the fact that nationalization of foreign-owned enterprises was not a first but a last step toward a socialized industrial sector in Yugoslavia. This was not only a way for Tito to assert Yugoslavia's autonomy from "the Soviet experience," but it was also a tool with which to pressure the French for territorial concessions.¹³⁷ In October 1946 the Yugoslavian Deputy Foreign Minister, Aleš Bebler, was frank about the fact that the final Yugoslavian decision on nationalization, as well as the granting of visas to French nationals to return to Yugoslavia and see to their property, was contingent upon the French attitude at the quadripartite foreign ministers' conference on Trieste in New York.¹³⁸ As part of the Quai's policy to support Yugoslavian territorial claims within reason, the French were willing to endorse Belgrade's claims to Rijeka (Fiume) and Zadar (Zara) against the Italians.¹³⁹ But the Yugoslavian claim to Trieste was unacceptable to the French, especially as it impeded the signature of a peace treaty with Italy.¹⁴⁰ Two days after the conference opened in New York, Industry Minister Boris Kidrič announced the nationalization of all foreign-owned

¹³⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, "Note sur les Ecoles Françaises de Belgrade," Folio 6–10, undated; *Ibid.*, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry "a.s. Situation de l'enseignement français en Yougoslavie," Folio 293, 27.04.1948.; *Ibid.*, Note on the Maria Stella monastery, Folio 125, undated.

¹³⁶ Cvetković, *Ekonomski odnosi Jugoslavije i Francuske*, 311.

¹³⁷ Momčilo Mitrović, "Nacionalizacija u Srbiji i Hladni rat," Ljubodrag Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu 1945–1955: Slučaj Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Katedra za istoriju Jugoslavije Filozofskog fakulteta, 2005), 237–250.

¹³⁸ For MAE, Série Z, Carton 81, "Note pour le Secrétaire Général," Folio 53–54, 16.10.1946.

¹³⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, "Note pour le Ministre," Folio 77–79, 12.01.1946.

¹⁴⁰ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 141–142.

enterprises.¹⁴¹ As Soviet-American tensions intensified, the Western powers interpreted the move on nationalization as Yugoslavian hostility to the West and subservience to the Kremlin.¹⁴²

Over the course of 1947 the French repeatedly requested that the Yugoslavs discuss compensation. Their requests remained unanswered until November, when the Yugoslavs indicated that they were only prepared to discuss what properties would qualify for compensation.¹⁴³ The problem for the French government was that it was hardly negotiating from a position of strength. Its efforts to gain control over the Ruhr and the Rhineland had failed, and labour unrest was mounting at home.¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile the French empire, key to the nation's Great Power status after the debacle of May 1940 and France's marginalization by the Big Three, was becoming increasingly restless as nationalist rebellions erupted in Madagascar, Indochina and Algeria.¹⁴⁵ As Soviet-American relations began to deteriorate over the German question, culminating with the promulgation of the European Recovery Program (ERP or "Marshall Plan") after the failure of the Moscow foreign ministers' conference that April, so too the CPY position on France devolved.¹⁴⁶ Not long after the announcement of the ERP, in May 1947 Ramadier expelled the PCF from the government, which ended *tripartisme* and brought the first of three

¹⁴¹ Souleille, "Quelques aspects des relations franco-yougoslaves," Aleksić-Pejković, ed., *Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi*, 334.

¹⁴² Mitrović, "Nacionalizacija u Srbiji i Hladni rat," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 237–250.

¹⁴³ Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, "Nacionalizacija francuskog kapitala u Jugoslaviji, 1946–1951. Godine," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 255–256.

¹⁴⁴ Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, 115–116.

¹⁴⁵ As Fredrik Logevall explains, resource-rich Indochina and Algeria were the 'jewels in the French imperial crown,' and French power and prestige suffered not only from the swift collapse before the Germans in May 1940, but also from Vichy's concession of Indochina to Japan three months later. As the French struggled to regain control over Indochina in 1945, they exploited local and international circumstances to shift the colonial war waged by Ho Chi Minh to a civil war. The First Indochina war lasted from 1945–1954 and ended with the French capitulation at Dien Bien Phu. Five months later a nationalist rebellion began in Algeria and quickly grew into a full-scale colonial war lasting from 1954–1962. The Algerian War as it pertains to Franco-Yugoslavian relations is discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. For the First Indochina War see Fredrik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 2012), xvi, 24, 198.

¹⁴⁶ Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 55–62.

MRP governments to power.¹⁴⁷ Ristić, who often relied on the PCF's interpretation of domestic French developments, erroneously attributed the expulsion to American interference.¹⁴⁸ Even before the implementation of the ERP and Ramadier's eviction of the Communists, CPY ideologues had begun to espouse the conviction that the French were little more than marionettes of the Americans and the Vatican. This was attested by Tito's hagiographer Vladimir Dedijer in a lengthy brochure on Franco-Yugoslavian relations published in February 1947 in the Belgrade periodical *Trideset dana (Thirty Days)*. According to the official party view, the true nature of the traditional friendship between France and interwar Yugoslavia had been one of economic exploitation. Post-1945 events were once again showing to the Yugoslavian people who their true friends and enemies were. Without Soviet Russia, "the imperialist powers would have torn us apart like a pack of wolves," while the voice of French liberty was being silenced "by American imperialists and their helpers in the Vatican."¹⁴⁹ That same month, an embassy report on the MRP contended that the party had "firm ties to the financial oligarchy and the Church ... [which it] has very skilfully camouflaged."¹⁵⁰ As a party that became the rallying point for reactionaries after the wartime incrimination of the old political Right, the report continued, the MRP was receiving support from the Vatican and had not once openly declared itself to be in favour of improving the station of the working class.¹⁵¹

By late 1947, mutual tensions had brought a chill to political relations between the two countries. On nationalization the French were using the only option available to them: they were insisting that the renewal of the bilateral trade agreement, set to expire at the end of 1948, be

¹⁴⁷ Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, 125–132.

¹⁴⁸ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 1455, 26.05.1947. Subsequent scholarship has shown that American pressure was not a factor in Ramadier's decision to expel the PCF. See Irwin M. Wall, *French Communism in the Era of Stalin: The Quest for Unity and Integration, 1945–1962* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), 53–70.

¹⁴⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 81, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 82–90, 05.02.1947.

¹⁵⁰ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, The Yugoslavian embassy's report on the MRP, Doc. 42850, 12.02.1947.

¹⁵¹ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, The Yugoslavian embassy's report on the MRP, Doc. 42850, 12.02.1947.

contingent upon the compensation settlement. Yugoslavian rejoinders that these were two wholly separate issues did little to sway Paris.¹⁵² These political tensions soon carried over into the cultural sphere. On November 29, 1947 (the new Yugoslavia's national holiday commemorating the anniversary of AVNOJ), Minister of the Interior Jules Moch banned the Yugoslavian expatriate body, the *Association des Yougoslaves en France (Udruženje Jugoslovena u Francuskoj* or UJF). The UJF emerged from the Resistance-associated Yugoslavian Committee that had been created in 1945 to agitate for the international recognition of the new Yugoslavian regime and its territorial claims.¹⁵³ The UJF's more politically sanitized aim was to perpetuate Resistance contacts, as well as "contributing to elevate the cultural level of the Yugoslavian emigration ... in collaboration with French authorities" and "promoting friendship between the French and Yugoslavian peoples."¹⁵⁴ The outlawing of the UJF and consequently of its bulletin "*Nova Jugoslavija*" ("*La Nouvelle Yougoslavie*") was a blow to Belgrade because the association was deemed crucial in the face of two problems: one, the general hostility to foreign workers in France in the aftermath of the November–December 1947 strikes; and two, the PCF's hostility to Yugoslavian workers after the CPY thoroughly berated the French and Italian party delegations for their "parliamentary cretinism" at the inaugural Cominform meeting in Szklarska Poręba in September 1947.¹⁵⁵ The official reason given to Payart was that its president was a member of the association's banned propaganda committee.¹⁵⁶ (The Chetnik organization in France,

¹⁵² AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/214, "Zabeleška o razgovoru druga Velebita sa francuskim ambasadorom," Doc. 3, 08.01.1948.

¹⁵³ Ilić, "Francuska propaganda u Jugoslaviji," 266.

¹⁵⁴ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-51, Letter from the President of the *Association des Yougoslaves en France* to Minister of the Interior Moch, Doc. 425370, 08.07.1947.

¹⁵⁵ For the importance attached to the bulletin see Milošević, "Pogled Jugoslovenskog ambasadora iz Pariza" Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 69. For the hostility to foreign workers see DSIP, PA, 1948 F-48, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Petrović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 416317, 03.06.1948., and Judt, *Postwar*, 144. For the inaugural Cominform meeting see Sacker, *A Radiant Future*, 43–59.

¹⁵⁶ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-47, Note on the conversation between Todorović and Jesover, Doc. 420634, 29.07.1948.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 82, Letter from the French Foreign Minister to Payart, Folio 88, undated (1948).

however, was allowed to continue its activities.¹⁵⁷) In response, Belgrade instructed Ristić to demand an explanation and “express our astonishment at such a measure that can only damage relations between our two countries.”¹⁵⁸ Belgrade retaliated by closing the French cultural institute in Ljubljana and expelling its director. Payart concluded that “seeking to protect itself from all foreign contamination, without renouncing – far from it – [the desire] to penetrate the West, the Eastern world is entrenching itself and does not intend to, ideologically or politically, accept a compromise.”¹⁵⁹ Although there is no evidence to suggest that Yugoslavian intransigence on compensation stemmed directly and solely from political and cultural tensions (technical and financial difficulties were the more likely reason), that was the logic of Payart who, according to the Foreign Ministry, “developed a whole theory that we were cooperating [on compensation for nationalization] with everyone – citing Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium, England, etc. – but that we were avoiding an accord with France.”¹⁶⁰

A compensation agreement would not be reached until 1949, and many changes were to occur in the interim. In a conversation with Auriol two months before the Tito–Stalin split, Payart noted that with the opposition in disarray and with Yugoslavia so firmly in the Soviet camp, even the intellectuals had turned away from Paris and toward Moscow and the people were obligated to follow. But because Belgrade needed the West economically even before the split, Payart emphasized that it was not in France’s interest to abandon Yugoslavia as it sought to rebuild and industrialize (especially as in Auriol’s estimation a clearing zone between the US and USSR needed to be created, in which France could play an important role). Auriol instructed

¹⁵⁷ Milošević, “Pogled Jugoslovenskog ambasadora iz Pariza,” Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 69.

¹⁵⁸ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–51, Telegram from Velebit to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 424533, 04.12.1947.

¹⁵⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 270–276, 23.03.1948.

¹⁶⁰ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/214, Note on Vlahov’s conversation with Payart, 12.06.1948.

Payart to visit Tito on his behalf and declare that all the French wished was to see Yugoslavia rebuild, and their only request was that Yugoslavia not interfere in French domestic politics.¹⁶¹

Yugoslavia's Young Diplomacy and its Propaganda Offensive in France: Mission Trieste

Auriol's request that Payart ask Tito to not interfere in internal French politics is telling of the trepidation that international communism inspired among France's ruling elites in the early Cold War. However, Yugoslavia's diplomatic and propaganda machine had a fitful start. Woefully short on experienced, qualified, and politically acceptable diplomats, Tito had no choice but to keep the royalist-appointed Ristić in Paris.¹⁶² Even though Ristić had no Partisan resistance credentials or communist convictions, Tito's agitprop chief Milovan Djilas urged him to keep Ristić because of his knowledge of the French language and culture, as well as his connections to the Parisian intellectual milieu.¹⁶³ The bourgeois Ambassador, as grandson of the Serbian statesman and historian Jovan Ristić (who represented Serbia at the Congress of Berlin in 1878), was sent as a young *lycéen* out of occupied Serbia to Geneva in 1915, where he became interested in French literature. Coming into contact with French surrealist writers such as Louis Aragon and Paul Eluard, he lived in Paris for a time in the late 1920s and translated André Gide into Serbian. In 1930 he co-founded a surrealist group in Belgrade where he met Konstantin "Koča" Popović, who would later serve as Tito's Chief of the General Staff (1948–1953) and Foreign Minister (1953–1966).¹⁶⁴ Lacking in both interpersonal skills and an understanding of diplomacy, Ristić considered his subordinates incompetent. The only authorities he recognized were the Politburo and Bebler and Velebit from the Foreign Ministry, and he resented the turf

¹⁶¹ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. II, 181–182.

¹⁶² Dragomir Bondžić, "Školovanje kadrova za diplomatiju u Socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji od 1945. do 1960.," Slobodan Selinić, ed., *Jugoslovenska diplomatija 1945–1961* (Beograd: INIS, 2012), 418.

¹⁶³ Slobodan Selinić, *Partija i diplomatija u Jugoslaviji 1945–1952* (Beograd: INIS, 2013), 208–219.

¹⁶⁴ Milošević, "Pogled jugoslovenskog ambasadora iz Pariza," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 63; MAE, Série Z, Carton 3, Biography of Ristić, Folio 85–87, 19.04.1945.

war at the embassy between himself and the UDBa man Josip Zmaić.¹⁶⁵ He thus frequently had to deal with near-mutinies from his subordinates. One embassy staffer wrote to Belgrade that he “hates Ristić more than he hates Hitlerites,” while his detractors at the Politburo (which included UDBa chief Aleksandar Ranković) insisted that he was nothing but an “intellectual, an individualist, and a petty bourgeois.”¹⁶⁶ However, the Politburo was forced to concede that Ristić was correct in describing the severely understaffed embassy as little more than a glorified administrative office. In the first year after the war the embassy consisted of the Ambassador, a consular section, an accounting service, and the UDBa agent. It lacked secretaries, advisers and attachés, which meant that Svetislav Todorović, the lone staffer that Ristić deemed competent, was overburdened. Ristić openly characterized this situation as “catastrophic” and although the embassy was eventually adequately staffed, Belgrade was unhappy with the dearth of reporting from the Ambassador. Ristić relied on the Parisian press, parliamentary debates and public speeches to relay generalities and conjectures about general French domestic and foreign policy. He reported remarkably little on Franco-Yugoslavian relations and the Foreign Ministry complained that he did not provide sources for the information that he forwarded.¹⁶⁷ He was nevertheless kept at his post for a full five years, one of a number of non-communist representatives appointed to Western legations that also included Nikola Tesla’s nephew Sava Kosanović in Washington.¹⁶⁸

In urging Tito to keep Ristić, Djilas was surely hoping that the Ambassador and his chargé d’affaires Sreten Marić, who “saw the French as gods,” could exploit their “excellent

¹⁶⁵ The counter-intelligence service OZNa (*Odelenje zaštite naroda*; Department for the Protection of the People) became the state security apparatus UDBa (*Uprava državne bezbednosti*; State Security Administration) in 1946. Both agencies were headed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Aleksandar Ranković, until his fall in 1966.

¹⁶⁶ Selinić, *Partija i demokratija*, 222–236.

¹⁶⁷ Marko Ristić, *Diplomatski spisi*, ed. Miladin Milošević (Beograd: Prosveta, 1991), 45–54.

¹⁶⁸ Selinić, *Partija i demokratija*, 220–224, 282.

connections to the most famous of French progressive writers and intellectuals,” such as Aragon and Pierre Emmanuel, to the regime’s benefit.¹⁶⁹ This was crucial because after 1945 more and more French intellectuals began rallying to communism (though they did not necessarily join the PCF), a phenomenon explained by Tony Judt as an unhealthy fixation “upon its wartime experience and the categories derived from that experience,” compounded by the “Kantian reign of ends” shared by existentialism and Marxism.¹⁷⁰ The pro-Yugoslav sentiment of Pierre Emmanuel in particular was deemed crucial because of his Catholicism.¹⁷¹ By the Marseille Consul’s assessment, it was French intellectuals who were most sympathetic to Yugoslavia, followed by communists, trade unionists, patriots, resisters, and political deportees.¹⁷² Additionally, the Yugoslavian embassy and consulates’ duties were not only to maintain official relations but also to manage agitprop campaigns because “propaganda was the party’s most direct means of communicating with the broader public” – both at home and abroad.¹⁷³

Belgrade’s French agitprop campaign consisted of publications, exhibitions, lectures, musical and theatre performances, film screenings and other events, all designed to exploit and promote intellectual and popular sympathies, as well as liaisons with “democratic elements” for both short-term and long-term aims. In the early postwar years, two themes dominated Yugoslavian propaganda in France. The first was to fight “misinformation” about the regime that was being disseminated by “hostile elements,” both French and expatriate, but also to promote the fact that Yugoslavia was independent of, and different from, the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁴ For both

¹⁶⁹ AJ, A CK SKJ, IX 30/I-68, “Francuski napredni književnici i njihovi odnosi sa Jugoslavijom,” undated (1948).

¹⁷⁰ Tony Judt, *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944–1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 44–76.

¹⁷¹ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, Telegram from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 426369, 20.12.1947.

¹⁷² DSIP, PA, 1948 F–50, Annual report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 42642, 07.01.1946.

¹⁷³ Carol S. Lilly, *Power and Persuasion: Ideology and Rhetoric in Communist Yugoslavia, 1944–1953* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), 10.

¹⁷⁴ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–48, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Petrović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 416317, 03.06.1948.

purposes Belgrade relied on the testimony of French intellectuals who had visited Yugoslavia. Ahead of the November 29 celebrations in 1947, Belgrade instructed the embassy to commission individuals who had been to Yugoslavia to write articles and hold lectures.¹⁷⁵ The theme of Yugoslavia's independence from the Soviet Union was implicit in the NOB exhibition (discussed below) but was also emphasized in other fora, such as conferences hosted by the *Association France–Yougoslavie*. At one such conference in Lyon, the journalist Francis Crémieu declared that “Yugoslavia does not resemble Russia[:] not by its form of government, nor by its economic and social forms[.] Private property and initiative are guaranteed by the Constitution; private property can simply be restricted or expropriated in the name of general interest.”¹⁷⁶ The second aim, of much greater practical and immediate importance, was the promotion of Yugoslavian claims to Trieste. With regard to this objective, Bebler judged agitprop in France, Yugoslavia's oldest friend among the Western powers, to be “of great utility.”¹⁷⁷

French sympathizers of Yugoslavia fell into three broad categories, all of whom openly supported the country's claims to Trieste. The first group consisted of conservative circles stemming from the shared experience of the First World War, such as the *Association des amis de Yougoslavie*. The association's apolitical mission was to assist Yugoslavs in France, particularly students. Its honorary president was General Louis Franchet d'Espèrey, who had been the Allied commander at Salonika during the First World War. Upon his death in 1942 he was succeeded by the politician Louis Marin.¹⁷⁸ Belgrade was suspicious of this organization, but it was far more amenable to First World War veterans' groups. In September 1947 the Paris

¹⁷⁵ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, Telegram from the Foreign Ministry (Velebit) to the Yugoslavian embassy, Doc. 42155, 25.10.1947.

¹⁷⁶ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, Transcript of Crémieu's speech, Doc. 414513, page 37, 22.07.1947.

¹⁷⁷ DSIP, PA, 1946 F–25, Letter from Bebler to Kardelj and Simić, Doc. 4656, 07.04.1946.

¹⁷⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 82, Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Zagreb Consul, Folio 77–78, 30.12.1947.

chapter of the *Poilus d'Orient*¹⁷⁹ invited Ristić to attend a ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Ristić sent Todorović to show that the embassy was “not disinterested in the organization.” Greeted with “unusual delight” at the fact that the embassy responded, Todorović, seated in the front row next to the association’s president, had been given instructions to leave if any royalist were also seated prominently or if anyone attended in a “Chetnik or other quisling uniform.”¹⁸⁰ Similarly the Yugoslavian Consul in Metz, Predrag Mitrašinović, was invited to the annual meeting of the Nancy chapter of the *Poilus d'Orient* in March 1947. The Consul’s pronouncements were greeted with “tumultuous enthusiasm” and he urged Belgrade to nurture the veterans’ “genuine affection for our country” because they represented a cross-section of French society. Maintaining links with French veterans was seen as a valuable opportunity for the new Yugoslavia to develop direct contacts with the French people, especially workers. Mitrašinović saw an ally in Emile Pierret-Gérard, a university professor in Nancy and President of the *Association des Anciens Combattants*, who lauded Yugoslavian resistance efforts that had fortuitously delayed Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union.¹⁸¹ The *Poilus d'Orient* were also allowed to visit Yugoslavia on numerous occasions in the 1950s and 1960s, a sign of Tito’s willingness to utilize the nominally proscribed royalist past to maintain relations with France.¹⁸²

The second group of ‘friends of Yugoslavia’ were left-leaning non-communists. Meeting with Ristić in a personal capacity in Paris in August 1945, the Governor General of Algeria (and later Ambassador to Moscow) Yves Chataigneau told him that he was fond of Yugoslavia and

¹⁷⁹ *Poilus* (“hairy ones”) is a term of endearment for French infantrymen of the First World War.

¹⁸⁰ What transpired at the ceremony was that General Glišić, the interwar military attaché, attended in civilian clothes and Todorović did not recognize him. DSIP, PA, 1947 F-34, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 421790, 27.10.1947.

¹⁸¹ DSIP, PA, 1947 F-34, Report from the Metz Consul (Mitrašinović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 45845, 13.03.1947.

¹⁸² The first postwar *Poilus d'Orient* pilgrimage to Yugoslavia was in 1955 (see MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Letter from the Minister of Veterans’ Affairs to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Folio 75-77, 05.05.1955.). The last pilgrimage within the period that this dissertation covers was in 1968 (see MAE, Série Z, Carton 293, Letter from Ambassador Francfort to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 1021, 20.07.1968.).

was disappointed that he was not named Ambassador to Belgrade. As someone who “did not make any great distinction between the old and new Yugoslavia,” when the subject of Bulgaro-Yugoslavian relations was raised Chataigneau told Ristić that “his old vision was that Yugoslavia should stretch from Beljak and Celovac to the Black Sea and eventually to Salonika.”¹⁸³ DGRC chief Louis Joxe was far from a self-styled “expert” on Yugoslavia like Chataigneau, but his son was a “great agitator” on Yugoslavia’s behalf who returned from a visit to the country in 1950 “full of exceptionally wonderful impressions and memories.”¹⁸⁴ Included in this category too were other individuals and groups whose support for Yugoslavia’s territorial claims primarily stemmed from their anti-fascism and hostility to Italy. The SFIO politician André Philip supported Belgrade’s claims to Trieste because in his view returning the city to Italy was not an option.¹⁸⁵ Like the *Association des Anciens Combattants*, organizations such as *L’Union Nationale des Etudiants de France*, *La Fédération Française d’Etudiants Catholiques*, suburban Parisian MRP deputies as well as the Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Egyptian, Vietnamese and, of course, Yugoslavian student groups all petitioned the French government to support Belgrade on Trieste ahead of the four-power conference in New York. A petition also came from intellectuals; the long list of signatories included Eluard and Aragon, historian Lucien Febvre, Nobel laureate Frédéric Joliot-Curie, writers Jean Cassou, Jean-Richard Bloch, Elsa Triolet, and Edith Thomas, and actor Pierre Renoir.¹⁸⁶ The citizens of Caen, Grenoble, Nice and other cities also declared their solidarity with the “the anti-fascist population,” both Italian and Slavic, of the Venezia Giulia, and likewise petitioned the four foreign ministers.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ DSIP, PA, 1945 F–9, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Velebit), Doc. 3699, 27.08.1945.

¹⁸⁴ DSIP, PA, 1951 F–25, “Zabeleška razgovora sa Joxe-om i ministrom Petrovićem,” Doc. 410014, 15.07.1951.

¹⁸⁵ DSIP, PA, 1946 F–25, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Bebler), Doc. 3356, 13.03.1946.

¹⁸⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 70, Text of the intellectuals’ petition to the French Government, Folio 233–237, undated.

¹⁸⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 70, “Nouvelles de la Marche Julienne” (press bulletin), Folio 258–260, 29.06.1946.

The third group of Yugoslavian supporters were PCF members and fellow travellers. As the only country that had “liberated itself,” Yugoslavia and the CPY were objects of reverence and praise (and perhaps envy) from the French Communists, at least until the events at Szklarska Poręba. Prior to the inaugural Cominform meeting, *L’Humanité* regularly came to Belgrade’s defence on nationalization and the church question, and criticized “the reaction” at the Quai (although Ristić noted in October 1946 that he sensed nothing incorrect about the Quai’s comportment toward Yugoslavia and felt that the PCF’s campaign was counterproductive).¹⁸⁸ On June 15, 1946 in Stiring-Wendel in Lorraine, the PCF and the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT) demanded that Trieste be given to Yugoslavia, “which had fought a heroic fight against the fascist plague.”¹⁸⁹ Along with the PCF, the MRP accounted for the majority of the 225-member-strong *Groupe d’amitié franco-yougoslave* founded in April 1947 in the French National Assembly.¹⁹⁰ Similarly the *Association France–Yougoslavie*, presided over by the jurist René Cassin, became a host to communists and communist sympathizers such as Cassou, Claude Aveline, Agnès Humbert, Clara Malraux and Jean Duvignaud, but also to left-wing Catholics such as Jean-Marie Domenach and leftist Gaullists such as Léo Hamon.¹⁹¹ Joliot-Curie, a Nobel laureate, PCF member and President of the *Union Nationale des Intellectuels*, was a Yugoslavian sympathizer and the Union’s local chapter in Marseille provided space for a series of lectures organized by the *Association France–Yougoslavie* in January 1947.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ DSIP, PA, 1946 F–25, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 441, 04.01.1945; *Ibid.*, 1946 F–26, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Velebit), Doc. 3501, 15.10.1946.

¹⁸⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 70, “Texte d’une résolution en date du 15 juin 1946,” Folio 210, 26.06.1946.

¹⁹⁰ DSIP, PA, 1947 F–34, Telegram from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 410038, 03.04.1947.

¹⁹¹ Jean Cassou, ed., *Vers une renaissance du socialisme: Témoignages sur la Yougoslavie* (Paris: Gizard, 1951), 5–10, 67–83, 125–143.

¹⁹² DSIP, PA, 1945 F–9, Doc. 4840, Letter from Frédéric Joliot-Curie to the Yugoslavian legation, 10.09.1945; *Ibid.*, 1948 F–50, Letter from the Marseille Consul (Pandurović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Folio 50/371, 31.01.1947.

Despite the intellectual and popular support for Yugoslavia and its claims to Trieste, the new Yugoslavian government's actions in France did not yield the desired results. Both Ristić in Paris and Pandurović in Marseille bemoaned the lack of agitprop funding, materials and instructions for everything from musical radio emissions to French-language publications. Musical recordings and film reels, the technical quality of which often left much to be desired, had to be shuttled from one embassy to another and the shipments were frequently delayed at customs.¹⁹³ In January 1948 Pandurović reported that “considering that we were left to our own devices with regard to propaganda, and that we did not have enough support from the appropriate authorities, and that the material we requested was tardy – never mind our humble means – our work over the year 1947 nevertheless represented a step forward.”¹⁹⁴ But these were fairly small steps. At the embassy's suggestion it, along with the *Association France–Yougoslavie*, organized an exhibition in June 1946 on the “immortal legend” that was the Yugoslavian peasants' and workers' sacrifice in the War of National Liberation (*Narodnooslobodilačka borba* or NOB) at the Salle des Ambassadeurs near the Place de la Concorde. The exhibition's patronage committee read like a “who's who” of postwar French intellectual and political elites: Cassin, Febvre, Joliot-Curie, Generals Juin, de Lattre de Tassigny and Legentilhomme, Eluard, Aragon, Cassou, Vercors, Auriol, President of the Provisional Government Félix Gouin, PCF leader Maurice Thorez and MRP President Maurice Schumann, among others. Cassin opened the exhibition and spoke along with Juin and de Lattre.¹⁹⁵ However, despite the exhibition's month-long run, it was not well-visited by the general population. The exhibition's director, the painter Oto Bihalji-Merin, filed a report to Belgrade regarding the problems the exhibition faced:

¹⁹³ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-48, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Marić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 4487, 20.12.1947.

¹⁹⁴ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-50, Annual report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 42642, 07.01.1946.

¹⁹⁵ DSIP, PA, 1946 F-25, Letter and press material on the exhibition from the Yugoslavian embassy (Jakšić) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 7259, 19.06.1946.

everything from poor attendance due to war fatigue to failing to find a larger, more fitting and more economical venue, to other planning problems, and a lack of quality materials.¹⁹⁶

Conclusion

On the subject of the NOB exhibition and many other projects Ristić chided Belgrade for its improvisation, tardy and contradictory directives, and the bureaucratic overlap between the embassy and the Foreign Ministry.¹⁹⁷ Unfortunately for Belgrade, however, no amount of propaganda could convince Bidault to deviate from de Gaulle's 1945 pronouncement on the eternally Italian character of Trieste.¹⁹⁸ The affair would not be settled until 1954 (to Yugoslavia's disfavour), but Franco-Yugoslavian relations in August 1945–June 1948 provide a new perspective on the immediate postwar period. Neither country renounced its interest in the other. Despite their distaste for the new regime, the French sought to salvage their economic interests and reclaim their position in Yugoslavia as a means of regaining their Great Power status while Tito, far from denouncing the traditional friendship, co-opted it to obtain international legitimacy for the regime and its territorial claims against Italy. With the onset of the Cold War, however, mutual suspicions, manifesting themselves as accusations that only the other party lacked understanding and was being intransigent, began to affect relations. The French did not appreciate the extent to which the Yugoslavian campaign of nationalization was driven by sheer necessity. Nationalization of natural resource holdings and infrastructure was crucial to Yugoslavia's economic viability and independence (from both East and West), but the nationalization of smaller interests, such as real estate, was driven by a very real shortage of

¹⁹⁶ DSIP, PA, 1946 F-25, Report from Oto Bihalji-Merin to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 6036, 04.07.1946.

¹⁹⁷ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-53, Letter from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 426689, 17.12.1947.

¹⁹⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 37, Memo from the French Foreign Ministry to the French embassy in Belgrade, Folio 106, 24.07.1945.

building stock. When the French requested that they be allowed to purchase back the building of the liquidated *Banque franco-serbe*, the Yugoslavs eventually agreed to return it to the French on the condition that half the building be loaned out to the University of Belgrade.¹⁹⁹ The Belgrade authorities, for their part, did not acknowledge the fact that the French government, of its own accord and without consultation with the Yugoslavs, drew a demarcation line in the Venezia Giulia that was “more useful than harmful” to Yugoslavian interests. The Foreign Ministry likewise rejected Ristić’s argumentation that it was up to both parties, not just the French, to strive toward better and closer relations.²⁰⁰

Such was the state of the bilateral Franco-Yugoslavian relationship by the end of the first year of the Cold War: despite mutual self-interest in in the relationship, tensions inevitably mounted with the ideological polarization of the Cold War. However, we must remember that Tito and his inner circle were uncompromisingly communist and it remains significant that the new Yugoslavian leader never completely renounced the traditional friendship that was showing promise of revival in 1945–early 1946, despite his application of an ideological filter with his distinction between “democratic” and “reactionary” variants of the relationship. For him, France was useful in terms of international power political concerns, as well as with regard to the long-term goal of the ideology he espoused. In his world view, the Iron Curtain was not impermeable and the ideological divide was not immovable. What now remains to be seen is how Yugoslavia’s “new friends” in France, the French Communist Party and its fellow travelers, would react to the Cominform Resolution of June 28, 1948.

¹⁹⁹ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/211, “Zabeleška o razgovoru druga Beblera sa francuskim ambasadorom Payartom,” 29.04.1947.

²⁰⁰ Ristić, *Diplomatski spisi*, 51–53.

Chapter 2: “A Policy of Presence,” June 1948–June 1954

Introduction

Thomas Schreiber has argued that the Quai’s post-1945 renewal of interest in Eastern Europe was driven by young diplomats, such as Jean Laloy and Jean-Marie Soutou, who were “pioneers of a lucid thinking that sought to orient the international action of France toward the primary postwar danger – the USSR – at least from the moment the Cold War began.”¹ Although there is no scholarly consensus on whether the French ruling elites believed Germany or the Soviet Union to be the primary threat to French national security after the Second World War, the case of Franco-Yugoslavian relations in the period 1948–1954 shows that France’s chief concern in Southeast Europe was not with combatting international communism but with recovering its political, economic, and cultural position in the region as a means of reasserting its Great Power status. In contrast to what Cold War revisionists such as William Hitchcock and Michael Creswell have argued – that the international strategy of the French Fourth Republic was much more shrewd and articulate than orthodox scholarship has allowed, and that this permitted Paris enjoy a real influence on the world stage and to mould the European peace and West Germany’s reintegration² – what emerges in this chapter is a picture of a far less certain nation. Far from leading a farsighted and calculating policy, the French were constrained by two factors: one, the international Cold War structure; and two, the disconnect, wrought by Paris’s domestic situation and colonial policy, between their continental ambitions and their means. In addition to the fundamental ideological and security threat from the Soviet Union, France’s international power and prestige were being threatened by America’s hegemony in the Atlantic

¹ Thomas Schreiber, *Les actions de la France à l’Est, ou les absences de Marianne* (Paris: Harmattan, 2000), 26–27.

² William Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 203–209; Michael Creswell, *A Question of Balance: How France and the United States Created Cold War Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 165–167.

Alliance, the possibility of West German rearmament, and troubles in the French colonial empire, particularly the war in Indochina (1946–1954) and growing unrest in its Maghrebi holdings of Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria.

With these French weaknesses in mind, his chapter will argue that despite the Foreign Ministers Georges Bidault and Robert Schuman's anti-communism, in order to remain competitive with the Anglo-Americans the French removed the ideological lens and turned to Yugoslavia. There they relied on the rhetoric of the traditional friendship and on the resurrection of pre-1945 cultural and military traditions in order to keep a foothold in what had once been their sphere of influence. For Yugoslavia, the security situation was even more precarious than it was for France. The very real threat of a Soviet invasion in 1949, coupled with the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, rendered inadequate Tito's post-schism policy of "autocephaly," as termed by Darko Bekić.³ Reluctant to get too close to its ideological archenemy, the Americans, for the sake of its survival the Yugoslavian leadership desired to exploit 'friendly sympathies' among an array of French circles to obtain not only international legitimacy but military and economic assistance in the face of the schism with Moscow, as well as diplomatic support over its claim to Trieste. In their quest to achieve these aims, the Yugoslavs often employed the rhetoric of the traditional friendship. Although the nature of interwar Franco-Yugoslavian relations was deemed ideologically unacceptable, Tito did not reject the French, who were the 'lesser of two evils' vis-à-vis the Anglo-Americans, and who shared in Belgrade's concerns over the Soviet threat, West Germany's economic resurgence and rearmament, and America's presence in Western Europe. However, Franco-Yugoslavian relations at this stage were not

³ Svetozar Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs: Yugoslavia's Road to Non-Alignment," Ljubodrag Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu 1945–1955: Slučaj Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Katedra za istoriju Jugoslavije Filozofskog fakulteta, 2005), 87–88. For the policy of autocephaly see Darko Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu: Odnosi s velikim silama 1949–1955* (Zagreb: Globus, 1988), 37.

without their problems. Political tensions were engendered by Yugoslavia's turbulent relations with Italy and the Vatican: the former fueled by *Realpolitik* and the latter by ideology and domestic concerns. Stemming from the turn of the century and now aggravated by the prerogatives of the Cold War, Belgrade's disputes with Rome and the Holy See left the potential for fruitful Franco-Yugoslavian relations unfulfilled and both sides dissatisfied.

A New Great Schism

By spring 1948, tensions between Yugoslavia, Italy, and the three Western powers had not eased over the Free Territory of Trieste, which had been established in September 1947 with the signature of the Italian peace treaty. The port was declared a free city but the United Nations Security Council was unable to agree on the appointment of a governor for its zone (the northern Zone A), while the Yugoslavs were accused of acting as “sovereigns” in their zone (the southern Zone B).⁴ The French had been alarmed when Foreign Minister Stanoje Simić told their representatives at the United Nations in October 1946 that “we want the Venezia Giulia, Istria and Trieste and we will have it, even if we will have to go to war against the whole world.”⁵ However, Yugoslavian threats proved hollow and in March 1948 Ambassador Ristić informed Belgrade that the French government was of the view that the only solution to the problem was to return Trieste to Italy.⁶ In response, the Yugoslavs submitted written protests to the American, British, and French, denouncing their alleged anti-Yugoslavian and anti-communist motives. A note was also presented to the Italian ambassador in a similar vein, with the added twist of proposing the signatures of Italo-Yugoslavian non-aggression and friendship treaties.⁷

⁴ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-d/62, Note on Ristić's telephone conversation with Dušan Gaspari, 20.03.1948.

⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 38, Note on a conversation with Simić in New York [unsigned], Folio 86, 31.10.1946.

⁶ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-d/62, Note on Ristić's telephone conversation with Dušan Gaspari, 20.03.1948.

⁷ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-d/62, Draft notes to Washington, London, Paris, and Rome, undated.

The problem continued to fester as American policy toward Yugoslavia became conditioned by the strategy of containment as developed by George F. Kennan.⁸ However, Tito was not only becoming a liability to the West with regard to Trieste; he also stirred the suspicions of the Soviet leader who after 1945, according to Milovan Djilas, feared “that the creation of revolutionary centres outside of Moscow could endanger its supremacy in world communism.”⁹ Early interpretations of the Tito–Stalin split, attributing it to an independent ideological variant that had supposedly been elaborated before the schism or to a conscious attempt at emancipation, have since been proven incorrect.¹⁰ The current orthodoxy holds that the schism stemmed from Tito’s ambitious foreign policy.¹¹ Stalin was infuriated by Tito’s backing of the Communists in the Greek Civil War because the intervention prolonged a conflict from which he himself had abstained in observance of the October 1944 Percentages Agreement, which placed Greece in the Western sphere of influence. Equally angered by Tito’s obstinacy over Trieste which had delayed the signature of a peace treaty with Italy, Stalin was believed to be most concerned with the planned federation project between Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria, which threatened to turn into a Yugoslav bid for regional hegemony.¹² Although he had

⁸ Beatrice Heuser, *Western ‘Containment’ Policies in the Cold War: The Yugoslav Case, 1948–1953* (London: Routledge, 1989), x.

⁹ Djilas quoted in Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 50.

¹⁰ Svetozar Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, Comradeship, Confrontation 1953–1957* (London: Routledge, 2011), 213.

¹¹ For a recent example of the orthodox interpretation of the split see Jeronim Perović, “The Tito–Stalin Split: A Reassessment in Light of New Evidence,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 9, No. 2 (Spring, 2007), 34–56. Challenging the orthodoxy, Svetozar Rajak argues that the schism stemmed from “a flawed execution of Stalin’s plan to create a monolithic Communist ‘camp’” by pre-emptively making an example out of his most loyal disciple, Tito. The advantage of his interpretation is that it offers a more satisfactory explanation to the Yugoslavs’ shock at the expulsion and the oft-cited ‘sentimentality’ that drove Tito to repeatedly seek acceptance from the Soviet leadership. See Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 14–15, 213.

¹² Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 141–142. Tito hoped to settle two major ethno-territorial issues (the Macedonian and Kosovo questions) to Yugoslavia’s favour via the Balkan Federation. His support of the Greek Communists was tied to the Macedonian Question. Since a great number of Greek Communists were ethnic South Slavs, Tito hoped that by supporting them he would be able to annex the Slavic-inhabited portions of Greek (Aegean) Macedonia. See Perović, “The Tito–Stalin Split,” 43–56.

initially been in favour of the project, Stalin denounced Yugoslavia and Bulgaria’s “independent behaviour” in February 1948.¹³

The schism culminated with the Cominform Resolution of June 28 through which Yugoslavia was formally expelled for supposedly leading a nationalist foreign policy and an incorrect domestic one, or more specifically, for “equating the foreign policy of the USSR with that of the imperialist powers and for behaving toward the USSR as though it were a bourgeois state.”¹⁴ The Americans, however, had taken it as an article of faith that international communism was, in Secretary of State Dean Acheson’s words, “a genus without a subspecies,” and that Yugoslavia’s expansionist foreign policy was merely an extension of Moscow’s own program.¹⁵ It was therefore not a surprise that the West perceived the Cominform Resolution, in the words of the French historian and journalist Geneviève Tabouis, as an “excommunication without precedent since the sixteenth century.”¹⁶

Cominformists vs. Titoists: The Battle for France

The Cominform Resolution came as a shock to Tito and to the CPY leadership. In the words of Ambassador Payart, a “massive calm” reigned in Yugoslavia in the first week of July, and party militants “spoke of the crisis with a *sang-froid* but could not disguise their sadness and disappointment” at the attacks leveled against them.¹⁷ Far from wishing for the schism, Tito feared the consequences that it would have on his own position, which could be menaced from

¹³ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 50.

¹⁴ Judt, *Postwar*, 144; MAE, Série Z, Carton 23, La Documentation Française, Notes documentaires et études No. 972, “Résolution du Cominform relative à la situation du parti communiste de Yougoslavie,” Folio 149, 06.08.1948.

¹⁵ Acheson quoted in Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 96; Heuser, *Western ‘Containment’ Policies in the Cold War*, 20.

¹⁶ AN, 27AR/175, Fond Geneviève Tabouis, “L’Espoir du 16/17-7-1949.” Tabouis came from a family of diplomats, which included her uncles Jules Cambon (Ambassador to Berlin, 1907–1914) and Paul Cambon (Ambassador to London, 1898–1920), and moved in Quai circles during her career as journalist.

¹⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 22, Telegram from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 124, 02.07.1948.

within the country and without.¹⁸ Although as early as March 1947 the French military remarked that Yugoslavia had a significant armed capacity (especially relative to its small size and economic underdevelopment),¹⁹ for Belgrade the threat of a Soviet invasion was very real, while the economic costs of the schism were almost immediately apparent. The Five-Year Plan was predicated on long-term loans from Moscow and trade with the satellites, all of which now ground to a halt.²⁰ With its army now bereft of its primary supplier and facing the threat of invasion and with its economy and agriculture still recovering from the ravages of war, Yugoslavia's military expenditure increased tenfold to \$655 million in 1948–1952.²¹ Meanwhile, the threat to Tito's reign from within was represented by the traditionally Russophile Serbs who feared decentralization, and the equally Russophile and "tradition-bound and clannish" Montenegrins, who accounted for the bulk of Yugoslavia's army and were overrepresented among the ranks of the Cominformists.²² Tito thus orchestrated a purge of the *ibeovci* ("men of the *Informbiro*"), swelling the inmate population of the notorious political prisons located on the barren Adriatic islands of Goli Otok and Sveti Grgur.²³

Yugoslavia was faced with total isolation. Cut off from the Soviet bloc, mutual ideological suspicions isolated it from the West while Stalinist parties across the continent went on the offensive against the Tito regime. The PCF was no exception, and it was joined by Yugoslavian expatriates, both Cominformist and anti-communist alike. Paris was crucial to

¹⁸ Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Tito, Yugoslavia's Great Dictator: A Reassessment* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992), 58.

¹⁹ SHD, GR 4Q 41, National Defence Council note on Yugoslavia and the question of Trieste, Folio 185, 24.03.1947.

²⁰ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 62.

²¹ Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 86–87.

²² Ivo Banac, *With Stalin Against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 31, 151–183.

²³ For the purge of the Cominformists see Banac, *With Stalin Against Tito*, 166–183. With regard to the political purges in Yugoslavia, the most recent scholarship estimates 200,000–250,000 political arrests and a political prison population of 40,000–60,000 in the period 1949–1961, in a population of just under 20 million. See Dragoslav Mihailović, "Goli Otok: A Reflection of the Gulag and the Holocaust," Petar Kačavenda and Djoko Tripković, eds., *Jugoslovensko-sovjetski sukob 1948. godine* (Beograd: ISI, 1999), 277–278.

Yugoslavian legitimation propaganda, not only because of its historic political and cultural significance to the Western world, but also because of the traditional friendship which meant that Yugoslavian (especially Serbian) political émigrés in France were particularly numerous and influential.²⁴ In the first week of July a Serbian nationalist leaflet arrived at the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, calling for the liberation of the homeland that the Communists had usurped “with the help of foreign arms.”²⁵ Ex-Ustasha men, too, both Catholic Croats and Bosnian Muslims, were beginning to regroup and rearm abroad in 1948 after the UDBa liquidation of the *Križari* (“Crusaders”) of the so-called “Croatian Armed Forces in the Fatherland.”²⁶ There were 400 ex-Ustasha members in Munich, 600 in Palestine, and another 350 who were attached to the Arab Legion in Egypt.²⁷ By January 1949, they had resumed activity in Paris under the cover of the “*Colonie croate de France*” which had existed at the turn of the century.²⁸ These groups were patently unable to liberate their homeland from “Serbo-Communism” and their hopes of Croatian independence were further dashed by the Western bid to “keep Tito afloat” rather than overthrow him after the schism with Moscow.²⁹ In contrast to their Croatian counterparts, however, Serbian nationalist circles in Paris came to the conclusion that given the external dangers that imperilled their country it was preferable that Tito remain in power, at least provisionally.³⁰

Thus for the time being, Serbian émigré nationalism ceased to be an immediate threat to Tito’s regime. PCF cadres, however, saw it as their duty to promote the Yugoslavian crisis in all

²⁴ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–31, Report from the Yugoslavian cultural attaché (Petar Šegedin), Doc. 426229, 01.11.1958.

²⁵ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–51, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Latinović) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 419048, 09.07.1948.

²⁶ After three years of struggle, in 1948 the UDBa counterinsurgency campaign “Operation Guardian” (*Operacija Gvardijan*) liquidated the *Križari*, who had been launching operations out of Austria into Croatia and Bosnia. See Mate Nikola Tokić, “The End of ‘Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement:’ Cold War Politics and Émigré Croatian Separatist Violence, 1950–1980,” *Social Science History* No. 36, Vol. 3 (Fall, 2012), 426.

²⁷ AN, 4AG/104, Papiers des chefs de l’Etat: Quatrième République, “Confidentiel–Objet: L’Oustacha,” 30.06.1948.

²⁸ AN, 4AG/104, Papiers des chefs de l’Etat: Quatrième République, “Renouveau de l’activité de “l’Oustacha” en France,” 15.01.1949.

²⁹ Tokić, “The End of ‘Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement,’” 427–430.

³⁰ AN, 4AG/104, Papiers des chefs de l’Etat: Quatrième République, “Objet: Les nationalistes serbes de Paris seraient favorable au maintien au pouvoir, au moins provisoirement, du Maréchal Tito,” 18.01.1949.

spheres of political life because Tito, as an “imperialist warmonger,” was jeopardizing the struggle for socialism, democracy, and peace. The task fell to Jules Decaux to purge the party of Titoists and all Yugoslavian-related activities in France, party-related or not, were closely monitored. When a Yugoslavian soccer team played a game in France the PCF kept surveillance on “Titoist” players during their stay.³¹ When two Yugoslavian films, *Planica* and *Na svojoj zemlji* (*On Their Own Land*), were screened in Nice the PCF distributed leaflets at the cinema entrance and planted agents in the audience. The following day the party interrogated Yugoslavs who had attended the screening and its press attacked Tito, the Yugoslavian embassy, and the cinema owner. The Yugoslavian Consul in Marseille hypothesized that the party was attempting to provoke Yugoslavian émigrés and get the police involved, in hopes that the consulate’s propaganda work would be banned.³² The Yugoslavian embassy’s chargé d’affaires, Sreten Marić, however, was convinced that the PCF was in a state of internal crisis and that enough sympathy for Yugoslavia existed among the French “progressive masses” so that properly-implemented and focused propaganda could counter “these outrageous [and] defamatory outbursts” against Belgrade. Marić further believed that “hundreds and hundreds” of PCF cells could be made to protest against the positions of *L’Humanité*, *Ce Soir* (run by the Cominformist Louis Aragon) and the party leadership.³³ But a problem for the future of Yugoslavian agitprop in France was that its two organs – the “*La Nouvelle Yougoslavie*” bulletin that was kept going after the banning of the UJF in 1947 (see Chapter 1), as well as the intellectual *Association France–Yougoslavie* – were now being usurped by Cominformist PCF members.

³¹ Sacker, *A Radiant Future*, 64–81.

³² DSIP, PA, 1950 F–27, Letter from the Marseille Consul (Krstić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 42054, 24.01.1950.

³³ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–47, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 426625, 29.07.1948.

After the UJF was banned, the Yugoslavian embassy began assisting the bulletin's editors – all naturalized Yugoslavs and private citizens – in continuing the publication. The first post-ban issue appeared on May 20, 1948, nominally published by the “*Informativno-kulturno glasilo Jugoslovena u Francuskoj*” (“The Informative-Cultural Organ of Yugoslavs in France”) with the aim of providing expatriates with positive propaganda about the new Yugoslavia (thereby encouraging their return), protecting them from propaganda emanating from “hostile elements,” as well as aiding “progressive forces” in France. However, with French economic instability the six-page bulletin was more and more expensive for immigrants to purchase.³⁴ Moreover, a power struggle was emerging between the Yugoslavian embassy and the bulletin's editors. Dr. Jesover, French husband of one of the bulletin's Yugoslavian editors, met with embassy attaché Todorović at the latter's request in July 1948 as Mme. Jesover was temporarily absent. The embassy was concerned about the content of future issues, and Todorović reminded Jesover of the bulletin's mission. Jesover, a PCF member, replied that the embassy could not dictate the bulletin's content and direction; when asked about the patent lies the PCF was disseminating about Yugoslavia, he told his interlocutor that “the ends justify the means.”³⁵ The editors refused to print Belgrade's response to the Cominform Resolution and the PCF appropriated the bulletin. Simultaneously, subscribers of *La Nouvelle Yougoslavie* also began receiving unsolicited copies of the bulletin *Jugoslavija*, published by an anti-Titoist group in Paris.³⁶ This prompted the embassy to begin distributing its own publication, “*Iz nove Jugoslavije za iseljenike u Francuskoj*” (“From the New Yugoslavia for Expatriates in France”) in cooperation with the federal news agency, *Tanjug*. That bulletin began appearing on July 15, and along with it the

³⁴ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-48, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 416317, 03.06.1948.

³⁵ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-47, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 420634, 29.07.1948.

³⁶ DSIP, PA, 1948 F-51, Letter from the Marseille Consul (Krstić) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 426063, 23.09.1948.

embassy helped publish a 90-page pamphlet entitled “*Odgorovi jugoslovenskih komunista na optužbe Informacionog biroa i drugih kleveta*” (“Yugoslavian Communists’ Responses to Cominform Accusations and Other Libel”), of which 16,000 copies were distributed to Yugoslavian expatriates in France and Belgium (Wallonia).³⁷

Although the UJF was banned in November 1947, by March 1949 Payart was still querying the Quai d’Orsay for an explanation as to why exactly and under what conditions the association was dissolved.³⁸ Unlike this organization, however, the *Association France–Yougoslavie* was not banned. However, like the *Nouvelle Yougoslavie* bulletin, the *Association* too was paralyzed by the Tito–Stalin split. In January 1948 the PCF had tried and failed to oust the group around the association’s president, René Cassin, whom it accused of reaction. The association’s secretary could not bring himself to break with the PCF, while its treasurer was purged from the party for his “Titoism.” Riven between PCF loyalists and those who supported Yugoslavia (Cassin, Vice-President and Sorbonne dean André Cholley, and others), the association’s long-anticipated magazine never materialized.³⁹ The new Yugoslavian consul in Marseille felt that many PCF members in the association’s provincial sections were never “friends of the new Yugoslavia” but in fact “as speculators, they wanted, in the first days after our victory, to profit personally from our country’s glory.”⁴⁰ The PCF therefore effectively paralyzed Yugoslavian propaganda in France over the course of 1948 and 1949. For a time the *Association France–Yougoslavie* existed in name only and counseled Yugoslavian legations to

³⁷ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–48, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Petrović) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 420978, 29.07.1948.

³⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 79, Letter from Payart to the Foreign Ministry, Folio 331–332, 28.03.1949.

³⁹ DSIP, PA, 1948 F–48, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy (Marić) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 431594, 25.12.1948.

⁴⁰ DSIP, PA, 1951 F–25, Letter from the Marseille Consul (Krstić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 412595, 04.04.1950.

not organize any manifestations for the national holiday on November 29, especially given the police pressure placed upon Yugoslavian nationals in cities such as Nice, Lyon, and Toulouse.⁴¹

The *Association France–Yougoslavie* resumed its activity in summer 1950 after the Cominformist usurpation of it had been broken. René Cassin was retained as honorary president, while Jean Cassou became acting president. Cassou’s associates from his resistance movement, the *Groupe du musée de l’Homme* – Agnès Humbert and Claude Aveline – also remained with the association. Humbert, who was also Cassou’s assistant at the *Musée d’Art Moderne* in Paris, was the association’s Secretary-General. MRP Senator Léo Hamon served as bureau president, while the writers Edith Thomas and Louis Le Cunff were Treasurers. The association acted as a liaison between French and Yugoslavian cultural figures and representatives and helped organize visits, exchanges, public lectures and other events.⁴²

The association’s members, themselves PCF targets, frequently published French-language books and articles on Yugoslavia as part of a counter-propaganda effort to that of the PCF. Humbert, not a PCF member but a PCF voter, said of the Communist accusations leveled against her that although she admired Tito (who, unlike de Gaulle and Thorez, she noted, did not flee in the face of German occupation), she could not be a “Titoist” because she was French. A *résistante* and deportee, Humbert traced her sympathies for the Yugoslavian people to her visit to the country in 1938 as well as to her encounters with Yugoslavian women in concentration camps.⁴³ In 1949 she requested permission to travel privately to Yugoslavia to write a book: a request that Ristić urged Belgrade to grant on the grounds that she was a “a progressive,

⁴¹ DSIP, PA, 1949 F–35, Annual report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 4514, 19.12.1948.

⁴² DSIP, PA, 1951 F–26, Telegram from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 431, 12.12.1950; *Ibid.*, 1953 F–28, Report on the *Association France–Yougoslavie*, Doc. 412318, 04.09.1953.

⁴³ Agnès Humbert, *Vu et entendu en Yougoslavie* (Paris: Deux Rives, 1950), 7–10, 188.

intelligent, and serious woman” who would make a “useful witness” to the Yugoslavian reality.⁴⁴ Despite the PCF’s attempts to stop her, she voyaged to Yugoslavia and published her travelogue, *Vu et entendu en Yougoslavie*. She contrasted the experience of her visit to the country on the eve of the Second World War – destitution and misery, political oppression, “fratricidal hate” and economic backwardness – with a nation that, galvanized by occupation and external threats, at last came to understand that “fraternal love yields better political results than the dagger.”⁴⁵ Humbert’s romantic understanding of the new Yugoslavia was counterbalanced by her skepticism toward a “model political prison” she visited, but on balance she was satisfied with what she saw and heard and was proud to be among the first of her compatriots who “objectively and personally evaluated” Yugoslavia’s struggle against the Soviet Union.⁴⁶

Humbert’s work captured what Geneviève Tabouis wrote in July 1948: that the Western democracies could not be passive in the face of the schism, which would show to French “*communisants*” that one could not simultaneously be a Stalinist and a “chauvinist patriot.”⁴⁷ These themes were pursued further in the *Association France–Yougoslavie*’s 1951 collected volume. With the optimistic title *Vers une renaissance du socialisme (Toward a Socialist Renaissance)*, it attested to the power of the myths of Tito and Yugoslavia’s self-liberation, the gravity of the split with Stalin as understood by contemporaries, and the hopes invested in Tito’s variant of socialism as an antidote to the horrors of Stalinism that had been brought to public attention in France with the Kravchenko Affair.⁴⁸ As with Humbert’s book, the aim of the publication was to bear personal witness about the “little, astonishingly intrepid people” that had

⁴⁴ DSIP, PA, 1949 F-34, Telegram from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 418791, 15.10.1949.

⁴⁵ Humbert, *Vu et entendu en Yougoslavie*, 171–174.

⁴⁶ Humbert, *Vu et entendu en Yougoslavie*, 190.

⁴⁷ AN, 27AR/102, Fond Geneviève Tabouis, “Rupture des relations entre URSS et Yougoslavie: Article Tabouis, 5 juillet 1948.”

⁴⁸ Victor Kravchenko was a Soviet defector whom the PCF unsuccessfully sued for libel in 1949 for his revelations of the horrors of Stalinism in his best-selling memoir, *J’ai choisi la liberté (I Choose Freedom)*. See Alexander Werth, *France, 1940–1955* (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1956), 436–443.

refused to bow to both Hitler and Stalin, and whose country now captivated the world's attention as "the country of revolution."⁴⁹ The contributors, who had all visited Yugoslavia, were impressed with the speed and quality of the country's reconstruction and modernization (André Blanc and Claude Bourdet), the herculean struggles of its youth (Denis Berger and Gérard de Sède), its dogged pursuit of liberty despite complete isolation (Jean-Marie Domenach), the humanity of its people (Clara Malraux) and what would come to define Tito's socialism and would captivate French leftists for decades: workers' self-management (Edith Thomas). Even Jean-René Chauvin, in his search for "Tito's concentration camps," noted on his visit to Lepoglava prison (after his visit to the Ustasha death camp of Jasenovac) that the country's penitentiary system was "severe but humane."⁵⁰

In addition to the above works that presented a favourable picture of Yugoslavia's internal development and 'democratization,' Hamon also valorized Belgrade's "original" foreign policy. Promoting the myth that Tito broke with Stalin and not the other way around, he lauded the country's commitment to its own independence and neutrality as well as to collective security in the United Nations.⁵¹ Viewed from Belgrade, these works were not without their shortcomings. Ristić felt that Humbert's work "did not show a profound understanding of the position and significance of Yugoslavia within the international revolutionary movement, because [Humbert] has no political sense nor any Marxist knowledge," but felt that it was written with "sincere sympathies for us."⁵² Some in Belgrade also harboured suspicions toward Hamon as a "manipulative reactionary" because of his frivolous attitude and concerns for religious

⁴⁹ Jean Cassou, ed., *Vers une renaissance du socialisme: Témoignages sur la Yougoslavie* (Paris: Gizard, 1951), 5.

⁵⁰ Jean-René Chauvin, "A la recherche des camps de concentration Tito," Cassou, ed., *Vers une renaissance du socialisme*, 55.

⁵¹ Léo Hamon, "Principes de la politique extérieure yougoslave," *Politique étrangère* No. 1, 1951, 16^e année, 31–44.

⁵² AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Agnès Humbert from Ristić, 05.10.1953.

freedoms in Yugoslavia.⁵³ However, with its own propaganda efforts lacking resources even before the schism, in the face of isolation any and all “friendly” publications were welcomed even if they were ideologically imperfect.

In the face of lukewarm MRP governments, the *Association France–Yougoslavie* gained momentum in 1952 as Belgrade sought to diversify its membership and co-opting a wider segment of the French political population in order to marshal more support and legitimacy. “Under consideration” were Socialists, Radicals, Christian Democrats, *Poilus d’Orient* and other pro-Yugoslavian leftists.⁵⁴ The Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry financed the association’s move from a small space in Paris’s second arrondissement to a larger space in the Latin Quarter – complete with exhibition and conference space, as well as a 150-person capacity film theatre⁵⁵ – and the grand opening, hosted by Cassin and Cassou, was well attended by 200 “notables and friends of Yugoslavia.”⁵⁶ At its new space, the association began hosting a weekly “*entretiens de lundi*” series that provided visiting Yugoslavian cultural and political dignitaries an opportunity to engage in dialogue with their French counterparts and the public, while “*entretiens de samedi*” were dedicated to fostering dialogue between youth. The association also offered weekly French and Serbo-Croatian language courses, Yugoslavian folk dance (*kolo*) lessons, hosted film screenings, organized receptions for Yugoslavs with French families and youth visits to Yugoslavia, and facilitated professional networking.⁵⁷ Given the Yugoslavian embassy’s involvement and the political leanings of the association’s leadership all activities had a “progressive” element, but this did not assuage suspicions. The Yugoslavs’ impression was that

⁵³ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, Smiljan Pečjak, “Izveštaj o boravku francuske parlamentarne delegacije, 18.IX. – 30.IX. 1952 god.,” Doc. 417510, 04.10.1952.

⁵⁴ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–25, Note on the Yugoslavian embassy collegium meeting, Doc. 4676, 02.01.1952.

⁵⁵ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–27, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 41995, 26.01.1952., *Ibid.*, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy (Makiedo) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 41384, 31.01.1952.

⁵⁶ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–27, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 49041, 07.07.1952.

⁵⁷ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–28, Report on the *Association France–Yougoslavie*, Doc. 412318, 04.09.1953.

the association's work was ineffective and uninfluential because, although its direction was no longer being commandeered by the PCF, its leadership was now deemed too close to "official circles."⁵⁸ The association's work increasingly overlapped with the work of the *Agencija za informacije* (Yugoslavian Information Agency), established in Paris in 1950 to centralize and coordinate the country's propaganda efforts in France. Like the *Association France–Yougoslavie*, the agency organized lectures, exhibitions and film screenings, and sold books and other publications. It published a theoretical digest, *Questions Actuelles du Socialisme* (*Current Questions in Socialism*), as well as the news bulletin *Les Nouvelles Yougoslaves* (*Yugoslavian News*). The latter was in a circulation of over 8,000 copies: 4,700 copies were distributed in France to institutions, editorial boards, politicians and intellectuals who had visited Yugoslavia, as well as individual subscribers, while the remainder was distributed in Francophone Belgium and Switzerland. The agency struggled with the costs of publication and technical execution; the revision of French translations was initially handled by AFP editor-in-chief Gustave Aucouturier before being handed over to embassy attaché Marić.⁵⁹ Yugoslavian propaganda work, however, was greatly hampered by two things: its inaccessibility, and a lack of planning and resources. With regard to the former, Jules Moch (who, as Interior Minister, had banned the UJF in 1947 but became a Yugoslavian sympathizer after the schism) told Tito privately in 1952 that Yugoslavian propaganda in France, while grammatically correct, was "too abstract [and] too intellectualist" even for a Socialist like himself to understand, and needed to be "on the ground and not in the air in order to reach the masses."⁶⁰ As for the latter, the shortage of funds and staff was so severe that the Marseille consulate had no cleaning staff (a task which fell upon the

⁵⁸ DSIP, PA, 1952 F-26, "Francuska: Neka pitanja iz spoljne i unutrašnje politike i jugoslovensko-francuskih odnosa," Doc. 417502, undated.

⁵⁹ DSIP, PA, 1951 F-25, Report on the *Agencija za informacije* (Daković), Doc. 419037, 19.04.1951.

⁶⁰ AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/32, Minutes of Tito's conversation with Jules and Mme. Moch in Split, Folio 23, 05.09.1952.

chauffeur), let alone a cultural attaché.⁶¹ In 1953, even though the Foreign Ministry recommended appointing someone to work exclusively on the distribution of *Questions Actuelles du Socialisme*, the funds were simply not there.⁶²

In a way, the *Association France–Yougoslavie* acted as a weather vane of Franco-Yugoslavian relations. The association’s ebb and flow – its post-schism hiatus, followed by a resurgence of activity before it petered out over the course of the 1950s – paralleled Yugoslavian foreign policy (its “freeze” with the Soviet Union, followed by the “thaw” of the early Khrushchev years), and its relationship with France (from a post-schism improvement in Yugoslavia’s relations with the West in general to a souring of relations with France in particular over the war in Algeria). In the first few years after the schism, however, Franco-Yugoslavian relations substantially improved.

The View from the Quai: Official Bilateral Relations, 1948–1949

As Frédéric Bozo has explained, French leaders – the Gaullists’ and MRP’s ideological aversion to communism notwithstanding – were ambivalent toward the Cold War. This uncertainty was driven by three factors: one, the desire to preserve the Allied coalition as a means of maintaining what was left of France’s international status (including the preservation of French influence in Eastern Europe); two, the need to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union for the sake of German containment; and three, the domestic factor of the PCF. Although it willingly integrated into the Atlantic Alliance, France remained equivocal toward, and frustrated with, the Cold War, which French leaders perceived as transient.⁶³

⁶¹ DSIP, PA, 1949 F–35, Annual report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 4514, 19.12.1948.

⁶² DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, Letter from Foreign Ministry advisor Luka Betomarić to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, Doc. 41061, 06.01.1953.

⁶³ Frédéric Bozo, “France, ‘Gaullism’ and the Cold War,” Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 159–163.

This ambivalence to the Cold War and sensitivity to France's international status conditioned Paris's Yugoslavian policy, as did a change in personnel at the Quai that coincided with the Cominform Resolution. In July 1948 Robert Schuman succeeded Georges Bidault as Foreign Minister, a post he would hold until January 1953. As "a man of the borderlands," the bilingual and devout Catholic Schuman's primary aim was to improve Franco-German relations. Although he had not been a partisan of Aristide Briand's vision of European integration, he entered French political life on an "apostolic mission" to work toward collective peace and a supranational Europe against the "anachronism of nationalism."⁶⁴ As a deputy in the interwar period, he was influenced by Ernest Pezet and Henri Simondet's 1933 book, *La Yougoslavie en péril?*⁶⁵ The authors took their countrymen to task on their general ignorance of geopolitics, imploring them to consider the consequences of their habit of equating Yugoslavia and the Yugoslavs with Serbia and the Serbs. In their view, the friendship between the two countries compelled them to tell the truth about Yugoslavia – which was far less united and stable than the French establishment preferred to admit – for the sake of the interests of both France and Yugoslavia, as well as the general European peace.⁶⁶ In August 1934 Schuman traveled to Zagreb as part of a Catholic parliamentary commission on foreign affairs. He returned convinced that Yugoslavia was in even more dire straits than Pezet and Simondet had described (a view the French Consul in Zagreb, Roger Garreau, did not share), and wrote to Foreign Minister Louis Barthou that Yugoslavia needed a constitutional monarchy and federalism in order to survive and

⁶⁴ Angeles Muñoz, "L'engagement européen de Robert Schuman," Sylvain Schirmann, ed., *Robert Schuman et les pères de l'Europe: Cultures politiques et années de formation* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2008), 39–54.

⁶⁵ Gergely Fejérdy, "Les visites de Robert Schuman dans le bassin du Danube," Schirmann, ed., *Robert Schuman et les pères de l'Europe*, 77.

⁶⁶ Ernest Pezet and Henri Simondet, *La Yougoslavie en péril?* (Paris: Librairie Bloud & Gay, 1933), 7–14, 237.

that France could not continue to support a dictatorship, neither financially nor morally.⁶⁷ After the 1934 Marseille assassination, Schuman became convinced that bringing a lasting political settlement to “Danubia” was key to European peace.⁶⁸ Hamon, having tasked himself with the mission of becoming an advocate for Yugoslavia, noted in his memoir that the new Foreign Minister “needed no convincing” that it was in France’s interest to aid Yugoslavia.⁶⁹

Well before the schism, many in French political and diplomatic circles had decided to make their peace with the fact that Yugoslavia had become a communist state. As Maurice Dejean, French Ambassador to Prague, noted, the communist dictatorship was qualitatively little different from the royal dictatorship of the 1930s but at least the new authorities were marshalling the country’s resources for the good of the whole nation: something that even the regime’s adversaries had to concede.⁷⁰ From the beginning of the Cominform crisis, the Quai understood that the schism originated in disagreements over foreign and domestic policy, and that the Resolution in no way lessened Tito’s devotion to communism.⁷¹ Vincent Auriol, the Socialist President of the Republic, however, learned from a “sure source” that the origins of the conflict were purely economic. Tito needed foreign markets for his ambitious Five-Year Plan to succeed, and it was his turn to the West to escape Moscow’s economic exploitation that brought on the schism: “and that’s what they call an ‘ideological conflict!’”⁷² Both the Quai and the President, however, were quite correct about the fact that the conflict was not about Marxist orthodoxy, even though it was nominally an intra-party and not an intra-government dispute.

⁶⁷ In the marginalia of Schuman’s letter, Barthou noted that he “read with interest, but it is much easier to advise than it is to act.” Fejérdy, “Les visites de Robert Schuman dans le bassin du Danube,” Schirmann, ed., *Robert Schuman et les pères de l’Europe*, 80.

⁶⁸ Fejérdy, “Les visites de Robert Schuman dans le bassin du Danube,” Schirmann, ed., *Robert Schuman et les pères de l’Europe*, 70–80.

⁶⁹ Léo Hamon, *Vivre ses choix* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1991), 311.

⁷⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 38, Telegram from Dejean to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 132, 18.06.1947.

⁷¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 23, “Note sur la Yougoslavie,” Folio 217–220, 25.08.1948.

⁷² Vincent Auriol, *Journal du septennat, 1947–1954*, Vol. II (Paris: Armand Colin, 1974), 506.

With word coming from the French military attaché in Belgrade a mere two days after the passing of the Resolution that the Americans would likely intervene in the case of a Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia,⁷³ the French embassy continued to maintain that France had a role to play in Yugoslavia, given its presence in that country prior to its fall to “Oriental communism.”⁷⁴

Initial Western doubts about the sincerity of the schism were matched by Yugoslavia’s reluctance to “go west.” Their own ideological antagonism toward the West in general and America in particular aside, Yugoslavian policy was restrained by its desire to not give credence to Soviet allegations that it had passed to the imperialist camp. In Payart’s evaluation, although the Yugoslavian population was pro-Western and although the 400,000-strong army was respectably equipped, Tito “did not dare take a step west” because he feared that the party would not follow him.⁷⁵ French policy, meanwhile, was constrained by the country’s modest means and precarious position in Yugoslavia in the face of Tito’s continued domestic commitment to communism and international support of the Soviet Union because in Payart’s words, Tito’s “attitude of servility” to Moscow was unshaken by the irreparable schism.⁷⁶ The Yugoslavian leader remained steadfast, sending a telegram to Stalin on his sixty-ninth birthday that went unanswered.⁷⁷ At the Danubian Conference in August 1948, the Yugoslavian delegation supported the Soviets on every vote, which helped Moscow obtain an agreement to limit membership of the control commission of Europe’s second-longest river to riparian states (which included the USSR, as part of the Danube delta is in Ukraine).⁷⁸ Tito also continued to profess his solidarity with the international proletariat. In November 1948 Yugoslavian workers

⁷³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 22, Telegram from the French military attaché in Belgrade to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 57, 30.06.1948.

⁷⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 22, Letter from the chargé d’affaires (Epinat) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 183, 06.07.1948.

⁷⁵ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. II, 463.

⁷⁶ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. II, 462.

⁷⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 75, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 131–132, 23.12.1948.

⁷⁸ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 57.

collected 13,350,000 dinars for French strikers – a move that incensed both the PCF and the Quai, although the latter could hardly afford to protest.⁷⁹ With signs of Yugoslavia’s ideological entrenchment, French expectations of a “spectacular resignation” by the “bourgeois intellectual” Ambassador Ristić were understandable but unfounded.⁸⁰ Although Consul Pandurović was removed from Marseille for alleged incompetence and bourgeois tendencies,⁸¹ Ristić was kept at his post and continued to enjoy Tito’s confidence despite the ongoing organizational difficulties at the embassy.⁸²

The French understood that Yugoslavia’s reluctance to “go west” stemmed from Tito’s desire to avoid becoming politically dependent on the capitalist powers if he were to accept any economic assistance. In leading Yugoslavia “down the path of dissent” with “efficient economic aid” (at this point still contingent upon Yugoslavia’s attitude), the Quai identified the Deputy Foreign Minister, Aleš Bebler, as its “ideal intermediary for such a reconciliation.”⁸³ Bebler was born in the Slovenian Alpine mining town of Idrija in 1907. Joining the CPY in 1929, he obtained his Doctorate of Law in Paris in 1930, and volunteered in the Spanish Civil War. Described as a “jet-propelled” man who was always prepared, Bebler was the closest “friend of France” in the Foreign Ministry, first under Simić (1945–1948) and then under Edvard Kardelj (1948–1953).⁸⁴ Simić was a known republican from a middle-class family who had worked at the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris from 1935–1938. He was favoured by the Soviets, who considered nominating him for the post of Secretary- General of the United Nations, and

⁷⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 265–266, 02.12.1948.

⁸⁰ AN, 4AG/104, Papiers des chefs de l’Etat: Quatrième République, “L’Ambassadeur de la Yougoslavie en France donnera-t-il sa démission?” 01.07.1948.

⁸¹ DSIP, PA, 1949 F–35, Annual report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 4514, 19.12.1948.

⁸² AJ, A CK SKJ, IX, 30/I-58, Letter from Ristić to Tito, Folio 12, 21.05.1948.

⁸³ MAE, Série Z, Cabinet du Ministre (R. Schuman), Carton 57, “Situation de la Yougoslavie,” Folio 108–121, 06.09.1948.

⁸⁴ Darko Stuparić, *Diplomati izvan protokola: Ambasadori Titove Jugoslavije* (Zagreb: Centar za kulturnu djelatnost Saveza Socijalističke Omladine Zagreba, 1978), 100–101.

intervened when Kardelj attempted to replace him in 1947.⁸⁵ Despite his family origins and his interwar diplomatic service, Simić was hostile to the French for “betraying their traditional mission” of “providing asylum to progressive minds” by supporting the Serbian reaction. He was particularly disappointed with the French position on Trieste, and was “more negative than his Communist colleagues” on the issue of French enterprises in Yugoslavia. After the Cominform Resolution, he was succeeded by the “pretentious and semi-intelligent” Kardelj, Tito’s doctrinaire “super-minister” and champion of a pro-Soviet and anti-Western foreign policy.⁸⁶

Although Kardelj’s arrival at the Foreign Ministry did not seem to bode well for French aims in Yugoslavia, by autumn there were indications that it was seeking a rapprochement with the West as Soviet pressures on Belgrade mounted. The number of military border incidents launched against Yugoslavia by its four socialist neighbours (Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania) was reaching extraordinary proportions as a sign of Stalin’s determination to overthrow Tito. No fewer than 1,397 incidents – which included military exercises and troop movements precariously close to the border, shootings of Yugoslavian border guards, etc. – occurred between July 1948 and December 1950.⁸⁷ In light of Soviet pressures on Yugoslavia, in November French information channels learned that Tito’s ambassador to Washington had been given clear instructions to solicit “Yankee economic aid,” and that the Americans had earmarked a portion of Austria’s ERP funds to purchase Yugoslavian resources.⁸⁸ After a year of post-schism autarky that could not withstand Stalin’s determination to eliminate the Yugoslavian leadership, by 1949 there were clearer signs to Paris of change in Belgrade’s political attitude.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Aleksandar Životić, “Stanoje Simić: Prilog biografiji,” Slobodan Selinić, ed., *Jugoslovenska diplomatija 1945–1961* (Beograd: INIS, 2012), 223–240.

⁸⁶ Ranko Petković, *Subjektivna istorija jugoslovenske diplomatije 1943–1991* (Beograd: Službeni list, 1995), 30–33.

⁸⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 88, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 195–196, 02.01.1951.

⁸⁸ AN, 4AG/106, Papiers des chefs de l’Etat: Quatrième République, “Objet: A/S de la politique yougoslave,” 24.11.1948.

⁸⁹ Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 23–37.

This shift was driven by Tito, Bebler, Interior Minister Aleksandar Ranković and Politburo member Moša Pijade against Kardelj and Industry Minister Boris Kidrič, who disapproved of the Western rapprochement and called for reconciliation with Moscow and the CPSU (at least until the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950).⁹⁰ For the French, however, one positive development stemming from Yugoslavia's isolation was the latter's sudden willingness to continue working on the nationalization settlement.⁹¹ In August 1948 the French had agreed to separate the renegotiation of the trade agreement that was set to expire on December 31 from the nationalization compensation talks, although the Yugoslavs remained suspicious because the compensation talks were now tied to the conclusion of a much larger long-term trade and investment accord. Therefore, from the economically vulnerable Belgrade's perspective, a much larger trade deal now stood to be lost should it not cooperate on nationalization, prompting resentment toward Paris's manipulation.⁹² Partially swallowing their pride, the Yugoslavs indicated to the French in February 1949 that they were prepared to settle the issues of compensation for nationalized property and commercial and financial debts, as well as the conclusion of a long-term commercial agreement. They were not, however, in a position to as yet proceed on the matter of Yugoslavia's sizable prewar public debts to France, which was Paris's chief concern.⁹³ The talks continued as part of a broader series of talks on economic relations. Although they were not problem-free, the matter of financial compensation for nationalized property was successfully settled through the signature of an accord in April 1951.⁹⁴ The ability

⁹⁰ AN, 4AG/104, Papiers des chefs de l'Etat: Quatrième République, "Objet: A/S du changement d'attitude politique de la Yougoslavie," 04.03.1948. For the galvanizing effect of the Korean War upon the Yugoslavian leadership see Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, "The Yugoslavian Communists' Special Relationship with the British Labour Party, 1950–1956," *Cold War History* Vol. 14, No. 1 (2014), 29–30.

⁹¹ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. II, 463.

⁹² DSIP, PA, 1948 F–51, Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Trade (Jakovljević) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 5717, 04.08.1948.

⁹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 81, Telegram from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 126–127, 17.02.1949.

⁹⁴ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, "Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi," Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

of the two countries to sign an accord on the matter was an indication of the Yugoslavs' preferences for the French as their primary Western partners: preferences that would become even clearer with the implementation of Tripartite Aid.

Tripartite Aid and the "Policy of Presence," 1950–1953

During its period of autocephaly, Belgrade made ends meet with highly unfavourable loans from smaller capitalist countries, such as Belgium and Canada.⁹⁵ The French military and government estimated in 1949 that even though the Yugoslavian army was severely affected by the cessation of Soviet aid, Belgrade was not being seriously threatened by the neophyte armies of the satellites.⁹⁶ However, Yugoslavia's strategic importance and political significance to the West (insofar as it was hoped that more satellites would follow Yugoslavia's example of 'breaking with Moscow'), along with Tito's fears of a Soviet invasion of his country, grew with the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. Despite the heightened tensions the Americans, British, and French maintained their policy to extend aid to Yugoslavia only upon Tito's request in the case of a national emergency.⁹⁷ The Quai had no coherent Yugoslavian policy to speak of apart from a nebulous "policy of presence in all domains in order to encourage the good dispositions of the Yugoslavian leadership, as evidenced by their words and their actions, not just toward us, but toward the Western powers in general."⁹⁸ According to Philippe Baudet, who succeeded Payart as Ambassador in 1950, in rebuilding their position and prestige in Yugoslavia the French were starting "from scratch."⁹⁹ But in comparison with the British and Americans, the French prided themselves not only on their relationship with Serbia and Yugoslavia in the first

⁹⁵ Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 87.

⁹⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 38, Hôtel Matignon conference report, Folio 326–327, 18.03.1949.

⁹⁷ Heuser, *Western 'Containment' Policies in the Cold War*, 123.

⁹⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, Telegram from Parodi to the French embassy in Yugoslavia, Folio 41–42, 10.11.1950.

⁹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 36, 01.11.1950.

half of the twentieth century and their understanding of the Serbian national struggle,¹⁰⁰ but also on their supposed ability to better appreciate the realities of the continent than the Anglo-Americans and the fact that many who were now in positions of power in Yugoslavia had become communists in France, not Russia.¹⁰¹ In Tito's eyes the French were far less disposed to ideological crusade than the British and Americans. While Franco-Soviet relations cooled with the onset of the Cold War despite the 1944 treaty, France was the partner that would least compromise Tito as an "imperialist" in the eyes of the Soviets.¹⁰² According to the French Ambassador the Yugoslavs, unlike the Soviets, did not rank the Western powers according to industrial and military might alone, and they "discern[ed] in us a more similar disposition of mind" than in the British and Americans.¹⁰³ However, the legacy of France's long-standing involvement in the region, as Baudet remarked to Auriol, was a double-edged sword: as "the new guard have all learned their communism in France, [they] expect understanding and support from [us]."¹⁰⁴ This was not always possible, particularly with the MRP in power at the Quai, and Yugoslavian expectations of unqualified support from France often resulted in disappointment.

With war raging in Korea, in autumn 1950 Tito made the move to formally request economic and military assistance as insurance against Soviet belligerence. Although the

¹⁰⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, "Note pour le Secrétaire Général A/S Aspect politique de l'aide économique à la Yougoslavie," Folio 129–131, 11.05.1951.; *Ibid.*, Carton 181, Letter from the French embassy (Susini) to the French Foreign Ministry "A.S. 'La Yougoslavie et la France dans le passé,' article de M. Milan Bartoš," Folio 90–96, 07.05.1956.

¹⁰¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Letter from the French embassy (Burin des Rozières) to the Foreign Ministry, Folio 130–134, 15.07.1954.; Vincent Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. V, 467. Those Yugoslavs who became communists in France included the long-serving Foreign Minister Koča Popović, the diplomat Mladen Iveković, and General Vladimir Velebit, one of Tito's top representatives who served as Ambassador to Rome, London, the World Bank, as well as Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe. See Mira Šušar, ed., *Vladimir Velebit: Svjedok istorije* (Zagreb: Razlog, 2001), 8–9, 40–41.

¹⁰² Franco-Soviet relations had cooled after the signature of the 1944 friendship treaty due to a series of factors, including the general geopolitical–ideological conflict, de Gaulle's demission, the expulsion of the PCF from the French government, the Kravchenko Affair that undermined the cause of communism in France, as well as French attempts to maintain a foothold in Eastern Europe (including Yugoslavia but also Poland and Czechoslovakia). See Schreiber, *Les actions de la France à l'Est*, 25–34. For the Kravchenko Affair see n.46.

¹⁰³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 33–38, 21.03.1955.

¹⁰⁴ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. V, 467.

scholarship on the topic emphasizes the centrality of the Americans in providing aid, Tito in fact first turned to the French.¹⁰⁵ This did not surprise Baudet's British and American counterparts in Belgrade, who attached great importance to this new Yugoslavian step toward the West and understood Tito's reasoning for seeking French assistance first.¹⁰⁶ With a unified tripartite aid policy not yet elaborated the French hoped to become interlocutors between Yugoslavia and the West, and indeed the Yugoslavs initially addressed the French exclusively.¹⁰⁷ As Kardelj told Baudet, France was "the pivot of the rapprochement between Yugoslavia and the West," and as such the French knew that they could not reject Yugoslavia's requests for aid lest their traditional position in the country be completely supplanted by the Anglo-Americans.¹⁰⁸ There were voices of opposition to French assistance to Yugoslavia: Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassador in Cairo, told his American counterpart that "every tank to Yugoslavia is one less tank for us," and that sending heavy armoured vehicles was redundant since the Yugoslavs themselves knew that the country's northern plains were indefensible and were planning a tactical retreat into the Bosnian mountains in case of invasion.¹⁰⁹ Despite dissenting voices, the French government decided to send aid. However, here as elsewhere, French designs foundered upon the rock of the country's own economic realities. With concerns over metropolitan and imperial defence and with colonial war raging in Indochina since 1946, French resources were simply stretched too thin. They had little materiel to spare, leaving the Yugoslavs unpleasantly surprised at Paris's

¹⁰⁵ For American supremacy in Tripartite Aid see John R. Lampe, Russell O. Prickett, and Ljubiša S. Adamović, *Yugoslav–American Economic Relations since World War II* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 19–46; Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat* (1998), xiii–xiv.

¹⁰⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 88, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 120–123, 28.10.1950.

¹⁰⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 88, "Note pour le Secrétaire Général a.s. aide à la Yougoslavie," Folio 156–159, 16.11.1950.

¹⁰⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 89, Telegram from the French Foreign Ministry to the French embassy in Yugoslavia, Folio 38–39, 26.01.1951.

¹⁰⁹ Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 138.

“meticulous examination” of their requests.¹¹⁰ The Quai was hamstrung by the fiscally conservative National Assembly and Ministry of Defence, who were opposed to sending free aid. The Quai insisted, however, that Paris had to follow London and Washington’s lead and provide free aid even though the Anglo-Americans were unlikely to defray the shipping costs from Paris (which Quai staffers considered asking).¹¹¹ In June 1951 the Ministry of Defence agreed to give obsolete German materiel (1,200 machine guns, 100 howitzers, 340,000 shells of assorted caliber, and 170 cannons) to Yugoslavia for free, which totaled over six billion francs in value before packaging and shipping. The French were also willing to sell 80 German Schneider 155mm howitzers and 120,000 corresponding shells of more recent manufacture (a total value of two billion francs) at a reduced price, the payment for which would not be required up front. However, regarding a limited quantity of French-made materiel that was to be sold at regular price, the Ministry of Defence was unyielding in insisting upon a “cash and carry” policy.¹¹²

The French were under no illusions about the inadequacy of their “contribution” of obsolete German war booty to Yugoslavia, which was pitiful to the point that the Quai considered the possibility of Italian objections to the delivery of said “aid” highly improbable.¹¹³ France’s annual contribution to Tripartite Aid was as follows:

| French Contribution to Tripartite Aid to Yugoslavia (in millions of American dollars) | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Period | French Contribution | Tripartite Total | Percentage of French Contribution |
| 1951–1952 | 14.4 | 120 | 12% |
| 1952–1953 | 8.5 | 99 | 8.5% |
| 1953–1954 | 5.5 | 92 | 5.9% |

¹¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 89, Telegram from the French Foreign Ministry to the French embassy in Yugoslavia, Folio 11, 11.01.1951.

¹¹¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 90, “Note a.s. Aide militaire à la Yougoslavie,” Folio 62–67, 25.06.1951.

¹¹² MAE, Série Z, Carton 90, “Note a.s. aide militaire à court terme à la Yougoslavie,” Folio 69–72, 26.06.1951.; *Ibid.*, “Note a.s. aide militaire à la Yougoslavie – entretien avec le Colonel Dousset,” Folio 77–78, 27.06.1951.

¹¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 91, “Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre a.s. aide militaire gratuite à la Yougoslavie,” Folio 135–137, 30.03.1953.

These figures, which ranged from just under 6% to 12% of the combined tripartite total, fell by half from 1951 to 1954, and were in sharp contrast to the initially projected 25% contribution.¹¹⁴ This figure included not only the German materiel, but also scrap metals, wool and flax, synthetic fibers, tractors, tires and auto parts, paints, potassium fertilizer, phosphates, activated carbon, and pharmaceuticals (much of it also of German provenance). The Yugoslavs were unhappy that French aid consisted mostly of finished goods when they had requested raw materials. Although the Yugoslavs' relations with the French were far less problematic than they were with the British and Americans, in Belgrade's eyes the French were much more "unguided and bureaucratic" than the Anglo-Americans, and "in discussions they never have an opinion and are quite disinterested ... and tend to adjust their position to the situation."¹¹⁵

In an attempt to compensate for their meagre contribution, the French turned to optics. The Quai insisted on a unified tripartite demarche toward Belgrade because "it is of major political importance to impress upon the Yugoslavs that the aid which is being accorded to them is not the doing of a single power [the Americans] but of the three major Western powers acting in agreement with the states affiliated with the Atlantic Pact."¹¹⁶ In sending ten million francs' worth of German-origin pharmaceutical drugs to Yugoslavia for free, Schuman emphasized the humanitarian nature of France's commitment.¹¹⁷ Such initiatives were deemed an effective means of exploiting Yugoslavia's positive disposition toward France. However, it must be noted that there were limits to French self-promotion. A combination of drought and the logical consequences of collectivization led to a severe food shortage in Yugoslavia in 1949–1950,

¹¹⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 90, "Note A.s. Contribution française à l'aide militaire à la Yougoslavie," Folio 32–34, 29.05.1951.

¹¹⁵ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, Note on France's participation in Tripartite Aid, Doc. 417639, undated.

¹¹⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 90, Circular telegram from the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 11, 08.05.1951.

¹¹⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 91, Letter from Schuman to the Ministry of Defence, Folio 44, 16.11.1951.

leaving the country short of 500,000 tons of wheat and 1 million tons of corn.¹¹⁸ The French sent a rather limited quantity of food aid (5,000 tonnes of wheat, 1,000 tonnes of sugar, and 500 tonnes of dried fish) which the Quai urged be delivered quickly to yield “maximum political advantages.”¹¹⁹ The anti-communist Schuman sympathized with the country’s plight and saw to it that the food aid was framed as a “gesture of friendship” and a “gift of raw materials” that would not be subtracted from existing aid and credit arrangements, and that it would be given no publicity. So as to not wound Belgrade’s pride and place it in an “embarrassing position” of accepting charity, Tito’s government was asked to simply reciprocate the gesture in kind within a ten-year window. While grateful, Ristić told Quai Secretary-General Alexandre Parodi that if the French truly wanted to help Yugoslavia, “they could easily do so by adopting a more reasonable position in their economic demands” over the nationalization and trade negotiations.¹²⁰ In a conversation with Ristić and Kardelj in Paris in December 1950, Schuman indicated that he was in favour of keeping interest on Yugoslavian purchases and credits to a minimum, and favoured passing a law that would allow such issues to bypass the National Assembly and eliminate the possibility of PCF (or other) obstructionism.¹²¹

Unfortunately, Schuman’s plans to implement legislation that would allow the government to bypass the National Assembly in matters of sales, aid and credits to foreign countries did not materialize. With Paris struggling to maintain a military upper hand in Indochina by 1953, the National Assembly brought an end to Tripartite Aid by voting against France’s further participation in it.¹²² For the period 1954–1955, the French contribution was

¹¹⁸ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 90.

¹¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 141, “Note pour la Direction Générale des Affaires Economiques a.s. fourniture de ravitaillement à la Yougoslavie,” Folio 32–33, 27.11.1950.

¹²⁰ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/220, Telegram from Ristić to Tito and Milentije Popović, Folio 6, 12.11.1950.

¹²¹ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/220, Telegram from Ristić to Tito and Milentije Popović, Folio 12, 01.12.1950.

¹²² To regain France’s offensive footing in Indochina the costly Navarre Plan was adopted in 1953. Apart from diverting French resources from NATO, the Plan was unable to secure a French victory and resulted in the defeat at

scheduled to be \$4 million (8.8%) of the combined tripartite total of \$45 million. The National Assembly rejected this contribution and approved of a 1.3 billion-franc credit package to Yugoslavia only after Henri Teitgen (MRP) announced that the extension of credits will be formally linked to incoming payments of Belgrade's debts. The Quai's European Direction considered it "extremely regrettable" that the Assembly had voted against French participation in Tripartite Aid in the final year of the program, thus breaking Allied unity and risking a loss of "moral capital" in Yugoslavia that it had been working to regain.¹²³ With this in mind, the Quai urged that some sort of gesture of Franco-Yugoslavian solidarity be made ahead of Tito's visit to France which was scheduled for autumn 1955.¹²⁴

The fundamental problem in the Franco-Yugoslavian relationship, however, was that while relations were not objectively bad, they could not be qualified as good, either. Necessity, not conviction, had obligated Tito to look westward. His order of preference of Western partners was the French, followed by the British (with whom he had extensive contacts during the war although postwar relations cooled), and lastly the Americans. Tensions with all three powers stemmed from their determination to impose conditions upon the use of aid in the Yugoslavs' rash pursuit of industrialization. Finding little understanding from the Anglo-Americans, Belgrade was expecting less self-interest and more understanding and cooperation from Paris on the matter of Yugoslavia's long-term industrial development.¹²⁵ However, as Jules Moch privately told Tito in September 1952, the reason for the slow improvement in bilateral relations

Dien Bien Phu in spring 1954. See David Mark Thompson, "Delusions of Grandeur: French Global Ambitions and the Problem of Revival of Military Power, 1950–1954," (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2007), 286–301.

¹²³ Lampe *et al.*, *Yugoslav–American Economic Relations since World War II*, 49; Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 229. The British, whose own contribution to Tripartite Aid fell from 23% to 3%, withdrew from the program in 1954. American military and economic aid to Yugoslavia continued until it was mutually decided to suspend it in 1958.

¹²⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 181, "Note pour le Président a.s. aide à la Yougoslavie," Folio 1–3, undated.

¹²⁵ Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad 1952–1955: Jugoslovensko približavanje NATO-u* (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 2000), 90, 166–178; AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/32, Minutes of Tito's conversation with Jules and Mme. Moch in Split, Folio 23, 05.09.1952.

was not because the French were skeptical toward Yugoslavia, but because they lacked an acquaintance with it. Accustomed to seeing the PCF not as a French party but as “the Russian communist party in France,” the French public struggled to grasp the notion that “one can be a communist without being Russian.”¹²⁶ Despite France and Yugoslavia’s shared geopolitical interests (*vis-à-vis* the Soviet threat, the German question and American hegemony in Western Europe), ideology remained a barrier to fostering more meaningful political relations. However, a change in ambassadors in 1950–1951 signaled a policy evolution on both sides. Relations improved after Baudet succeeded Payart in 1950 even though the Yugoslavs continued to accuse Baudet, as they had his predecessor, of hostility and reaction.¹²⁷ In a move to improve relations, Tito replaced Ristić with his trusted Western specialist and Deputy Foreign Minister Srdja Prica in late 1951. While intelligent, competent, and amiable, Prica was a peculiar choice as he did not speak French. This annoyed Ristić, who wrote to Tito and Kardelj that:

The French will find it difficult to understand that in Yugoslavia, which is not Pakistan, one could not find someone who speaks French to replace me, especially at a moment in which we seek to deepen friendly relations in all domains. [...] Specifically, the fact that Prica is Deputy Foreign Minister is not an argument that would prove to the French that we attach importance to the relations between our two countries.¹²⁸

Despite Prica’s lack of knowledge of the French language, Baudet lauded him for his frankness and accessibility, determination to learn French, and the “rather strong position” he created in Paris. This was made possible by the fact that Prica, unlike Ristić, had close connections to the Belgrade establishment, which allowed him to work much more efficiently in developing relations – a fact, Baudet told Bebler, that allowed the Quai to “finally understand” and come to “highly appreciate” his appointment.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/32, Minutes of Tito’s conversation with Jules and Mme. Moch in Split, Folio 23, 05.09.1952.

¹²⁷ DSIP, PA, 1952 F-26, “Francuska: neka pitanja iz spoljne i unutrašnje politike jugoslovensko-francuskih odnosa,” Doc. 417502, undated.

¹²⁸ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/222, Telegram from Ristić, Folio 1, 04.10.1951.

¹²⁹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Bebler’s conversation with Baudet, Doc. 522, 22.12.1953.

The increasing importance that Yugoslavia attached to France as its preferred Western partner was manifested in a number of other ways. Baudet resumed the prewar tradition of hosting Bastille Day receptions at France's embassy and consulates. Although in 1950 Bastille Day went unremarked in the Zagreb press, according to Consul Guy Radenac the consulate's fete was well-attended, not only by officials and "our country's old friends," but also "by a certain number of Croats who seemed to judge that it was an appropriate time to resume contacts with the West," such as the public prosecutor from the Stepinac trial.¹³⁰ In Belgrade in the early 1950s, the embassy's annual July 14 celebration was routinely attended by the most powerful men of the new Yugoslavia: Federal Assembly President Moša Pijade, Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council Rodoljub Čolaković, Tito's Secretary Jože Vilfan, Bebler and others, as well as "crowds of friends of France" that increasingly consisted of youth.¹³¹

Tensions with the Vatican and Belgrade's Courting of Alternative French Elements

Winning over the youth of Communist Yugoslavia was crucial for the perpetuation of French influence beyond the traditional and now largely defunct prewar circles. However, in the early 1950s official relations were inharmonious as ideological differences continued to fester, and as the Yugoslavs blamed the MRP for the disappointing state of relations.¹³² Yugoslavian hostility to the MRP only worsened when Belgrade severed diplomatic relations with the Vatican in late 1952. The Papacy under Pius XII was vociferous in its condemnation of communism and did not embrace Tito as a dissident. It continued to fear for the Church's position in Yugoslavia

¹³⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, Letter from Radenac to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 16–17, 17.07.1950.

¹³¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Letter from the French embassy (Burin des Roziers) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 135–136, 15.07.1954.

¹³² DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, Report on Franco-Yugoslavian relations, Doc. 18241, June 1955.

and refused any political rapprochement with Belgrade, despite Washington's prodding.¹³³ In late 1952, Rome incited controversy by elevating Archbishop Stepinac (whom Tito had released from prison in 1951 as a gesture of good will¹³⁴) to the rank of Cardinal on November 29, the Yugoslavian national holiday. The news of this inspired charges of provocation from the CPY, Kardelj fulminating that "nothing in the Church's situation in Yugoslavia justifies the attitude of the Vatican."¹³⁵ When Baudet learned that Belgrade was not simply asking the Papal Nuncio to leave but was demanding that the Vatican dissolve the Apostolic Nunciature completely, he "was in shock," according to Bebler, who knew that the news would have negative repercussions in France.¹³⁶ In announcing the rupture with the Holy See, Tito alluded to the possibility of Yugoslavia "following another policy if it is not accepted by the Western powers as a respected ally."¹³⁷ According to him, the reactionary Vatican (under whose umbrella he also subsumed the Anglican Church, which was protesting his upcoming visit to London) "detests socialism and is doing everything it can against us" and, working alongside imperialist Italy, "is behind the anti-Yugoslavian campaign in the West."¹³⁸

Tito's suspicions of the MRP intensified with word that the Vatican was exerting pressure on Schuman regarding the Trieste question, and were further heightened when the Holy See confided the protection of its interests in Yugoslavia to France.¹³⁹ Yugoslavian propaganda in France therefore now had to contend with both Cominformist and Vatican campaigns against

¹³³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 105, Letter from the French chargé d'affaires in the Vatican (Christian de Margerie) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 4–10, 13.10.1951.

¹³⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 105, Letter from the Zagreb Consul (Auvynet) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 40, 05.12.1951.

¹³⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 106, Letter from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 25–30, 09.12.1952; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Baudet on Kardelj's speech to the *Skupština*, 19.12.1952.

¹³⁶ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/227, Note on Bebler's conversation with Baudet, Doc. 2758/52, 17.12.1952.

¹³⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 94, Telegram from the French Ambassador to Washington (Bonnet) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 19, 18.12.1952.

¹³⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 94, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry transmitting excerpts of Tito's speech in Smederevska Palanka, Folio 13–15, 17.12.1952.

¹³⁹ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/222, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 94, 17.04.1951.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 106, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 44, 19.12.1952.

it. The *Agencija za informacije* published Kardelj's pamphlets on the break with the Holy See and on the Church's wartime collusion with the Germans and Ustashas, and disseminated it to the press and various notable individuals and organizations to "comparatively serious effect."¹⁴⁰ The greatest understanding on this score came from the SFIO, and even from Baudet who said at an embassy soirée in September 1954 that the recently-defunct European Defence Community (EDC) was "a Vatican creation and a Catholic policy on whose foundation the Vatican, Schuman and [West German Chancellor Konrad] Adenauer worked in tandem."¹⁴¹

For Yugoslav ideologues, the questions of the Catholic Church and Francophilia in Yugoslavia were twinned, as explored by the Catholic affairs scholar Sima Simić in his study, *Pitanje frankofilstva (The Francophile Question)*. Simić traced the Quai's hostility to Orthodoxy in the Balkans to the days of the Avignon Popes' missions to convert the inhabitants of Serbia and Bosnia. This legacy manifested itself in the Quai's Catholic elements' support of the interwar Assumptionist missions who sought to convert the Orthodox regions of Yugoslavia – Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia – which, coincidentally, were the strongest bastions of Francophilia in the country. The order opened a series of elementary schools and junior gymnasia in Belgrade and Skopje, which were simply known as "French schools" to the locals. Popular with the interwar urban elites, these schools were closed by the Communists in 1945. According to Simić, after the Second World War France became the Vatican's stronghold in Western Europe and so the Quai's animosity toward Yugoslavia continued.¹⁴² The Belgrade authorities were thus not happy when in May 1952 three French parliamentary deputies visited

¹⁴⁰ DSIP, PA, 1953 F-27, Embassy report on cultural and propaganda work, Doc. 41061, undated.

¹⁴¹ In contrast to Baudet the embassy's the chargé d'affaires, Etienne Burin des Rozières, characterized the situation as a Yugoslavian tendency to "blame the Roman Church whenever it sustains a diplomatic defeat." AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Lj. Radovanović's conversation with Baudet and Burin des Rozières, Doc. 765, 22.09.1954.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Letter from Burin des Rozières to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 131, 15.07.1954.

¹⁴² DSIP, PA, 1956 F-25, Doc. 423941, undated. Cf. AJ, A KPR, I-2-/6, Sima Simić, *Pitanje frankofilstva*, Folio 812ff, undated.

Yugoslavia and published a hostile report in *La France Catholique* upon their return to France, prompting Baudet to speculate that it had been commissioned by the Vatican.¹⁴³

Thus in the early Cold War the question of religion in general and the Vatican in particular was a central problem in the relationship between the Christian Democratic Quai and atheist Belgrade. Despite professions of traditional friendship, the Yugoslavs felt that official France was the most reserved of the three Western powers, and that they were having much more success in building relations with Protestant London and Washington.¹⁴⁴ Hoping to sway France's ruling circles, Kardelj suggested to Baudet in early 1951 that the two countries exchange parliamentary delegations. Schuman, whose initial post-schism enthusiasm for Yugoslavia had begun to cool, voiced his concerns that as a rule Paris did not send such delegations to non-democratic regimes.¹⁴⁵ Auriol and Baudet partially shared in Schuman's reluctance and although they did not object to an exchange of delegations in principle, they did not wish to send anything "too official or too representative" to Belgrade.¹⁴⁶ Hamon and Maurice Schumann (MRP), as well as Guy Mollet (SFIO), were in favour of the project, while the Quai argued that it was "indispensable" that the French delegation be headed by a well-known politician such as Paul Ramadier (SFIO) or Pierre Mendès-France (Radical).¹⁴⁷

A twelve-member Yugoslavian delegation led by Pijade was the first to visit in March 1951. The delegation was greeted at the Gare du Nord by Hamon, but labour unrest affected the itinerary: a reception at the Yugoslavian embassy was poorly attended due to a RATP strike; a visit to a Renault factory was cancelled due to fears of unrest; and upon departure the delegates

¹⁴³ DSIP, PA, 1952 F-26, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 46466, 15.05.1952.

¹⁴⁴ DSIP, PA, 1953 F-27, "Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi," Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

¹⁴⁵ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. V, 468.

¹⁴⁶ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. V, 468.

¹⁴⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, "Aide-memoire a.s. Echange de visites de délégations parlementaires entre la France et la Yougoslavie," Folio 55-58, 03.02.1951.

were obligated to reach the French border by car due to railway disturbances. Despite scheduling difficulties and PCF protests, the delegation met with many French notables. Pijade and Federal Presidium member Josip Vidmar met with President of the Council of the Republic, Gaston Monnerville. Briefed by Hamon, Monnerville assured Pijade and Vidmar of France's interest in maintaining Yugoslavia's independence and assuring its security, while Pijade enlightened Monnerville on Yugoslavia's position on Trieste and its general foreign policy. Pijade and Prica also met with Schuman, a meeting both parties deemed "satisfactory." The delegation visited the SFIO headquarters and was received by Mollet, and was honoured by a reception at the Quai. The delegation was also very warmly received by the President of the National Assembly, Eduard Herriot, who fondly recalled his own interwar visit to Yugoslavia. In addition, Hamon, "old friends" with Pijade from interwar pacifist fora, presented medals commemorating the French Revolution and the eightieth anniversary of the Paris Commune to his guest.¹⁴⁸

A French parliamentary delegation, representing all French political parties except the PCF, repaid the visit in September 1952. The roster included: Hamon, Pierre Schneider and Father Albert Gau of the MRP; the Radical René Mayer; the Socialist François Mitterrand and Eduard Depreux; and the Gaullist (RPF) Gaston Palewski and Louis Vallon.¹⁴⁹ Although the delegation met with Tito in Slovenia the parliamentarians seemed reluctant to voice any opinion, particularly on official French policy toward Yugoslavia, and conversations never advanced beyond general pleasantries. Father Gau was so preoccupied with the "church question" and was so belligerent in conversation with Tito that Baudet had to intercede. The Yugoslavs attributed

¹⁴⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, "Note sur le séjour de la délégation parlementaire yougoslave à Paris," Folio 106–115, 23.03.1951. For the Pijade–Hamon friendship see AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Pijade's conversation with Hamon, Doc. 393, 30.03.1956.

¹⁴⁹ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy (Makiedo) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 413575, 22.08.1952.

this behaviour to “contact with reactionaries who have told them [Gau, Hamon, and Depreux] all sorts of things [about Yugoslavia].”¹⁵⁰ Belgrade concluded that:

The French parliamentarians’ visit may undoubtedly be considered useful for the establishment of contacts and for making acquaintance with notable representatives of the main political groups of the French Parliament, and through them their friends, especially those with whom we have not thus far had such encounters. However, even though the delegation contained representatives of the three parties that are in government [MRP, RPF, SFIO], we should not expect that this visit will have a significant influence in terms of a change in official French policy toward our country: more specifically, in terms of reducing Vatican influence on French foreign policy, her prudence toward Italy as an Atlantic partner, and certain opportunistic tendencies toward the USSR.¹⁵¹

Finding little common ground with the MRP chiefs at the Quai, the Yugoslavs began courting left-of-centre circles of French political life in the hopes of improving bilateral relations as a way of bolstering Yugoslavia’s security, combating the PCF’s anti-Yugoslavian campaign, and building international socialist solidarity. Quai Secretary-Generals Alexandre Parodi, René Massigli and Louis Joxe, Presidents of the Republic Vincent Auriol and René Coty, Premiers René Pleven and Edgar Faure, as well as SFIO ministers Jules Moch and Guy Mollet, were all Yugoslavian sympathizers of varying degrees. Their sympathies stemmed from their Socialism (post-schism, of course) and general anti-fascism and Germanophobia. In comparison, Schuman continued to find communism objectionable and worked toward European integration, a project that did not lack detractors who feared a “Vatican Europe.”¹⁵² Pleven in particular, the EDC¹⁵³ originator who recognized that Tito’s international significance and utility lay precisely in the fact that he was a communist, was identified by Ambassador Ristić in July 1950 as “certainly

¹⁵⁰ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, “Izveštaj o boravku francuske parlamentarne delegacije,” Doc. 417510, 04.10.1952.

¹⁵¹ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, “Poseta francuske parlamentarne delegacije,” Doc. 417510, unsigned, undated.

¹⁵² Alan Paul Fimister, *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2008), 227.

¹⁵³ The EDC was a French counterproposal to American plans to rearm West Germany, whose assistance it needed in NATO because imperial obligations diverted French and British resources. Under the EDC West Germany would not have a national army and its troops would be integrated into the French-controlled European force. However, the EDC failed because the French themselves refused to ratify it on the grounds that it would mean a loss of autonomy for the French national army. Georges-Henri Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine: Les rapports politico-stratégiques franco-allemands, 1954–1996* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), 11–13, 21.

much more suitable and useful to us than Schuman.”¹⁵⁴ Twice Premier in 1950–1952 as well as serving subsequently as Defence Minister, Pleven worked on securing aid and diplomatic support for Yugoslavia as much as he could with his slim parliamentary majority.¹⁵⁵

A key segment of French political life that supported Yugoslavia was the SFIO, in particular the party leadership which included Auriol, Moch, and Mollet. With PCF–CPY contacts severed after the Cominform Resolution, Belgrade sought allies in the French Socialists instead. While a current of opposition existed within the SFIO leadership, in early 1951 the party began considering a more open line toward Yugoslavia, and Ristić was instructed to extend invitations to anyone from the party who wished to visit the country.¹⁵⁶ This policy quickly yielded results. Party contacts flourished and two SFIO delegations visited Yugoslavia in 1951. Both were surprised by the liberty and frankness with which their skepticism toward the Yugoslavian system was met.¹⁵⁷ National Assembly deputy and future Premier Guy Mollet visited Yugoslavia in March 1952 along with Albert Gazier, Robert Pontillon and François Tanguy-Prigent, where he met with Tito, Kardelj, Djilas, and other top men. Topics of discussion included democracy and Socialist theory, Yugoslavia’s internal development, and the international questions *du jour*, on which a pleasantly surprised Mollet noted a great coincidence of views.¹⁵⁸ Like other delegations before them, Mollet and his colleagues were impressed by the sincerity and openness of the talks and vowed to maintain regular party contacts. In Baudet’s

¹⁵⁴ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/220, Telegram from Ristić to Tito and Kardelj, Doc. 109, 28.07.1950.

¹⁵⁵ AJ, A KMJ, I-3-b/220, Telegram from Ristić to Tito and Kardelj, Doc. 109, 28.07.1950.; DSIP, PA, 1951 F–25, Telegram from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 414532, 27.09.1951.

¹⁵⁶ DSIP, PA, 1951 F–25, Telegram from Mates to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 4512, 17.01.1951.; AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/30, Preparatory notes for the CPY–SFIO meeting, Folio 16, 20.03.1952.

¹⁵⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 117, Letter from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 100–102, 19.03.1951.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 194–197, 12.12.1951.

¹⁵⁸ AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/30, Note on the conversation between the SFIO delegation and the CPY Central Committee, Folio 22–25, 26.03.1952.

words, “the seductive powers of Yugoslavia’s master proved particularly effective,” and the Yugoslavs also expressed “unreserved satisfaction with the conversations.”¹⁵⁹

Tito’s charm offensive and building of socialist solidarity continued with Jules Moch’s unofficial visit to Yugoslavia in September 1952. Meeting privately with Tito at his villa in Split, they discussed ideology, Yugoslavian foreign policy, Franco-Yugoslavian relations, the German question, and disarmament, on all of which they were largely in agreement.¹⁶⁰ Moch published his travelogue, *Yougoslavie, terre d’expériences*, the following year but Prica’s review of it was less than glowing: “the book is confusing and it is obvious that the author is not clear on what he wants to prove. On some questions he writes in such a manner that he outclasses our propaganda. On workers’ self-management he writes as though he considers it a solution which the West should adopt.” He wrote favourably on the country’s cooperatives (*zadruga*) and economic development, was contradictory on whether democracy exists in Yugoslavia or not, and treaded carefully on the sensitive issues of Mihailović, Italy, and the Vatican. Despite some of his “absurd” and “unsubstantiated” conclusions, Moch nevertheless called upon the world to let Yugoslavia follow its own path so that it may become a “torchbearer for a Socialist Europe.” Prica’s final verdict was that while the book would be received positively by Socialists, some of the content could, in the wrong hands, be used as ammunition against Yugoslavia.¹⁶¹

Some SFIO members were hostile to Yugoslavia’s position on Trieste on the grounds that the affair could play into Soviet hands, but the party leadership remained supportive.¹⁶² When General Clément Blanc visited Yugoslavia in October 1952 (discussed below), he transmitted a message from Auriol that he would like, upon the end of his term, to visit Yugoslavia as a

¹⁵⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Letter from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 39–42, 02.04.1952.

¹⁶⁰ AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/32, Minutes of Tito’s conversation with Jules and Mme. Moch in Split, Folio 14–26, 05.09.1952. Cf. Jules Moch, *Yougoslavie, terre d’expériences* (Monaco-Ville: Editions du Rocher, 1953), 239–253.

¹⁶¹ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–28, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44631, 12.03.1953.

¹⁶² DSIP, PA, 1951 F–27, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44319, 23.03.1951.

“simple French citizen” and meet Tito. Tito “enthusiastically” replied to Blanc that he would meet Auriol “anywhere and in any capacity.” Baudet was uncertain if Tito, scheduled to visit Great Britain the following March, was intimating that he would like to pay an official visit to France or whether this was a simple phrase of courtesy, and instructed the Quai to “keep this in mind.”¹⁶³ Tito would visit France in May 1956 but he was preceded by Auriol’s own visit to Yugoslavia in April–May 1955. Although the international situation had changed by 1955 with the Geneva Summit, the Khrushchev Thaw, and the Soviet–Yugoslav rapprochement, a cautious normalization of relations between the PCF and LCY did not come until 1963–1964.¹⁶⁴ Until the divergence between the LCY and SFIO over the war in Algeria in 1956–1957 (see Chapter 3), the Socialists remained the Yugoslavs’ chief allies in France. In his capacity as president of the *Fédération mondiale des anciens combattants*, Auriol was invited by the Yugoslavian veterans’ organization (headed by Ranković) to visit during its national congress, as well as the International Workers’ Day celebrations.¹⁶⁵ The visit was accorded much press attention and Ambassador François Coulet, who briefly served as Baudet’s successor, estimated that “this visit [had] a positive influence on Franco-Yugoslavian relations.”¹⁶⁶

Continental security concerns continued to unite the two parties even after the death of Stalin. When asked by Tito if “deep inside you consider the German threat as serious as the Russian threat,” Auriol’s response that Europe must proceed prudently on both incited a “hearty

¹⁶³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 189, 10.10.1952.

¹⁶⁴ The PCF’s position on Yugoslavia evolved after the PCF delegation’s return from the XXI Congress of the CPSU in 1959. The rapprochement between the PCF and LCY, however, was slow and cautious – stemming from the PCF’s “Gaullo-centric and chauvinistic” position on Algeria that was at odds with Marxism–Leninism – and did not take root until 1963–1964. See DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 47649, 18.03.1959.; *Ibid.*, 1963 F–28, “Informacija za druga Jakova Blaževića o predlogu CK KP Francuske za ekonomsku saradnju sa Jugoslavijom,” Doc. 437197, 23.11.1963. For the PCF’s position on Algeria see René Dazy, *La partie et le tout: Le PCF et la guerre franco-algérienne* (Paris: Editions Syllèpse, 1990), 39.

¹⁶⁵ AN, 552AP/182, Fond Vincent Auriol, Letter from Ranković to Auriol, 19.03.1955.

¹⁶⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Letter from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 78–80, 05.05.1955.

laugh of approval” from the Marshall.¹⁶⁷ With the prospect of Yugoslavia’s return to the Soviet bloc worrying the West, Auriol returned from Yugoslavia convinced that “Tito will not abandon his independence and return to the Soviet fold” and that Yugoslavia’s willingness to cooperate with the West was sincere, inspired as it was by “the dual concern of national prosperity and outside security.”¹⁶⁸ However, Auriol’s visit incited a press polemic with Bidault. In *Ce Soir* Auriol accused “certain French governments” of “condemning Yugoslavia through their religious allegiances and matching the Vatican in its hostile attitude,” thus prioritizing Vatican over French national interests instead of “engaging in cooperation which would be fruitful to both countries.”¹⁶⁹ Feeling personally targeted, Bidault did little to conceal his hostility to Yugoslavia, replying to Auriol in *Sud-Ouest Dimanche* that “the French Academy could debate what difference [the American] Cardinal Spellman could make between the fates of Cardinal Stepinac and [the Hungarian] Cardinal Mindszenty. However, the jailers of the former have received relief and aid, while the jailers of the latter continue to be disgraced.”¹⁷⁰ Simić, the religious affairs expert, remarked that:

The positions of Vincent Auriol and Georges Bidault are an expression of the internal contradictions that have been given expression in the postwar coalitions with regard to France’s policy toward Yugoslavia. [...] Put differently, which France seeks, and which France opposes, reasonable and open-minded links and cooperation with Yugoslavia for the sake of France’s own security and future; more so given that friendship and alliances between the peoples of France and Yugoslavia are only natural and logical. At stake are mutual interests in international life.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ AN, 552AP/182, Fond Vincent Auriol, “Entretien du Président Vincent Auriol et du Maréchal Tito le samedi 30 avril, 1955 de 12h.45 au Palais Blanc à Belgrade,” 30.04.1955.

¹⁶⁸ AN, 552AP/182, Fond Vincent Auriol, “Retour de Yougoslavie,” undated.

¹⁶⁹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–25, Simić, “Katolički elementi u politici Kej d’Orseja prema Jugoslaviji,” Doc. 423941, undated.

¹⁷⁰ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–25, Simić, “Katolički elementi u politici Kej d’Orseja prema Jugoslaviji,” Doc. 423941, undated.

¹⁷¹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–25, Simić, “Katolički elementi u politici Kej d’Orseja prema Jugoslaviji,” Doc. 423941, undated.

'Mutual Interests in International Life:’ Western Overtures and the Koča Years

These “mutual interests in international life” were the familiar triad of concerns over Soviet belligerence, American hegemony, and West German rearmament. In response to these Kardelj elaborated a new set of foreign policy tenets after the Cominform Resolution. Although the Non-Aligned Movement was still quite distant on the horizon, the principles of Yugoslavia’s “active neutralism” were based on the condemnation of all imperialisms, Soviet and Western alike, and defined as: non-intervention of outside powers in the domestic affairs of any country; international disarmament (both conventional and nuclear); and economic development and cooperation as pathways to global equality and international peace. These goals could only be achieved through the United Nations, and Yugoslavia was elected a rotating member of the United Nations Security Council in 1951 and 1956.¹⁷² For Tito, these steps were a means of distinguishing his regime from Moscow in order to legitimize Yugoslavia’s independence (and the United Nations was an ideal platform for condemning Soviet policy in the early post-schism days). This, in turn, bolstered the country’s international status, which further reinforced Tito’s domestic legitimacy and prestige.¹⁷³

Having paid a high price for its overdependence on the Soviet Union, Tito, however much he needed the West to ensure Yugoslavia’s economic survival, did not want to become overdependent on the Western bloc lest Washington attempt to overthrow him, and further wanted to keep open the possibility of reconciliation with Moscow.¹⁷⁴ Despite receiving Western aid the Yugoslavs consistently called for a careful avoidance of alignment with either

¹⁷² MAE, Série Z, Carton 24, Kardelj’s speech to the *Skupština* of December 28, 1948, Folio 106–166, 07.01.1949.; *Ibid.*, Carton 160, “Note a.s. La Yougoslavie et l’O.N.U.,” Folio 29–31, 30.04.1956.

¹⁷³ Robert Niebuhr, “Nonalignment as Yugoslavia’s Answer to Bloc Politics,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol 13, No. 1 (Winter 2011), 153–159.

¹⁷⁴ Svetozar Rajak, “The Cold War in the Balkans, 1945–1961,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 214–215.

superpower and for the prevention of any and all forms of aggression. However, the Fourth Republic's track record was problematic on both of these scores, and Palweski and other Gaullists who visited Yugoslavia in September 1952 admired (and perhaps envied) the fact that “the Americans were not able to impose upon [the Yugoslavs] any conditions of a political nature.”¹⁷⁵ As Bebler said in a speech in Pakistan in January 1953, “relations between nations can be spoiled if the principles of equality, good neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of others are forgotten.”¹⁷⁶ Rather than denoting problems in the Third World or the Soviet threat to itself that was mitigated by Western aid and the death of Stalin, Yugoslavian allusions to “good neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of others” frequently referred to Italy and to the problem of Trieste. Although the West had been urging a settlement between Italy and Yugoslavia, the crisis peaked in October 1953 when the two came precipitously close to war following the announcement that Italian troops would replace the Anglo-Americans in Zone A. Although war was averted, the Western powers worried that the affair would have consequences on Italy's domestic politics. They needed a centrist Rome that would remain in NATO and ratify the EDC.¹⁷⁷ However, Tito and Kardelj were reluctant to yield on Trieste: the former because he did not wish to see such a strategically important port fall to American influence; the latter because the contested territory bordered his native Slovenia.¹⁷⁸ With the policies of both Rome and Belgrade constrained by nationalism and public opinion, the impasse created in 1945 continued well into the 1950s.

The question of Trieste had a tremendous impact on Franco-Yugoslavian relations. The pre-1945 legacy, coupled with an improvement in relations after Tito's schism with Stalin,

¹⁷⁵ DSIP, PA, 1952 F-26, “Izveštaj o boravku francuske parlamentarne delegacije,” Doc. 417510, 04.10.1952.

¹⁷⁶ Aleš Bebler, “The Foreign Policy of Yugoslavia,” *Pakistan Horizon* Vol. 6, No. 2 (June, 1953), 54.

¹⁷⁷ Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 51–53.

¹⁷⁸ Rinna Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 93–94.

created an illusory expectation in Belgrade that France, even with the Catholic MRP in control of the Foreign Ministry, would support it against Rome.¹⁷⁹ The French liked to think of themselves as guarantors of European peace, which they would achieve not only by working toward European integration but also by acting as mediators between Rome and Belgrade.¹⁸⁰ Bidault in particular was, according to Baudet, preoccupied with Trieste to the same extent that Schuman was preoccupied with German reconciliation.¹⁸¹ As tensions flared in October 1954, in hopes of exploiting French sympathies Prica sent a letter to Hamon (copies of which Hamon disseminated to a number of senators and deputies) in which he made an emotional appeal to the traditional friendship: “My country has always had the same interest as France in maintaining peace in Europe, and it is not by chance that in all the previous wars we have fought against the same aggressors. This is why I am certain that, in our current efforts to preserve peace, my people will be supported by the people of France.”¹⁸²

With the Quai refusing to endorse Yugoslavia’s claims to Trieste, the Belgrade daily *Politika* also wondered “what remains of the traditional Franco-Yugoslavian friendship eight years after the Quai d’Orsay assumed a regular anti-Yugoslavian position.”¹⁸³ Belgrade was incensed that its threats of the use of force were ignored.¹⁸⁴ The Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry concluded that “it cannot be said that the French position on [Trieste] has fundamentally altered, despite a patent desire from the French to portray themselves as favourably inclined, even friendly, toward us.”¹⁸⁵ In a conversation with Prica, however, an “overly nice” Parodi contended that the Yugoslavs were exaggerating France’s allegedly hostile attitude to Yugoslavia and

¹⁷⁹ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, “Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi,” Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

¹⁸⁰ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. VII, 457.

¹⁸¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Bebler’s conversation with Baudet, Doc. 502, 27.10.1953.

¹⁸² DSIP, PA, 1953 F–28, Doc. 416187, 21.10.1953.

¹⁸³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Telegram from the French embassy (Fontaine) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 75, 18.12.1953.

¹⁸⁴ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Crnobrnja’s conversation with Baudet, Doc. 1605, 12.10.1953.

¹⁸⁵ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, Report on Franco-Yugoslavian relations, Doc. 18241, June 1955.

claimed that the British and Americans were placing France in an awkward position between Rome and Belgrade.¹⁸⁶ Belgrade resented the French rapprochement with ex-enemy Italy and was disappointed to see that support for this came from the most unlikely of quarters such as segments of the PCF and SFIO, and not simply the expected pro-Catholic and pro-American circles.¹⁸⁷ It was in this context that Belgrade interpreted Bidault's repeated postponement of the invitation to visit Yugoslavia.¹⁸⁸ Prica, however, took Parodi's words to heart, writing to Belgrade that "the constant reassurances from Bidault and other figures in authority that France wishes to be as friendly as possible with Yugoslavia, and at the same time with Italy, are not simply hollow diplomatic verse, but that it is a policy the government genuinely wishes to follow; ... it's a reflection of France's uncertain international position."¹⁸⁹ It was in this context, Prica argued, that one must interpret Bidault's hesitancy to pay an official visit to Yugoslavia.

France's postwar predicament of balancing between Rome and Belgrade ran in stark parallel to its interwar quandary. After the collapse of Tsarist Russia in 1917, France sought to establish a counterweight to Germany through a series of eastern alliances that included the Little Entente (Yugoslavia, Romania, and Czechoslovakia). Throughout the 1920s and first half of the 1930s, Third Republic governments sought to balance between their Yugoslavian client and a revisionist Italy that desired to once again render the Mediterranean a "Roman lake." With an entente between Rome and Belgrade impossible due to territorial disputes in Dalmatia and Istria, French policy gave rise to a virtual merry-go-round whereby any improvements in Franco-Yugoslavian relations were met with Italian belligerence, while any attempts at a Franco-Italian rapprochement inspired panic in Belgrade. The Italian dictator Benito Mussolini actively worked

¹⁸⁶ DSIP, PA, 1954 F-23, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 4676, 19.01.1954.

¹⁸⁷ DSIP, PA, 1953 F-27, "Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi," Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

¹⁸⁸ Yugoslavian overtures to Schuman about a visit to the country similarly proved unfruitful. Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. VI, 639.

¹⁸⁹ DSIP, PA, 1954 F-22, Annual Yugoslavian embassy report for 1953, Doc. 41814, 03.02.1954.

to destroy Yugoslavia from within in order to facilitate his annexation of the eastern coast of the Adriatic. It was under his patronage that the Ustashas assassinated King Alexander and Louis Barthou in Marseille in 1934: the very episode that definitively dashed the Yugoslavian monarchy's faith in France, its First World War saviour and Great Power benefactor.¹⁹⁰ The French balancing act ultimately failed, and the result was that both Italy and Yugoslavia drifted into the German sphere of influence: Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1937 while Yugoslavia's economy became increasingly dependent on Berlin from 1933 onward.¹⁹¹ After 1945, the French once again found themselves treading carefully between the two countries. Italy opposed Western aid to Yugoslavia and any Yugoslavian integration into Western defence, but to little effect. The West could not pressure Italy over Trieste due to its political, economic, and strategic importance; but Cold War prerogatives meant that it could not afford to alienate the Yugoslavian "bloc wedge," either.¹⁹² In summer 1953, Baudet suggested to Parodi that France offer to financially assist Italian reconstruction as compensation for Paris's pro-Yugoslavian position on Trieste. The Quai judged that "this idea is certainly valid" but the funds were simply not there to permit France to compete with American resources for influence in Rome.¹⁹³

What this meant was that France would continue to be in an uncomfortable position between the two countries as long as Tito refused to realize "that the guarantee of [Yugoslavia's]

¹⁹⁰ Vuk Vinaver, *Jugoslavija i Francuska između dva rata* (Beograd: ISI, 1985), 451–459.

¹⁹¹ Yugoslavia's drift into the German sphere of influence culminated with Regent Paul's signature of the Tripartite Pact on March 25, 1941. This was followed by an army putsch on March 27. As demonstrators gathered in Belgrade to denounce the pact, famously shouting "*bolje rat nego pakt, bolje grob nego rob*" ("better war than the pact, better death than slavery"), the putschists proclaimed the 17-year-old heir, Crown Prince Peter, to be of age and crowned him king. Infuriated by the putsch, Hitler launched "Operation Punishment" (*Unternehmen Strafgericht*) against Yugoslavia on April 6. Yugoslavia capitulated ten days later and was occupied by the Axis, while the government fled to London.

¹⁹² DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 47412, 04.06.1953.

¹⁹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Quai letter (unsigned) to Baudet, Folio 62–64, 04.08.1953.

security depends upon an improvement in Italo-Yugoslavian relations.”¹⁹⁴ However, the man who would persuade Tito to solve the Trieste problem and release France from its purgatory between Belgrade and Rome came from unlikely quarters. A reshuffling took place at the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry in spring 1953 when Chief of the General Staff, Konstantin “Koča” Popović, was appointed Foreign Minister, a post he would hold until 1966. Born to a wealthy Belgrade family, Koča, as he was simply known, studied philosophy at the Sorbonne where he became a communist. He moved in Ristić’s surrealist circles and was a volunteer in the Spanish Civil War. Arrested by the occupying Germans in 1941, he narrowly escaped hanging on Belgrade’s Terazije Square and joined Tito’s forces. He eventually became commander of the First Proletarian Division and was appointed Chief of the General Staff in 1947. He never belonged to the party elite: he remained on the fringes due to his existentialism, distaste for Bolshevism, and Djilas and Ranković’s mistrust of him that stemmed from his interwar arrest, torture and alleged confessions to the police as a member of the then-illegal CPY.¹⁹⁵ As Chief of the General Staff he emphasized quality over quantity in the country’s armament and was instrumental in the establishment of military technical institutes. He lobbied hard to convince the West that Yugoslavia was in danger after the Cominform Resolution, and it was under his aegis that Yugoslavia began receiving Western aid.¹⁹⁶

His aversion to the “virus of ideology” and the “doctrinal Hydra” of Bolshevism made him an unlikely candidate for the post of Foreign Minister, a position that Kardelj no longer wished to hold after the death of Stalin in March 1953.¹⁹⁷ It still remains unclear why he was chosen, although the decision was likely inspired by two factors: one, that Kardelj wished for the

¹⁹⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 113, “Note a.s. Questions concernant la Yougoslavie. Coordination de la défense dans les Balkans,” Folio 35–39, 13.12.1952.

¹⁹⁵ Aleksandar Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 2nd edition (Zagreb: Globus, 1989), 33–43.

¹⁹⁶ Dušan Čkrebić, *Koča Popović: Duboka ljudska tajna* (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2011), 148–153.

¹⁹⁷ Čkrebić, *Koča Popović*, 158–159.

portfolio to fall to a subordinate and not a potential rival from Tito's inner circle; and two, that Tito himself, in seeking to improve relations with the West, wished to see the Sorbonne-educated "salon communist" replace the stiff and dogmatic Kardelj.¹⁹⁸ It was reportedly the diplomat Ivo Vejvoda who made the suggestion of Koča to the Politburo, which Ristić quickly seconded.¹⁹⁹ Surprised by the appointment, Koča later recalled that he accepted it "decisively, without any hesitation, although I would have to admit that, deep inside myself, I had certain reservations."²⁰⁰

The Quai also had its reservations. According to a biography of Koča prepared by the French embassy in Belgrade, "it is dangerous to claim, as it is sometimes claimed, that he is a great Francophile." As a son of the bourgeoisie, Koča used the two years he spent in Paris in his twenties to "roam the Latin Quarter and Montparnasse, where he immersed himself in surrealism." In the embassy's estimation, Koča was "intelligent, cultivated, often caustic and at ease with paradox, [which makes him] a difficult interlocutor."²⁰¹ Although he was opposed to Bolshevism, one-party and personal rule, this did not mean that he was a democrat, blindly uncritical of the West, or that he was a Serbian nationalist.²⁰² He believed that Yugoslavia, as a European country, could not afford cool relations with the Western half of the continent. He therefore worked to regain the confidence of the West, believing that only the developed capitalist world, however imperfect, could provide the stability and prosperity that multiethnic Yugoslavia needed to survive.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 90–91.

¹⁹⁹ Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 22.

²⁰⁰ Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 23.

²⁰¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 148, "Note a.s. Biographie de M. Ko[č]a Popovi[ć], Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires Etrangères – (Note de l'Ambassade de France à Belgrade)," 27.04.1956.

²⁰² When the chief of the Serbian secret police, Slobodan Penezić, told Khrushchev that "that one [motioning to Koča] wouldn't do anything for Serbia," Koča retorted: "Yes, nothing stupid! That task I leave to you *Srbende* [a pejorative term for Serbian chauvinists] because of whose great concern for Serbdom the Serbs will have to suffer and atone for centuries." Čkrebić, *Koča Popović*, 190.

²⁰³ Čkrebić, *Koča Popović*, 185.

Tito did not hold the reins of power over Yugoslavian foreign policy in the conventional sense because, as Serbian Politburo member Mirko Tepavac said, “not even a dictator dictates every day and on every occasion.”²⁰⁴ Tito never countermanded the Foreign Ministry’s policy, except in rare cases when its analyses and suggestions of course of action toward the USSR were deemed too hard-line. He was “ideologically burdened” and according Tepavac, he was “a slave less to Russian pressures than to his own ideological education.”²⁰⁵ Tito had full confidence in Koča until the Soviet–Yugoslav reconciliation that was marked by Khrushchev’s visit to Belgrade in May 1955, and the Foreign Ministry line (“*sipovska linija*”) held against the party line that prioritized relations with the world’s progressive forces. Despite UDBa’s omnipresence, Koča carved out a remarkable degree of autonomy for the Foreign Ministry, and even after the reconciliation with Moscow the Ministry retained its freedom of action and was left to develop relations with France and other Western countries as it saw fit. Weary of Tito and Kardelj’s ideological diatribes with the Kremlin, which he felt did little to advance Yugoslavia’s security and prosperity, Koča pursued a policy of “Eurocentric neutralism” in the Finnish example of appeasing Moscow by maintaining good diplomatic and trade relations, not interfering with Soviet rule elsewhere, and renouncing integration into Western Europe.²⁰⁶ He was eager to solidify Yugoslavia’s political and economic relations with the West and unburden it of the festering Trieste dispute. It was Trieste and not the prospect of a rapprochement with Moscow after Stalin’s death that stood to jeopardize Yugoslavia’s relations with the Western powers, and for his part Koča repeatedly tried to rein in the nominally independent and jingoistic Yugoslavian press on the issue.²⁰⁷ After an eight-year stalemate Tito finally renounced Yugoslavia’s claims to

²⁰⁴ Vladimir Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija: studije i dokumentarni prilozi* (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 17.

²⁰⁵ Tepavac quoted in Čkrebić, *Koča Popović*, 161.

²⁰⁶ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 2–20, 87–90, 174.

²⁰⁷ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 131; Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 564.

Trieste in October 1954 at the urging of Koča and Vladimir Velebit because as the latter said, it was “easier to give up a claim ... than to jeopardize your very existence.”²⁰⁸

However, one must be careful not to overstate Koča’s liberalism and pro-Western attitude. Just as he and others so often feared after 1955 that Tito would “deliver” Yugoslavia to the Soviets (prompting Tito to once snap, “You all suspect me of not defending the interests of this country”),²⁰⁹ it did not follow that the Foreign Minister desired to “deliver” Yugoslavia to the West. According to Koča, Tito was at one point in the early 1950s prepared to go “quite far” toward the West in order to obtain security guarantees, as indicated by the signature of the Balkan Pact with NATO members Greece and Turkey mere days before Stalin’s death.²¹⁰ The Pact, whose chief architect was Koča in his capacity as both Chief of the General Staff and then Foreign Minister, was designed as an alternative to Yugoslavia’s adhesion to NATO after Belgrade had failed to obtain Western security guarantees during the quadripartite talks led by General Thomas D. Handy.²¹¹ According to Rajak, Tito knew that Stalin would not risk a world war over Yugoslavia.²¹² Yet to obtain security guarantees he had to convince the Western powers of precisely the opposite: that a Soviet attack on Yugoslavia would be a *casus belli* for a world war. Vehemently opposed to any and all military blocs in principle, the Yugoslavian leadership pursued an ‘alternative’ form of regional collective security through the Pact (that made Yugoslavia a de facto NATO member) that rested on three key principles: a hostility to “ideological offensives;” member equality; and suspicion of American dominance in Europe.²¹³

²⁰⁸ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 142.

²⁰⁹ Čkrebić, *Koča Popović*, 169.

²¹⁰ Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 118.

²¹¹ Rajak, “In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs,” Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 89.

²¹² Rajak, “The Cold War in the Balkans,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 213.

²¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, “Note a.s. Orientation actuelle de la politique extérieure yougoslave (spécialement à l’égard de la France),” Folio 4–13, 03.03.1955.; AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Bebler’s conversation with Baudet, Doc. 633, 14.09.1954.

In addition to the Balkan Pact, Belgrade also saw security promises in the EDC. In *Politika* in May 1953, Bebler wrote in favour of European integration in general and the EDC in particular as a means of resisting the superpowers and consolidating peace.²¹⁴ Wishing to follow the process more closely, Belgrade relocated its Metz consulate to Strasbourg and expressed an interest in being an observer at the Council of Europe (although that invitation never came).²¹⁵ In April 1954 Prica told Parodi that Yugoslavia was interested in limited participation in the processes of European unification. Although Baudet expressed to Bebler his support of continental integration as a means for Europe to regain the “dignity” it had lost to the Americans after 1945, Bebler treaded carefully, denying that the Yugoslavs were inspired by an anti-American sentiment. As Bebler explained, Yugoslavia could not rely on the Mediterranean (because of a hostile Italy and fascist Iberia) or on the unstable Middle East for its security, which meant that Western Europe and its economic and military potential was the only path for Yugoslavia’s future. Belgrade was not in a position to yet clarify the forms of its limited cooperation in European integration, and one of its main concerns was the balance between France and the FRG which the Yugoslavs felt would not be guaranteed by the EDC.²¹⁶ Some French politicians, such as the Socialist deputy Albert Gazier, saw a solution to this problem in Yugoslavian (as well as possible British) adhesion to the EDC, where Belgrade would act as a counterweight to Bonn.²¹⁷ However, Koča deterred Tito from entering any Western military pact, prompting Mollet to once remark to Tito that “you have a shrewd minister.”²¹⁸

²¹⁴ SHD, 14 S 218, Letter from Morel-Deville to the Minister of Defence, Doc. 182, 03.05.1953.

²¹⁵ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–22, Letter from the Strasbourg Consul (Milić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 43262, 23.02.1954.; AN, 552AP/182, Fond Vincent Auriol, “Entretien du Président Vincent Auriol et du Maréchal Tito le samedi 30 avril, 1955 de 12h.45 au Palais Blanc à Belgrade,” 30.04.1955.

²¹⁶ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Note on Bebler’s conversation with Baudet, Doc. 181, 20.04.1951.

²¹⁷ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–23, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 411101, 19.08.1954.

²¹⁸ Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 118–119.

Despite the Yugoslavs' interest in the EDC, ideological concerns carried the day. The clear division between political–ideological and military prerogatives in the Balkan Pact made it much more palatable to Belgrade than the EDC and its proximity to the 'ideological crusader' NATO. Tito consequently backed away from the EDC, arguing that it was "stillborn, ... an artificial creation and unfeasible as it was built on flawed foundations,"²¹⁹ but remained wedded to the Balkan Pact. After the resolution of Trieste, Washington wished to incorporate the Balkan Pact into NATO as a means of securing its southeastern flank.²²⁰ The Yugoslavs, expectedly, refused to join NATO and the change in the international climate after Stalin's death did not bode well for either the EDC or the Balkan Pact. The EDC failed when the French National Assembly refused to ratify it in August 1954, opposed as it was by Gaullists, Communists, the military leadership, and some Quai officials.²²¹ Despite Koča's best efforts, the Balkan Pact also dissolved, victim to a host of disagreements between its members: its superfluousness to Yugoslavia after Stalin's death; Greco-Yugoslavian disputes over Macedonia; Greco-Turkish disputes over Cyprus; Turkish press support of the dissident Djilas; disagreements over Italy's possible accession to the Pact and Yugoslavia's accession to NATO; and diverging policies toward Nasser's Egypt.²²² This was just as well since the prospect of Yugoslavia's adhesion to NATO was unlikely to improve its relations with MRP France. The Greeks and Turks, as well as some French individuals like Moch, wished to see Yugoslavia join NATO.²²³ However, Schuman and Bidault both remained suspicious of, and hostile to, Belgrade's (but apparently not Bern's, Dublin's or Stockholm's) supposed machinations to enjoy the protection of the Western

²¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, "Note a.s. Orientation actuelle de la politique extérieure yougoslave (spécialement à l'égard de l'Europe)," Folio 170, 20.10.1954.

²²⁰ The key to NATO's southeastern flank was the so-called Ljubljana Gap, the "historic gateway for barbarian incursions into northern Italy," situated between Ljubljana and Trieste. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 110–138.

²²¹ Creswell, *A Question of Balance*, 106.

²²² Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 104; MAE, Série Z, Carton 116, Letter from Burin des Roziers to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 135–140, 26.01.1955.

²²³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 90, "Note pour le Président: Visite du Général Popovitch," Folio 115, 07.07.1951.

security umbrella without actually joining (and contributing to) the Atlantic Alliance.²²⁴ Thus in both Paris and Belgrade, despite the shared triad of concerns, mistrust inspired by ideological antipathy stood in the way of concrete cooperation on matters of security.

Restoring Industrial and Military Relations and Promoting French Culture, Language and Technology in Yugoslavia

During the Bidault–Schuman years at the Quai, the DGRC was a principal champion of improving relations with Yugoslavia.²²⁵ Of the Western powers France was the most disadvantaged by the division of the continent and for the DGRC, headed by François Seydoux after Louis Joxe’s appointment to Moscow, Yugoslavia was crucial as it was the only Eastern European country where French culture was not completely expunged after 1945.²²⁶ After the war France’s cultural institutions in Yugoslavia briefly resumed their activities, but were closed soon after along with French private and religious schools, and French professors were dismissed from Yugoslavia’s universities. Given the difficulties in recovering their interwar economic and political position in Yugoslavia, the French chose to emphasize culture because, according to Baudet, “once the political barriers are lifted, we will resume our place at the forefront.”²²⁷

Cultural relations, while never severed, nevertheless received a noticeable boost after the Cominform Resolution. In early 1949 Jean Cassou’s *Les Massacres de Paris* was translated into Serbo-Croatian.²²⁸ That same year the DGRC allowed Yugoslavia to establish the *Agencija za informacije* and both countries liberalized the exchange and sale of foreign books (although

²²⁴ Heuser, *Western ‘Containment’ Policies in the Cold War*, 173; Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 164.

²²⁵ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, “Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi,” Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

²²⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 144, “Note pour la Direction Générale des Relations Culturelles a.s. correspondance scolaire franco-yougoslave,” Folio 36, 09.06.1951.; Maurice Vaïsse, *La Grandeur: La politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle, 1958–1969* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 361.

²²⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Letter from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 24, 19.02.1952.

²²⁸ DSIP, PA, 1949 F–34, Telegram from Ristić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 43046, 26.02.1949.

Serbo-Croatian books edited in France remained subject to censorship).²²⁹ The French sent a delegation of experts to help with the conservation and reproduction of medieval Serbian frescoes, the copies of which would be exhibited abroad to promote Yugoslavia's pre-Ottoman contribution to European civilization.²³⁰ The highlight of the summer and a testament to Yugoslavia's good will toward the West was the first postwar iteration of the *Tour de Slovénie et de Croatie*, a 1,040-kilometre cycling race featuring cyclists from Yugoslavia, France, Austria, Italy and the Free Territory of Trieste.²³¹

However, without a cultural convention much work on both sides was unsystematic and improvisational.²³² As a tacit *quid pro quo* for aid, in 1952 the Yugoslavs allowed the French to reopen cultural institutes and reading rooms in Belgrade, Zagreb, Split, and Skopje. These institutions provided library services (including classical and technical literature), hosted talks and film screenings, and for a time ran language courses for children and adults. However, the French state simply did not have the funds to outpace the cultural propaganda (especially film) of the British and Americans, and further suffered when the Yugoslavian authorities banned foreign institutes from offering language courses.²³³ The French were also forced to revise their long-standing view of cultural relations as unidirectional (that is, only serving to export French culture) when the Yugoslavs obtained permission to open the *Agencija za informacije* and engage in other means of disseminating their own culture in tandem with the *Association France–Yougoslavie*. With France falling behind the Anglo-Americans in terms of aid and

²²⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 41, "Note pour le service d'information et de presse," Folio 289–290, 20.05.1949.

²³⁰ DSIP, PA, 1949 F–34, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy (Todorović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 46911, 15.04.1949.

²³¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 143, Letter from the Zagreb Consulate (Forest-Divonne) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 1–2, 29.08.1949.

²³² DSIP, PA, 1954 F–22, Annual report from the Yugoslavian embassy, Doc. 41814, 03.02.1954.

²³³ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, "Francuska: Neka pitanja iz spoljne i unutrašnje politike i jugoslovensko-francuskih odnosa," Doc. 417502, undated.

cultural presence, Baudet urged the Quai to increase funding to cultural relations projects and work toward grander gestures of Franco-Yugoslavian friendship.²³⁴

Baudet remained vague on what these gestures might entail. French and Yugoslavian interests coincided on everything from the Soviet threat and concerns over West Germany to the need for Western Europe's sovereignty from the United States. However, during the Bidault–Schuman years and after, the French were more concerned about their own international status which they could bolster through a continuation of their long-standing relationship with the new international 'darling,' the renegade Yugoslavia, than they were about integrating Yugoslavia into the West or rolling back communism. Many segments of the Yugoslavian population remained broadly pro-French: sentiments that stemmed from both pre-war traditions and the perception among many ideologically-minded people that France was the 'least worst' of the capitalist powers. Moch noted that this popular pro-French sentiment remained strong despite the paltry amounts of French aid that were dwarfed by the British and American contributions. He also remarked that while the French made a "good effort" at their first postwar appearance at the Zagreb International Fair in 1952, "the Anglo-Saxons and also – alas! – the Germans came with ten times more material and offered better credits." Nevertheless, Moch was optimistic about the Yugoslavs' "instinctive turn" to their friend, France, which was "less ideologically remote, more hurt by the wars, [and] less economically formidable than England and America."²³⁵

However, not everyone agreed that the French could afford to be complacent. With the cessation of Anglo-French participation in Tripartite Aid the Yugoslavs were obligated to rationalize their industrial investment and focus on industrial exports – which on the continent only West Germany had the capability to substantially absorb. In 1952 Bonn issued a blank

²³⁴ MAE, Série Z, Caron 117, Letter from Baudet to Léon Laporte, Folio 63, 14.02.1951.; *Ibid.*, Carton 119, Letter from the Quai (unsigned) to Baudet, Folio 62–64, 04.08.1953.

²³⁵ Moch, *Yougoslavie, terre d'expériences*, 274.

cheque on industrial purchases to Belgrade, which meant that Yugoslavian imports from the FRG more than doubled, jumping from \$7.5 million to \$17.8 million.²³⁶ That same year the West Germans received top billing at the Zagreb fair in terms of both the number of exhibitors (over 150) and the area they occupied (3,000 square metres). They were trailed by the French (whose mere 65 exhibitors nevertheless occupied 2,700 square metres) and the British (whose 100 exhibitors occupied 2,000 square metres). With an impressive effort made by Bonn at the fair, Zagreb Consul Etienne Auvynet felt that it was “fortunate that this year we have not avoided, as we have since the end of the war, this commercial manifestation which is without any doubt the most important in Yugoslavia,” a rapidly-changing country where international competition for investment opportunities “is already being felt.” Therefore, Auvynet concluded, “we must not consider this 1952 fair as a simple exposition of local and foreign products [because the fair] will naturally determine the flow of exchange between [Yugoslavia] and abroad.”²³⁷

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries French expertise had been crucial to developing the Serbian military and aviation industries, including the canon foundry established in Kragujevac in the 1850s and the national aircraft factory founded in Kraljevo in 1927 which produced French Breguet and Dornier aircraft.²³⁸ In 1945 it fell to the Soviets to rebuild Yugoslavian technical cadres and enterprises that had been decimated by the Germans.²³⁹ Between 1945 and 1948 the Yugoslavian air industry’s contacts were confined to the Soviets, and the backbone of the industry was the Ikarus factory in Belgrade that performed maintenance

²³⁶ Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad*, 104–105.

²³⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 141, Letter from Auvynet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 52–53, 23.08.1952.

²³⁸ For the Kragujevac foundry see Draga Vuksanović-Anić, *Stvaranje moderne srpske vojske: Francuski uticaj na njeno formiranje* (Beograd: Mala biblioteka, 1993), 43. For the Kraljevo aircraft factory see SHD, 14 S 217, Letter from Morel-Deville to the Minister of Air, Doc. 209, 15.05.1954.

²³⁹ For example, two thirds of skilled workers from the Kraljevo factory were executed during the war as part of German reprisals against civilians. SHD, 14 S 217, Letter from Morel-Deville to the Minister of Air, Doc. 209, 15.05.1954.

and repairs for Yakovlev and Ilyushin fighter aircraft.²⁴⁰ After the schism the Yugoslavian government decided to relocate the country's industrial base from the indefensible plains of Vojvodina and Slavonia to the mountains of the almost completely landlocked Bosnia and Herzegovina, the only republic whose borders were not contiguous with neighbouring countries. Chief of the General Staff Koča and Industry Minister Kidrič were placed in charge of this “frightfully costly” endeavour and even entertained the possibility of recreating the prehistoric Pannonian Sea by flooding Vojvodina for the sake of national defence.²⁴¹ With Bosnia becoming the country's industrial heartland, especially around the booming steel town of Zenica, Western investment bloomed. The Austrians were building a steelworks with the help of Krupp; the Americans were building blast furnaces and were providing the Yugoslavs with drop hammers; the West Germans too, erected three Siemens-Martin blast furnaces, a coke plant, and a massive forge which was due to produce its first drop hammer that would be capable of exerting five million tonnes of force. As Auvynet noted, “sadly of all these installations, not a single one has been entrusted to France,” while the Belgians were building a coke plant and even “the Swiss, Swedes and Sarrois were engaged in various auxiliary operations.” With France already lagging behind other Western countries in Yugoslavia by 1952–1953, Auvynet counseled that “it would not be in vain to make an effort now that would bear fruit later.”²⁴²

One means of exploiting prewar friendships for the sake of reviving French presence and grandeur was to intensify military relations, an endeavour that had the potential to prove quite fruitful for Paris given the growing Western interest in coordinating defence strategy with Belgrade. With political relations tumultuous over Trieste, the discourse of the traditional

²⁴⁰ Nikola Žutić, “Yugoslav Air Industry and Aviation, 1945–1952,” Petar Kačavenda and Djoko Tripković, eds., *Jugoslovensko-sovjetski sukob 1948. godine*, 140.

²⁴¹ Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 120.

²⁴² MAE, Série Z, Carton 144, Letter from Auvynet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 59–64, 24.04.1953.

friendship served as a vehicle to revive military relations. Koča visited the United States, Britain and France in 1951 to marshal diplomatic, economic, and military support for Yugoslavia. The British and Americans had already repaid their official visits to Yugoslavia by summer 1952 – Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten and Foreign Minister Anthony Eden, as well as the American Army Chief of the General Staff, J. Lawton Collins, and Assistant Secretary of Defence, Frank Nash – while the French “policy of presence” seemed to be turning into one of absence.²⁴³ Koča thus invited General Blanc, Chief of Staff of the Army, to visit Yugoslavia in October 1952. The French military establishment was not as reserved toward Yugoslavia as the Quai’s MRP leaders were; yet despite his personal reticence, Schuman wrote to Defense Minister Pleven that “I see nothing but advantages to General Blanc accepting General Popović’s invitation.”²⁴⁴

The Quai instructed Blanc to assess the utility of the Yugoslavian army to the West and emphasize the importance of concerted defence to the Yugoslavs – but Pleven reminded Blanc to tread carefully since no formal Western proposal for strategic coordination had yet been made to Belgrade.²⁴⁵ Even though the visit therefore turned into one of little more than courtesy, Blanc was the most important French figure to visit Yugoslavia since 1945. Belgrade was eager to ascribe political significance to his visit as well as to Yugoslavian visits that followed in 1953 (Admiral Mate Jerković and the Generals Peko Dapčević and Kosta Nadj), but the Quai was extremely reluctant to do so and even prohibited Blanc from publishing anything regarding his visit. Neither side remained quite happy with the state of relations: differing priorities meant that Paris and Belgrade were talking (and working) at cross-purposes. The Yugoslavs believed

²⁴³ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (R. Schuman), Carton 57, Letter from Baudet, Folio 164–167, 14.10.1952.

²⁴⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Letter from Baudet (signed by François Seydoux) to the Minister of Defence, Folio 90, 06.09.1952.

²⁴⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, “Note a.s. évolution de la question yougoslave – visite à Belgrade du Général Blanc,” Folio 153–160, 04.10.1952.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from the French Foreign Ministry (de Margerie) to the French embassy in Belgrade, Folio 161, 05.10.1952.

themselves to be the only party engaged in improving bilateral relations, particularly in the military and political domains.²⁴⁶ However, the French saw their interlocutors as solely interested in military aid, for which they “naturally turned to France, a middle continental power and neighbour,” while they were reluctant to engage in political and cultural relations because “they fear damage to their ideology.”²⁴⁷

Blanc may not have been an expert on Yugoslavia – he was under the impression that its citizenry spoke “Yugoslavian”²⁴⁸ – but despite the less than ideal political relations, the trip was deemed “extremely satisfactory” by both parties. Blanc met with the Yugoslavian Army (JNA) General Staff and visited a host of military installations around the country. He evaluated the army’s morale and work ethic, as well as the general quality of the rank and file as exceptional, but the quality of the officer corps left much to be desired. Most men in the top army echelons were “*Španci*” (“Spaniards,” or Spanish Civil War volunteers), the majority of whom were from proletarian backgrounds and lacked the education of the interwar bourgeois officer corps.²⁴⁹ Blanc therefore encouraged the resumption of another prewar tradition: sending Yugoslavs to France for technical and military training.²⁵⁰ Here the legacy of the interwar period was once again an asset for the French. Historically, French and German had been the foreign languages of choice for Yugoslavs to learn. With Germany disarmed after 1945 and after the schism with Moscow any competition to French patronage of the Yugoslavian army could only come from the Anglo-Americans. But as few Yugoslavs spoke English, a France familiar both in language, culture and size remained the natural destination for the specialization of Yugoslavian cadres.²⁵¹

²⁴⁶ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–22, Prica’s annual report for 1953, “Neka zapažanja o francusko-jugoslovenskim odnosima na vojnom planu,” Doc. 41814, 03.02.1954.

²⁴⁷ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (R. Schuman), Carton 57, Telegram from Baudet, Folio 161–163, 10.10.1952.

²⁴⁸ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. VI, 628.

²⁴⁹ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. VI, 628–630.

²⁵⁰ MAE, Serie Z, Carton 118, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 190–192, 10.10.1952.

²⁵¹ SHD, 14 S 221, Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel de Chezelles to the Minister of Defence, Doc. 15, 17.01.1953.

Perhaps chagrined at the slowness in establishing bilateral military contacts, at a reception on the first day of Blanc's visit Koča delivered a perfunctory toast in Serbian even though he was fluent in French.²⁵² However, the tone of the visit quickly improved and allusions to the traditional friendship abounded. The Belgrade press enthusiastically covered Blanc's arrival as well as his first stop to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Mount Avala.²⁵³ Blanc in particular was very happy to visit Kragujevac, "the heart of Serbia where a love for France has always been strong [and where people are glad] to again see French *kepis*."²⁵⁴ Evoking the brotherhood of arms of the First World War, Blanc presented the *Légion d'Honneur* to the Serb Koča and the Croat General Ivan Gošnjak (the latter visibly moved), while Generals Blanc and Jacqot were decorated with the Order of the Yugoslavian Star (I Class).²⁵⁵ It is here that perhaps the greatest emotion came. The medals were presented by Ivan Ribar, Chairman of the *Skupština* Predisium, who told Blanc that he had met Auriol once in the early 1920s. The Croat Ribar was a First World War veteran who lost his wife and sons in the Second World War, and delivered a speech during the presentation of the decorations. Upon his return to Paris, Blanc recounted the moment to Auriol in the following words:

You see, Mr. President, there are very few people who have fought both wars, but those who have, have an attachment to France that is almost frightening. Ribar, while handing us our decorations, gave a speech; during the speech, while speaking about the friendship with France, about France's role in Yugoslavia, Ribar cried, tears were flowing. It was astonishing to see that.²⁵⁶

Blanc's successful visit was followed the next month by an equally successful visit from Vice-Admiral Antoine Sala aboard the *Georges Leyges*. Weather conditions and scheduling were proving uncooperative (and the Italians were protesting) but Baudet, Parodi, and the Foreign

²⁵² MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Letter from the French embassy (Fontaine) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 193–196, 15.10.1952.

²⁵³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 180, 08.10.1952.

²⁵⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Letter from the French embassy (Fontaine) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 193–196, 15.10.1952.

²⁵⁵ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, "Izveštaj o boravku francuske parlamentarne delegacije," Doc. 417510, 04.10.1952.

²⁵⁶ Auriol, *Journal du septennat*, Vol. VI, 631.

Minister's cabinet were of the opinion that the visit could not be postponed. Baudet urged that the visit not be delayed despite Italian protests because the initiative for it came from Paris, not Belgrade, and Belgrade would surely realize the reasons for the deferment and be "humiliated."²⁵⁷ Parodi concurred that postponing the visit would do more harm than good to Franco-Yugoslavian relations, and reasoned that surely the Italians knew very well that the French only desired a "most satisfactory resolution" to Trieste.²⁵⁸ To that effect, Schuman wrote to Pleven that the visit must not be delayed lest it "lose its value, given its place in a series of Franco-Yugoslavian manifestations" in the year 1952, which included the Zagreb Fair and the visits by the parliamentary delegations and General Blanc.²⁵⁹ The visit proceeded as scheduled. The *Georges Leygues* docked in Split on November 21, marking the first time since 1945 that a French vessel entered Yugoslavian waters. Sala was greeted by the Admirals Jerković, Manola and Černi. Again, a presentation of decorations to the three Yugoslavian admirals inspired "real emotion," and the warmth of the reception "clearly surpassed that which was accorded to the Americans and British." With "the whole town coming to celebrate the French Navy," Baudet concluded, "our aim [of renewing contacts] has largely been achieved."²⁶⁰

An opportunity for the French to achieve more than simply a renewal of military contacts came when the Yugoslavs, possessing only obsolete Soviet aircraft while their satellite neighbours boasted top-of-the-line MiGs, expressed an interest in setting up domestic production of the Dassault Mystère II and IV in 1951.²⁶¹ Early financing problems meant that the project did not advance until 1953, and it limped toward an unsuccessful resolution until 1956. The French Ministers of Air and Defence and the Quai were in favour of the proposal, which by 1954–1955

²⁵⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 211, 04.11.1952.

²⁵⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Circular telegram from Parodi, Folio 215–216, 07.11.1952.

²⁵⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Letter from Bidault to the Minister of Defence, Folio 146–148, 02.10.1952.

²⁶⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 118, Telegram from Baudet, Folio 227, 27.11.1952.

²⁶¹ Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad*, 117.

also accumulated support from a host of key political figures including President of the Republic René Coty and Premiers Mendès-France and Faure.²⁶² Although Italy was again likely to voice opposition, the Quai reasoned that Yugoslavian production of the aircraft would not begin in earnest for some years to come, by which time Italo-Yugoslavian differences would have been settled.²⁶³ As indicated in a Quai note prepared for Baudet, the project was a valuable opportunity for France to carve out a place for itself in Yugoslavia's aviation industry and to renew the "solid friendships" and prewar traditions.²⁶⁴ The Quai was enthusiastic about the legitimizing role that the Yugoslavian deal would play, which could help French aviation break into the Middle and Far Eastern markets. As the French military attaché Colonel Morel-Deville put it, given that all that Yugoslavian youth knew of France was that it is an "aged and decadent country infatuated with its culture but outdistanced in its technics," the Mystère project would be "such beautiful propaganda" and an opportunity for France to "occupy on our continent the ultimate vacated place."²⁶⁵ With France outpaced by the Americans, British and West Germans in Yugoslavia, the Quai was more than willing to proceed with the deal – provided that the Yugoslavs had a means of paying for it, because while the political benefit of the deal to the French would be immense, it would not be nearly immense enough to justify free aid in the form of cutting-edge aviation technology.²⁶⁶ The Yugoslavs, however, could not afford such technology, although that did little to diminish their determination to obtain the licence. While

²⁶² MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (A. Pinay), Carton 17, Baudet, "Note pour Monsieur de Carbonnel a/s Vente de matériel "Mystère" à la Yougoslavie," Folio 114, 06.11.1954.; *Ibid.*, Cabinet du Ministre (C. Pineau), Carton 14, "Note sur le projet d'acquisition par la Yougoslavie de matériel aéronautique français," 07.02.1956.

²⁶³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 91, "Note pour la Direction des Affaires Economiques et Etrangères a.s. requête yougoslave au sujet des avions français Mystère II et Mystère IV," Folio 127–128, 06.03.1953.

²⁶⁴ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (A. Pinay), Carton 17, "Note pour Monsieur Baudet A/S. Avions "Mystère" pour la Yougoslavie," Folio 117–119, 16.11.1954.

²⁶⁵ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (C. Pineau), Carton 14, Letter from Morel-Deville to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 212–218, 24.01.1956.

²⁶⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 91, "Note a.s. de la cession d'avions "Mystère" à la Yougoslavie," Folio 234–236, 02.02.1955.; Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad*, 220.

the Americans feared a Yugoslavian deal with MiG, they were opposed to the Mystère project on the grounds that it was neither feasible nor necessary economically, technically, militarily and otherwise, and were exasperated by Tito's insistence on pursuing the French deal when Washington was offering him the already-manufactured and ready-to-ship F-86 Sabre for free. Unsurprisingly, Washington rejected the French proposal that the United States purchase a contingent of Mystère prototypes and operative aircraft for Yugoslavia as "aid" before Paris proceeded with the signature of the licence agreement. Negotiations over the Mystère quickly went nowhere, and the British began following the situation to see if they and their Hawker Hunter could benefit in the end. Although Morel-Deville indicated that Tito would take the Mystère, Hawker, and even the MiG over any American aircraft, by 1956 France found itself in financial troubles due to the conflict in Algeria.²⁶⁷ The Mystère licencing project was thus buried for good, and in 1956 Yugoslavia accepted American jets.²⁶⁸

Conclusion

In contrast to the image of a shrewd and calculating Fourth Republic which ably manipulated international events in order to obtain settlements highly favourable to France, this chapter presents an alternative portrait, one of a much less certain nation. Rather than "keeping Tito afloat," the French sought to keep themselves "afloat" in Yugoslavia as a means of bolstering their international position vis-à-vis the British and Americans. With French power and prestige severely damaged by the collapse of May 1940 and the fall of Indochina to the Japanese where colonial war now raged, the MRP-led Quai d'Orsay relied on the rhetoric of the traditional friendship and on the resurrection of pre-1945 cultural and military traditions in a bid

²⁶⁷ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (C. Pineau), Carton 14, Letter from Morel-Deville to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 212–218, 24.01.1956.

²⁶⁸ AJ, A KPR I-2/6, "Komentari o poseti," Folio 1228, 09.05.1956.; Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 191.

to recover its place of privilege in Yugoslavia. Conversely, Paris was important to the Yugoslavs as ‘the capital of the West.’ Its acceptance of the new leadership, diplomatic support over Trieste, and material aid was indispensable to the international legitimation of the Tito regime, both before and after the split with Stalin. Although tensions between the two capitals were palpable over Italy and the Vatican and the Yugoslavs, despite their refusal to integrate into the Western defense system, were in the early 1950s quite eager to partner with the French. They sought to exploit traditional sympathies to extract material aid and marshal French diplomatic support for Trieste, while offsetting the MRP’s antipathy by finding allies in other segments of French political life, particularly in the ranks of the SFIO. Paris was crucial to Belgrade for a number of reasons and it was not by coincidence that the latter’s sole propaganda centre abroad was located in the French capital. However, the legacy of the traditional friendship incited in the Yugoslavs unrealistic expectations of French support, diplomatic and otherwise. These unrealistic expectations were compounded by the realities of France’s geopolitical and economic situation. Its weakened international position, the quagmire in Indochina, and in particular its uncomfortable position between Belgrade on the one hand, and Rome and the Vatican on the other – as well as Schuman and Bidault’s anti-communism – meant that the opportunity to deepen bilateral relations, especially on the economic and military fronts, remained unfulfilled.

Chapter 3: From Rapprochement to Isolation, June 1954–January 1959

Introduction

Chapter 2 outlined the French policy of maintaining pre-1945 traditions with regard to its relationship with Yugoslavia for the sake of regaining its Great Power status, and the concurrent Yugoslavian interest and expectation of French diplomatic and economic support. The argument was made that there existed the potential for cooperation that stemmed from mutual security concerns: the Soviet Union, West Germany, and American hegemony. Yugoslavia's pro-French orientation in the period to 1954 remained unexploited, however, and not only because the MRP-led Quai d'Orsay found itself in an uncomfortable position between Belgrade on the one hand, and Rome and the Vatican on the other. Both Paris and Belgrade were willing to discount the ideological lens for the sake of practical gain: the former to regain its Great Power status against the Anglo-Americans in Yugoslavia, and the latter to obtain military, economic and diplomatic support for the new regime. However, there was an ideologically-imposed limit to the rapprochement on account of Bidault and Schuman's anti-communism and consequent disinclination to see Yugoslavia join NATO, and Tito's own principled hostility to military pacts in general, and NATO and the EDC in particular.

This chapter traces the Franco-Yugoslavian rapprochement in the rapidly-changing international climate of the mid-1950s, from Pierre Mendès France's premiership to Yugoslavia's "Third World turn" in 1959. It argues that the French Fourth Republic, while reluctant to ally itself with Belgrade, pursued a policy of maintaining an independent Yugoslavia because a Yugoslavia that remained outside of the Soviet bloc was in French national interest on three fronts: the general Cold War; Yugoslavia's growing presence in the Arab world and North Africa, which the French hoped to exploit for their own purposes; and, most significantly,

France's own presence in Yugoslavia as a means of staking its Great Power claim against the Anglo-Americans. By examining Franco-Yugoslavian relations in this period, this chapter also contributes to our understanding of Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policy and the origins of the Non-Aligned Movement. Much Cold War scholarship takes as an article of faith the argument that Yugoslavia turned to the West for self-preservation after the Cominform Resolution, and "ungratefully" fled into the Third World-based Non-Aligned Movement after it normalized relations with Moscow in 1955–1956.¹ This chapter will revise this generalization by making the case for a Yugoslavian conception of an international neutralist or non-aligned movement that was not exclusively Third World-based. Neither Belgrade's policy of non-alignment nor the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement were preconceived by the Yugoslavian leadership.² Belgrade knew that the key to its security remained in Europe. Over the course of the 1950s, after years of pragmatic relations with the West and the Soviet normalization, the Yugoslavs gradually conceptualized and elaborated a non-aligned foreign policy that would be ideologically consistent with their socialism; in doing so they pursued not only political and economic relations with the Third World (Asia, Africa, and Latin America), but they also sought to develop meaningful neutralist cooperation with France, their "traditional friend" who, like them, opposed Soviet and American hegemony and possessed a healthy dose of Germanophobia.

That France was a cornerstone of Yugoslavia's foreign policy was not a surprise. While Tito and his inner circle condemned both Soviet and American hegemony, they continued to fear

¹ Svetozar Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs: Yugoslavia's Road to Non-Alignment," Ljubodrag Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu 1945–1955: Slučaj Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Katedra za istoriju Jugoslavije Filozofskog fakulteta, 2005), 84–85. Related to this tenet is the myth, influenced by the accounts of Kardelj, Mates, and other Yugoslav contemporaries, that the Non-Aligned Movement was founded at the Tito–Nasser–Nehru summit on Brioni in July 1956. For the "Brioni myth" see Vladimir Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija: Studije i dokumentarni prilozi* (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 130, and Tvrtko Jakovina, *Treća strana Hladnog rata* (Zagreb: Faktura, 2011), 38–39.

² Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 84.

the possibility of West German rearmament – an issue that preoccupied international relations on account of the absence of a postwar settlement on Germany. Opposed to German reunification (though loath to recognize the GDR), the French were proving successful in their bid to mitigate the Teutonic threat through European integration: a process that began with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), signed in 1951.³ Despite the nascent process of continental integration, Europe's loss of international supremacy to the United States after 1945, as well as France's colonial problems – the disastrous eight-year-long Algerian war having begun mere months after the end of an equally disastrous eight-year-long war in Indochina – left Paris struggling to preserve its Great Power status. While Tito traveled around Asia and Africa to seek neutralist allies the Foreign Ministry, headed by the “salon communist” Koča Popović kept Belgrade focused on Western Europe,⁴ where the French-led process of European integration aimed to contain West Germany and keep the Americans (and their “Trojan horse,” the British) off the continent. As part of this broader aim, the French also sought to exploit the similarity of national interests between their country and Yugoslavia, as well as the traditional friendship and the familiarity and accessibility of France to Yugoslavs. However, this policy stalled, trapped between France's dependence on the Atlantic Alliance for security, on the one hand, and its hostility to Anglo-American (and West German) cultural-linguistic, military, and economic rivalry to their “traditional place” in Yugoslavia, on the other hand. While Paris was apprehensive toward Belgrade's cautious rapprochement with Moscow in 1955–1956, the Yugoslavs remained keen on developing relations with France, even after the untimely fall of Mendès France's government in February 1955.⁵ However, it was Belgrade's initially equally

³ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 156–160.

⁴ The polycentric nature of decision-making in Belgrade and the discrepancy between Tito and Koča's interpretations of non-alignment are discussed further in Chapter 4.

⁵ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–23, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi 1954–1955,” Doc. 18021, undated.

limited relationship with Egypt and the Algerian rebels that soured relations with the West in general, and France in particular, and accelerated the process of Yugoslavia's decidedly "aligned," that is, ideologically-influenced, flight into the Third World from 1959 onward.

On the Origins of Yugoslavian Neutralism and the Non-Aligned Movement

Yugoslavia had no "exit strategy" from the schism with Moscow in June 1948. While forced to eventually turn to the West to survive, the Yugoslavs looked for allies outside of Europe, as well. Of particular interest was neutralist India, with whom Yugoslavia sought to develop relations. As part of a campaign of personal diplomacy to broaden the reach of Yugoslavia's diplomatic relations, Tito visited Egypt, Ethiopia, India, and Burma in winter 1954–1955. This gave Tito the opportunity to meet with Jawaharlal Nehru, the Socialist Prime Minister of India, whom he had deliberately sought to "woo."⁶ In India the two leaders, both determined to guard the new-found independence of their countries, immediately got on well. Tito succeeded in convincing Nehru that the Soviet Union and Communist China were not, as the Indian leader believed, benign powers, but that they were hegemons just like the United States.⁷ The result of their meeting was a fourteen-point joint declaration, the themes of which – the preservation of independence and peace, disarmament, bloc "non-adhesion," and "active neutralism" – the French embassy in Belgrade evaluated as "an expression of an original and coherent policy." This policy of "peaceful active coexistence"⁸ rejected both passive neutralism

⁶ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 124; Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 84–85, 92–103.

⁷ Rajak, "In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs," Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 103.

⁸ Although Stalin had used the phrase "peaceful coexistence" as early as the 1920s, Nehru distinguished it by combining it with the Buddhist set of moral principles known as *Panchsheela*. *Pancsheela* was incorporated into the agreement on Indo-Chinese cooperation of 1954 and the Bandung Declaration of 1955. Nataša Mišković, "Between Idealism and Pragmatism: Tito, Nehru and the Hungarian Crisis, 1956," Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné, and Nada Boškovića, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 115–116.

and the notion of a “third bloc” (that Washington was trying to make out of Western Europe⁹), which would not ensure peace any more than the two-bloc system did. This meeting was widely extolled in the Yugoslavian press as a historic moment of global significance.¹⁰ Although the joint declaration heralded the Non-Aligned Movement that would come to be identified with Yugoslavia, the movement predated the Tito–Nehru encounter. While some have traced the Yugoslavian Communists’ “non-alignment” (*nesvrstanost*), defined as a determination to exercise autonomy from both the Comintern and their wartime allies in the decade prior to the schism,¹¹ Yugoslavia was prompted by Cold War prerogatives to turn to the Third World. However, the Non-Aligned Movement’s ideological foundations were rooted in anti-colonialism and were laid at the Southeast Asian Socialist Congress in Rangoon in 1953 (which Djilas and Bebler attended as observers), and the Afro-Asian Bandung Conference in 1955 (to which Yugoslavia did not send a delegation.)¹² Despite this, Yugoslavia is often seen as the sole originator of the movement, perhaps because, as Nataša Mišković explains, “the inclusion of Yugoslavia gave the [movement] a more global appeal that transcended the limits of ‘coloured’ Afro-Asian solidarity.”¹³ In the former Yugoslavia the movement’s emergence is conventionally attributed to the Tito–Nehru–Nasser summit on Tito’s island retreat of Brioni in June 1956.¹⁴ This, however, was not the case. After 1948 Yugoslavia emulated the Finnish model of Eurocentric neutralism as a political, not an ideological strategy, particularly during the early

⁹ Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 147.

¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 136, Letter from the embassy’s chargé d’affaires (Burin des Rozières) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 133–138, 13.01.1955. The Parisian press was more subdued, although *Le Monde* did run a favourable article authored by a Yugoslav. See Goïko Nikolitch, “Le Voyage de Tito en Asie,” *Le Monde*, 22.12.1954.

¹¹ Dragan Bogetić, *Koreni jugoslovenskog opredelenja za nesvrstanost* (Beograd: ISI, 1990), 18, 62–72.

¹² Rinna Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 12–16; MAE, Série Z, Carton 136, “Belgrade: Congrès de Rangoon,” Folio 60–62, 02.02.1953.

¹³ Nataša Mišković, “Introduction,” Mišković *et al.*, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, 8.

¹⁴ For the “Brioni myth” see n.1.

years of Koča's tenure as Foreign Minister (before his definition of non-alignment became too "anti-Soviet" for Tito in the periods of thaw between Belgrade and Moscow).¹⁵ As Rinna Kullaa has argued, the roots of the Non-Aligned Movement as a Cold War alternative are to be found neither at Bandung nor on Brioni but in the Mediterranean, in the "long aftermath of the 1956 Suez and Hungarian crises," when superpower interests directly threatened the security of two of the movement's founding members: Yugoslavia and Egypt.¹⁶

Radical Rapprochement, June 1954–February 1955

As seen in Chapter 2, Belgrade's relations with official France during the MRP period at the Quai were uneasy at best, stemming from the dispute over Trieste and mutual ideological suspicions. The MRP and its Yugoslavian policy (or lack thereof) had detractors in both Belgrade and Paris. The Radical René Mayer bemoaned the fact that the MRP's non-existent Yugoslavian policy translated into support for Italy; serving as Premier in the first half of 1953, Mayer instead sought to build a "realistic policy" toward Belgrade.¹⁷ The Gaullist deputy Gaston Palewski shared this view. In a conversation with Ambassador Prica in May 1954 he railed against the MRP, "predicting that their end is near [and that] they are responsible for the incorrect, that is, vague, policy toward Yugoslavia."¹⁸ On uneasy terms with the MRP and on no terms with the PCF, Belgrade found allies in Socialist and Radical ranks. It was therefore no surprise that the Yugoslavs greeted the formation of Pierre Mendès France's government in June

¹⁵ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 16, 179; Aleksandar Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 2nd edition (Zagreb: Globus, 1989), 28.

¹⁶ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, xiv.

¹⁷ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44361, 03.04.1953.

¹⁸ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–23, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 46353, 17.05.1954.

1954 – or perhaps more accurately, the fall of the conservative Joseph Laniel’s government and the end of the MRP’s tenure at the Quai – with satisfaction.¹⁹

Having become the youngest deputy in the history of the National Assembly at the age of 25 in 1935, Mendès France was a bright political economist who belonged to the left wing of the centrist Radical party.²⁰ He formed his first government after the Laniel ministry fell following the French collapse at Dien Bien Phu in June 1954. As both Prime and Foreign Minister, and with his motto, “*gouverner, c’est choisir*” (“to govern is to choose”), he negotiated France’s departure from Indochina.²¹ His unconventionality, enthusiasm, and status as an outsider in the ruling establishment of the Fourth Republic brought him international leftist admiration, from the Russian-British journalist Alexander Werth to the Yugoslavian leadership.²² Although a central principle of Yugoslavia’s foreign policy was the ideological hostility to all forms of imperialism, its leadership (and to a lesser extent, the press) had been silent on Indochina in deference to France, and so the colonial war did not adversely affect official relations.²³ However, a change in the Yugoslavian attitude with the formation of the Mendès France government was palpable. Although bilateral relations were hitherto not objectively bad, from June 1954 the Yugoslavian press began writing on France in a tone that the French evaluated as more “objective” and

¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Letter from Burin des Roziers to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 130–134, 15.07.1954.

²⁰ Richard Dartigues and Francis Delabarre, *Pierre Mendès France: La passion de la vérité* (Paris: Plon, 1992), 11–18.

²¹ Jean-Pierre Rioux, *The Fourth Republic, 1944–1958*, trans. Godfrey Rogers (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987 c1980), 222. Although celebrated for his role in ending the war in Indochina, Mendès France’s anti-colonial credentials remain in question since he came to power faced with the fait accompli of Dien Bien Phu. As Fredrik Logevall points out, it is unclear what Mendès France would have done on Indochina as Premier had he defeated Laniel in the 1953 election. Fredrik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America’s Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 2012), xvii, 352.

²² Alexander Werth, *France, 1940–1955* (London: R. Hale, 1956), 710–724.

²³ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, Report on Franco-Yugoslavian relations, Doc. 18241, June 1955. The Yugoslavs were hardly alone in prioritizing pragmatism over ideology. The Soviets, too, kept their silence on Indochina for the sake of maintaining relations with France. Logevall, *Embers of War*, 182–194.

“sympathetic” to their country’s governmental instability and colonial troubles.²⁴ The Yugoslavian leadership appraised Mendès France as firm and a realist, and valued not only his commitment to French sovereignty (in contrast to the pro-Americanism and EDC support of the preceding *troisième force* governments), but also his efforts to end the war in Indochina, thereby contributing to “the consolidation of peace in the world.”²⁵

Tito had bitterly criticized the MRP leaders for their inability to “imagine, in a positive way, a [close Franco-Yugoslavian] collaboration,” and placed great hopes in Mendès France, “an energetic man whose views on the resolution of international problems coincided with ours.”²⁶ In contrast to his predecessors, Mendès France considered Yugoslavia an important player in international and European affairs.²⁷ His first interview as Premier was to *Politika*’s Paris correspondent, marking the first time since 1945 that a French Premier gave an interview to a Yugoslavian outlet.²⁸ Committed to reducing armed tensions and limiting the Cold War to a struggle between socioeconomic systems, Mendès France proposed a reorganization of NATO along tripartite Franco-Anglo-American lines, and envisaged a Franco-Soviet dialogue on the German question.²⁹ In June the Yugoslavian embassy received word that the Premier, on account of his lack of enthusiasm for the EDC, was contemplating a broader approach to continental defence and floated the possibility of Yugoslavia’s adhesion to his plan (which admittedly would have been difficult to implement since West Germany, Italy, and the Benelux had already ratified

²⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, “Note a.s. les relations franco-yougoslaves,” Folio 178–181, 21.10.1954.

²⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Letter from Burin des Rozières to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 130–134, 15.07.1954.; *Ibid.*, Folio 135–136, 15.07.1954.; AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-1, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 655, 12.07.1954.

²⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 243–245, 26.02.1955.

²⁷ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–23, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi 1954–1955,” Doc. 18021, undated.

²⁸ Running the interview on its front page, *Politika* proudly boasted that it was the first paper to which Mendès France gave an interview since assuming power, and that it was the first time since 1945 that a French leader had given an interview to a Yugoslavian media outlet. MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Telegram from the French embassy in Belgrade to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 139, 06.08.1954.

²⁹ Georges-Henri Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine: Les rapports politico-stratégiques franco-allemands, 1954–1996* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), 33–35.

the EDC).³⁰ With Yugoslavia's foreign policy of "active neutralism," Tito urged closer relations and more frequent consultations with France on continental and international affairs to "contribute to lasting peace:" that is, to settle the questions of decolonization and German rearmament, and to carve out a greater international role for Yugoslavia as a means of guaranteeing its independence. Despite their opposition to the EDC, for Tito and the rest of the Yugoslavian leadership France was the only country that was strong enough to unite and organize the continent in the face of both Soviet and American hegemony, yet not strong enough to itself become a hegemon and therefore a threat to peace.³¹ In a meeting with Mendès France in October 1954, Kardelj underscored the point that "our fate is to a large extent tied to that of France."³² Although the French realized that Yugoslavia's post-schism Western turn had been driven by necessity, the Ambassador Baudet and the Quai's Eastern European direction counseled that Paris embrace Belgrade's overtures because "the fact remains that the two countries are not currently separated by any significant differences."³³ In the aftermath of Indochina, Baudet expressed his hopes to Prica that Belgrade will continue to support the French government's efforts in reducing international tensions by using its influence with its new neutralist friends in India and beyond.³⁴

Lively Rhetoric and Lackluster Results, June 1954–May 1955

That Belgrade's interest in France increased with the arrival of Mendès France was not a coincidence. His coming to power in June 1954 coincided with the first communication from

³⁰ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–22, The Yugoslavian embassy's monthly report for June 1954, Doc. 49194, 01.07.1954.

³¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, "Note a.s. Les relations franco-yougoslaves," Folio 178–181, 21.10.1954.; *Ibid.*, Carton 120, "Note a.s. Lignes générales d'une politique française à l'égard de la Yougoslavie," Annex A, Section F, Folio 247, 26.11.1955.

³² "DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, Report on Franco-Yugoslavian relations, Doc. 18241, June 1955.

³³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Letter from Burin des Rozières to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 130–134, 15.07.1954.; *Ibid.*, "Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre a.s. Relations entre France et Yougoslavie," Folio 189, 09.11.1954.

³⁴ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–22, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Cicmil), Doc. 49570, 15.07.1954.

Moscow to Belgrade since June 1948, via a letter in which Nikita Khrushchev indirectly conceded Soviet responsibility for the schism. A cessation of border incidents between Yugoslavia and its satellite neighbours followed, along with the signature of a military annex of the Balkan Pact in August, and the formal resolution of the Trieste standoff in October. Now secure on a number of fronts, Belgrade was able to pursue a bolder policy of equidistance to further consecrate Yugoslavia's independent path.³⁵ From the arrival of Mendès France to Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade in May 1955, and on the heels of Tito's visit to Africa and Asia in winter 1954–1955, the Yugoslavs looked to bolster their policy of active neutralism by building stronger ties not only with India and Egypt, but also with a European partner: France. Post-1945 Yugoslavian and French national interests and foreign policy aims were remarkably, although perhaps unsurprisingly, similar. In the historiography of postwar France Charles de Gaulle has often been seen, in contrast to the maligned Fourth Republic, as the “linchpin” of European integration and consequently of France's struggle for agency in the bipolar system of the Cold War world.³⁶ However, scholarship has shown that there were, in fact, “striking continuities” in the foreign policy of the Fourth and Fifth Republics which have “testified to a

³⁵ Rajak, “In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs,” Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 94–95.

³⁶ The orthodox and revisionist schools of Cold War historiography are heavily Washington-centric and have overlooked the agency of the middle powers. (For the former see Lloyd C. Gardner, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Origins of the Cold War* (Waltham: Ginn-Blaisdell, 1970), 43; Louis J. Halle, *The Cold War as History* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967), v–x. For the latter see William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962 c1959), 229–244; John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 353–361). These omissions have been addressed by post-revisionist specialists of post-1945 Europe, who have rehabilitated the Fourth Republic and have argued in favour of France's agency during the Cold War. Cf. Frédéric Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: De Gaulle, the United States and the Atlantic Alliance*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 143–144, 246; Michael Creswell, *A Question of Balance: How France and the United States Created Cold War Europe* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2006), viii–ix, 165–166; William Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 1–2, 203–204. For the “decadence school” of the Fourth Republic see Alexander Werth, *France, 1940–1955* (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1956), xi–xviii; Georgette Elgey, *La république des illusions, 1945–1951, ou La vie secrète de la IVe République* (Paris: Fayard, 1965), 507–510.

high degree of constancy in perceptions of national interest.”³⁷ These French national interests revolved around the security threats emanating from both the Soviet Union and Germany, as well as the menace of American hegemony, and in that respect they were identical to those of Tito’s Yugoslavia. France and Serbia/Yugoslavia had fought the Germans in both world wars and according to French Ambassador François Coulet, the Yugoslavs “approach the German problem with the same difficulties, the same instinctive recollection of recent experiences ... as we do.”³⁸ Both sides were concerned about a resurgence of West German power, particularly its economic presence in the Balkans.³⁹ However, like the Western Allies, Tito was aware of the importance of reintegrating Germany into the international community to avoid a repetition of the faults of the Versailles settlement, and was willing to countenance limited German rearmament and eventual reunification. As he told René Mayer and Léo Hamon in October 1952:

...it is important to give Germany the opportunity to feel as equal as possible to other nations. Germany’s equal status presupposes its right to arms, not for the purpose of militarization, but to defend its independence and to work in concert with the other nations to keep the peace in Europe. [...] I know that the vitality of the German people is very great, and that it is impossible to keep this nation in a subordinate position for long. The past has shown that that has yielded negative consequences, and inspired revanchism and the events that followed it. It is wrong to think that a divided Germany will be a Germany. East Germany will become the Soviet Union and not a divided Germany. And that’s when the Soviet Union will be at the borders of West Germany. And that will mean a constant threat of war.⁴⁰

Opposed to ideological crusades and preventive wars, in the bipolar Cold War world (entrenched with the establishment of the Warsaw Pact in 1955), Tito wished to be an independent partner and desired the same independence of Western Europe from the United

³⁷ Michael Sutton, *France and the Construction of Europe, 1944–2007: The Geopolitical Imperative* (New York: Berghahn, 2007), 4.

³⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 33, 21.03.1955.

³⁹ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 413623, 07.10.1953.

⁴⁰ AJ, A KMJ, I-2-a/33, Transcript of Tito’s meeting with a French parliamentary delegation on Bled, Folio 1–10, 27.09.1952.

States.⁴¹ While the Yugoslavs anticipated that Austria, as well as possibly a reunified and neutralized Germany, would join them and India in the growing “actively neutralist” movement,⁴² it appears that Tito was hoping for French adhesion to this movement, as well. As he told AFP director Jean Marin after his return from Africa and Asia in February 1955, “France and Yugoslavia could help each other in the search for a policy to counterbalance the blocs.”⁴³ Although the Quai perceived an indisposition on the part of Belgrade toward France after the fall of Mendès France in February 1955 (who was succeeded by his fellow Radical, Edgar Faure), the Mendéssiste Coulet was surprised by the frankness and *Realpolitik* of the leadership, as well as its “disdain for formulas and theses,” and noted that Belgrade’s French policy was becoming less and less moved by material self-interest and suspicions of “reaction.” He wrote to the Quai in March, more than a month after the fall of Mendès France, that he had received a series of unambiguous signs of Belgrade’s desire to “collaborate with us.”⁴⁴ He explained Belgrade’s interest in Paris in familiar terms:

The Yugoslavs envision a much easier establishment of close links with France than with the United States and even Great Britain, partly because we are less compromising as friends and partly because they discern in us a more similar disposition of mind. Intellectually as materially, they find France far more accessible than England and America; they speak French more than English; we were the ones who initiated them in the ways of modern technics, and their cadres, trained in our schools, would readily welcome a resumption of active collaboration. Generally, they recognize in us a kind of “political humanism” which they do not find elsewhere. Thus the small group of [...] partisans who rule Yugoslavia looks with more interest to France than to anyone else of the Big Four, [because] an active friendship [with France] would be more profitable.⁴⁵

⁴¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 136, Letter from Burin des Rozières to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 135, 13.01.1955.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, “Note a.s. Lignes générales d’une politique française à l’égard de la Yougoslavie,” Annex A, Folio 247, 26.11.1955. For the Warsaw Pact see Judt, *Postwar*, 246.

⁴² Darko Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu: Odnosi sa velikim silama 1949–1955* (Zagreb: Globus, 1988), 690.

⁴³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 243–245, 26.02.1955.

⁴⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 33–34, 21.03.1955. For the perceived Yugoslavian indisposition toward France see DSIP, PA, 1954 F–23, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi 1954–1955,” Doc. 18021, undated. The replacement of Baudet with Coulet coincided with the fall of Mendès France. For Coulet’s background and political leanings see DSIP, PA, 1954 F–22, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 414895, 13.11.1954.; Dragan Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme Alžirskog rata 1952–1964* (Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, 2009), 213.

⁴⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 34, 21.03.1955.

One such unambiguous sign of Belgrade's desire for collaboration with France was the decision to replace the non-Francophone Ambassador Prica with Bebler, the "kingpin of Yugoslavian diplomacy."⁴⁶ An even more resounding sign came from the dogmatic Kardelj, who emphasized to Coulet that the existence of an emotional friendship between the two countries could not be doubted and that, in order to be sustained, the two had to develop a concrete basis to their friendship and look "no longer to the past but to the future."⁴⁷ While the Yugoslavs were building relations with Asian and African partners, with regard to continental security India and Egypt were of little practical utility, and so Belgrade retained a keen eye on France. From the Yugoslavs' vantage point, the failure of the EDC in August 1954 had made France a *persona non grata* with the other five community members. Moreover, they believed that the French had signed the Paris Accords (which normalized Germany's postwar status) in October 1954 under pressure from the British. With Paris seemingly at risk of isolation, the Yugoslavs hoped that France would revive its "traditional policy" of looking east for its security; that is, finding itself in a postwar concert with its two wartime enemies (Germany and Italy), France would look to its former protégé, Yugoslavia, as a counterweight, even as Belgrade expressed reservations toward the "weak [and] reactionary" Faure government.⁴⁸

Coulet urged the Quai to respond to Belgrade's overtures and suggested that it consider a formal accord on general cooperation. The Ambassador believed this to be of particular import since France was, contrary to its goal of regaining its privileged prewar position in Yugoslavia at the expense of the Anglo-Americans, not one of that country's top five trading partners.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 33–34, 21.03.1955.

⁴⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, "Note a.s. Orientation actuelle de la politique extérieure yougoslave (spécialement à l'égard de la France)," Folio 4, 03.03.1955.

⁴⁸ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–18, Prica's annual report for 1954, Doc. 41371, 31.01.1955.; AJ, A KPR, I-2-6, Note on Bebler's conversation with Tito on Brioni, Folio 1–2, 21.06.1955.

⁴⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 37–38, 21.03.1955.

Although the Quai was certain that there was no danger of Yugoslavia returning to the Soviet fold even as it began to distance itself from the Balkan Pact in late 1954, the European Direction rejected Coulet's suggestion of a formal agreement with an ideological foe.⁵⁰ However, in a note to Faure's Foreign Minister, the conservative Antoine Pinay, it determined that a rapprochement with Yugoslavia "merits an effort; it would even be unfortunate if it were to fail. The disappointment in Belgrade in the event of a failure would be in direct correlation to the esteem that we currently enjoy. This is of consequence to our political influence in Yugoslavia and in the Balkans as a whole."⁵¹

While the Quai's anti-communism and fear of the Soviets persisted, it reasoned that despite Yugoslavia's ideology, as long as it remained opposed to the Soviet proposal of a neutralized Germany, it would remain "a positive element in European policy, as we conceive of it."⁵² The ideological threat posed by Yugoslavia thus mitigated, the central concern for France regarding its own position in Yugoslavia was the threat of Anglo-American encroachment. This threat was being posed not only in the cultural, linguistic, economic, and military domains, but also on the power-political and strategic levels. American President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, espoused a much more aggressive "wedge" strategy than that of Eisenhower's predecessor, Harry S. Truman. Eisenhower and Dulles were determined to not only "keep Tito afloat," but to "entice" him into NATO.⁵³ By spring 1955, as international tensions mounted due to Soviet displeasure at West Germany's incorporation into the Atlantic Alliance, the Eisenhower administration demanded firmer security cooperation

⁵⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, "Note a.s. Orientation actuelle de la politique extérieure yougoslave (spécialement à l'égard de la France)," Folio 172, 20.10.1954.

⁵¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, "Note pour le Président a.s. Relations franco-yougoslaves," Folio 46–48, 03.04.1955.

⁵² MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, "Note a.s. Orientation actuelle de la politique extérieure yougoslave (spécialement à l'égard de la France)," Folio 172, 20.10.1954.

⁵³ Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 122–123, 130.

commitments from Belgrade. In response, Tito proposed an exchange of views between Belgrade, Paris, London, and Washington, and met with the American and British Ambassadors, James Riddleberger and Frank Roberts.⁵⁴ On the heels of Tito's meetings with the Anglo-American representatives the Quai Secretary-General, René Massigli, instructed Coulet to request an audience with the Yugoslav leader lest the French be marginalized. Such a meeting, Massigli reasoned, would give Coulet the opportunity to "emphasize to the head of the Yugoslavian state the solidarity which, on key points, unites the three Western powers," as well as the importance that Paris attributed to the maintenance of a "close cohesion between Yugoslavia and the Western community."⁵⁵

Massigli further instructed Coulet to begin his meeting with Tito by discussing outstanding bilateral economic, commercial, cultural, and technical questions which, as Kardelj emphasized to the French Ambassador, continued to "lack imagination."⁵⁶ Alongside the *Mystère* licencing project (see Chapter 2), Paris and Belgrade were working on a project of technical assistance between the state-owned Bor-Majdanpek copper mine and the private French company, Compadec. The cooperation agreement was signed in November 1953 but the deal was hampered by two problems. The first stemmed from the French government's difficulties in subsidizing the project. Since 1951, Paris had advanced 22 billion francs to Belgrade, "more than half of it in the form of a gift, pure and simple."⁵⁷ Unlike the *Mystère*, which was politically beneficial but financially disadvantageous to Paris, the Bor-Majdanpek deal would yield economic advantages in that Paris would be guaranteed a supply of copper.

⁵⁴ United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957, Vol. XXVI: Central and Southeastern Europe (1955–1957)* (Washington: United States Government Printing Offices, 1992), Telegram from the Embassy in Yugoslavia to the Department of State, Belgrade, April 25, 1955, Doc. 244, 641–644.

⁵⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Telegram from Massigli to Coulet, Folio 82–84, 12.05.1955.

⁵⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, Telegram from Coulet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 240–242, 24.02.1955.

⁵⁷ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (C. Pineau), Carton 14, "Note A/S. Relations économiques franco-yougoslaves. – Problèmes devant faire l'objet d'une très prochaine décision gouvernementale," Folio 219–223, 01.02.1956.

Despite the financial cost to the French government, there was no doubt in the Quai's mind that if Paris did not step in to subsidize Compadec in exploiting one of Europe's biggest copper mines Washington, Bonn, or Moscow gladly would. The second problem for Paris was a concern over the reliability of Yugoslavian deliveries of the metal.⁵⁸ Despite these worries, the project was deemed vital not only to France's own industry, its international market expansion, and even domestic job creation, but also to boosting Yugoslavia's economy, thus facilitating debt payments to its creditors (which, of course, included France). The initial agreement expired in February 1956 and was prorogued until June, at which time the French government agreed to grant \$10 million to the project, while another \$11 million came from Washington.⁵⁹

As the Bor-Majdanpek project demonstrated, bilateral economic relations were fraught as two of France's interwar habits carried over into the postwar period. The first was Paris's tendency to view Belgrade as a cheap, abundant, and exploitable source of raw materials. Thus the French preferred to get their copper, corn, and tobacco from Yugoslavia for payment in kind, instead of purchasing those products elsewhere with hard currency.⁶⁰ The second was the continued French insistence upon the priority, above all other issues, of Belgrade paying off its nationalization compensation and prewar debts (the payment schedule for which was set in the 1951 agreement).⁶¹ And as in the interwar period, the perpetual trade imbalance – for which the French bore partial responsibility – remained, hindering Yugoslavia's ability to pay off its debts. It was this concern, combined with Paris's fears of being supplanted by the British and Americans in Yugoslavia, that fueled its insistence on moving ahead with the *Mystère* and Bor-

⁵⁸ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (C. Pineau), Carton 14, "Note A/S. Relations économiques franco-yougoslaves. – Problèmes devant faire l'objet d'une très prochaine décision gouvernementale," Folio 219–223, 01.02.1956.

⁵⁹ AN, 580AP/13, Fond Christian Pineau, "Cuivre yougoslave: Programme d'investissements Bor-Majdanpek," 08.02.1956.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 181, "Note A/S. Voyage de Compadec à Washington," Folio 127–128, 08.06.1956.

⁶⁰ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, Report on Franco-Yugoslavian relations, Doc. 18241, June 1955.

⁶¹ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, Yugoslavian embassy report on bilateral economic relations, Doc. 42892, 28.02.1953.

Majdanpek projects.⁶² As the French military attaché in Belgrade, Colonel Morel-Deville, wrote with regard to the British promotion of the Hawker at the expense of the Mystère: “the British have ousted us from European aviation [but] one country remains open to us: Yugoslavia. It is up to us to decide if we will renounce all ambition and let the British banish our industry and aeronautics from the entire continent.”⁶³ Despite the French desire to keep out the British and Americans, the Franco-Yugoslavian trade imbalance made negotiating a long-term exchange accord difficult, and so bilateral barter trade was conducted through a series of 12-month and 18-month agreements. The negotiating difficulties stemmed from a multitude of factors, including: the structural incompatibility of the two countries’ agricultural and industrial bases; France’s protectionism, which limited its interest in Yugoslavian exports; the constant restructuring of Yugoslavia’s economic sector, which did not always guarantee delivery of expected quotas; and the infamous French bureaucracy, which meant that the paperwork for already agreed-to exchanges of goods was often delayed.⁶⁴ While the total value of trade more than doubled over a five-year period (from \$48 million in 1949–1951 to \$82 million in 1952–1954), Belgrade’s exports to France stagnated. They remained under \$9 million annually, while French exports to Yugoslavia averaged almost \$19 million annually.⁶⁵ Yet while the French were worried that the lackluster state of economic relations would have political consequences – in that they would be supplanted by the Anglo-Americans, as well as the Soviets and West Germans – they were reluctant to liberalize trade. Two of Yugoslavia’s top trading partners, West Germany and Italy, had liberalized trade and were treating Yugoslavia as a de facto member of the Organization for

⁶² MAE, Série Z, Carton 155, Note for Pineau on the Mystère, Folio 64–67, 18.04.1956.

⁶³ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (C. Pineau), Carton 14, Note from Morel-Deville on the Mystère, Folio 212–218, 24.01.1956.

⁶⁴ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (A. Pinay), Carton 17, “Note pour le Président A/S. Etat de relations économiques franco-yougoslaves,” Folio 106–108, 21.10.1954.; DSIP, PA, 1953 F–28, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 45537, 25.04.1953.

⁶⁵ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, “Jugoslovensko-francuski privredni odnosi od 1948. god. do danas,” Doc. 18190, 16.06.1955.

European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), which Belgrade hoped to join de jure. Given the limited market for Yugoslavian goods in metropolitan France, the best way for Belgrade to redress the imbalance of trade would have been to increase exports to the French Union.⁶⁶ But Paris jealously guarded its empire, particularly the Maghreb. Politically and economically, it was keen on preventing any non-French incursions into North Africa, lest its own presence be threatened.⁶⁷ Paris obstructed Yugoslavia's trade with the Maghreb, rejected Belgrade's 1952 request to reopen its interwar consulate in Algiers, and even prohibited Ambassador Prica from visiting Yugoslavian expatriates in Tunisia and Morocco.⁶⁸ Therefore, even as Yugoslavia's postwar economic base and export potential grew, opportunities for trade remained constrained due to a mixture of structural, economic, and political factors. In more practical terms, this meant that no long-term solution was found to the problem of the Franco-Yugoslavian trade imbalance, which remained a latent sore point in bilateral relations.

Kremlin Overtures, June 1954–December 1955

In 1948–1950 Stalin had attempted everything short of war to eliminate Tito.⁶⁹ Although commonly assumed to have started after Stalin's death in March 1953, Moscow's overtures to normalize relations with Belgrade began in late 1951.⁷⁰ However, it was only after Stalin's death that Moscow and Belgrade, at the initiative of the former, once again exchanged ambassadors. A formal overture from Moscow – and the first form of direct communication between the Soviet

⁶⁶ DSIP, PA, 1954 F–23, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 43432, 18.03.1954.; *Ibid.*, 1955 F–19, "Jugoslovensko-francuski privredni odnosi od 1948. god. do danas," Doc. 18190, 16.06.1955.

⁶⁷ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Making of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 20–32.

⁶⁸ DSIP, PA, 1953 F–27, "Posleratni francusko-jugoslavenski odnosi," Doc. 18156, 05.12.1953.

⁶⁹ Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Tito, Yugoslavia's Great Dictator: A Reassessment* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992), 61.

⁷⁰ Because of a lack of sources it remains unclear what Stalin's conception of normalization with Yugoslavia actually was. According to Darko Bekić, it is possible that Stalin contemplated the neutralization of Yugoslavia as per the Percentages Agreement, in the same vein in which he sought a reunified, neutralized Germany in order to create a *cordon sanitaire* along the satellite belt. Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 350.

and Yugoslav party leaders – came in June 1954. With Eisenhower and Dulles’s resolve to tether Yugoslavia to the Western camp, Khrushchev determined that the dangers of Belgrade’s deepening ties with the West outweighed the dangers of ideological heresy, and proposed a full normalization of party relations. Courted by both sides, Tito realized that he could use this unique position not only to secure Yugoslavia’s political and economic independence by averting superpower accommodation over Yugoslavia at the country’s expense, but also to legitimize himself, both domestically and abroad, as a mediator between East and West.⁷¹

The Soviet–Yugoslav rapprochement was formalized with Khrushchev’s visit to Belgrade in May 1955. Although the visit made international headlines, it did not signal a return to the pre-Resolution status quo. The Yugoslavs were stunned at the nonchalant way in which their guests spoke of the benefits that Moscow could reap from a third world war.⁷² Tito was under no illusions that Moscow’s intention was to foment Western suspicions of Yugoslavia and reinforce bloc cohesion, and was incensed when Khrushchev ascribed responsibility for the schism to Stalin’s secret police chief Lavrentiy Beria and his former protégé Viktor Abakumov. Behind a façade of rapprochement, in a one-on-one meeting on Brioni the two leaders agreed to a gradual restoration of party relations and that ideological polemics were no longer to be made in public (which Koča argued were damaging to Yugoslavia) but were to be confined to private written exchanges.⁷³

Despite the initial limpness of the Soviet–Yugoslav reconciliation, French apprehensions were palpable. Despite the ‘optimism’ that the 1955 Geneva Summit inspired, Coulet told Prica that the normalization, however “understandable,” was progressing “much more quickly and

⁷¹ Rajak, “In Search of a Life Outside the Two Blocs,” Dimić, ed., *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu*, 90–91; Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 122–123.

⁷² Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 161.

⁷³ Svetozar Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, Comradeship, Confrontation 1953–1957* (London: Routledge, 2011), 82–125.

deeply than expected.”⁷⁴ Nothing had come of Tito’s April 1955 suggestion to Riddleberger of quadripartite military intelligence exchange. By the fall of that year, the Yugoslavs decided that such an exchange was “absolutely out of the question” because they had normalized relations with Moscow and the satellites. Following Khrushchev’s visit, the Quai’s Eastern European desk noted that as long as Soviet–Yugoslav relations were limited to a “good neighbour” policy and ideological polemics, there was no “major danger” for the West. Despite their misgivings about the broader ramifications of a deeper Soviet–Yugoslav reconciliation, the French were willing to tolerate a limited rapprochement in order to maintain their own presence in Belgrade, which, according to the Quai, “corresponds to the desires of the Yugoslavs.”⁷⁵

In an effort to reassure the West of his reliability after Khrushchev’s visit to Belgrade, Tito welcomed Dulles (“our best friend in the United States,” according to Leo Mates) on Brioni, and sent Kardelj to London in late 1955.⁷⁶ With France’s “*politique de présence*” on the defensive, the Quai lamented that “our Anglo-Saxon partners have worked, for their part, to affirm their relations with Yugoslavia. ... It is regrettable that no important ‘gesture’ has marked, over the last few years, the interest that France, too, attaches to its relations with Belgrade.”⁷⁷ In fact, in late 1954 Baudet had proposed that Tito be officially invited to Paris. The visit was planned for October 1955 but was postponed to May 1956 due to reasons of scheduling and Tito’s declining health. Coulet was surprised and hurt by the rescheduling, of which he was personally informed by Koča. Eyewitnesses who saw Coulet leave the Foreign Ministry after the

⁷⁴ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-2, Note on Prica’s conversation with Coulet, Folio 645, 12.07.1955. For the 1955 Geneva Summit see Vojtech Mastny, “Soviet Foreign Policy, 1953–1962,” Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 318.

⁷⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, “Note a.s. Lignes générales d’une politique française à l’égard de la Yougoslavie,” Folio 240–248, 26.11.1955.

⁷⁶ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (A. Pinay), Carton 17, “Note pour le Secrétaire d’Etat a.s. Yougoslavie,” Folio 88–89, 25.11.1955. For the Mates quote see Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 195.

⁷⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, “Note a.s. Lignes générales d’une politique française à l’égard de la Yougoslavie,” Folio 240–248, 26.11.1955.

meeting reported that he was visibly angry. Coulet speculated that Tito postponed the trip because of events in North Africa – that is, the war in Algeria that had begun in November 1954, as well as Tito’s burgeoning relationship with the Egyptian President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, who supported the Algerians’ plight for independence – and that his illness was merely a pretext. The French Ambassador was keen to see the Tito visit materialize, fearing that Nasser, whom Tito was scheduled to visit in late 1955, would waste no opportunity in claiming that the visit was postponed because of troubles in North Africa.⁷⁸ While scholars have shared in Coulet’s speculation,⁷⁹ given that these events coincided with the negotiations over the Mystère and Bor-Majdanpek it seems unlikely that Tito would wish to slight France at such a sensitive time. With the Yugoslavian leadership silent on the war in Algeria for the time being, a more sober Coulet concluded that having completed his “peregrination” around Africa and Asia, Tito postponed his trip to France because he did not wish to risk it turning into one of mere protocol.⁸⁰

The Yugoslavs hoped for concrete results from the visit and complained that Paris was attempting to strip Tito’s visit of any political significance because the French attitude to Yugoslavia had cooled after the latter’s normalization with Moscow.⁸¹ With suspicions on the rise in both capitals, in November 1955 Bebler presented the Quai with a veritable *cahier de doléances* cataloguing France’s tolerance of the Yugoslavian expatriate reaction.⁸² The Quai concluded that “while it may be worthwhile to firmly demonstrate in person that [the Ambassador’s] grievances are not fully justified, it would be inappropriate to suggest to Mr.

⁷⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-2, Note on Koča’s conversation with Coulet, Folio 838, 05.09.1955.

⁷⁹ Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad 1952–1955: Jugoslovensko približavanje NATO-u* (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 2000), 256.

⁸⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, “Note a.s. Orientation actuelle de la politique extérieure yougoslave (spécialement à l’égard de la France),” Folio 4, 03.03.1955.

⁸¹ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–19, “Razvoj jugoslovensko-francuskih odnosa od beogradskih jugoslovensko-sovjetskih razgovora do danas,” Doc. 18961, undated.

⁸² MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (A. Pinay), Carton 17, “Note pour le Cabinet du Secrétaire d’Etat a.s. doléances de l’Ambassadeur de Yougoslavie,” Folio 90–97, undated.

Bebler that our general attitude to Yugoslavia has changed in any way.” Loath to engage in more meaningful cooperation with Yugoslavia but equally reluctant to not let its “policy of presence” collapse, the Quai emphasized that Tito’s upcoming visit to Paris “must have as its principal aim the tightening of the already cordial relations that our country has with Belgrade.”⁸³

On other fronts, bilateral relations had been improving. A June 1954 French military delegation visit to a series of Yugoslavian military factories was deemed fruitful.⁸⁴ Former President of the Republic Vincent Auriol had visited in April 1955 (see Chapter 2), as did two *Poilus d’Orient* delegations who made pilgrimages to the Salonika Front in May 1955 and April 1956.⁸⁵ Despite the ideological condemnation of the “hegemonic” Serbs and the “exploitative” French in interwar Yugoslavia, the fact that *Poilus d’Orient* delegations were allowed to visit was indicative of Tito’s resolve to maintain good relations with France, even as Cold War and colonial tensions mounted.⁸⁶

In addition to favourable military and veteran relations, French tourist interest in Yugoslavia as an affordable summer seaside destination began growing, facilitated by Yugoslavian tourism promotion and a relaxation of entry rules.⁸⁷ An exhibition of Serbian frescoes that had been restored with the help of French experts opened in Marseille in February 1956.⁸⁸ That year also saw Mendès France pay a private visit to Yugoslavia, where he met with

⁸³ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (A. Pinay), Carton 17, “Note pour le Secrétaire d’Etat a.s. Yougoslavie,” Folio 88–89, 25.11.1955.

⁸⁴ SHD, GR 2S 91, Report on the French military delegation’s visit to Yugoslavia, Doc. 779, 18.06.1954.

⁸⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Note from the Minister of Veterans’ Affairs to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Folio 75–77, 04.05.1955.; *Ibid.*, Carton 186, Letter from Baelen to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 1, 26.01.1956.

⁸⁶ MAE, Série Z, 186, Letter from Baelen to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 1, 26.01.1956. Despite official Belgrade’s favourable disposition to France, there were limits to the Communists’ tolerance of “reactionary elements,” and invitations were not extended to the widow and son of General Franchet d’Espèrey, who were allegedly “cooperating with the Chetniks.” DSIP, PA, 1956 F–25, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 49397, 15.06.1956.

⁸⁷ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–24, Monthly report from the Marseille consulate, Doc. 414040, 25.07.1956. For Yugoslavian tourism promotion, which started in 1951, see DSIP, PA, 1951 F–27, Telefram from Prica to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44827, 15.03.1951.

⁸⁸ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–24, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 4974, 21.01.1956.

Kardelj. At Bebler's suggestion, Hamon established a parliamentary commission for Franco-Yugoslavian friendship in March 1956. That summer, he and Mayer again visited Belgrade.⁸⁹ Even after the fall of Mendès France, bilateral relations in many domains remained warm through summer 1956. However, they were not to last and were to be tested by increasing French suspicions of Yugoslavia's rapprochement with Moscow, as well as Tito's growing relationship with Nasser and the deteriorating situation in Algeria.

A Strain upon the Traditional Friendship: Moscow Honeymoon, Suez, and Algeria, 1956

As Svetozar Rajak has shown, Yugoslavia played an integral part in the Khrushchev Thaw. Successfully resisting re-absorption into the Soviet bloc, it forced a superpower to make a major concession, triggering de-Stalinization and ultimately the collapse of an empire. Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin at the XX Congress of the CPSU in February 1956 signified Moscow's admission of responsibility for the schism of June 1948. His famous "secret speech" gave rise to euphoria in Belgrade and paved the way for the full normalization of party relations. Tito returned from France in June (discussed below), and traveled to the Soviet Union in July where he and Khrushchev signed the Moscow Declaration acknowledging that there existed more than one path to Socialism.⁹⁰ Yet the moment did not signify Yugoslavia's reintegration into the Eastern bloc. The Yugoslavs justified the full normalization of relations as stemming from a change in Soviet, not Yugoslavian, policy. According to Mates, the constant "yo-yo" of Soviet-Yugoslav relations in the 1950s and 1960s was caused by Tito's emotional attachment to Moscow and his sincere desire to restore relations without forfeiting his country's independence. The result was that the realignment went too far in periods of "thaw," and was too violent in

⁸⁹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F-25, "Francuska: Državni, diplomatski i vojni odnosi," Doc. 423086, undated.

⁹⁰ Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 4-5, 144-155, 212-213.

periods of “freeze.”⁹¹ Consequently the optimism of the first half of 1956 was short-lived in both capitals and was brought to an end by the Hungarian Revolution, which coincided with the Suez Crisis in autumn 1956. While Tito initially supported the revolution until it began taking a distinctly anti-communist turn, the events in Hungary radicalized Khrushchev, confirming his intolerance for ideological heterogeneity. Tito’s refusal to sign the 1957 declaration recognizing Soviet hegemony over the international communist movement led to another period of confrontation that lasted until a second rapprochement of 1962–1968.⁹²

With regard to Franco-Yugoslavian relations, the Suez Crisis and its connection to the war in Algeria eclipsed the Hungarian Revolution. Algeria occupies a unique place in the annals of French colonialism. Unlike Tunisia and Morocco, Algeria, conquered in 1830, was not considered a colony but a part of metropolitan France. It was divided into three “overseas departments:” Algiers, Oran, and Constantinois. Although an 1865 law hollowly asserted that every “indigenous Muslim is French,” limited political rights were only granted in 1919.⁹³ In addition to a rapidly-growing population of almost nine million “indigenous Muslims,” there were one million *pieds noirs* in Algeria: a “lumpenproletariat” of Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Maltese, Corsicans, and Sephardic Jews, whose metropolitan self-identification increased with the growth of Muslim nationalism.⁹⁴ As France struggled to maintain its hold over Indochina, independence movements gained momentum across the Maghreb. With France defeated at Dien Bien Phu and with unrest fomenting in Morocco and Tunisia, the Algerian *Front de Libération*

⁹¹ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 203–222.

⁹² Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 173–185; Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 175.

⁹³ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 20–36.

⁹⁴ Alexander Harrison, *Challenging de Gaulle: The OAS and the Counterrevolution in Algeria, 1954–1962* (New York: Praeger, 1989), 21; Martin Thomas, *The French North African Crisis: Colonial Breakdown and Anglo-French Relations, 1945–1962* (London: MacMillan, 2000), 13.

Nationale (FLN) launched an insurgency on November 1, 1954.⁹⁵ As mentioned earlier, the staunchly anti-colonialist Yugoslavs had been silent on Indochina. They were initially equally silent on troubles in the Maghreb, although they did resist French pressures to lend their support to French positions on Tunisia and Morocco in the United Nations from 1953 onward, to the disappointment of Paris who “counted on the support of its friends.”⁹⁶ By late 1955 the Yugoslavian position began to shift, owing to two developments: one; as a divergence of views on colonial issues opened between the United States on the one hand, and Britain and France on the other, the Yugoslavs came to believe that they too could become more vocal in their condemnation of colonialism without damaging their relations with Britain and France;⁹⁷ and two, after almost five years of pragmatic relations with the West (and after de facto integrating into the Western security system through the Balkan Pact), the Yugoslavs sought to reaffirm their ideological credentials or, as was often termed euphemistically, their commitment to “principle” and “progress.”⁹⁸ When Yugoslavia voted in favour of bringing the matter of Algeria before the United Nations General Assembly, Coulet informed Prica that France considered this “an unfriendly act” (“*un acte inamical*”) and that Paris would “review its relations” with all the countries – that is, the majority of the Assembly – that had voted in favour of the motion.

Prica assured Coulet that for Belgrade the issue was one of a “principled” (that is, ideological) commitment to anti-colonialism and to the United Nations, and not a deliberate act of hostility against France in particular.⁹⁹ As noted above, the Yugoslavs were opposed to armed military blocs and to the idea of a “third force” because, as Koča said before the United Nations

⁹⁵ Judt, *Postwar*, 286.

⁹⁶ Vladimir Petrović, *Jugoslavija stupa na Bliski Istok: Stvaranje jugoslovenske bliskoistočne politike 1946–1956* (Beograd: ISI, 2007), 187; MAE, Serie Z, Carton 119, Telegram from Baudet to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 3–4, 19.01.1953.

⁹⁷ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 127.

⁹⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-2, Note on Prica’s conversation with Coulet, Folio 948, 03.10.1955.; *Ibid.*; I-5-b/28-3, Note on Prica’s conversation with Baelen, Doc. 935, 06.09.1956.

⁹⁹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-2, Note on Prica’s conversation with Coulet, Folio 948, 03.10.1955.

in 1954, “two blocs are more than enough.”¹⁰⁰ Because of this Belgrade attached much importance to the United Nations as a forum in which the smaller nations of the world, with their joint moral and political capital, could hold accountable the economic and military might of the Great Powers.¹⁰¹ In contrast to Belgrade, Paris’s attitude to the United Nations was lukewarm at best: the French refused to admit the United Nations jurisdiction over matters of empire and sought to contain, rather than satisfy, the criticism of French imperialism that was growing in the General Assembly.¹⁰² The two countries’ history of cooperation in the organization was anemic: although they cooperated in UNICEF and the ILO, Belgrade was in favour of funding for underdeveloped countries while Paris was not. And, expectedly, the two diverged most sharply on issues of colonialism, particularly as the situation in the Maghreb deteriorated.¹⁰³

It was against the backdrop of the normalization between Belgrade and Moscow and Belgrade’s increasingly vocal anti-colonialism that Tito’s visit to France unfolded, and proved anticlimactic. Tito and Bebler did not wish for the visit to signal Belgrade’s support for the “reactionary” Faure and Mollet governments that sought to retain control over Algeria, but thought that an alignment between the two countries could nevertheless “mean a great deal for Europe and the world.”¹⁰⁴ Although Faure (whose government fell in February 1956) and Pinay had wished to attribute political significance to Tito’s visit, things changed with their successors, the Socialist Prime Minister Guy Mollet and his Foreign Minister Christian Pineau. The Soviet–Yugoslav normalization and Belgrade’s anti-colonialism brought the SFIO’s pro-Yugoslavism into question, and official relations quickly cooled. Tito supported Mendès France’s

¹⁰⁰ IAB, Fond Koča Popović, Box 38K, Speech to the United Nations General Assembly, September 1954.

¹⁰¹ IAB, Fond Koča Popović, Box 38K, Speech to the United Nations General Assembly, September 1955.

¹⁰² Martin Thomas, “France Accused: French North Africa Before the United Nations, 1952–1962,” *Contemporary European History* Vol. 10, No. 1 (Mar., 2001), 91–92.

¹⁰³ DSIP, PA, 1952 F–26, “Francuska: Neka pitanja iz spoljne i unutrašnje politike i jugoslovensko-francuskih odnosa,” Doc. 417502, undated.

¹⁰⁴ AJ, A KPR, I-2-6, Note on Bebler’s conversation with Tito on Brioni, Folio 1–2, 21.06.1955.

interpretation of the conflict in Algeria as one of national liberation, and disagreed with Mollet's characterization of it as an internal affair.¹⁰⁵ Despite his party's own theoretical opposition to colonialism, Mollet (who was pelted by tomatoes in Algiers in February 1956) sent French conscripts to quell the rebellion, thereby fanning the flames of war. In the National Assembly the PCF voted in favour of the motion to send troops to Algeria and thus in a remarkable display of unity unseen since the Popular Front, the two French leftist parties proved that they were all too willing to sacrifice ideological principle for the sake of French national interest.¹⁰⁶

Despite their shared ideological principles and close friendship in the early 1950s, once in power the French Socialists were no more amenable to Yugoslavia than their more conservative predecessors had been. Meanwhile the Yugoslavs, who had little practical interest in the Maghreb or influence over the FLN, were taking a principled stance on colonialism. They remained mindful of their balancing act, aspirations of mediation, and economic reliance on Western Europe, and did not wish to damage their relations with Paris even as it became clear that no love was lost between the LCY and SFIO. Political cartoons on Algeria that began appearing in the Yugoslavian press in early 1956 (one in particular depicting a bumbling Mollet attempting to extinguish the Algerian fire, seemingly oblivious to the fact that the *colons* had severed his fire hose) that even Koča conceded were "crude," were the subject of repeated protests from the French Ambassador.¹⁰⁷ With such a state of relations between Belgrade and Mollet's government, it was not a surprise that Tito told a group of French journalists on Brioni a month before his visit that his main objective was to meet with Mendès France and President of

¹⁰⁵ AJ, A KPR, I-2/6, Note on Tito's conversation with Mendès France at the Elysée, Folio 934–935, 29.05.1956.

¹⁰⁶ Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830–2000: A Short History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 45–47. For the PCF's "Gaullo-centric and chauvinistic" position on Algeria see René Dazy, *La partie et le tout: Le PCF et la guerre franco-algérienne* (Paris: Editions Syllèpse, 1990), 39.

¹⁰⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Koča's conversation with Baelen, Folio 72, 26.01.1956.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 183, Folio 7, Press clipping of a political cartoon from *Oslobodjenje*, 12.02.1956.

the Republic, René Coty.¹⁰⁸ The chill in relations was made worse by the Quai's knowledge that Belgrade was going to be deeply disappointed with the decision on the *Mystère* that was made on the eve of Tito's visit, the financing for which the French, strapped of resources because of colonial war, could simply not make work.¹⁰⁹ With the partial French financing of Bor-Majdanpek as ersatz compensation, the Yugoslavs continued to strive toward cooperation with Paris within the growing international neutralist movement. Belgrade had initially hoped to issue a joint communiqué with the French in the same vein as the Tito–Nehru declaration.¹¹⁰ While the visit – and the traditional friendship – were publicized in highly favourable terms to an unusual degree in the Yugoslavian press, a joint declaration was not made because while the Yugoslavs sought to promote themselves as mediators who could temper Nasser's position on Algeria, on account of Belgrade's position on colonialism the French, expecting support from all of their friends, were not ready to issue any “historic declarations” or undertake any “joint action.” Having characterized Yugoslavia's policy of peaceful active coexistence and bloc equidistance as “original and coherent” in 1954, the French now struggled to divine its ultimate aims in light of the Soviet rapprochement, even as Mollet and Pineau journeyed to Moscow to marshal support (or at least “benevolent neutrality”) for French positions on North Africa three days after Tito's departure from Paris.¹¹¹ While they did not discount possible future cooperation with Yugoslavia on matters of continental security, it was decided that only the traditional friendship

¹⁰⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-2/6, Transcript of Tito's interview with French journalists on Brioni, Folio 989–998, 17.04.1956.

¹⁰⁹ MAE, Série Z, Cabinet du Ministre (M. Couve de Murville), Carton 92, “Note pour le Ministre A/S. Affaires économiques franco-yougoslaves – visite du Maréchal Tito,” Folio 291–292, 30.04.1956.; *Ibid.*, Carton 155, Note for Pineau on the *Mystère*, Folio 64–67, 18.04.1956.

¹¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, “Note pour le Ministre A.s. Visite de M. Bebler,” Folio 121–124, 06.06.1955.

¹¹¹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–25, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 46911, 05.05.1956.; AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Koča's conversation with Baelen, 09.04.1956. For Yugoslavian press coverage of Tito's visit see MAE, Serie Z, Carton 181, Letter from the French Embassy (Susini) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 112–118, 15.05.1956. For Mollet and Pineau's visit to Moscow in May 1956 see John Van Oudenaren, *Détente in Europe: The Soviet Union and the West since 1953* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 70.

would be reaffirmed, and the visit produced nothing apart from a communiqué to that effect.¹¹² Perhaps the most significant occurrence during Tito's stay in Paris was the moment when he stunned his interlocutors by disclosing that he had been engaging in correspondence with Nasser, whom Mollet, like his British counterpart Anthony Eden, frequently likened to Hitler.¹¹³

Tito had gained an admirer in the Egyptian president, who was eager to liberate his country from British influence. In his quest to exercise a more independent domestic and foreign policy, Nasser found a three-fold inspiration in Belgrade: the ability to engage with both East and West while remaining independent; the apparent success of its economic planning which rapidly increased the standard of living for its citizenry; and the coexistence of religion (in particular Islam) and Socialism that was permissible in the Yugoslavian theoretical model (and not in the Soviet one). Unlike either of the superpowers or any of the former Great Powers, Yugoslavia was neither a hegemon nor an ideological crusader. It was thus an acceptable model to emulate and was the main inspiration behind "Nasserism," or Arab Socialism, that would take hold in Egypt in the late 1950s and early 1960s.¹¹⁴ Having met in 1955, Tito and Nasser met again, this time with Nehru, on Brioni in July 1956. The tripartite summit happened spontaneously. Nehru and Nasser had each planned to visit Yugoslavia (and other European countries) separately but scheduling difficulties necessitated simultaneous visits, and Tito seized upon Nehru's suggestion of a joint meeting.¹¹⁵ The main aim of Nasser's visit to Yugoslavia – which marked his first

¹¹² AJ, A KPR, I-2-6, "Intervju Predsednika Vlade Francuske Gi Mole-a pred posetu Predsednika Republike Josipa Broza Tita Francuskoj," Folio 1017–1019, 05.05.1956. For the joint communiqué see of May 11, 1956 see MAE, Série Z, Carton 182, "Note pour le Secrétaire Général A.S. Rapports franco-yougoslaves," Folio 81–85, 08.09.1959.

¹¹³ AJ, A KPR, I-2/6, Note on Tito's conversation with Mollet and Pineau, Folio 936, 18.05.1956. For Eden and the Suez Crisis see Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonization, 1918–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 226–237.

¹¹⁴ Norman Cigar, "Arab Socialism Revisited: The Yugoslav Roots of its Ideology," *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 19, No. 2 (Apr., 1983), 152–163.

¹¹⁵ Aleksandar Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza 1956–1957* (Beograd: INIS, 2008), 67–80; Doc. 100 in Pero Simić and Zvonimir Despot, eds., *Tito, strogo poverljivo: Arhivski dokumenti* (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2010), 217.

direct encounter with a European country – was to obtain essential information on industrialization that, as the Yugoslavs often emphasized, was the sole means through which underdeveloped countries could secure their political and economic independence.¹¹⁶ The ostensible purpose of the tripartite summit was to reaffirm the Bandung declarations on independence and bloc equidistance. However, the meeting did not formalize the Non-Aligned Movement, as was retrospectively claimed by Kardelj and other Yugoslavian contemporaries.¹¹⁷ The primary topic of the summit was the growing problem in North Africa: Anglo-Egyptian tensions over the Suez Canal and the rebellion in Algeria. The FLN had wished to attend because such a summit would have accorded them an international platform. While Tito and Nasser agreed, at Nehru's insistence the FLN was rebuffed.¹¹⁸ Although the joint statement, representative of all three leaders and their nations' interests, highlighted "the Far East, the Middle East and Western Europe" as regions posing security concerns, the greatest emphasis was placed on North Africa and the Mediterranean.¹¹⁹ This inspired a negative reaction in Paris, prompting Ambassador Baelen (who had replaced Coulet in late 1955) to warn Prica about the official French displeasure at the "disproportionate space and significance accorded to the Algerian question in the [Brioni] declaration."¹²⁰

Although as late as November 1955 the French embassy in Belgrade had observed that there was no genuine alignment of policy between Moscow and Belgrade despite the normalization, by July 1956 Baelen was criticizing Tito for the "sentimental impulse" that drove

¹¹⁶ Norman Cigar, "Arab Socialism Revisited," 155.

¹¹⁷ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 3–16.

¹¹⁸ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 135.

¹¹⁹ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 3–16.

¹²⁰ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Prica's conversation with Baelen, Folio 785, 24.07.1956.

him to follow the same anti-colonial line on North Africa as the Soviets.¹²¹ This assessment was inaccurate but understandable given the context of the Cold War. While sentimentality did play a part in Tito's push to normalize relations with Moscow, the intensification of Yugoslav-Egyptian relations from 1955 onward was built not only upon Nasser's interest in socialism but also upon a legacy of comparatively fruitful interwar economic relations. Moreover, Tito's reasons for establishing relations with Asian and African countries related to the Soviets only to the extent that it was a fear of post-schism isolation that had led Tito to expand Yugoslavia's diplomatic efforts. Lastly, and most importantly, Moscow's reaction to the Brioni summit was one of complete indifference because for the time being they, like the Americans, much preferred to see the French remain in North Africa than to see the enemy superpower step into the post-colonial power vacuum.¹²² Tito would later oblige when Khrushchev asked him to help marshal international peacekeeping forces to send to Egypt, and to urge Nehru to be more assertive in resisting British pressures on Suez (as well as to prevent him from publicly condemning the events in Hungary).¹²³ But by the same token the Yugoslavs recognized the legitimate interests of their Western European allies and sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to soften Nasser's stance on Algeria, Koča urging for the "support of French positions, as much as possible, with the Egyptians. In any case, [urge a] compromise."¹²⁴

Nasser's announcement of the nationalization of the Canal caught Belgrade by surprise, and the Yugoslavs were privately livid that they had not been kept abreast of Cairo's

¹²¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 120, Letter from the Belgrade chargé d'affaires (des Garets) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 217–224, 21.11.1955.; *Ibid.*, Carton 176, Letter from Baelen to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 71–72, 17.09.1956.

¹²² Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 12, 82; Yahia H. Zoubir, "The United States, the Soviet Union and Decolonization of the Maghreb, 1945–1962," *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 13, No. 2 (Jan., 1995), 69–81.

¹²³ Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 127–192, 240–241.

¹²⁴ Koča quoted in Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 157.

intentions.¹²⁵ The British and French, however, were not convinced and insisted that not only did Tito know of the nationalization in advance, but that he had counselled Nasser to that effect.¹²⁶ These accusations were patently untrue, but were grounds enough for the British to exclude the Yugoslavs from the London Conference on the Canal. This slight, in turn, was reason enough for Tito to fully endorse Nasser's position alongside Moscow.¹²⁷ While he had attempted to urge Nasser to negotiate in order to preserve peace, Tito condemned the joint British, French, and Israeli aggression against Egypt in October 1956.¹²⁸ Although the British were first and foremost concerned with the Canal, for the French the Canal itself was of secondary importance. The Mollet government's primary reason for engaging in hostilities against Nasser was its insistence that he was supplying arms to the FLN.¹²⁹ Pineau had told Bebler this much when the latter submitted a formal protest over the aggression against Egypt. Pineau objected to Belgrade's inconsistency: the simultaneous support of Soviet aggression in Hungary and the condemnation of Western action in Egypt, for which Tito's friendship with Nasser was not accepted as justification. This was followed by a second protest from Bebler against the Anglo-French obstruction of the United Nations Security Council where Yugoslavia, as a rotating member, was proving invaluable to the inexperienced Nasser.¹³⁰

One particular exchange between Baelen and Prica in September was telling of the two sides' underlying concerns and sources of disagreement over North Africa. With a reference to nineteenth-century Serbian romantic literature Baelen obliquely asked why the Yugoslavs, like their ancestors, were not doing more to contain the Islamic 'infidel horde.' Prica replied by

¹²⁵ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 138.

¹²⁶ Veljko Mićunović's published diary (*Moskovske godine*) quoted in Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 148.

¹²⁷ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 138.

¹²⁸ Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 113, 232–233.

¹²⁹ Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, 116–117.

¹³⁰ Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 233.

asking why France was not seizing the opportunity to become the beacon of “progress, peace, and culture” and was instead destroying its own prestige, therefore only fueling the fire of pan-Islamism and pan-Arabism.¹³¹ While for the French the matter transcended Cold War and imperial concerns and was a broader question of the future of European civilization, the Yugoslavs’ disappointment in French actions stemmed from their own great expectations of France, especially with a Socialist government in power. Whereas in the past Belgrade had condemned Britain’s colonial policy while remaining silent on Indochina in deference to France, the situation reversed over Suez as the Yugoslavs reasserted their non-aligned “principles.”¹³² Now the Mollet government, more than the British Tories under Eden, became the object of bitter denunciation. In a second formal protest to Pineau, Bebler condemned the SFIO for its colonial policy while lauding British Labour for opposing the aggression.¹³³ In a party speech in Pula a few days later, Tito was even more scathing in his condemnation of Mollet and the French Socialists for their colonialist complicity:

I am convinced that the poor people of France will have to one day pay for the policy conducted by the French Socialists led by Guy Mollet. [...] We intended to help France in the Algerian question. We told Nasser that we felt that it would be difficult for the French to leave Algeria and that it would be better to seek a solution of a union between France and Algeria. ... While we were in France, we said to the French leaders: ‘instead of spending a billion francs a day on maintaining your army in Algeria, save half of that amount and spend it instead on raising the living standard for the population...’ [...] Some French leaders had approved while others had retorted that the prestige of France was at stake. Behold their prestige... they stand ashamed as the whole world condemns the French government’s aggression.¹³⁴

The fall of 1956 thus represented a crisis point in Franco-Yugoslavian relations, wherein official contacts virtually ceased. Although the French government did not launch a formal

¹³¹ Baelen mentioned the Prince-Bishop of Montenegro, Petar Petrović–Njegoš, and likely alluded to his epic poem, *Gorski vijenac (The Mountain Wreath)*, which tells of the clash of civilizations between the Christian Slavs and Muslim Turks in Montenegro. AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Prica’s conversation with Baelen, Folio 935, 06.09.1956.

¹³² MAE, Série Z, Carton 137, Letter from Burin des Roziers to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 59–61, 04.11.1954.

¹³³ Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 233.

¹³⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, Telegram from des Garets to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 59–62, 17.11.1956.

protest against Tito's speech, the French Socialists smarted from Tito's words which they found surprising given his recent visit to Paris and the esteem in which he was held by the French left.¹³⁵ As the battle of words continued at the United Nations the Yugoslavian representative Jože Brilej compared the aggressors to Hitler, accusing them of premeditating their campaign and "taking the law into their own hands."¹³⁶ In Ljubljana, a group of demonstrators shouted "Tito–Nasser!," "Down with France!," and "*Liberté! Egalité!*" in front of the French chancellery.¹³⁷ Acerbic political cartoons, described by Baelen as "insolent malignancy," continued to appear in the Yugoslavian press despite constant French objections.¹³⁸

With Yugoslavia's disappointment with France and with its balancing act between North Africa and Western Europe faltering, the situation in the Maghreb began affecting bilateral relations more generally. The French and Yugoslavs had expressed a mutual desire to "cooperate" in the field of nuclear energy for civilian use: that is, for France to provide technical assistance in the development of Yugoslavian nuclear research facilities. These plans were postponed by the French in December 1956 because of Belgrade's position on Suez and Algeria.¹³⁹ The *Poilus d'Orient* and the *Association France–Yougoslavie* likewise soured on Belgrade. After the United Nations vote on Algeria in September 1955 the Nancy chapter of the *Poilus d'Orient* recalled its invitation to Bebler to attend the anniversary celebration of the

¹³⁵ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Uvalić's conversation with André Le Troquer, President of the National Assembly, Folio 1237, 14.11.1957.

¹³⁶ Životić, *Jugoslavija i Suecka kriza*, 225–232.

¹³⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 176, Telegram from the Zagreb consulate (Bolle) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 79, 31.10.1956.

¹³⁸ One particularly stinging cartoon alluded to the Franco-Serbian experience of the First World War. Portraying a soldier aboard a French ship panicking at the sight of war on the approaching Algerian coast, it was titled "*Kreće se ladja francuska*" ("The French Ship is Leaving"), a song recounting the French transport of the Serbian army from Albania to Greece during the Golgotha. MAE, Série Z, Carton 176, Folio 67, 03.09.1956.

¹³⁹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–26, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 48963, 07.06.1956.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 422542, 29.12.1956.

Bulgarian armistice.¹⁴⁰ The *Association France–Yougoslavie*, meanwhile, disagreed with Belgrade’s position on Hungary and the repression of the dissident Djilas.¹⁴¹ Its president, Jean Cassou, took umbrage with ex-Ambassador Ristić’s allegation in *Borba* that its members were not engaged on the Algerian question, which prompted him to boycott the association.¹⁴²

The French army also cooled on Yugoslavia and not only because the nature of the Yugoslavian army had begun to change with Tito’s ‘democratization’ of the JNA, which, as Morel-Deville noted, “removed much of the [Serbian] Francophile sentiment hitherto traditional in the Yugoslavian army.”¹⁴³ It was the combination of Belgrade’s rapprochement with Moscow, relationship with Cairo, and its stance on colonial problems that fueled French suspicions and contributed to the deterioration of relations.¹⁴⁴ As signs of the Eastern rapprochement began emerging in late 1954, Morel-Deville began criticizing Yugoslavian press coverage of the French colonial question. He accused *Politika* of engaging in “a propaganda campaign against our presence in our overseas territories, which testifies to the complete ignorance, genuine or deliberate, of our achievements.”¹⁴⁵ By spring 1955 he was accusing the Yugoslavian authorities of an “encyclopedic ignorance of France’s colonial problems in general, and French responsibilities outside of France in particular.”¹⁴⁶ As far as the conservative French military establishment was concerned, Belgrade’s interest in France stemmed solely from its aversion to

¹⁴⁰ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–18, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 413308, 05.10.1955.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Bebler to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 421598, 15.12.1956.

¹⁴¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Koča’s conversation with Jean Cassou, Folio 1072, 30.10.1957.

¹⁴² DSIP, PA, 1957 F–28, “Kratki informativni pregled bilateralnih odnosa FNRJ–Francuska od 1955 do danas (septembar 1957),” Doc. 28367, 06.09.1957.

¹⁴³ SHD, 14 S 221, Army Staff 2nd Bureau report, “L’Armée Yougoslave,” Doc. 708, March 1956.

¹⁴⁴ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Yugoslavian embassy quarterly report on bilateral relations, Doc. 41260, 05.01.1957.

¹⁴⁵ SHD, 14 S 218, Letter from Morel-Deville to the Premier and Minister of Defence, Doc. 510, 18.11.1954.

¹⁴⁶ SHD, 14 S 222, Letter from Morel-Deville to the Minister of Defence, Doc. 182, 05.04.1955.

American and Soviet hegemony. And with the Soviet–Yugoslav rapprochement, it became clear to the French army that “Yugoslavia remain[ed] a Slavic country, and a *communist* one.”¹⁴⁷

At a Crossroads: Yugoslavia between East and West, December 1956–December 1957

Tito’s balancing act between East and West was not producing results. While the West feared Soviet realignment behind his every move, Moscow was incensed that Belgrade continued to present itself as communist while remaining “open for business” with the capitalist powers. As the Soviet Ambassador to Paris, Sergei Vinogradov, told Prica, “call your party Social Democratic and we won’t attack you anymore.”¹⁴⁸ Despite Tito’s commitment to communism that was never in question – in both his implementation of socialism at home and his moral support of “progressive elements” abroad – the Yugoslavian leader presented himself as a moderate on the world stage. When asked to comment on Khrushchev’s prediction that future generations of Americans will live under socialism, he replied: “it is up to the American people to decide what system of society it will develop and what system it would prefer.”¹⁴⁹ While the Quai contended in spring 1956 that Tito was seeking to make his own incursions into the Middle East as a counterweight to both Soviet and American influence there, the Yugoslavs downplayed the spread of Titoism in Egypt or elsewhere because to do otherwise would have contradicted its sacred foreign policy tenet of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries.¹⁵⁰ Instead Tito ridiculed Moscow for seeking to gain influence in a region where “feudalism”

¹⁴⁷ SHD, 14 S 222, Le Capitaine de Vaisseau de Geffrier, chef de la 2ème Division de la EMFA, “La Yougoslavie au moment de la visite du Maréchal Tito à Paris,” Doc. 4701, 11.05.1956.

¹⁴⁸ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–30, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian embassy in Moscow, Doc. 417694, 29.07.1958.

¹⁴⁹ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 219.

¹⁵⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, “Note a.s. La Yougoslavie et l’O.N.U.,” Folio 29–31, 30.04.1956.; Cigar, “Arab Socialism Revisited,” 159.

persisted, and called on the West to commit to economic development in the Arab world rather than using the fear of communism as justification for its presence there.¹⁵¹

To Koča's chagrin, the resumption of ideological polemics between Belgrade and Moscow in 1957 threatened to once again compromise Yugoslavia's independence.¹⁵² Meanwhile, Yugoslavia's influence in the Arab world kept growing in all disproportion to its political, economic, and military means.¹⁵³ From 1957 onward Belgrade began making more systematic efforts to improve economic relations with the developing world. The aim was to reduce Yugoslavia's economic dependence on the West, which accounted for 60% of its total trade, because economic reliance could only engender political dependence. Along with the United States, Yugoslavia's top trading partners were its Second World War enemies, West Germany and Italy. The FRG was the only country that awarded credits without any political "strings" to Yugoslavia. From 1951 onward, an astonishing 20% of Yugoslavia's total trade was with the West Germans. With regard to Italy, despite long-standing enmities the two countries' economies were highly complementary and a long-term trade accord was signed in August 1956. In 1957, Italy accounted for 13.6% of Yugoslavia's imports, and 11.9% of its exports. As always, a trade imbalance remained because Yugoslavian exports, particularly of the industrial variety, were uncompetitive in Western markets.¹⁵⁴ This posed a problem because the rise in the Yugoslavian standard of living necessitated greater imports, and therefore greater exports in order for Belgrade to balance its trade.¹⁵⁵ As an antidote to its trade deficit, reliance on the Western bloc, and a reluctance to again become reliant on the Eastern bloc, Belgrade

¹⁵¹ Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 219–220.

¹⁵² Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 176.

¹⁵³ Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme Alžirskog rata*, 244–245.

¹⁵⁴ Dragan Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike 1956–1961* (Beograd: ISI, 2006), 12, 125, 147–153, 237.

¹⁵⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 161, Report from Broustra, "L'expansion économique de la Yougoslavie dans les pays sous-développés d'Asie, d'Amérique du Sud et d'Afrique," Folio 209–238, 16.02.1960.

chimerically sought greater economic independence through bilateral trade with the Third World.¹⁵⁶ The Middle East in particular was a viable option for Yugoslavia due to its geographic proximity and because the region was not a priority for Moscow in the 1950s (despite the potential receptiveness of anti-colonialists, nationalists, and pan-Arabists to Soviet policy).¹⁵⁷ Yugoslavia's chief partners in the Third World were India, Indonesia, the United Arab Republic (the short-lived merger between Egypt and Syria), Burma, Iraq, and Israel. Trade with other African states (Tunisia, Morocco, Ethiopia, and Sudan) was negligible.¹⁵⁸ Belgrade, however, was not only focused on likeminded Asian and African countries for purposes of extra-European trade: between 1946 and 1958 the Foreign Ministry sent no less than four trade delegations to Latin America.¹⁵⁹ Although not negligible, trade with this part of the world was unsteady. Despite an appreciable growth in Yugoslavia's trade with extra-European countries over the course of the 1950s, as with France this trade was limited due to structural and geographic factors, as well as the increasing superpower presence and competition in the Third World.

In addition to trade, Belgrade also sought to promote its military and technical expertise and sponsor cultural ties with the Third World. However, as Baelen's successor, Vincent Broustra, observed, there was a considerable degree of irony in the fact that Yugoslavia's economic structures were at best marginally more evolved than those of the countries that it was seeking to assist (and when it itself continued to receive military and food aid from the United States).¹⁶⁰ Despite Tito's overtures to the Third World, it remained clear to Koča and the Foreign Ministry that Yugoslavia's security remained tied to the continent and that in order to preserve

¹⁵⁶ Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*, 155.

¹⁵⁷ Mikhaïl Narinskiy, "L'Union soviétique et la crise de Suez," Mikhaïl Narinskiy and Maurice Vaïsse, eds., *Les crises dans les relations franco-soviétiques, 1954–1991* (Paris: A. Pedone, 2009), 41.

¹⁵⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 161, Report from Broustra, "L'expansion économique de la Yougoslavie dans les pays sous-développés d'Asie, d'Amérique du Sud et d'Afrique," Folio 209–238, 16.02.1960.

¹⁵⁹ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 15.

¹⁶⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 176, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 139–144, 07.01.1958. For the resumption of American military aid to Yugoslavia in 1957 see Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 214.

its economic and political independence it had to continue pursuing bilateral relations with Western Europe.¹⁶¹ The Ministry, therefore, took a particular interest in the non-military aspects of European integration. By 1956, Belgrade had acquired the status of observer with the OEEC and the European Civil Aviation Conference, and also expressed an interest in closer association with the Council of Europe. The Quai emphasized the importance of supporting Yugoslavia's bids to join the OEEC, Council of Europe, and the United Nations Security Council. Yugoslavia was granted observer status with the OEEC in 1955, and having served as a rotating member on the Security Council in 1951, it was re-elected in 1956.¹⁶² As for the Council of Europe, its Consultative Assembly was opposed to Yugoslavia's accession on the grounds of concerns regarding the quality of Belgrade's potential representatives, and Belgrade's cooperation was thus left confined to technical contacts.¹⁶³

In 1957, Belgrade also began expressing an interest in the European Economic Community (EEC) as an institution that, according to the daily *Slovenski poročevalec*, was “important to old Europe: it will revive it, strengthen it, and give it more independence” from the United States, both economically and politically.¹⁶⁴ The EEC (or Common Market) was established through the Treaty of Rome, signed in March 1957 by “the Six” – France, West Germany, Italy, and the Benelux – to “lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe.”¹⁶⁵ While it approved, Belgrade was concerned with France's precipitousness in seeking to compensate for the loss of its Great Power status by championing European integration the result of which, the Yugoslavs feared, was bound to be a “first among equals” role for West Germany. According to *Politika*, it was not only Bonn's economic might, but also

¹⁶¹ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 114–157.

¹⁶² MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, “Note A/s La Yougoslavie et l'O.C.D.E.,” 24.08.1966.

¹⁶³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, “Note a.s. La Yougoslavie et l'O.N.U.,” Folio 29–31, 30.04.1956.

¹⁶⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 113–116, 11.02.1957.

¹⁶⁵ Sutton, *France and the Construction of Europe*, 2–5.

its political capital in the aftermath of France and Britain's moral collapse over Suez, that stood to shift the continental balance away from Paris. There was also the danger that the consolidation of a West European economic bloc would only reinforce the division of the continent, the avoidance of which was a chief aim of Yugoslavian foreign policy.¹⁶⁶ Broustra urged that Paris not be indifferent to Belgrade's interest in European integration since Belgrade, less beholden to dogma and with a growing number of Arab allies, could be a useful ally to France.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, the "refreeze" between Belgrade and Moscow had opened the door to another Western rapprochement, although Broustra recognized that this was bound to be limited. In contrast to his West German and American counterparts who were forecasting Belgrade's imminent jettisoning of both its "active neutrality" and its Marxism, Broustra understood that Yugoslavia's interest in European integration primarily stemmed from concerns of its own isolation and not from a genuine willingness to join the EEC, which was at odds with both Yugoslavia's economic structure and its foreign policy.¹⁶⁸

While Belgrade continued to seek security in Europe and deepen ties with the Third World, the Mollet government remained fearful of the possibility of Yugoslavia's return to the Soviet fold and the consequences that it could have on North Africa, where Belgrade had considerable influence despite its limited means. The Socialist Foreign Minister Pineau maintained an Eastern European policy of "introducing more flexibility" to the bloc and exposing any fissures through "prudent tactics," and a Yugoslavian policy defined as "prudent cooperation in order to avoid as much as possible her recourse to greater association with the Eastern bloc" – words that could have easily come from the pen of Bidault, Schuman, or de

¹⁶⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 113–116, 11.02.1957.

¹⁶⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 134–139, 21.03.1957.

¹⁶⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 150–157, 15.04.1957.

Gaulle.¹⁶⁹ With cool diplomatic relations between Paris and Belgrade, over the course of 1957 official France's Yugoslavian policy remained impracticable. The only issue on which Paris requested Belgrade's support was on bringing the question of Togo before the United Nations. However, this request did not come from the Quai as per standard practice, but from the anti-Mollet Minister of Overseas Territories.¹⁷⁰ Belgrade interpreted the official French attitude as the product of France's own post-Suez isolation and a desire to avoid a public row with the Yugoslavs who, after all, had not returned to the Soviet fold and had influence in the Arab world.¹⁷¹ Belgrade also continued to enjoy an influence with broad segments of the European left. Its relations with groups of the New Left and the opposition within the SFIO remained strong, as did its ties with the *Poilus d'Orient*, who welcomed a delegation of Yugoslavian veterans in fall 1957.¹⁷² Syndicate relations also flourished and the CGT in particular, one of France's largest and most powerful trade unions, took an interest in workers' self-management (*radničko samoupravljanje*). This Yugoslavian doctrinal innovation was, according to Stevan K. Pavlowitch, "a good way of sounding more communist than the Soviet Union, yet more democratic than the West."¹⁷³ Calling for the removal of bureaucracy, "one of the greatest enemies of socialism and democracy," from the management of the national economy, workers' self-management drew much interest from anti-Stalinists across the continent, and a CGT delegation visited the country in March 1957 to examine the practice.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ AN, 580AP/13, Fond Christian Pineau, "Note A.s. Position de la France à l'égard des pays de l'Europe orientale," 20.02.1957.

¹⁷⁰ DSIP, PA, 1957 F-28, "Kratki informativni pregled bilateralnih odnosa FNRJ-Francuska od 1955 do danas (septembar 1957)," Doc. 28367, 06.09.1957.

¹⁷¹ DSIP, PA, 1957 F-29, Yugoslavian embassy quarterly report on bilateral relations, Doc. 41260, 05.01.1957.

¹⁷² DSIP, PA, 1957 F-28, "Kratki informativni pregled bilateralnih odnosa FNRJ-Francuska od 1955 do danas (septembar 1957)," Doc. 28367, 06.09.1957.

¹⁷³ Pavlowitch, *Tito*, 61-62.

¹⁷⁴ Vladimir Velebit, "Yugoslavia on Her Way towards a Socialist Democracy," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* Vol. 30, No. 2 (Apr., 1954), 160; MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 50-51, 20.03.1957.

Although there were further signs of French hostility – Paris continued to tolerate Yugoslavian political exiles and French consular services were becoming uncooperative toward Yugoslavian citizens – economic relations were unaffected by the diplomatic cooling. For the Yugoslavs, the constancy in economic relations signified the beginning of a “thaw” in post-Suez bilateral relations that was bound to lead to an improvement in the political arena.¹⁷⁵ In France, both official and private circles continued to express an interest in investing in Yugoslavia.¹⁷⁶ A host of French enterprises approached the Yugoslavian embassy to inquire about importing goods: everything from wood and fibers to textiles, foodstuffs (tinned fish, plums and prunes, paprika, onions, beans and lentils), live cattle, horses and snails, and metals and minerals.¹⁷⁷ A revolving credit under the technical cooperation agreement that the French had granted to Belgrade in 1955 (valued at 1.5 billion francs until 1962 and another 1 billion francs until 1965) was also being successfully used for Bor-Majdanpek and French shipbuilding orders from Dalmatian shipyards.¹⁷⁸

While the French struggled to contain the insurgency in Algeria, the détente heralded by the 1955 Geneva Summit was coming to an end as superpower tensions brewed over Berlin.¹⁷⁹ According to Marc Trachtenberg, the German question – that is, the absence of a settlement over Central Europe in 1945 and the outstanding question of German power – was at the heart of the Cold War. More specifically, it was the German nuclear question that worried Moscow.¹⁸⁰ The Soviets offered the reunification and neutralization of Germany as a counterproposal to the EDC,

¹⁷⁵ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Yugoslavian embassy quarterly report on bilateral relations, Doc. 41260, 05.01.1957.

¹⁷⁶ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–28, “Kratki informativni pregled bilateralnih odnosa FNRJ–Francuska od 1955 do danas (septembar 1957),” Doc. 28367, 06.09.1957.

¹⁷⁷ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, List of French enterprises interested in Yugoslavian imports, Doc. 47397, January 1957.

¹⁷⁸ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, “Potsetnik o nekim aktuelnim pitanjima iz bilateralnih odnosa FNRJ–Francuska i o ličnosti francuskog ambasadora V. Brustra-a,” Folio 31/444, 23.04.1959.; *Ibid.*, 1957 F–29, Yugoslavian embassy quarterly report on bilateral relations, Doc. 41260, 05.01.1957.

¹⁷⁹ Judt, *Postwar*, 247.

¹⁸⁰ Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 251–253.

on the heels of whose failure West Germany was integrated into NATO and was allowed to field an armed force of 500,000 men.¹⁸¹ However, with the growing superpower arms race Britain, France, and West Germany all wished for their own nuclear forces to reduce their security dependence on the United States. Moscow's concerns only intensified when in April 1957 Chancellor Adenauer "did not deny that the FRG might become a nuclear superpower."¹⁸² This concerned Tito, too, who opposed nuclear testing and frequently called for the international reduction of both conventional and nuclear weapons.¹⁸³ Although his above-cited 1952 statement on Germany indicated that he was prepared to accept the German status quo for the time being, at the Sixth CPY Congress in November 1952 he endorsed the Soviet proposal of German reunification and neutralization on the grounds of the following: one, in support of the inviolable principle of national self-determination; two, a reunified Germany would frustrate the "imperialistic division of the world;" and three, the belief that a stable Germany would translate into a stable Europe (even though a reunified and neutralized Germany would benefit Moscow more than it would benefit the West). However, by 1957 Belgrade, while still intrigued by the notion of German neutralization, reversed course.¹⁸⁴ Although Coulet had speculated in May 1955 that the Yugoslavs feared that a reunified, neutral Germany would unseat them as the European locus of the growing international neutralist movement, by 1957 the fact was that Tito did not wish to indulge Moscow in its plans to create a *cordon sanitaire* of neutral states along the satellite belt.¹⁸⁵ Although both France and Yugoslavia had long ago de facto recognized East Germany, Tito caused a stir when in October 1957 he extended de jure recognition to the GDR. Soviet pressures played a part, with the Kremlin calculating that Belgrade's recognition of

¹⁸¹ Judt, *Postwar*, 244–246.

¹⁸² Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 223–230.

¹⁸³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 160, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 168, 16.05.1957.

¹⁸⁴ Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 398–402.

¹⁸⁵ Coulet quoted in Bekić, *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, 690–691; Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 142.

Pankow would lead other states to follow suit, thereby bringing an end to the Hallstein Doctrine.¹⁸⁶ The Yugoslavs acquiesced for two reasons: one, because Bonn itself was contemplating normalizing its relations with the East; and two, because there were only two courses of action with regard to the German question: peace through an East–West accord, or a world war.¹⁸⁷ A third reason was Tito and Kardelj’s belief that the West Germans would not break relations over Belgrade’s recognition of the GDR, despite ex-Ambassador to Bonn Mladen Iveković’s insistence to the contrary.¹⁸⁸ Iveković was vindicated when Bonn did sever diplomatic relations, although economic and consular relations remained unaffected.¹⁸⁹ While panic gripped Washington about the increasing lack of distinction between Soviet and Yugoslavian foreign policy, the French government, unlike Eisenhower and Dulles, was coming to terms with the realization that Yugoslavia’s equidistance from both blocs did not preclude a commonality of views with Moscow.¹⁹⁰ The Yugoslavs were nevertheless unpleasantly surprised when Quai Secretary-General Joxe called on the Yugoslavian embassy to protest the recognition of the GDR before the formal announcement had even been made to Pankow. Belgrade took this as a sign of mistrust on the part of the French, who had also called for a tripartite Western démarche in Belgrade against the recognition.¹⁹¹

For their part, Jean Laloy, the head of the Quai’s European desk, and Etienne Manac’h, advisor to Pineau’s cabinet, acknowledged that bilateral diplomatic relations had been tepid and

¹⁸⁶ Amit Das Gupta, “The Non-Aligned and the German Question,” Mišković *et al.*, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, 146.

¹⁸⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Bebler’s conversation with Broustra, Folio 996, 11.10.1957.

¹⁸⁸ Živojin Jazić, *Moj pogled na diplomatiju 1957–2005* (Beograd: Čigoja, 2010), 67.

¹⁸⁹ Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*, 12, 125.

¹⁹⁰ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy (Vilović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 421658, 11.10.1957; Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 210.

¹⁹¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-3, Note on Iveković’s conversation with Broustra, Folio 1054, 16.10.1957.

that the responsibility for the situation lay with Paris.¹⁹² As with the Vatican in 1952, France became Bonn's diplomatic representative in Yugoslavia. Despite managing to set aside its animosities toward Germany for the sake of economic interest, Belgrade was never comfortable with the political rapprochement between Paris and Bonn.¹⁹³ The new Yugoslavian Ambassador to France, Radivoj Uvalić, had studied law in Paris in the 1930s and had served as President of the *Société des relations culturelles Yougoslavie–France* in 1952. As a man who, according to the Quai, was “steeped in our culture,”¹⁹⁴ he told French Premier Félix Gaillard that “Yugoslavian public opinion could not understand how France, of all countries, was chosen to represent Germany's interests in Yugoslavia.”¹⁹⁵ All that the diplomatic break practically meant was that the French tricolour now flew over the West German embassy in Belgrade, while the West German consular service relocated to a space inside the French embassy across town.¹⁹⁶ The Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry reproached Uvalić for speaking out of turn, since “France could not say no if Bonn had asked. We do not know whether this situation is awkward for the French.”¹⁹⁷ Broustra, in fact, suggested to Prica that Paris broker a rapprochement between Bonn and Belgrade since ostensibly the Yugoslavs, although willing to restore diplomatic relations with West Germany, refused to publicly take the initiative as a matter of principle.¹⁹⁸

Despite the cessation of diplomatic relations, West Germany's trade with Belgrade dwarfed Franco-Yugoslavian exchange and therefore challenged France's position. However,

¹⁹² DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Embassy (Vilović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 421658, 11.10.1957.

¹⁹³ Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*, 12.

¹⁹⁴ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (M. Couve de Murville), Carton 38, “Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre A.S. Agrément de M. Uvalitch,” Folio 35–36, 02.08.1957.

¹⁹⁵ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 424459, 18.11.1957.

¹⁹⁶ Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*, 124.

¹⁹⁷ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Iveković) to the Yugoslavian embassy, Doc. 424459, 22.11.1957.

¹⁹⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-4, Note on Prica's conversation with Broustra, Folio 736, 21.06.1958. Belgrade repeatedly sent signals to Bonn over the course of 1958 in an effort to normalize relations. Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike*, 261.

Paris was less concerned with German–Yugoslav relations than with the possibility of a “realignment” between Belgrade and Moscow (the latter now also disillusioned with the Mollet government and overcoming its mistrust of non-communist nationalist rebellions), and the effects that it could have on France’s colonial position and Cold War security – especially after the discovery of oil in the Algerian Sahara in 1957.¹⁹⁹ According to Broustra, the significance of Khrushchev’s attempt to reel in the communist world’s “prodigal son” could not be underestimated, and to him it was undeniable that Yugoslavia’s foreign policy distinctly changed in August, after Tito’s meeting with Khrushchev in Bucharest.²⁰⁰ The remarkably frank meeting in ‘neutral’ Romania had come on the heels of another vicious anti-Yugoslavian campaign, not unlike the one that had followed the Cominform Resolution. This time the campaign was aimed at Yugoslavia’s “revisionist” interpretations of the origins of the revolution in Hungary. The campaign had begun to ease up by late spring, and Tito relaxed his antagonism to Khrushchev after the attempted coup against him by the hardliners Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich in May. Although in Bucharest Tito once again refused to rejoin the bloc, he made two important concessions: he agreed to attend the fortieth anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution in Moscow, and to recognize the GDR.²⁰¹

Communal Isolation, 1957–May 1958

The cordiality of the Tito–Khrushchev meeting was short-lived, as the anti-Yugoslav campaign resumed in October 1957 – this time spearheaded by the Albanians, whose leader, Enver Hoxha, Tito personally loathed, and the Chinese – to pressure Belgrade to sign the twelve-party declaration reasserting ideological homogeneity. Feeling “betrayed” by Khrushchev

¹⁹⁹ Yahia, “The United States, the Soviet Union and Decolonization of the Maghreb,” 62–73.

²⁰⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 148, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 153–164, 12.10.1957.

²⁰¹ Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 201–202.

for taking a hard line on the heels of the amiable Bucharest meeting, Tito cancelled his plans to attend the anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution.²⁰² Yugoslavia was now again isolated to the East, while Tito's dalliance with Moscow had fomented suspicions in the West.

France was similarly facing ostracism. By early 1958 the rebellion in Algeria had turned into a full-scale war. The casualties of the year-long Battle of Algiers, and the French bombing of the Tunisian town of Sakiet Sidi Youssef in retaliation for the downing of a French reconnaissance airplane in February 1958, inspired international sympathy for Algerians and condemnation of the French government.²⁰³ While London remained publicly disinterested (although it did have an interest in the preservation of France's continental military strength), Washington began anticipating a repeat of Indochina which, after Sakiet, would see the United States "move into" Algeria.²⁰⁴ With world political and public opinion shifting against it, France, much like Yugoslavia, was becoming isolated. Cynical toward the United Nations, French Fourth Republic governments scorned the organization's charter to the dismay of the majority of its membership.²⁰⁵ The isolated Yugoslavs, meanwhile, despite their ideological commitment to decolonization and to the United Nations, were determined to "not engage more than necessary" on the Algerian question in New York "in order for a compromise solution to be reached."²⁰⁶

The Yugoslavs had noted in 1950 that the French were more fearful of nationalism than of communism in the colonies.²⁰⁷ While this was true, as the war in Algeria continued to rage the French publicly insisted that communist infiltration and Soviet machinations were at work in North Africa (although they also accused the Anglo-Americans of seeking to extend their own

²⁰² Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War*, 202–203.

²⁰³ Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 125–131, 160.

²⁰⁴ Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, 12–13, 210; Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 163–166.

²⁰⁵ Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, 121.

²⁰⁶ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Note from Prica to Bebler, Doc. 460, 05.01.1957.

²⁰⁷ DSIP, PA, 1950 F–29, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Čelebonović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 415317, 26.07.1950.

influence into the Arab world by exploiting French weaknesses).²⁰⁸ As had been the case with Indochina, the French were justifying their struggle for imperial control by framing it as an anti-communist campaign.²⁰⁹ Despite the public declarations of France's Socialist leaders, communist subversion in the Maghreb was, in fact, minimal. When the Americans asked Mollet about Pineau's allegations of Soviet subversion in Algeria, Mollet himself admitted that his Foreign Minister was "often given to exaggeration and oversimplification and he would not himself say that communism was an important danger in Algeria as of the present moment."²¹⁰

That communist infiltration in the Maghreb remained minimal during the war in Algeria may seem surprising given the extra-European potential of Yugoslavian "deviationism." Remarking upon the failure of the Cominform in North Africa in 1950, the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris noted that the Maghrebi and Malagasy communist movements "look to Yugoslavia with amazement and high hopes, thinking that she will be the future ideological center around which will rally all genuinely progressive currents, especially those which are fighting against colonialism."²¹¹ Despite this potential for Yugoslavian influence, the bipolarity of the Cold War held sway. Although Belgrade sought political contacts with any and all "progressive" forces in the world, and although it pursued economic contacts with Asia, Africa, and Latin America, there were necessarily structural limits to these ties. These limits stemmed from geography and Yugoslavia's limited resources, as well as the bipolar Cold War order, the end result being a limited (though certainly existent) practical effect of Belgrade's relations with "progressive

²⁰⁸ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 83–85; Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, 174.

²⁰⁹ Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, 128; David Mark Thompson, "Delusions of Grandeur: French Global Ambitions and the Problem of Revival of Military Power, 1950–1954" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2007), 93.

²¹⁰ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 312, note 85.

²¹¹ DSIP, PA, 1950 F–29, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Čelebonović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 415317, 26.07.1950.

elements.”²¹² One such example is the visit to Belgrade by a small Algerian Communist Party (PCA) delegation in December 1957. Visiting the multiethnic Serbian Vojvodina, the delegation was particularly interested in minority affairs. The joint communiqué, published in *Borba*, represented the first time that Belgrade formally asserted its support of the Algerian people in their “struggle for liberation.” While the PCA nominally fought alongside the FLN, the latter were reluctant to publicly associate with communism lest they alienate otherwise-sympathetic (Western) world opinion that was the only trump card it had against the militarily superior French – and, according to Broustra, “no leader in Belgrade was unaware of this.”²¹³ Thus in strictly ideological terms, communism in general, and Communist Yugoslavia in particular, were of little threat to France’s colonial presence in North Africa. Yugoslavia as an emerging extra-bloc force, however, was a different matter.

The FLN, eschewing support from Moscow so as to not alienate sympathetic Western opinion, courted neutralist India and Yugoslavia and opened a bureau in New Delhi in 1957 (but not in Belgrade, because while the Yugoslavs may have liaised with the FLN in Cairo as early as 1953–1954, for the time being they did not allow the FLN to open a bureau in their capital).²¹⁴ While Belgrade had been sending arms to Egypt since 1956, it denied that these arms were finding their way into the hands of the FLN.²¹⁵ Although it remains unclear if any Yugoslav-

²¹² As Tony Smith has argued, the superpowers may “be seen as much played upon as players.” To local elites keen on exploiting the Cold War for narrowly nationalist, local, or regional purposes, the United States and Soviet Union were of much more use than a middle power like Yugoslavia was. Smith, “New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* Vol. 24, No. 4 (Fall, 2000), 571, 787–588.

²¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 183, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 94–95, 23.12.1957. For the importance of international media, world opinion, and the United Nations to the FLN in staking Algeria’s independence see Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 121–141.

²¹⁴ Emmanuelle Colin-Jeanvoine and Stéphane Derozier, *Le financement du FLN pendant la guerre en Algérie, 1954–1962* (Paris: Editions Bouchène, 2008), 65–72. For the early Yugoslav–FLN liaison see Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 85.

²¹⁵ The French speculated at the time that the arms were of either Soviet, Hungarian, or Czechoslovak provenance (AN, 580AP/13, Fond Christian Pineau, “Secret: Rôle de la Yougoslavie dans l’approvisionnement des pays arabes en matériel de guerre,” 04.05.1956.). It was later confirmed that the arms were coming from Czechoslovakia, and

ferried arms reached the FLN in 1956–1957, on January 18, 1958, two French destroyers intercepted a Yugoslavian vessel, the *Slovenija*, in the open waters of the western Mediterranean. The French navy forced the ship to dock in Oran, Algeria, where a veritable arsenal was discovered. Uvalić immediately protested to Pineau, claiming that the arms were of Czechoslovak provenance.²¹⁶ The French government and press rightly suspected that the arms were destined for the FLN.²¹⁷ Belgrade denied this and changed Uvalić’s story a few days later, claiming that the arms were provided by a private firm, Félix of Zurich, and were being transported to Casablanca by the “private” national shipping company, Jugolinija. Broustra was not convinced by this argument, because “nothing happens in this country without state intervention and control.”²¹⁸ When Mr. Félix himself came forward in Zurich, he denied all allegations of smuggling and challenged Belgrade’s contention that his company had provided the arms. He claimed that Félix was only contracted to transport the goods as far as Morocco, although their alleged final destination was Yemen.²¹⁹ Three weeks after the seizure of the *Slovenija*, the Yemeni Ambassador in Cairo told his Yugoslavian counterpart, Josip Djerdja, that Yemen was willing to corroborate the claim that the arms were destined for the gulf state. This was a plausible cover since the Yemeni Crown Prince had recently visited Yugoslavia and Poland, and his government had ordered arms from the Soviet bloc.²²⁰ This, too, the French found unconvincing: given that Yugoslavia operated four regular shipping lines via the Red Sea,

recent evidence suggests that the Czechoslovak–Egyptian arms deal was brokered not by the Soviets, but the Chinese. See Mišković, “Introduction,” Mišković *et al.*, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, 6.

²¹⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 15, 22.01.1958.

²¹⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 9–14, 21.01.1958.

²¹⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 4–6, 21.01.1958.

²¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Letter from the French Ambassador to Switzerland (Dennery) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 61–62, 31.01.1958.

²²⁰ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–31, Telegram from Djerdja to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 43407, 14.02.1958. For the Yemeni Crown Prince’s visit to Yugoslavia and Poland see MAE, Série Z, Carton 176, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 139–144, 07.01.1958.

there was no credible explanation as to why a ship en route from Rijeka to Yemen would journey via Casablanca.²²¹

The Czech-language manifest found aboard the *Slovenija* indicated that the purchase of arms in Prague had been negotiated by a certain Mr. Driss ben Saïd, who had connections to the FLN. The shipment included 200 machine guns, 48 bazookas, 1,000 submachine guns, 4,000 Mauser rifles, 1,500 automatic pistols, and accompanying shells and cartridges.²²² The French insisted upon the illegality of Yugoslav actions and argued that as a successor state, Yugoslavia had inherited Austria-Hungary's signature of the 1906 Act of Algeciras, which outlawed the import of arms into the Sherifian Empire. Paris further cited the two *dahirs* (royal decrees) of 1936 and 1937 that also outlawed the import of arms into Morocco.²²³ Uvalić submitted a formal protest on January 27, objecting to the unlawful interception and forced docking of the *Slovenija* and the seizure of its cargo, and maintained that Belgrade had not violated any laws.²²⁴ The Yugoslavian press was silent on the incident, while Koča denied that the arms were destined for the FLN.²²⁵ As a Foreign Ministry staffer told Broustra in Belgrade, while Yugoslavia was confident that it would win if the case were to be brought before The Hague, it nevertheless wished to settle the situation bilaterally and amicably (although it did insist upon reparations).²²⁶ The Quai's East European desk internally conceded that the French seizure of a ship in excess of 100 tonnes at high seas was difficult to justify by international law, and that the incident was

²²¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Letter from the French Foreign Ministry to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Folio 76–79, 15.02.1958.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 135, 02.04.1958.

²²² MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, "Ministère de la Défense Nationale et des Forces Armées: Fiche a.s. Cargaison d'armes du SLOVENIA," Folio 95–96, 31.01.1958.

²²³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Letter from the French Foreign Ministry to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Folio 76–79, 15.02.1958.

²²⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 41–45, 27.01.1958.

²²⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 183, "Note a.s. déclaration de M. Popovi[ć] à une réunion électorale," Folio 113–115, 11.03.1958.

²²⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 3, 20.01.1958.; *Ibid.*, "Note A.S. Affaire du 'Slovenija,'" Folio 98–99, 27.02.1958.

most inopportune given Yugoslavia's estrangement with Moscow and the possibilities of its rapprochement with the West. The Quai also commended Belgrade's restraint and sincere desire to preserve its relations with Paris.²²⁷ Although Paris was willing to compensate Jugolinija, it refused to issue compensation to the *Državni osiguravajući zavod* (DOZ), the Yugoslavian federal insurance trust. Finding this unacceptable, Belgrade did not reply to the French offer, and so no compensation was issued to either Jugolinija or the DOZ.²²⁸

The Yugoslavs had hitherto been ambivalent on Algeria, although Tito did recognize himself in the Algerian guerrilla leader, Ahmed Ben Bella.²²⁹ Despite ferrying arms to the FLN, Tito knew, as he wrote to Nasser in 1955, that the rebels could not achieve their aims through a conventional military defeat of the French army. As Bebler wrote in his memoir, the Yugoslavs found the Algerians "endearing (*simpatični*); we helped them out; we sent them munitions and arms, but we still tried to maintain good relations with France," who remained decisive in Belgrade's continental calculations.²³⁰ In the aftermath of the seizure of the *Slovenija*, the Yugoslavs complained of a series of discriminatory measures by Paris, including discrimination against Yugoslavian expatriates, the encouragement of political émigré activity, the reduction in stipends for military and technical training, a slowdown in the issuing of visas, and an anti-Yugoslavian bias in RTF broadcasts – all denied by the French.²³¹ Despite these denials, French antipathy to Yugoslavia was palpable. In March 1958, Paris assumed a hard line on economic negotiations with Belgrade, categorically rejecting any and all Yugoslavian requests for liberalization similar to what France had accorded to other *hors-bloc* countries, such as Iran. This

²²⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, "Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre a.s. affaire du 'Slovenija,'" Folio 147–150, 18.06.1958.

²²⁸ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, "Odnosi FNRJ–Francuska, 1956–1959," Folio 157–158, 29.01.1959.

²²⁹ Cigar, "Arab Socialism Revisited," 176.

²³⁰ Aleš Bebler, *Kako sam hitao: Sećanja* (Beograd: NIRO "Četvrti jul," 1982), 275.

²³¹ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, "Odnosi FNRJ–Francuska, 1956–1959," Folio 158, 29.01.1959.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 155, "Note a.s. attitude de divers services français à l'égard de la Yougoslavie," Folio 82–84, 18.02.1958.

prompted Velebit, Yugoslavia's key negotiator, to remark that "the French have no desire to expand trade with us."²³² Therefore, in spring 1958 Franco-Yugoslavian relations were at their worst since 1945. This situation would briefly improve with the return of de Gaulle in May, before the official French antipathy to Communist Yugoslavia became unmistakable.

Le Retour du Général: Franco-Yugoslavian Relations, May 1958–January 1959

Political life in France had become paralyzed due to the gulf between those who were determined to keep Algeria *française*, and those who wanted to bring an end to the war by negotiating with the FLN. While Mollet's government had fallen in June 1957 as the costs of war soared, polarization over the war brought down the Bourgès-Manoury and Gaillard governments in November 1957 and May 1958, respectively.²³³ On May 13, the fall of Gaillard's government was followed by a ministerial crisis and army coup in Algiers. Gaillard was succeeded by Pierre Pflimlin, while the putschists called on de Gaulle to take power. Condemning the "degradation of the state" and affirming that he was ready to "assume the Powers of the Republic," the General was "invited" by President Coty to form a government. Assuming power, he promulgated a new constitution with a strong presidential executive authority, and so the Fifth Republic was born.²³⁴ Insisting upon a "French solution" to Algeria, he famously pronounced to a crowd in Algiers, "*je vous ai compris*" ("I have understood you"), although it remains unclear what he had understood. De Gaulle had stated as early as 1944 that he was opposed to the long-pursued policy of assimilation in Algeria (on practical rather than moral grounds), as well as to integration (because "Arabs are Arabs, [and] Frenchmen are Frenchmen," ergo the failure of assimilation). He subsequently claimed in his memoirs that he had intended to grant independence to Algeria

²³² DSIP, PA, 1958 F–32, Telegram from Velebit to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 47677, 27.03.1958.

²³³ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 97–112, 148–170.

²³⁴ Julian Jackson, *De Gaulle* (London: Haus Publishing, 2003), 66–78.

from the beginning. However, the General's policy, on everything from Algeria to European integration to French nuclearization, was one of ambiguity and uncertainty. Although the *pièdes noirs* had come to believe that de Gaulle would keep Algeria French, as the war progressed and took its toll on the metropole the General was forced to concede that the Algerian people had a right to self-determination. In granting independence to Algeria (and the rest of the French colonial empire) in 1962, de Gaulle, as Michael Connelly writes, was in fact "motivated by the most illiberal sentiments."²³⁵

Tired of the Fourth Republic's ministerial instability and incoherent and ineffective policies, Washington cautiously welcomed de Gaulle's return despite his reservations about the Atlantic Alliance on the grounds of America's hegemony, as well as its support for supranational European integration.²³⁶ The Soviets also welcomed de Gaulle under the belief that France was "bankrupt as a Great Power" and that only de Gaulle could "oppose the revival of German militarism."²³⁷ In other words, the Soviet interest in de Gaulle's return stemmed from the concurrence between the General's campaign for French autonomy within the Atlantic Alliance, and Moscow's Western anti-coalition strategy.²³⁸ For Belgrade, however, the prospect of de Gaulle in power was a mixed blessing. The General's sympathies for Draža Mihailović and his condemnation of Tito's execution of him were well-known, as was his anti-communism. In November 1955, he had yielded to Bebler's repeated requests for an audience and agreed to meet the then-Yugoslavian Ambassador. When Bebler began by asking for the General's thoughts on current international affairs, de Gaulle remained silent and only spoke when his interlocutor broached the subject of the "disinterestedness and inertia" on the part of the French in improving

²³⁵ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 176–193.

²³⁶ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 169, 187–189.

²³⁷ DSIP, PA, 1955 F–18, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy in Bern (conversation with Vinogradov) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 414512, 28.10.1955.

²³⁸ Julie M. Newton, *Russia, France, and the Idea of Europe* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 2.

their relations with Yugoslavia. De Gaulle attributed the lack of French energy to the nation's postwar loss of power and "honour." However, while Bebler emphasized that Belgrade's independent foreign policy was not dissimilar to de Gaulle's views – his hostility to supranationalism and his support of the "healthy and realistic doctrine" of nationalism – the easily-offended General did not fail to mention that during the war Tito had sought contacts with the Americans, Soviets, and British, but not with the Free French.²³⁹

Although at Bebler's departure from Paris de Gaulle told him that "the French, as a people, love the Yugoslavs as a people" and that "such a love is a historic rarity," that statement was not reflective of de Gaulle's sentiments toward Tito and the Communist regime in Belgrade.²⁴⁰ The General believed that communism "subsists to the extent that it is nationalism."²⁴¹ Nevertheless, he "approved of" Tito's Middle Eastern policy – that is, his support of the political sovereignty and bloc independence of those countries – which de Gaulle judged as useful, since it "serviced the interests of peace."²⁴² In summer and autumn 1958 there were signs of an improvement in bilateral relations, in contrast to the noticeable cooling between spring 1956 and spring 1958. Broustra evaluated the writing of the Yugoslavian press on de Gaulle's return as "objective," and rightly so.²⁴³ As the two leaders shared broad aims in foreign policy, Uvalić told de Gaulle in September that Tito wished to solidify cooperation between the two capitals, and hoped to issue a joint declaration on a second visit to Paris. From his conversation with de Gaulle Uvalić drew the impression that, in his quest to position himself as head of continental Europe, the General "would be very interested in cooperating with extra-bloc countries such as Yugoslavia and Austria so that he could, with their support, become a mediator

²³⁹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–24, Note on Bebler's conversation with de Gaulle, Doc. 41333, 23.11.1955.

²⁴⁰ DSIP, PA, 1958–F30, Note on Bebler's conversation with Broustra, Doc. 414284, 21.06.1958.

²⁴¹ De Gaulle quoted in John Lamberton Harper, *The Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 248.

²⁴² DSIP, PA, 1958 F–30, Telegram from Prica to the Yugoslavian embassy in Moscow, 417694, 29.07.1958.

²⁴³ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–30, Note on Koča's conversation with Broustra, Doc. 413224, 04.06.1958.

between the United States and the Soviet Union.”²⁴⁴ While “visibly pleased,” de Gaulle deferred the matter of more concrete Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation to his Foreign Minister, Maurice Couve de Murville.²⁴⁵

Over the course of the second half of 1958, bilateral political and economic relations progressed. Despite the French reluctance to liberalize trade, 1958 represented a record year as both Yugoslavian exports to, and imports from, France doubled.²⁴⁶ Yugoslavian exports increased due to a surplus in the country’s corn yield, as well as France’s interest in purchasing it. Despite a steady upward trend, however, Belgrade’s trade with Paris remained well behind its trade with Bonn, Rome, and London.²⁴⁷ A 12-month trade agreement, signed in October, anticipated an increase in exchange, while a further agreement set a 17-year payment schedule for Yugoslavia’s public debts to France.²⁴⁸ Paris also issued an additional credit for Bor-Majdanpek, increasing its total participation in the project to \$21 million, and an additional \$10 million for a cellulose factory in Banja Luka.²⁴⁹

However, both official and privately-coordinated cultural relations were stagnating. While in 1958 France spent 20 billion francs on its cultural propaganda abroad, Belgrade continued to lack funds, even for its sole international cultural propaganda centre in Paris. This severely limited its efforts to propagate Yugoslavia’s cultural heritage in France, “the world’s cultural stock market,” in order to “create in this country an impression as complete and accurate

²⁴⁴ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–30, Telegram from Uvalić to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 422176, 17.09.1958.

²⁴⁵ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–30, Telegram from Koča to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 422916, 25.09.1958.

²⁴⁶ DSIP, PA, 1961 F–27, “Ekonomski odnosi sa Francuskom,” Doc. 49824, 06.08.1961.

²⁴⁷ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi,” Doc. 43859, 03.10.1959.

²⁴⁸ Yugoslavia’s public debts to France included debts inherited from the Ottoman and Habsburg empires and from the Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro, its own pre- and post-1945 debts, as well as compensation for the post-war nationalization of private property.

²⁴⁹ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, “Jugoslovenski pregled, jun. 1958,” Doc. 23723, undated; *Ibid.*, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi,” Doc. 43859, 03.10.1959.

as possible about our country.”²⁵⁰ Marred by organizational difficulties and inefficiencies, in late 1958 Koča decided to close the Paris agency as the ‘commercial enterprise’ that it nominally was. The Foreign Minister intended to parcel out its tasks among the Foreign Ministry, the embassy’s press section, and other Yugoslavian commercial and tourist enterprises in Paris. However, some voiced concerns that the French might perceive the closing of the agency as a snub, and that the closing was damaging to Belgrade given Paris’s international cachet and its position as an assembly point for politicians, cultural workers, students and journalists from Asia, Africa and beyond.²⁵¹ French cultural propaganda efforts in Yugoslavia were equally lagging. Over the course of the 1950s the French continued to promote the teaching of their language, as well as cultural exchange in the forms of conferences, exhibitions, and the performing arts. While French remained a popular foreign language for Yugoslavian students to learn (mostly in Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro), sales of French books never regained their pre-1945 levels and lagged behind sales of American and West German literature.²⁵² As Broustra informed the Quai, French propaganda in Yugoslavia was a catch-22 in that by and large, only those individuals who were already Francophiles consumed French culture and media.²⁵³

While the results in the domain of cultural relations were mixed, along with the improvement in political and economic relations outlined above, late 1958 also saw one further occasion that reaffirmed the “traditional friendship.” The nuclear cooperation proposal that had been shelved in December 1956 over the Suez Crisis was revived, and an agreement was signed

²⁵⁰ DSIP, PA, 1958 F–31, Report from the Yugoslavian cultural attaché (Petar Šegedin), Doc. 426229, 01.11.1958.

²⁵¹ AJ, A SIV, 130, Carton 620, Koča’s letter to the SIV, Doc. 91190/14, 05.12.1958.; DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, “Agencija u Parizu,” Folio 400–403, undated.

²⁵² The problems with book sales stemmed in part from financial difficulties. Cash-strapped Belgrade could not afford to pay for the books in a convertible currency, nor did it allow for the conversion of the dinar at the time (which, had it been convertible, the French would have likely been reluctant to accept). The dinar was made convertible in 1965. MAE, Série Z, Carton 119, “Note a.s. Relations culturelles franco-yougoslaves,” Folio 182–183, 22.10.1954.; *Ibid.*, Carton 213, Note for the Press Service on bilateral cultural relations, 16.09.1963.

²⁵³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 155, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 21–22, 14.06.1957.

in October 1957.²⁵⁴ A year later, on October 15, 1958, an accident occurred at one of the reactors of the Boris Kidrič Nuclear Institute in Vinča, near Belgrade. Six researchers suffered radiation poisoning and were taken to France for treatment. One researcher died, while the other five received bone marrow transplants – the first in Europe – at the hospital of the Curie Institute in Paris. As Broustra reported to the Quai, the case “deeply captured the Yugoslavian public’s imagination and inspired in them a boundless admiration for French medicine, as well as a deep gratitude to France.”²⁵⁵ *Borba* praised the “heroism” of the five French volunteer bone marrow donors. Broustra interpreted the press coverage as a favourable sign: “given the meticulous care with which the newspapers are controlled and directed here, one is inclined to see in this public praise a tangible sign of the favourable disposition toward our country that the Belgrade chiefs have been showing for some time.”²⁵⁶ The show of gratitude continued when the employees of the Vinča institute collected 300,000 dinars to purchase gifts for the donors.²⁵⁷ Uvalić expressed Belgrade’s official gratitude on behalf of his Foreign Minister and extended an invitation to the donors to visit Yugoslavia, as did the municipality of Sombor, which invited the families of the doctors and donors to vacation on the Adriatic island of Rab.²⁵⁸ The atomists’ return to Yugoslavia was met with great fanfare, and French embassy staffers were among the crowds that greeted the patients at Belgrade’s central train station.²⁵⁹ *Tanjug* published Tito’s open letter of thanks to the director of the hospital, while the patients themselves expressed their deepest

²⁵⁴ DSIP, PA, 1957 F–29, Note on Ranković’s conversation with Broustra, Doc. 47157, 23.03.1957.; *Ibid.*, Draft agreement on nuclear cooperation, Doc. 425803, 24.10.1957.

²⁵⁵ Although one may wonder whether the Belgrade press comments on the matter could be taken at face value, it is not unreasonable to think that press coverage reflected Serbian public opinion. The French, in any case, were content to take the coverage at face value and bask in their “moral profit.” MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 114–116, 29.01.1959.

²⁵⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 78–83, 08.12.1958.

²⁵⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 107, 07.01.1959.

²⁵⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Note on Uvalić’s expression of gratitude and French press clippings, Folio 92–93, 27.12.1958.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry and translations of Yugoslavian press articles, Folio 94–102, 03.01.1959.

²⁵⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Letter from the Yugoslavian atomists to Broustra, Folio 125, 12.03.1959.

gratitude to France in the media and to Broustra.²⁶⁰ All in all, Broustra summed up the episode in the following terms:

The success of the operations and the [atomists'] recovery have struck the Yugoslavs' imagination and have incited in them a boundless admiration for French medicine and tremendous gratitude for France. [...] We yield from this brilliant feat of French medical arts an undeniable moral profit, and it could be said that this event has surpassed the efforts, mounted with perseverance by the Americans and the English in this country, to strengthen their influence and disseminate their language.²⁶¹

Conclusion: Yugoslavia at an Impasse

On the heels of the Yemeni Crown Prince's visit to Yugoslavia and on the eve of the *Slovenija* affair in January 1958, Broustra – perhaps bereft of a sense of irony – accused Belgrade of pursuing “*une politique de prestige*” inspired by a combination of “natural vanity” and security concerns.²⁶² While the French sought to maintain their position in Yugoslavia for the sake of prestige even as problems in the bilateral relationship mounted, the new Yugoslavian foreign policy principles as laid down by Kardelj after 1948 came to be implemented more thoroughly in practice, and with more ideological consistency, over the course of the 1950s. As seen in Chapter 2, after the immediate post-schism danger of a Soviet invasion had subsided, Yugoslavia began to pursue a policy of non-alignment, that is, independence and equidistance from the two blocs, that remained grounded in Europe. While Tito embarked on a campaign of global personal diplomacy in the quest for security, independence, and international renown as a mediator, Koča kept the Foreign Ministry focused on the continent.²⁶³ Although this policy did not preclude diplomatic and economic relations with the extra-European world, the Foreign Ministry continued to seek political and economic security in Europe. However, with no

²⁶⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Letter from Tito to Professor Courtial (*Tanjug* bulletin), Folio 127–128, 08.05.1959.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 119–120, 18.02.1959.

²⁶¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 186, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 116, 29.01.1959.

²⁶² MAE, Série Z, Carton 176, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 144, 07.01.1958.

²⁶³ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 121–123; Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 158.

consensus on priorities between Tito's inner circle, which favoured Third World "progressive elements," and Koča's Foreign Ministry, these conflicting pursuits amounted to little practical political effect. At once Belgrade had tried to maintain good political and economic relations with the West – in particular the emerging continental integrationist institutions – all the while seeking to normalize relations with Moscow and make economic and political inroads into the Third World. These pursuits brought Yugoslavia's foreign policy to a crossroads by the close of 1958. At the root of Belgrade's predicament was the fact that Tito's balancing act between East and West was simply impracticable. Instead of propelling Yugoslavia from a regional to an international soft-power factor and Tito to the position of an international broker, the tightrope walk was proving unsustainable. The smallest of Belgrade's steps East was bound to alienate the West, and vice versa.²⁶⁴ While acting the "honest broker" may have served Bismarck, in the bipolar Cold War system Tito secured no Bismarckian coups. Being "excommunicated" from the church of universal communism did not help him secure Trieste, while attempting to mediate between Nasser and the West, at the request of the West (as much as he publicly denied that he was doing so), proved damaging to his relations with Britain and Israel, and especially with France.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁴ Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike 1956–1961*, 154.

²⁶⁵ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 123–138.

Chapter 4: The Crisis Years, January 1959–August 1962

Introduction

Most Serbian- and English-language literature places Tito squarely at the helm of Yugoslavian foreign policy from 1945 until the last years of his life and overlooks the multiple decision-making loci and the role played by the long-serving Foreign Minister, Koča Popović. The conventional view of Yugoslavian diplomacy is that after the bankruptcy of the policy of mediation in 1956, and not content to see Yugoslavia become an impotent neutral country like Finland or Austria, Tito and his inner circle sought to institutionalize Belgrade's non-aligned Third World orientation.¹ While the travel-loving Tito's inclination toward Third World "progressives" became evident in the mid-1950s, in contrast to the established narrative Rinna Kulla has offered a contrasting interpretation that informs this work. Kullaa has argued that Belgrade's Third World turn (which led to the formalization of the Non-Aligned Movement) became definitive not after the Brioni summit of July 1956, but only after winter 1958. (And, as Chapter 3 has shown, both before and after Brioni Belgrade remained invested in Europe and in France while simultaneously working to develop relations with the Third World). It was only after another Soviet denunciation of Belgrade's "revisionism," as well as the Finnish Night Frost Crisis (discussed below), that the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry conceded that the country's independence and security could no longer be found exclusively on the European continent, and needed to be pursued with countries beyond Moscow's direct reach. Thus Kardelj's foreign policy principles as first elaborated in 1949, as well as the broadening of Yugoslavian diplomacy, became the foundation for the Foreign Ministry's new non-ideological course of Third World-centered non-alignment. According to Kullaa, it was from this point in late 1958–

¹ Vladimir Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija: Studije i dokumentarni prilozi* (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 142, 165.

early 1959, and not in the mid-1950s, that Belgrade began paving the way toward the Non-Aligned Movement, which was inaugurated at the Belgrade Conference in September 1961.²

This chapter pursues the progression of Yugoslavian foreign policy to the inauguration of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in September 1961 and traces Franco-Yugoslavian relations during the “existential crises” of the Cold War, marked by the Berlin Crisis of August 1961 (of concern here) and the Cuban Missile Crisis (October 1962).³ As the Cold War intensified and as the Franco-Yugoslavian relationship deteriorated, both capitals ceased exploiting the rhetoric of the traditional friendship. While the argument has been made that Belgrade went too far in its support of the FLN and that its Third World turn drew it away from Western Europe in general, and France in particular, to Yugoslavia’s (and Serbia’s) own detriment,⁴ this chapter revises this indictment of Tito’s policy. It reviews Yugoslavian foreign policy in the crucial turning point of winter 1958/59, after which Belgrade began striving for ideological consistency in its diplomacy while resisting Moscow in response to the renewed anti-Yugoslavian campaign mounted by the Soviet bloc. These developments moved Yugoslavia to lend ever-increasing moral and material support to anti-colonial struggles in the Third World, chiefly in Algeria. Although this shift in policy meant that Gaullist France became an ideological nemesis, the patent similarities between the means (though not the ends) of “Titoism” and “Gaullism” could not be denied. These similarities meant that the Yugoslavian capital could not afford to jettison the relationship with France, while the French similarly sought to retain their

² Rinna Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 176–177.

³ David C. Engerman, “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917–1962,” Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 41. For France and Yugoslavia’s positions on the Cuban Missile Crisis see Chapter 5, n.15.

⁴ For the argument that Belgrade went too far in its support of the FLN and its engagement in the Third World see Dragan Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme alžirskog rata 1952–1964* (Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, 2009), 306–308. Cf. Blažo Mandić, *S Titom: Četvrt veka u Kabinetu* (Beograd: Dan Graf, 2012), 229; Gilles Troude, “La Yougoslavie titiste vue par les diplomates français (1955–1974),” *Balkanica: Annual of the Institute for Balkan Studies* XL (2009), 181.

economic position in Yugoslavia and exploit Belgrade's influence in North Africa for their own benefit and pursuit of grandeur. French attempts to capitalize upon Yugoslavia's influence attested to the fact that Belgrade enjoyed a real eminence in the eyes of Arab nationalist leaders in the 1950s and early 1960s, which brings into question the bipolar nature of the Cold War. Further, in response to the realism–ideology debate in Cold War historiography, this chapter considers the relationship between the two and the limits imposed upon the exercise of *Realpolitik* by ideological world views. While the parallels between Titoism and Gaullism confirmed the possibility and validity of challenging superpower hegemony (or more specifically, the possibility of challenging the hegemony of the superpower to whose ideological or socioeconomic bloc one belonged), the dissonance between the negotiable geopolitical bipolarity and the uncompromising ideological duality remained. The former could be contested, and in fact was effectively challenged by de Gaulle in the 1960s, when an arguably multipolar world order was established.⁵ The latter, however, remained very real: it not only frustrated de Gaulle's aims of engaging with Eastern Europe in order to liberalize the continental divide and “liberate” the satellites; it also frustrated the exercise of Yugoslavia's bloc equidistance, any hopes of Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation, and the effectiveness of the Non-Aligned Movement as suspicions on both sides of the ideological divide persisted.

The General's New Course

When de Gaulle returned to power in May 1958, he made his ambitions and policies abundantly clear: “It is indispensable that what we say and what we do be independent of others.

⁵ Garret Joseph Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War: Challenging American Hegemony, 1963–1968* (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 5.

Upon my return, that is the rule.”⁶ He immediately embarked upon bringing to life his “certain idea of France:” recovering the country’s grandeur by reasserting its independence from the United States through a reconfiguration of the process of European integration and a disengagement from NATO. The recovery of grandeur was the first pillar of de Gaulle’s ‘grand design;’ the other pillar aimed to transform the Cold War order into a multipolar system.⁷

French reservations toward NATO, harboured since 1949, had turned to skepticism by the last years of the Fourth Republic. France had been all but forced to accept West German rearmament and integration into the pact while, as far as Paris was concerned, the Suez Crisis showed that Atlantic solidarity was not a two-way street: Western Europe was expected to support American views while Washington was free to abandon London and Paris on colonial matters for the sake of its own interests. Washington’s reaction to the Soviet ultimatum to France and Britain over the Suez Crisis further illustrated to the French that the United States was not prepared to risk nuclear war over its allies’ perceived vital interests. While the British relied on their “special relationship” with the Americans and Bonn’s fear of Moscow drove it to Washington, Paris saw its military obligations to NATO as a drain on metropolitan and imperial defence. De Gaulle felt marginalized within the Atlantic Alliance and was not convinced of the utility of NATO’s military integration, which he viewed as a constraint upon his country’s ambitions. Immediately upon his assumption of power, he submitted his Tripartite Memorandum to London and Washington, calling for the institutionalization of strategic coordination between the three countries and threatening withdrawal if his request was not met.⁸

⁶ Etienne Burin des Rozières, “Le Non-Alignement,” Elie Barnavi and Saül Friedländer, eds., *La politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1985), 72–73.

⁷ Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War*, 192–194.

⁸ Frédéric Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: De Gaulle, the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2001), 1–12. The memorandum had an antecedent in Mendès France’s proposal to reorganize NATO along tripartite lines, as he resented the “special relationship” between Washington

In addition to reshaping the Atlantic Alliance, de Gaulle sought to refocus the process of European integration around France. As he told his confidant Alain Peyrefitte, Europe was “a means for France to again become what it had ceased to be after Waterloo: the first in the world.”⁹ He wished to establish a “European Europe,” although whether this meant that the continent would become an auxiliary Western force, a neutral ‘third force,’ or a fully-fledged third bloc remained intentionally unclear.¹⁰ The historiography on the subject offers two interpretations: that de Gaulle either “rescued” the EEC from the excessive idealism and weak executive of his predecessors; or alternatively that he had no choice but to accept the decisions made by Fourth Republic governments, and so instead sought to subvert the integrationist project by promoting the intergovernmental Fouchet Plan in 1961 at the expense of supranationalism.¹¹ The cornerstone of his confederal European Europe, which did not include Britain, was to be the ‘historic’ reconciliation between France and its junior partner, West Germany.¹²

Without compromising Western security in the process, de Gaulle’s ultimate aim was to transcend bloc logic and bring an end to the Cold War, not unlike what the Yugoslavs had been expounding at the United Nations since 1949.¹³ From 1963 onward the General also promoted a French role in the Third World beyond the country’s former colonies that was based on a respect for other states’ rights to self-determination and independence, and the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of others. He thereby hoped to introduce balance into the Cold

and London and desired an equal status for France and Britain within the alliance. Georges-Henri Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine: Les rapports politico-stratégiques franco-allemands, 1954–1996* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), 33.

⁹ Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine*, 131.

¹⁰ Julian Jackson, *De Gaulle* (London: Haus Publishing, 2003), 98–99.

¹¹ The Fouchet Plan was not implemented because the other five EEC members remained wedded to political union as a prerequisite for other forms of joint planning and integration. Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine*, 198–199. For the historiography of de Gaulle and the EEC see Piers Ludlow, “From Words to Actions: Reinterpreting de Gaulle’s European Policy,” Christian Nuenlist, Anna Lochner, and Garret Martin, eds., *Globalizing de Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958–1969* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010), 64–66.

¹² Jackson, *De Gaulle*, 100–101.

¹³ Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe*, 245–248. Kardelj first denounced Soviet imperialism at the United Nations in 1949 (MAE, Série Z, Carton 24, Letter from Payart to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 234–236, 05.04.1949.). During the 1950s this crystallized into the Yugoslavian policy of ideologically-driven non-alignment.

War order: again, not unlike the Yugoslavs' aims.¹⁴ "Gaullism" was thus akin to "Titoism." With both leaders seeking national independence and an active international role in order to surmount the bipolar Cold War system, Frédéric Bozo's description of Gaullism as "a kind of major heresy within the Atlanticist religion"¹⁵ could just as easily be applied to the role of Titoism within the church of international communism. However, while de Gaulle's return to power and the Vinča accident served to initially improve Franco-Yugoslavian relations and reaffirm the "traditional friendship," the commonalities in France and Yugoslavia's national interests and foreign policies were not enough to sustain the rapprochement as long as the war in Algeria preoccupied French energies and envenomed bilateral relations. Thus the rapprochement of the second half of 1958, just as the one that had followed the arrival of Mendès France in June 1954, was short-lived.

Finnish Lessons: Belgrade's New Course, Winter 1958/59

As seen in Chapter 3, Tito's foray into North Africa had strained Yugoslavia's relations with France which, coupled with another "freeze" with Moscow, once again isolated Belgrade. Its isolation was exacerbated by its diplomatic break with Bonn in October 1957, which had inspired a negative reaction in the other Western capitals. The break further proved detrimental as international tensions mounted over the outstanding questions of the occupational status of Berlin and the signature of a German peace treaty which, as Marc Trachtenberg has shown, was the key destabilizing factor in the early Cold War.¹⁶ Eager to insert himself into the Big Four conversation on the German question, in a propaganda-driven New Year's speech in January 1958, Tito, prone to speaking impulsively, issued a hasty and ill-conceived appeal to attend a summit, implying that Yugoslavia was the spokesperson for all neutral countries. The major

¹⁴ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 75–77.

¹⁵ Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe*, x.

¹⁶ Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 352.

Western capitals, along with Cairo and New Delhi, interpreted his statement as a call for a joint neutralist summit.¹⁷ Amid the confusion, Koča instructed Yugoslavia's Ambassadors to exploit the ambiguity to Belgrade's advantage, because "there are certain situations the hurried clarification of which is not in our interest, so you should not feel obligated to proffer explanations."¹⁸ With the general disinterestedness in the German question on the part of the neutral Asian and African countries, the commotion over Tito's statement quickly dissipated, but Belgrade's interest in attending a four-power conference on Berlin did not. (Nasser and the Indonesian President Sukarno, meanwhile, embraced the prospect of a separate neutralist conference, which is discussed below).¹⁹

Unlike its extra-European partners, Belgrade's primary security concerns lay in Europe. Given its people's sacrifice and the Partisans' own much-vaunted contribution to Germany's defeat in the Second World War, the Yugoslavian leadership took every opportunity to air its opinion on the German question.²⁰ On the heels of the *Slovenija* affair, the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris appealed to the Quai, echoing Tito's futile request to be invited to a summit because:

[W]e're isolated and we don't know anything. Our Eastern friends are briefed in Moscow, our Western friends in NATO, but no one tells us anything. Yet of what interest to France and the Western powers to have the support of neutral countries, in particular Yugoslavia, who only seeks to reconcile the views of the East and of the West.²¹

Despite the brief rapprochement with France in the second half of 1958, by the close of that year a decade of pursuing an independent foreign policy had resulted in little for Belgrade. In seeking to transition from a regional to an international player, Tito overestimated Yugoslavia's ability to

¹⁷ Dragan Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike 1956–1961* (Beograd: ISI, 2006), 261–262. For Tito's impulsiveness see Mandić, *S Titom*, 119.

¹⁸ Koča quoted in Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 262.

¹⁹ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 262.

²⁰ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 274.

²¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 161, "Note A.S. Opinions d'un diplomate yougoslave sur l'affaire du "Slovenija," le problème algérien, le projet de pacte méditerranéen et la conférence au sommet," Folio 37–39, 14.03.1958.

compete on the Great Power stage.²² His quest to solidify relations with post-MRP France after 1954 had failed, while his balancing act between East and West incurred suspicion from both directions. The ideological skirmishing with Moscow thus continued, while Tito's position on Suez soured his relations with Britain, France and Israel. Moreover, Broustra's remark upon the irony of Belgrade's extension of aid to Third World countries did not escape the famously vain Yugoslav leader.²³

Meanwhile, Finland, the inspiration behind Belgrade's policy of Eurocentric neutralism, now offered a cautionary tale. Just as Belgrade's relations with Moscow soured in 1957, so did Helsinki's. Frustrated that de-Stalinization failed to woo Yugoslavia and instead angered Mao Zedong and inspired dissent in Poland and Hungary in 1956, Khrushchev became increasingly belligerent. In late 1958 he issued an ultimatum to the Western powers to withdraw from West Berlin.²⁴ Moreover, he no longer deemed sufficient the security guarantees of the Soviet Union's two neutral neighbours. Belgrade closely followed the Night Frost Crisis in late 1958 when Moscow, by cutting off trade and diplomatic relations with Helsinki, brought down Karl-August Fagerholm's pro-Western centre-right government. In the eyes of Belgrade's Foreign Ministry, not only did Moscow bring down a Finnish government: it also de facto dictated the form of the succeeding government, an outcome that the Yugoslavs had no desire to see replicated in Belgrade. For practical purposes, the crisis also signified the sacrifice of the Finnish Foreign Ministry's independence, which fell under President Uhro Kekkonen's close oversight.²⁵

²² Troude, "La Yougoslavie titiste vue par les diplomates français (1955–1974)," *Balkanica*, 180.

²³ A case in point was Tito's 1956 request to end American military aid because as a recipient of such Yugoslavia could not be a "positive influence" in international affairs. But with the resumption of polemics with Moscow in 1957, he was forced to again request aid from Washington, before once again asking to cease aid for good later that same year. Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 196–214, 229.

²⁴ Vojtech Mastny, "Soviet Foreign Policy, 1953–1962," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 320–322.

²⁵ Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe*, 175–176.

From 1959 a fissure began to appear between Tito and Kardelj's ideological non-alignment, emphasizing the support of "progressive" leftist elements (with the ultimate aim of helping the cause of socialism in the Third World), and Koča's realist non-alignment, stressing the preservation of Yugoslavia's independence from either bloc. The ideologue Kardelj promoted ideological non-alignment and opposed too far a political drift from the Soviets, relations with whom were firmly in the hands of Tito and not the anti-dogmatic Koča, for whom the Soviet Union was not a model of socialism but a hegemonic superpower.²⁶ Eschewing military blocs, over the course of the 1950s Koča had kept Yugoslavia politically and economically engaged in Western Europe. Perceiving a yielding to Moscow for the sake of ideological solidarity from the 1956 rapprochement onward, he endeavoured to promote literal non-alignment (*nesvrstanost*), rather than the more passive "non-engagement" (*neangažovanost*) or a more radical ideological non-alignment, as a means of preserving Yugoslavia's political and ideological independence.²⁷ In 1959, however, this internal schism was yet latent. That same year signalled a sharpening of international tensions over Berlin and a hardening of the Yugoslavian position on Algeria, the latter culminating with de Gaulle's decision to break diplomatic relations with Belgrade in 1962.

Belgrade's Third World Turn and Hardening on Algeria, 1959

By some accounts, Yugoslavia and the FLN had first clandestinely liaised in Cairo as early as 1953–1954.²⁸ Although Belgrade had been endorsing the Algerian people's right to self-determination, it welcomed de Gaulle's return to power with an open mind. While they were apprehensive about his apparent lack of a clear plan for France's domestic and foreign policy

²⁶ Živojin Jazić, *Moj pogled na diplomatiju 1957–2005* (Beograd: Čigoja, 2010), 67–70.

²⁷ Aleksandar Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 2nd edition (Zagreb: Globus, 1989), 21.

²⁸ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 85.

problems, the Yugoslavs praised de Gaulle's conception of a purely continental Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals," which excluded Britain and included not the Soviet Union as a superpower, but Russia as an integral part of Europe.²⁹ According to Broustra, upon the General's return to power "a concern for objectivity finally seemed to animate Yugoslavian press correspondents," a change he attributed to instructions from above, and which was indicative of Belgrade's desire for a rapprochement with the West.³⁰ Despite the deliberate ambiguity of the General's rhetoric, and although there were no attempts at systematic coordination, over the course of 1959 the two capitals did extensively discuss their foreign policies.³¹ The Yugoslavs invested hope in de Gaulle's grand design of making Europe independent of Washington, and both capitals realized that the success or failure of the General's plan was predicated on French power, which itself rested upon the resolution of the war in Algeria. Of further interest to both countries was not only the fate of Europe, but also the French foray into Asia, where the growth in Chinese power was of concern to both Tito, Nehru, and the Western leaders. Here again Algeria posed a problem. While Nehru was keen to develop trade with Western Europe, Franco-Indian relations were hamstrung by Nehru's condemnation of France's colonial policy, and André Malraux's winter 1958 visit to India was a disappointment. It was therefore not a surprise that Malraux solicited the Yugoslavs' thoughts on what a settlement with the FLN might look

²⁹ DSIP, PA, 1958 F-29, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry to its embassies in Paris, Cairo, Rabat, and Tunis, Doc. 412768, 31.05.1958.; *Ibid.*, 1959 F-30, Uvalić's report on de Gaulle's foreign policy, Doc. 42036, 11.01.1959.; Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe*, xiii.

³⁰ Série Z, Carton 181, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 267-270, 26.06.1958.

³¹ In addition to Uvalić's conversations with de Gaulle (see n.64 and n.78), for bilateral foreign policy discussions see 1958 F-30, Telegram from Koča on his conversation with Couve, Doc. 422916, 25.09.1958.; *Ibid.*, 1959 F-30, Telegram from Uvalić on his conversation with Couve, Doc. 41285, 16.01.1959.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Uvalić on Froment-Meurice's conversation with Petrović, Doc. 432763, 18.12.1959.

like and expressed a hope that Tito “could exercise a lot of influence” to help moderate Nasser’s position on Algeria, whom he believed was being pressured by Moscow.³²

Uvalić told Malraux that Tito believed the path to peace in Algeria lay in “mutual concessions,” that is, a partial French satisfaction of FLN demands.³³ While de Gaulle struggled to bring an end to the war and began preparing the ground for his disengagement from NATO, the Yugoslavs were grappling with a foreign policy dilemma. The text of Uvalić’s French-language speech on Yugoslavian foreign policy from the first month of 1959 offers insight into the crossroads at which Belgrade found itself. Although the (clearly French) audience is not identified in the document, the speech dealt with the familiar themes of Yugoslavian foreign policy: the need for active peaceful coexistence, the transcending of bloc logic, economic development and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states in order to preserve a peace that was being threatened by nuclear armament. However, the speech also acknowledged Belgrade’s recognition of the structural limits of the international system, and the consequent dilemma it faced between the pursuit of security on the European continent versus the pursuit of greater independence and prestige in the Third World:

In pursuing [our foreign] policy, however, we are well aware that peace cannot be achieved solely through the actions of those countries which are not aligned with the blocs. [...] Yugoslavia considers that its non-aligned position is not an impediment to the maintenance of good relations, and even close cooperation and mutual friendship with countries which belong to either bloc. Yugoslavia wishes to remain faithful to its traditional friendships and will never forget the support of friendly countries who were on her side and helped her in the most difficult moments of her struggle for national independence.³⁴

Emphasizing the possibility and desirability of cooperation between countries of different socioeconomic systems, the speaker added, “You will perhaps judge [our foreign policy] as too

³² DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry on his conversation with Malraux, Doc. 41285, 16.01.1959.; *Ibid.*, Uvalić’s report on de Gaulle’s foreign policy, Doc. 42036, 11.01.1959.

³³ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry on his conversation with Malraux, Doc. 41285, 16.01.1959.

³⁴ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, “Les principes de la politique extérieure yougoslave,” Folio 61–73, undated.

pretentious, given the limited material possibilities of the country I represent. We do not, however, believe that material forces are the only ones that should count, or do count, in the world.”³⁵ While sensitive to Yugoslavia’s status as at best a middle power, which was at odds with Tito’s ambitions, the speech clearly sought to justify Yugoslavia’s simultaneous support of anti-colonialist rebels and the maintenance of close relations with ‘traditionally friendly countries,’ that is, France. This, therefore, indicated that Belgrade, far from renouncing the continent in favour of the Third World, continued to hope for a peace-brokering role on the international stage. Securing this greater role was all the more imperative since the secret talks to re-establish diplomatic relations with Bonn had failed in autumn 1958, which further distanced Yugoslavia from conversations on Berlin and the German peace settlement. Meanwhile, the Western powers were becoming frustrated with Yugoslavia’s diplomacy which, unwittingly or not, from recognizing the GDR to morally supporting leftist anti-colonialists in Africa, more often than not served the interests of Moscow – and the speech clearly sought to assuage these concerns and preserve Belgrade’s relations with the West.

Cold War *détente* came to an end as tensions escalated over Berlin. Belgrade supported Khrushchev’s announcement that he would sign a separate peace treaty with the GDR, thereby enshrining the existence of two equally legitimate German states. Although Belgrade had extended *de jure* recognition to Pankow in October 1957, the three Western powers interpreted the commonality of views between Belgrade and Moscow as the former’s return to the latter’s camp, and Washington refused to countenance Yugoslavia’s attendance at a Big Four conference (while Khrushchev also had no desire to indulge Tito in his quest for a summit invitation).³⁶

³⁵ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-30, “Les principes de la politique extérieure yougoslave,” Folio 61–73, undated.

³⁶ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 264–272. George F. Kennan offered an illustration of the deep-seated anti-Yugoslav prejudice in the United States Congress that was the result of a combination of

Thus having first called for Yugoslavia's participation in a summit conference on Berlin in January 1958, more than a year later Tito remained shut out from the German settlement process. The pursuit of "active peaceful coexistence" and the search for an international mediator role had patently failed: by early 1959, both East and West remained suspicious of Belgrade, while the superpower détente was coming undone over Berlin. It was at this juncture that it became clear to Tito and the rest of the country's leadership that the ad hoc policy of balancing between East and West while building relations with their Asian and African friends was inadequate. They had no choice but to institutionalize a "third way" between the two blocs as a means of assuring Yugoslavia's independence and prestige, as well as preserving international peace.³⁷ Tito thus embarked upon a number of "voyages of peace" (*putovanja mira*) aboard the *Galeb* between winter 1958–1959 and spring 1961, traveling through Asia and Africa to prepare the ground for a collective *hors-bloc* démarche toward the superpowers (although he did not care for his deputy Foreign Minister Veljko Mićunović's quip that Christopher Columbus' *Santa Maria* must have voyaged faster than the *Galeb*).³⁸

If Koča's conversations with Broustra are any indication, it appears that by spring 1959 the Foreign Minister had reached the limits of his patience with the haughty French who were showing no signs of willingness to deepen their political and economic ties with Belgrade to any meaningful degree, and embraced Yugoslavia's turn toward the Third World. While Broustra conceded that Belgrade's reasons for wanting to attend a summit and be involved in the German peace treaty negotiations were valid, with a number of Third World countries recognizing the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA), French concerns regarding

McCarthyism, the influence of Yugoslav (mostly Croatian) émigrés, and a general feigned ignorance. George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1950–1963*, Vol. II (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), 282–291.

³⁷ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 310–314.

³⁸ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 165, 171.

Yugoslavia were not centered on the latter's position on Berlin or a realignment with Moscow, but whether it, too, intended to recognize the GPRA. Koča proved evasive on this question, and Broustra was visibly flustered when asked whether France intended to break diplomatic relations with any and all nations who recognized the GPRA. When the Ambassador replied that all the governments that had so far recognized the Provisional Government – all Arab countries, with the exception of Indonesia – were “not fully mature and responsible,” Koča retorted: “it is not a convincing legal basis that the French government decide which governments (all UN members) are more or less mature.” Instructing Broustra that “we must learn to cooperate despite the clear differences in principle that obviously exist on some questions between us,” he noted upon the Ambassador's departure that “periodically the marbles in his head weren't working.”³⁹

In contrast to the sober and optimistic internal and press evaluations of de Gaulle's foreign policy in the first months of his tenure, by spring 1959 – when it became clear that the Yugoslavs would not be involved in the German peace treaty process, as a Big Four conference proceeded without them⁴⁰ – Belgrade's anti-colonial rhetoric and position on North Africa hardened. The French now became imperialist foes: the Belgrade current affairs review *NIN* charged that despite his commitment to ending the war in Algeria, de Gaulle intended to continue the economic exploitation of the North African country through different means because his own “dreams of historic grandeur” prevented him from realizing that “the insurrection in Algeria is not a romantic adventure à la Robin Hood, but a historical process.”⁴¹ The Yugoslavs believed that, in contrast to the old imperial powers, only they, as a rapidly-industrializing nation situated on the “hunting grounds of the Great Powers,” could contribute to the mitigation of neo-

³⁹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-4, Note on Koča's conversation with Broustra, Folio 209, 23.03.1959.

⁴⁰ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 251.

⁴¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 182, Translation of a *NIN* article sent by Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 41–42, 26.05.1959.

colonialism.⁴² Speaking in Kruševac, Tito alleged that Yugoslavia provided aid to underdeveloped countries “with unconditional sincerity [while] the aid accorded ... by certain countries ... is tainted with neo-colonialism, which is no less dangerous than colonialism.”⁴³

That the Yugoslavs compared the war in Algeria to Yugoslavia’s liberation from the Axis annoyed the French, while Belgrade’s ties to the FLN inspired worry.⁴⁴ While Malraux believed that the Soviets were pressuring the FLN, Couve was concerned with Belgrade’s support of the Algerian rebels, which differed from Moscow’s official reticence. Unbeknownst to the French, in May–June 1958 the *Borba* editor, one-time Tunisian correspondent and Islamist specialist Zdravko Pečar visited with the FLN in Algeria. From mid-1959 onward, with Belgrade shut out from the European settlement, *Borba* published more and more pro-FLN content, leading the French embassy to conclude that Pečar “might even be [the FLN chiefs’] spokesperson-in-disguise.”⁴⁵ Despite its desire to exploit Yugoslavia’s influence in the Arab world for its own benefit, Paris reacted negatively to the April announcement that the GPRA leader Ferhat Abbas, who had recently visited India and Pakistan, would visit Yugoslavia in the summer. Koča and the Foreign Ministry countered that if the French wanted the Yugoslavs to exercise their influence, a visit with Abbas was a prime opportunity to do so.⁴⁶ In the face of French misgivings, Uvalić received instructions from the Foreign Ministry to continue with “our firm and constructive

⁴² AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-4, Note on Mićunović’s conversation with Broustra, Doc. 414493, 27.05.1959.

⁴³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 233, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 574, 06.06.1961.

⁴⁴ Troude, “La Yougoslavie titiste vue par les diplomates français,” *Balkanica*, 170–171. As discussed in Chapter 3, Cold War prerogatives drew Yugoslavia to the Afro-Asian movement, which itself was inspired by anti-colonialism. In order to bridge the gap between themselves and their Afro-Asian partners and to legitimate their leadership role within the Movement, the Yugoslavs frequently likened their liberation from the Ottomans, Habsburgs, and Nazis to the anti-colonial struggle.

⁴⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 184, Letter from the embassy’s chargé d’affaires (Naudy) to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 32–34, 06.07.1959.

⁴⁶ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 411234, 23.04.1959.

stance on the Algerian question,” because the absence of a sharp French reaction toward Belgrade indicated that the Yugoslavs’ position on the question was correct.⁴⁷

Abbas visited Belgrade in June, and a joint communiqué with “Yugoslavian representatives” confirmed the mutual commitment to peace and the principle of national self-determination. Abbas further thanked the Yugoslavian people for their material aid.⁴⁸ In response, Couve immediately expressed his government’s shock to Uvalić, and protested the “unacceptable character” of the joint declaration, which was all the more “irregular and regrettable” given Yugoslavia’s friendly relations with France and its interference in “an affair which does not concern it in the least.” A visibly embarrassed Uvalić deflected his government’s official responsibility, insisting that “the communiqué stemmed from certain individuals and not from the Yugoslavian government.”⁴⁹ Simultaneously in Belgrade, Broustra, whose ‘marbles’ now appeared to be in working order, protested before a subdued Koča, who assured him that Belgrade harboured no intentions of recognizing the GPRA despite pressures from Abbas to do so.⁵⁰ As had been the case since the early 1950s, the Yugoslavs were again seeking to find a balance between two opposing sides, in each of whom they had an interest. Koča reasoned that Belgrade was supporting both sides in an effort to contribute to a settlement and would have long ago recognized the GPRA had it wanted to, but did not do so in deference to France. As though surprised by the weight that the French attached to Yugoslavia, after the meeting he noted that “it

⁴⁷ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-30, Telegram from Brilej to Uvalić, Doc. 411234, 25.04.1959.

⁴⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 182, “Communiqué conjoint signé le 12 juin 1959 à Belgrade entre M. Ferhat Abbas et des représentants yougoslaves,” Folio 85, undated. In addition to the arms transport, at the Algerians’ request Belgrade transported over 100 of their wounded pro bono to Czechoslovakia and East Germany for convalescence. Although Belgrade also provided humanitarian aid, it ranked last on the list of donors behind nations like Vietnam. For Yugoslavian aid to Algeria see AJ, A SIV, 130, Carton 635, Letter from Koča to the SIV, Doc. 44969, 24.02.1959.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Deputy Foreign Minister Mićunović to the SIV (Zeković), Doc. 422963, 03.09.1959.

⁴⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 184, Telegram from the French Foreign Ministry (Roux) to the French embassy in Belgrade, Folio 28, 14.06.1959.

⁵⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 184, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 29–30, 15.06.1959.

turns out that [the French] really were afraid that [the Abbas visit] was our first step toward recognition.”⁵¹

Paris’s displeasure at the Abbas visit clearly resonated with the Yugoslavs, who softened their stance on Algeria and brought the press in line in the aftermath of the Abbas visit.⁵² The French, however, continued to retaliate. De Gaulle’s Prime Minister, Michel Debré, who had warned Uvalić in February that “it would be good to suggest to [your] government to be prudent and patient on the Algerian question,”⁵³ publicly condemned Belgrade and called for the severing of diplomatic relations. While de Gaulle and Couve privately urged restraint, Broustra was briefly recalled to Paris. A Yugoslav official was detained at Orly airport, while even Yugoslavian sympathizers in Paris criticized the decision to publish the communiqué, and Malraux boycotted a performance by the Yugoslavian state opera in Paris.⁵⁴ Already-deteriorating military relations also worsened. After lavishly hosting a Yugoslavian military delegation in January 1959 in a bid to out-sell the British and Americans and have Belgrade buy the Aérospatiale Alouette II helicopter and the Dassault Mirage III fighter aircraft (the successor to the Mystère), the French army cancelled the planned follow-up visit by General Zdenko Ulepić and pressured its government to suspend the Mirage licencing talks.⁵⁵ Three Yugoslavian officers who were on a stipend in France were also prevented from visiting the factories of the

⁵¹ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-31, Note on Koča’s conversation with Broustra, Doc. 416999, 15.06.1959.

⁵² MAE, Série Z, Carton 184, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 48-51, 09.11.1959.

⁵³ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-31, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44475, 17.02.1959.

⁵⁴ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-31, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 416539, 17.06.1959.

⁵⁵ SHD, 14 S 222, Letter from Colonel de Froment to the Air Minister, Doc. 347, 04.06.1960.; DSIP, PA, 1959 F-31, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi,” Doc. 43859, 03.10.1959. It is highly likely that the French decision to suspend the Mirage talks with Yugoslavia was made from a combination of displeasure with Belgrade and a calculated position of strength, given the concurrent French efforts to sell the aircraft to West Germany and the Benelux in a bid for “European aeronautical leadership.” However, unhappy that Franco-German nuclear cooperation talks that had begun in 1957 stalled, Bonn – and subsequently the Benelux – opted instead to purchase the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter from the Americans. Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine*, 123–140.

transportation giant Alstom, as initially scheduled, while a French artillery school visit to Yugoslavia was cancelled.⁵⁶

Given the fallout of the Abbas visit, the pragmatic Koča, despite his earlier brusqueness toward Broustra, called for a concerted effort to improve Franco-Yugoslavian relations on all fronts for the sake of reducing Belgrade's dependence on the Anglo-Americans, West Germans and Italians. Trade with France had begun to improve. The year 1959 represented the second-highest level of exchange since 1954 (second only to the exceptionally high figures for 1958, discussed in Chapter 3), and further boasted a very favourable balance: Belgrade imported 4.2 million dinars' worth of goods from France and exported an impressive 3.4 million dinars, thanks to the more liberal trade agreement concluded in fall 1958 (although Yugoslavian exports continued to lag not because of French obstruction but because of limited Yugoslavian industrial productivity). In addition to growth in trade, French tourism to Yugoslavia was also steadily increasing. Furthermore, the Foreign Ministry called for a series of other non-economic measures and gestures of good will to restore relations: the revival of the bid for a Yugoslavian residence at the *Cité Universitaire*; greater Yugoslavian flexibility on the sales of French literature in the country; the renewal of interparliamentary and other contacts; and an improvement in military relations. The Ministry suggested that depending on the progress of the debate on Algeria at the United Nations, Koča should, on his way back from New York, stop in Paris for a series of informal talks on the development of bilateral relations.⁵⁷ Koča also urged the Federal Executive Council (SIV) to hasten along the signature of a cultural accord with France because "it is in our interest to send our people to France to specialize in, and make use of, the vast experience and results of French science, which is very advanced, and where there is a possibility to place our

⁵⁶ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-31, Note on French reactions to the Abbas visit, Doc. 417515, 26.06.1959.

⁵⁷ DSIP, PA, 1961 F-27, "Ekonomski odnosi sa Francuskom," Doc. 49824, 06.08.1961.; *Ibid.*, 1959 F-31, "Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi," Doc. 43859, 03.10.1959.

people in specialized, and even otherwise inaccessible, schools and institutes.”⁵⁸ In late 1959, however, Paris did not consider the signature of a cultural convention to be fundamental to the improvement of bilateral relations, and a convention was not signed until 1964.⁵⁹

Divergence and Deterioration: The Road to the Belgrade Conference, December 1959–September 1961

In addition to the Foreign Ministry’s efforts to mitigate the damage to Franco-Yugoslavian relations wrought by the Abbas visit, the government, too, distanced itself from the Algerian question. The Yugoslavian press was brought in line and did not report on the fifth anniversary celebration of the Algerian rebellion that was organized by the 150 Algerian students and convalescents who found themselves in Belgrade in November 1959. Although Mišo Pavičević, the president of the Central Council of the Confederation of Trade Unions (and the man who had been detained at Orly) spoke, no government officials attended the celebration.⁶⁰ The Yugoslavian press, despite never “failing to comment at length on the arrival of a foreign minister, especially from an Asian or African country,” was also uncharacteristically quiet on the visit by the Tunisian Minister of Industry in February 1960.⁶¹

The Yugoslavian leadership’s position on France oscillated. While its ideologically-charged anti-colonialism led it to condemn the conservative Gaullist regime, realism called for the preservation of relations. When it came to matters of the French colonial empire, ideological blinders affected both the Yugoslavian leadership and Foreign Ministry. For all of its condemnation of imperialism, calls for decolonization, and appeals to the equality of peoples,

⁵⁸ AJ, A SIV, 130, Carton 620, Letter from Koča to the SIV, Doc. 92872/4, 25.11.1959.

⁵⁹ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–32, Letter from the Yugoslavian embassy’s cultural attaché (Šegedin) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Folio 370, 19.11.1959.; *Ibid.*, 1965 F–36, Draft agreement of the Franco-Yugoslavian cultural convention, Doc. 42525, undated.

⁶⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 184, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 48–51, 09.11.1959.

⁶¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 184, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 71–73, 06.02.1960.

Belgrade seemed inattentive to a number of changes that de Gaulle implemented. The 1958 reformation of the French Union into the French Community – and Guinea’s immediate declaration of independence from it – went unremarked.⁶² Not helped by de Gaulle’s habitual and deliberate ambiguity, the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, which a year earlier had positively appraised Gaullism, now harshly evaluated it. While working toward a rapprochement in late 1959, it simultaneously charged that in addition to the Algerian question, it was the General’s “bloc conception, which is the foundation of French foreign policy,” that was adversely affecting bilateral relations.⁶³ Despite a conversation with Uvalić in 1958 where de Gaulle expressed an interest in cooperating with Yugoslavia on disarmament and an East–West rapprochement, the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry interpreted the French leader’s pursuit of a greater role in NATO and his determination to keep Algeria French as measures that would only contribute to the solidification of the bloc system.⁶⁴ These beliefs were reinforced by two additional factors: one, Debré’s statement to Uvalić in February 1959 that de Gaulle refused to accept an independent Algeria because of the tremendous amount of French investment in the territory, as well as Mediterranean security concerns;⁶⁵ and two, by the frost in Franco-Soviet relations due to de Gaulle’s hard line on Berlin and Moscow’s disappointment over the lack of a rapprochement based on mutual hostility to the United States and West Germany.⁶⁶

⁶² Dragan Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme alžirskog rata*, 291.

⁶³ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, “Jugoslovensko-francuski odnosi,” Doc. 43859, 03.10.1959.

⁶⁴ For the de Gaulle–Uvalić conversation see DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, “Odnosi FNRJ–Francuska 1956–1959,” Folio 158, 29.01.1959.. For the reading of de Gaulle’s policy see *Ibid.*, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Brilej) to the Paris, Cairo, Tunis, and Rabat embassies, Doc. 410463, 18.04.1959.

⁶⁵ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44475, 17.02.1959.

⁶⁶ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, Uvalić’s report on de Gaulle’s foreign policy, Doc. 42036, 11.01.1959. At the 1960 Paris summit de Gaulle assumed a highly pro-American line on Berlin and the U-2 incident, leaving Khrushchev stunned. It was in reaction to de Gaulle’s position and the failure of the Paris summit that Khrushchev de facto recognized the GPRA. Maurice Vaisse, *La grandeur: La politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle, 1958–1969* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 276–278.

Although the Yugoslavs supported the Soviet plan to integrate East Berlin into a sovereign GDR, they also defended the Western powers' claims to West Berlin and wished for them to remain there. That sentiment, as Dragan Bogetić has remarked, was “always couched in awkward and ambiguous phrasing so that neither the USSR nor any Western power reacted to it.”⁶⁷ Because of its own security concerns and misgivings regarding de Gaulle's policy, Belgrade became briefly interested in the equally briefly-floated Mendès France proposal for a “zone of reduced military tensions” in Europe.⁶⁸ As John Lewis Gaddis explains, the nuclear arms race served to enforce the Cold War status quo, which is why the issue was of keen interest to non-nuclear neutralist states like Yugoslavia.⁶⁹ While Belgrade did not wish to become part of the Soviets' neutral *cordon sanitaire*, it supported the Rapacki Plan calling for the nuclear demilitarization of Central Europe and was disappointed by Paris's reservations toward the Plan.⁷⁰ Further, the Yugoslavs condemned all nuclear proliferation, including the development of the French *force de frappe*, the preparations of which had begun in 1954.⁷¹ This the French struggled to comprehend because again, the Yugoslavs were “too involved” in a discussion that did not directly pertain to them and, as Broustra asked Koča, “did a strong France not suit Yugoslavia?”⁷² Mendès France, a supporter of Belgrade's anti-colonialism, envisioned the zone extending into the Balkans and hoped for Tito's endorsement of the plan (which in turn could help Belgrade secure a seat at a summit conference). While the Soviets were in favour of Mendès

⁶⁷ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 275.

⁶⁸ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-30, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Prica) to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 49105, 04.04.1959.

⁶⁹ John Lewis Gaddis, “Grand Strategies in the Cold War,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 12.

⁷⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 161, “Note a.s. Point de vue yougoslave sur l'équilibre des forces,” Folio 9–10, 17.01.1958.

⁷¹ The French decision to build a nuclear bomb was made in December 1954 during Mendès France's premiership on the grounds that France could not have influence in NATO's strategic planning unless it had its own force. The order for a test bomb was signed by Gaillard in April 1958 and was reaffirmed by de Gaulle. The first French detonation was carried out in the Sahara in February 1960. David Holloway, “Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 390.

⁷² AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-4, Note on Koča's conversation with Broustra, Folio 984, 13.11.1959.

France's plan, Belgrade lost interest after Uvalić voiced his opinion that the politically orphaned Mendès France, who had recently broken with the Radical Party, was in no way challenging de Gaulle's foreign policy and was merely looking for a way of keeping himself in the public eye, both domestically and internationally.⁷³

Further, while Uvalić had welcomed de Gaulle's conception of Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals," Belgrade was becoming concerned over the General's rapprochement with the West German Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. In de Gaulle's grand design French power, bolstered by the Paris–Bonn axis, was to be the foundation of a Western Europe that would be independent of the United States and would play a key role in East–West dialogue.⁷⁴ De Gaulle therefore invited Adenauer to visit with him in his home town of Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises in September 1958. Here, the initially reluctant Chancellor was "seduced" and agreed to a "special relationship" which included Bonn's renunciation of nuclear weapons and acceptance of the GDR's post-1945 eastern borders even in the case of reunification.⁷⁵ As Debré told Uvalić, French concerns derived from the uncertainty that would be posed by a neutral Germany, as there would be no guarantees that it would not fall under Soviet influence.⁷⁶ From this stemmed the need to integrate the FRG into Western structures. The Yugoslavs, however, had long objected to Bonn's opposition to any Western negotiations with Moscow, which they believed reinforced the status quo and fed international tensions. Belgrade further rejected the Hallstein Doctrine, in particular the thesis that West Germany was the only legitimate German state, and

⁷³ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–30, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 411194, 22.04.1959.

⁷⁴ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 17–18.

⁷⁵ For the standard Francocentric narrative of de Gaulle "seducing" Adenauer at Colombey see Jackson, *De Gaulle*, 101. However, the West Germans had their own interest in pursuing cooperation with the French, which, as Soutou shows, predated the first Colombey meeting. See Soutou, *L'alliance incertaine*, Chapters 3–6.

⁷⁶ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 44475, 17.02.1959.

disapproved of Bonn's attempt to escape its postwar pariah status and "strengthen its economic and military potential" through European integration.⁷⁷

Winter 1959/60 was therefore a period of contradictions in Belgrade. While in late 1959 the Yugoslavs were politically distancing themselves from Algeria and were seeking to mend relations with France, the bilateral relationship was aggravated by a shift in Belgrade's interpretation of de Gaulle's grand design and by the two capitals' clash of views on the role of the Great Powers in the world and the future of communism. Two aspects of Gaullism are key here. Firstly, in the General's conception of the world, nations were the immutable and foundational units, while ideologies were ephemeral. Secondly, despite the growth of active neutralism in the Third World, de Gaulle scorned the United Nations and believed that the Great Powers – that is, the five nuclear powers of the United States, the Soviet Union, France, Britain, and China – retained disproportionate power and responsibility in international affairs. At his semi-annual press conference in November 1959, the General pontificated upon the inevitability of the collapse of communism, which would pave the way for his European Europe.⁷⁸ His remarks offended Belgrade on the grounds of his categorization of Yugoslavia as a Soviet bloc state, his insinuation that Tito's regime had been installed by the Soviets, and his snub of smaller states. The Yugoslavian embassy in Paris interpreted his statements as a courting of Moscow, to whom he was proposing a "*marchandage*" of zones of interest to secure for himself a free hand in Algeria, and called for a sharp and official *démarche* at the highest levels in response to his comments.⁷⁹ When informed that the speech was allegedly not drafted ahead of time and that the General had spoken freely as per his usual manner, Koča told Broustra that he personally found

⁷⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/3, Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry report, "Informativni materijali o medjunarodnom razvitku," Folio 17–19, 45–56, 09.03.1960.

⁷⁸ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 6–9, 79–84.

⁷⁹ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Venisnik) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 429338, 11.11.1959.

it difficult to accept that de Gaulle genuinely believed in what he had said. The French conceded and issued a correction to de Gaulle's statement, albeit one that Koča found "confusing."⁸⁰

The following month de Gaulle met with Uvalić. In contrast to his cordiality in their encounters the previous year, at the Ambassador's professions of his country's desire to maintain relations and see a strong France play an active role on the world stage, the General replied that his government neither liked nor approved of the communist regime in Yugoslavia, but had no intentions of lending support to any opposition elements now or in the future. Adding that "[we] respect the order in [your] country," he told the Ambassador that the key to more fruitful bilateral relations lay in Yugoslavia's respect of that same principle. Clearly alluding to Belgrade's support of the FLN and further resenting its stance on nuclear testing, he emphasized the need for greater collaboration among the European nations to "convince the Russians of the need for equal and peaceful cooperation. Only if that succeeds will Europe be capable of assuming a place in the world that corresponds to its significance."⁸¹

From spring 1960 onward, Franco-Yugoslavian relations steadily worsened as French suspicions of the Yugoslavs intensified. In March 1960 the *Slovenija* was intercepted once again, this time carrying Red Cross supplies to North Africa.⁸² Over the remainder of 1960 five more ships were intercepted (the *Srbija*, the *Dubrava*, the *Martin Krpan*, the *Rijeka*, and the *Zadar*), some with more justification than others. The *Dubrava* was not destined for North Africa at all, but had been en route to Belfast. Of the six ships stopped in 1960, only the *Martin Krpan* was found to carry contraband, and was forced to dock in Oran.⁸³ The following year, seven ships

⁸⁰ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-4, Note on Koča's conversation with Broustra, Folio 984, 13.11.1959.

⁸¹ DSIP, PA, 1959 F-31, Telegram from Uvalić to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 431860, 09.12.1959.

⁸² MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Telegram from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 169, 01.04.1960.

⁸³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 185, Note from the Yugoslavian embassy to Couve protesting the interception of the *Srbija*, Folio 165-168, 01.07.1960.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 175, 22.12.1960.; DSIP, PA, 1961 F-28, Report on the *Dubrava*, Doc. 41104, undated.

were intercepted (the *Blato*, the *Franjo Supilo*, the *Lošinj*, the *Kastav*, the *Orijen*, the *Kosovo*, and the *Šubićevac*) and another (the *Pula*) was observed but not stopped.⁸⁴

Although Belgrade protested the unlawful interception of Yugoslavian commercial ships and continued to deny that it was supplying arms of bloc provenance to the FLN, by March 1960 it was clear that Belgrade's position on Algeria was once again hardening, conditioned partly in response to de Gaulle's own tough stance on Yugoslavia, which was in turn inspired by his plans for a rapprochement with Moscow.⁸⁵ That same month the difficult task of being Tito's Ambassador in France was passed from Uvalić to Darko Černej, who had previously served as Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Mexico, Sweden, and Italy.⁸⁶

That Tito had, since the early 1950s, hoped for more concrete forms of cooperation between France and Yugoslavia and for greater Western European independence from the United States in an effort to bring an end to the Cold War was not in doubt. As late as early 1960 the Yugoslavs laboured under the expectation that given the "essential conceptions of its foreign policy," France would come to the realization that good relations with an independent and extra-bloc Yugoslavia were in its interest and that this would prompt it to soften its hostility toward Belgrade's North African policy.⁸⁷ Broustra also posited that while neither publicly calling for, nor anticipating, a schism between de Gaulle and Adenauer or the formation of a third bloc under

⁸⁴ DSIP, PA, 1961 F-27, Note on Barišić's conversation with Arnaud, Doc. 411480, 15.04.1961.; *Ibid.*, Note on Barišić's conversation with Arnaud, Doc. 414197, 19.05.1961.; *Ibid.*, Note on Belamarić's conversation with Arnaud, Doc. 422634, 20.07.1960.; *Ibid.*, 1961 F-28, Protest note from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 413340, 08.05.1961.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Mates to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 423083, 27.07.1961.; *Ibid.*, Note on the interception of the *Kosovo*, Doc. 427338, 12.09.1961.

⁸⁵ Despite taking a much harder stance on Berlin than the Anglo-Americans as a means of currying favour with Bonn, de Gaulle nevertheless sought closer ties with Moscow as a means of challenging American hegemony and met with Khrushchev in Paris in March 1960. This brief rapprochement ended two months later at the Paris summit (see n.66). Jackson, *De Gaulle*, 138; Evguenia Obitchkina, "L'URSS face à la décolonisation de l'Algérie et de l'Afrique noire," Mikhaïl Narinskiy and Maurice Vaïsse, eds., *Les crises dans les relations franco-soviétiques, 1954-1991* (Paris: A. Pedone, 2009), 136-139.

⁸⁶ Darko Stuparić, *Diplomati izvan protokola: Ambasadori Titove Jugoslavije* (Zagreb: Centar za kulturnu djelatnost Saveza Socijalističke Omladine Zagreba, 1978), 272.

⁸⁷ DSIP, PA, 1960 F-29, "Neki momenti iz bilateralnih odnosa Jugoslavija-Francuska," Doc. 436086, 12.10.1960.

French leadership, many in Belgrade nurtured hopes of precisely that and were eager to see France distance itself from the Western alliance.⁸⁸ Despite these hopes, Belgrade had come to accept that, on balance, its attempts to develop political relations with France since 1945 had not been successful. Coupled with de Gaulle's refusal to distinguish between different types of socialist regimes and a lack of avenues along which to pursue a rapprochement, Belgrade had few remaining courses of action available.⁸⁹ In the Marxist world view, the overthrow of imperialism and the liberation of the subjugated nations of the world was an inevitable historical process. As Koča said before the United Nations in December 1960, to delay "a democratic solution [to the Algerian problem] would be to implicitly legalize force as a means of suppressing the legitimate aspirations of a nation, and therefore to legalize war in general."⁹⁰ Therefore, just as the first overt signs, however symbolic, of de Gaulle's challenge to Washington's hegemony became evident – the withdrawal of France's Mediterranean fleet from NATO command, the prohibition against the placing of American nuclear weapons on French territory, the visit with Khrushchev – Belgrade abandoned its active political neutralism of the mid-1950s and embraced an ideologically-tinted non-alignment instead.⁹¹

While the French Ambassador attributed Tito's flight into the Third World purely to concerns of prestige and bitterness over being rejected from summit diplomacy,⁹² the reality was that it was a decision borne of a combination of ideological prerogatives, a desire to distinguish himself from a Moscow that was officially reticent toward Algeria, a new-found confidence underpinned by domestic economic growth, a lack of East–West options, as well as concerns of prestige. With isolation from the East and relative isolation from the West, Belgrade had

⁸⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 182, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 178–179, 13.04.1960.

⁸⁹ DSIP, PA, 1960 F–29, "Plan aktivnosti jugoslovenske ambasade u Parizu za 1960. godinu," Doc. 47323, undated.

⁹⁰ IAB, Fond Koča Popović, Box 38K, Speech on Algeria to the United Nations General Assembly, 13.12.1960.

⁹¹ For de Gaulle's challenge to American hegemony see Jackson, *De Gaulle*, 97–98.

⁹² MAE, Série Z, Carton 161, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 248, 16.03.1960.

nowhere else to go. However, a sudden surge in the country's economy in 1959, facilitated by factory decentralization and "neo-entrepreneurial capitalist activities," opened the door to a greater, though still modest, political and economic offensive in Africa.⁹³ Lastly, from both an ideological and geopolitical perspective, if neo-colonialism and a superpower peace were to be avoided, then Yugoslavia had to engage and prevent superpower and Great Power competition in the Third World.⁹⁴ In this atmosphere Tito's Foreign Minister urged action over analysis, because "one must act, whereas analyses are never complete."⁹⁵ Proceeding along their foreign policy course of "principle and realism" (*principijelnost i realizam*), the Yugoslavs permitted the FLN to open a bureau in their capital in spring 1960.⁹⁶ The French, having resigned themselves to the fact that the Yugoslavs were not using their influence to moderate the situation to France's advantage, desisted in their attempts to sway Belgrade in its voting on Algeria at the United Nations, and did not submit a formal protest against the opening of the FLN bureau.⁹⁷

The Algerian question expectedly took its toll on Franco-Yugoslavian relations. At the United Nations, Koča denounced the "mass slaughters that were conducted in the cities of Algeria by French colonial settlers and French occupation army troops."⁹⁸ French decolonization in 1960 had created more than ten new African countries, including Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Cameroon, and Senegal, all of whom were potential recruits for non-alignment. Having however ambiguously and inadvertently planted the seed of a non-aligned summit in his New Year's 1958 speech, Tito's idea coincided with Nehru and Mao's plans for a second Afro-Asian

⁹³ Zbigniew Brzezinski, ed., *Africa and the Communist World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), 118–119.

⁹⁴ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/3, Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry report, "Informativni materijali o međunarodnom razvitku," 09.03.1960.

⁹⁵ IAB, Fond Koča Popović, Box 7K, Koča's notes on Yugoslavian foreign policy, 26.02.1960.

⁹⁶ IAB, Fond Koča Popović, Box 7K, Koča's notes on Yugoslavian foreign policy, 26.02.1960. For the opening of the FLN bureau in Belgrade see DSIP, PA, 1960 F–29, Note on Koča's conversation with Broustra, Doc. 46326, 09.03.1960.

⁹⁷ Petrović, *Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u vreme alžirskog rata*, 293; DSIP, PA, 1960 F–29, Note on Koča's conversation with Broustra, Doc. 46326, 09.03.1960.

⁹⁸ IAB, Fond Koča Popović, Box 38K, Speech on Algeria to the United Nations General Assembly, 13.12.1960.

conference, which stood to marginalize Belgrade – as a European capital and doctrinal enemy of China – from the non-aligned movement.⁹⁹ Tito took a hard line against the West over Berlin, blaming the failure of the May 1960 Paris summit on the Western powers' collective belligerence, and endeavoured to bring the non-aligned movement under Yugoslavian leadership.¹⁰⁰ That year, Khrushchev called for all heads of state to attend the UN General Assembly, and many did in order to take advantage of the opportunity to not only air their views on the international situation, but also to sway the countries of the developing world. Tito, along with Nasser, Nehru, Sukarno, and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, presented the "Initiative of the Five," calling for greater dialogue between the superpowers in response to the failure of the Paris summit to resolve the Berlin question. While ineffective, the initiative paved the way for greater cooperation and coordination between the five leaders, culminating with the inaugural summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in September 1961 that coincided with the Berlin crisis, which was prompted by the August decision by the Soviets and East Germans to seal the border between the two halves of the city.¹⁰¹

Tito's bid to give the conference a broader base by expanding beyond its Afro-Asian foundation, liable to fall under Chinese influence, and building a bridge between the leftist and pro-Western African elements, produced limited results. His visit to Northwest Africa in March–April 1961 proved more one-sided than advertised, attesting to the fundamentally ideologically-tinted yet simultaneously anti-Soviet character of his non-aligned vision. Visiting the "friendly" countries of the "progressive" Casablanca Group (Tunisia, Morocco, Mali, Guinea, Togo, Liberia, and Ghana) he incurred reproach from the French for neglecting to visit the

⁹⁹ Petrović, *Titova lična diplomatija*, 167–174.

¹⁰⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 161, Telegram from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Folio 324–325, 26.12.1960.

¹⁰¹ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 342–344, 347. For the timing of the Berlin crisis see Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 322–323.

Francophone countries of the moderate Brazzaville Group.¹⁰² (Belgrade did note, however, that the French did not react to Tito's visit to Africa as unfavourably as the Yugoslavs had anticipated, especially since Tito abstained from public condemnation of the French.)¹⁰³

Although Tito had considerable influence over progressive African leaders, in addition to his failure to recruit African moderates Washington actively dissuaded Latin American countries from attending.¹⁰⁴ Tito found himself outnumbered at the conference, where Yugoslavia and Cyprus were the only European attendees. Cuba was the sole Latin American delegate, while only three countries (Brazil, Bolivia, and Ecuador) attended as official observers. The remaining 22 official delegations were from Asia and Africa, including the GPRA.¹⁰⁵ A host of unofficial observers also attended, including the French, Italian, and Japanese socialist parties, a number of African liberation movements, the *Fédération Mondiale des Anciens Combattants*, as well as the American National Committee Against Nuclear Proliferation. Mendès France also sent a message of support to the conference.¹⁰⁶

As explained by Koča, the Berlin crisis, nuclear proliferation, and a series of wars of decolonization in Africa merited a meeting of the non-aligned countries to exchange views and coordinate action because the powers of both blocs had shown themselves incapable of solving international problems. Arguing that a “balance of terror” was not a recipe for peace, Belgrade called for the formation of a “third [non-armed] force” – emphasizing its distinction from a

¹⁰² DSIP, PA, 1961 F-27, Telegram from Černež to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 415045, 12.05.1961.; Brzezinski, ed., *Africa and the Communist World*, 121, 126.

¹⁰³ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, “Ocjena posjete Pretsjednika afričkim zemljama,” undated.

¹⁰⁴ Jovan Čavoški, “Between Great Powers and Third World Neutralists: The Belgrade Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement, 1961,” Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné, and Nada Boškovića, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 190–198.

¹⁰⁵ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 368.

¹⁰⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Letter from Broustra to the French Foreign Ministry, Annex: “Conférence des pays non-engagés: Délégations,” Doc. 667, 30.08.1961.; DSIP, PA, 1961 F-27, Telegram from Černež to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 321264, 19.10.1961.

“third [armed] bloc” – to contribute to the shaping of world affairs.¹⁰⁷ The Quai was correct in identifying the central contradiction within the endeavour: the conference needed the greatest number of participants possible to gain international clout, but its success was predicated on unanimity on essential points: something that would be difficult to achieve given the number and diversity of the convening states.¹⁰⁸ The work of the conference was also hampered by the disagreement between Tito and the megalomaniac Nasser, as well as the growing rift between Tito and Nasser, who wanted to concretely define non-alignment, and Nehru, who conceived of the idea as more open-ended.¹⁰⁹ Despite these potentially terminal problems latent in the “third force” project, the Quai counseled against a Western show of *Schadenfreude* at the gulf between the passively “neutral” and more actively “non-aligned” parties, and at the movement’s failure to recruit Latin America, which benefited the West.¹¹⁰

As John Lewis Gaddis remarked, the Non-Aligned Movement’s power “resided in the possibility that the countries that constituted it might cease to remain non-aligned.”¹¹¹ The Big Four therefore anxiously watched to see what stance on Berlin would be assumed by the conference participants.¹¹² The French calculated that Belgrade, although espousing similar views as Moscow on Berlin, would not risk complicating matters for the Western powers by pushing for a conference vote that would singlehandedly benefit the Soviets. The Quai thus

¹⁰⁷ Koča Popović, “After the Belgrade Conference,” *Socialist Thought and Practice* Issue 1, No. 4 (1961), 1–9.

¹⁰⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 237, “Note a.s. La Conférence au sommet des Etats non engagés,” Doc. 466, 13.07.1961. Further weakening the internal cohesion was the fact that when faced with the choice between the movement’s stated goals and their own vital national interests, leaders of non-aligned countries more often than not opted for the latter. Lorenz Lüthi, “The Non-Aligned: Apart From and Still Within the Cold War,” Mišković *et al.*, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, 107.

¹⁰⁹ For the rift between Tito and Nasser see Dragan Bogetić and Aleksandar Životić, *Jugoslavija i arapsko-izraelski rat 1967*. (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 76–79. For the Tito/Nasser–Nehru rift see Guy Arnold, *The A to Z of the Non-Aligned Movement and Third World* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 197.

¹¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 237, “Note pour la délégation française à l’O.T.A.N. a.s. La Conférence au Sommet des Etats non engagés,” 01.07.1961.

¹¹¹ Gaddis, “Grand Strategies in the Cold War,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 12–13.

¹¹² For British and American attitudes to the conference see Robert B. Rakove, “Two Roads to Belgrade: The United States, Great Britain, and the First Non-Aligned Conference,” *Cold War History* Vol. 14, No. 3 (2014), 337–357.

instructed its ambassadors to the convening Third World nations to clarify the Western position on Berlin to those governments, without submitting anything in writing and “without lending the impression that we are concerned with ‘pleading’ our cause.”¹¹³ The Quai was to be disappointed. On the eve of the conference the Soviet Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Alexei Yepishev, informed Tito of his government’s decision to resume nuclear testing and warned that Khrushchev expected Belgrade’s support on the matter. Tito objected to the Soviet move, which was clearly intended to manipulate him and sabotage the conference, but could not bring himself to act to the contrary. Koča told American Ambassador George F. Kennan that he was convinced that Tito would condemn the Soviet decision at the conference, and was blindsided when Tito unleashed a torrential and ideologically-laden condemnation of the “blocist” Common Market, the “reactionary and fascist forces which are remnants of Hitler’s war machine” in West Germany, the “unrestrained military thugs” of the French army in Algeria, and the “savage Portuguese” in Angola. The speech revealed Tito’s true colours: not once did he use the term “non-alignment” (*nesvrstanost*), which denoted moral and political equidistance. He opted instead for more nebulous phrasing, such as “non-engagement” (*neangažovanost*), “extra-bloc states” (*vanblokovske zemlje*), and “non-committed states” (*nevezane zemlje*). Tito was determined to preserve Yugoslavia’s political and territorial independence from Moscow, but he was also equally determined to prove his ideological credentials to the Soviets and preserve socialism at home. He was therefore not prepared to embrace a long-term *hors-bloc* policy of literal non-alignment, because a moral and ideological equidistance from the blocs was simply not possible. He thus set a decidedly anti-Western tone at the conference, blaming the Soviet decision to resume nuclear testing on the French detonation in the Sahara of the preceding year.

¹¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 233, Telegram from the French Foreign Ministry (Meurice), Doc. 129, 11.08.1961.

As Koča scrambled to mitigate the damage, Kennan remarked that “President Tito did not say anything about Germany and Berlin that Mr. Khrushchev could not have said himself.”¹¹⁴

The Yugoslav leader’s speech exposed his unwavering ideological conviction and consequent pro-Soviet orientation, and his disinclination to sacrifice either for the sake of non-ideological non-alignment as a long-term foreign policy course.¹¹⁵ While Tito’s position earned him more general support from the African delegations than Nehru’s moderate stance did, his pro-Soviet line isolated him from all but the most radical of African leaders, such as Nkrumah.¹¹⁶ While the Moscow press boasted that the conference was in complete agreement with Soviet theses, Bonn expressed disappointment that only the Cypriot Archbishop Makarios made reference to the German people’s right to self-determination – although it was relieved that most attendees did not intend to recognize the GDR.¹¹⁷ Claude Arnaud, the French chargé in Belgrade, however, was less surprised by Tito’s speech than by Washington’s reaction to it, pointing out that “Tito, in fact, did not say anything [at the conference] that he had not said earlier in no less clear terms, either himself or through a spokesperson.”¹¹⁸

Cultural Exchange in Retreat, 1960–1961

To the French, there was no question that the Belgrade conference consolidated Yugoslavia’s international position and bolstered its prestige.¹¹⁹ But the absence of French

¹¹⁴ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi 1961–1971* (Beograd: ISI, 2012), 29–34, 106; MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Telegram from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 862/872, 03.09.1961.

¹¹⁵ Bogetić, *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije*, 371.

¹¹⁶ Brzezinski, ed., *Africa and the Communist World*, 121–122.

¹¹⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Telegram from the French Ambassador to Moscow (Dejean) to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 4869/70, 05.09.1961.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Bonn (Seydoux) to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 3991/95, 04.09.1961.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from Bonn (Seydoux) to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 4062/70, 07.09.1961.

¹¹⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Letter from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 711, 27.09.1961. Arnaud’s statement corroborated Kennan’s sentiment that Tito “considered himself by outlook and conviction a good Marxian Communist and never encouraged anyone to suppose that he was anything else.” Kennan, *Memoirs*, Vol. II, 277.

¹¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Letter from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 711, 27.09.1961.

surprise at Tito's pronouncements drew upon more than a year of almost non-existent diplomatic relations. The year 1961 in particular represented an unprecedented low, in which Yugoslavian anti-colonialism and a rebuffing of French efforts to promote their culture in Yugoslavia, went too far for Paris. That year seven Yugoslavian ships were intercepted in the Mediterranean, as noted above. Although in early 1961 the Quai contemplated reducing trade with Yugoslavia to indicate its displeasure at Belgrade's Mediterranean activities, the decision was made to not take that step for a number of reasons: one, it was feared that it would anger Belgrade and move it to lend even greater material support to the FLN; two, it would damage progress in the domain of cultural relations, which was beginning to see an improvement that could lead to a "confirmation of our privileged place in Yugoslavia;" and three, a deterioration in economic relations would only benefit others, particularly Britain, which de Gaulle was determined to keep out of the continent.¹²⁰ At stake, among other things, were three lucrative deals: a licencing contract between the French automaker Citroën and the Slovenian manufacturer Tomos, the negotiations for which had begun in 1959; sales of three Caravelle passenger aircraft to the Yugoslavian national carrier JAT; and sales of Panhard armoured cars and anti-tank guns to the Yugoslavian army.¹²¹ Operating under the assumption that the downturn in Franco-Yugoslavian relations was temporary, the Quai and the French Defence Ministry were in favour of arms sales to Yugoslavia as long as said arms did not find their way into North Africa, while the Caravelle sales were deemed a prime opportunity for France to place itself onto the Third World's emerging aviation market, particularly as JAT was expanding its routes into Asia and Africa.¹²²

¹²⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, "Note a.s. Attitude yougoslave envers la France," 13.01.1961.

¹²¹ DSIP, PA, 1960 F-29, Letter from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry III Section (Brzić) to the SIV Industry Secretary (Brkić), Doc. 421106, 24.08.1960.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, "Note A/S. Vente de la Caravelle à la Yougoslavie," Doc. 48, 27.11.1961.; *Ibid.*, Carton 222, "Note A/S. Vente d'armes à la Yougoslavie," Doc. 44, 02.11.1961.

¹²² MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, "Note a.s. Vente d'armes à la Yougoslavie," Doc. 42, 14.10.1961.; *Ibid.*, "Note a.s. Vente de Caravelle à la Yougoslavie," 18.11.1961.

The year 1961 also brought significant changes to bilateral cultural relations. Yugoslavian propaganda efforts in France had all but ceased. Belgrade had stopped participating at international trade fairs in France in the years 1956–1964 due to a lack of funds, and in response, Paris ceased attending Yugoslavian fairs.¹²³ Financial and personnel difficulties also meant that timely communication between the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry and its embassy in Paris, especially with regard to press and other time-sensitive matters, was challenging.¹²⁴ The publication of *Questions actuelles du socialisme* had ceased because its printing in France after the closing of the Yugoslavian information agency was illegal according to French law. Its publication was moved to Yugoslavia but the printing and dissemination of it in France proved difficult and sporadic.¹²⁵ The publication of *Les nouvelles yougoslaves* was also suspended in September 1958 because of a lack of funds and translators.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, new press and language laws promulgated in Yugoslavia in 1960–1961 affected the propagation of French culture. The French operated the cultural centre (along with a reading room and bookstore) in Belgrade as an extension of their embassy, which Belgrade never recognized as such, classifying it instead as an information agency. Despite the fact that the reading room had reopened in 1945, its status had never been formally regulated. As long as the Yugoslavian information agency operated in Paris, the import and sale of French books into Yugoslavia was regulated through that body. With the closing of the agency in December 1958, however, it was decided that Yugoslavian enterprises would import French books and would sell them to the French embassy,

¹²³ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–32, Letter from the Yugoslavian Chamber of Foreign Trade (Djordjević) to the Foreign Ministry, Doc. 422218, 25.08.1959.; *Ibid.*, 1959 F–30, “O nekim pitanjima francusko-jugoslovenskih privrednih odnosa,” Doc. 41109, 16.01.1959. For Yugoslavia’s participation in the 1964 Paris trade fair see *Ibid.*, 1964 F–46, “Zadaci ekonomskog odeljenja u 1964 godini,” Doc. 412512, undated.

¹²⁴ DSIP, PA, 1961 F–28, “Izveštaj o informativno-propagandnoj aktivnosti u 1960 godini,” Doc. 44853, undated.

¹²⁵ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–31, “Izdavanje revije QAS posle likvidacije Agencije,” Doc. 415016, 29.05.1959.; *Ibid.*, 1961 F–28, “Izveštaj o informativno-propagandnoj aktivnosti u 1960 godini,” Doc. 44853, undated.

¹²⁶ DSIP, PA, 1959 F–32, “Godišnji izveštaj odeljenja za štampu,” Doc. 44977, undated.

which would then resell the books to interested individuals and groups.¹²⁷ The central problem to this arrangement was two-fold. One, such a scheme meant a flight of the dinar out of Yugoslavia, which was generally forbidden as a measure to protect the overvalued and non-convertible (to 1965) currency.¹²⁸ Two, the French reading room's status was based on the principle of reciprocity; however, there was no Yugoslavian reading room in Paris, and French press laws severely restricted the sales and distribution of foreign literature.¹²⁹ In an effort to balance the situation a new Yugoslavian press law, scheduled to come into force in late 1960, mandated that bilateral agreements be drafted to regulate the existence of foreign information centres such as the French reading room. Without such an agreement, after the promulgation of the law the work of the French reading room would become illegal.¹³⁰

The United States, Soviet Union, Great Britain, and Austria operated information offices similar to the French reading room in Yugoslavia. Reluctant to unilaterally pass the law, in February 1961 the Yugoslavs invited representatives of the five countries to discuss the changes that the new rule would require before it was set to come into force on June 9. None of the five countries formally replied, although the French, Austrians, and Soviets privately indicated that they would attend the talks (which they did not). While neither power wished to risk the cessation of its cultural propaganda work, the collective delaying tactics were intended to exert pressure on Belgrade and were based on the assumption that the Yugoslavs would not risk souring relations with all five parties by unilaterally shutting down their agencies after June 9.¹³¹

After weeks of no response, the French launched a formal protest against the “restrictive” press

¹²⁷ DSIP, PA, 1960 F–29, Note on the new Yugoslavian press law, Doc. 415173, 04.06.1960.

¹²⁸ Biljana Stojanović, “Exchange Rate Regimes of the Dinar, 1945–1990: An Assessment of Appropriateness and Efficiency,” *The Experience of Exchange Rate Regimes in Southeastern Europe in a Historical and Comparative Perspective*, Proceedings of *Oesterreichische Nationalbank* (OeNB) Workshops No. 13 (Apr., 2007), 198–207.

¹²⁹ DSIP, PA, 1956 F–24, Letter from the Federal Foreign Trade Chamber (Aleksić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 47608, 17.05.1956.

¹³⁰ DSIP, PA, 1960 F–29, Note on the new Yugoslavian press law, Doc. 415173, 04.06.1960.

¹³¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, “ODINF DSIPa: Informacija o sprovođenju u život novog zakona o štampi,” 11.04.1961.

laws which would affect the work of their reading room in Belgrade and the language courses at their cultural institute in Zagreb, as well as the publication of the AFP bulletin in Yugoslavia. While the Quai appealed to the need to avoid bilateral conflicts, such as this apparent severing of cultural relations, Ambassador Černej retorted that the ongoing interception of Yugoslavian ships hardly constituted an avoidance of conflict. By mid-March, reluctant to risk their “privileged place” in Yugoslavia, the French agreed to talks regarding the press law and the conclusion of a cultural accord.¹³²

While Černej insisted that the press law was not aimed at the French specifically, it did coincide with diplomatic tensions over Algeria, as well as demonstrations in Belgrade against the murder of the Congolese Pan-Africanist independence leader Patrice Lumumba, during which a group of breakaway demonstrators smashed a couple of windows of the French embassy.¹³³ While the French were interested only in the promotion of their own culture abroad and appealed to the need for friendship and understanding on that score, they demonstrated their displeasure toward Belgrade in a host of other ways, including their loss of interest in the 1955 bilateral agreement on industrial cooperation and technical assistance (which covered revolving credits for the development of Yugoslavian heavy industry and infrastructure, and training of technical cadres in France), as well as their unwillingness to entertain Yugoslavia’s request for assistance in the reform of its chronically unstable currency.¹³⁴ Under the new Yugoslavian law, without diplomatic immunity the directors of the French cultural centres in Belgrade and Zagreb could face a year in prison for the unauthorized distribution of foreign media. Rather than close these institutions, Paris limited their activities – particularly sales of books and film screenings – as

¹³² AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, Chronology of bilateral relations, February 9–March 5, 1961, undated.

¹³³ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, Chronology of bilateral relations, February 9–March 5, 1961, undated.

¹³⁴ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, Evaluation of bilateral relations, February 9–March 5, 1961, undated.

dictated by the new law.¹³⁵ In exchange for Yugoslavian flexibility on the issue, the French were willing to tie it to the reopening of the Yugoslavian consulate in Marseille, the closure of which the French had ordered after the Suez Crisis.¹³⁶ That year, agreements were struck on both the regulation of sales of French books, newspapers, music records and films, as well as the reopening of the Marseille consulate.¹³⁷

Closely connected to the press law was a new decree on the instruction of foreign languages in Yugoslavia. As per the press law of June 1961, the French cultural institute in Zagreb could no longer run language courses.¹³⁸ That same year, a federal law called for all primary and secondary schools in Yugoslavia to prioritize the teaching of English and Russian, “the only international languages,” at the expense of the Yugoslavian population’s traditional preference for French and German.¹³⁹ For France, a former hegemon struggling to rein in a disastrous colonial war and regain its grandeur, there was no greater insult than the claim that French was not an international language.

Belgrade Fallout, September 1961–August 1962

Diplomatic and cultural tensions had reached an unprecedented high over North Africa in 1960–1961, although this did not stop Paris from moving forward with arms and aircraft sales to Yugoslavia. Paris did, however, informally protest Belgrade’s April 1961 decision to extend de facto recognition to the GPRA, and warned that de jure recognition would not be without consequence.¹⁴⁰ French colonial problems were of secondary concern at the Belgrade conference where, apart from Tito, only the Burmese, Congolese, and GPRA delegates condemned its

¹³⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, “Note a/s accord culturel avec la Yougoslavie,” 25.11.1963.

¹³⁶ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, “FNRJ–Francuska: Hronologija bilateralnih odnosa od 5–13. Aprila 1961 godine,” undated.

¹³⁷ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, “Plan naše aktivnosti prema Francuskoj,” Doc. 443698, undated; *Ibid.*, Letter from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Drndić) to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 47104, 03.03.1962.

¹³⁸ DSIP, PA, 1961 F–27, Note on Bučević’s conversation with Charpentrat, Doc. 411686 11.04.1961.

¹³⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, “Note a/s accord culturel avec la Yougoslavie,” 25.11.1963.

¹⁴⁰ AJ, A KPR, I-5-a/4, “FNRJ–Francuska: Hronologija bilateralnih odnosa od 13 do 17 aprila 1961. god.,” undated.

“arrogant” attitude and obstruction of the United Nations.¹⁴¹ The central problem that stemmed from the conference for Paris was its contention that Yugoslavia had de jure recognized the GPRA by treating its delegation as a fully-fledged participant. The Yugoslavs argued that the de facto status had not changed, as indicated by Belgrade’s diplomatic roll that only listed the GPRA as a “diplomatic mission” on the very last page, behind the United Nations. While not wishing to sever diplomatic relations, the Yugoslavs nevertheless resented Paris’s assumption that it could strong-arm Belgrade into changing its foreign policy.¹⁴²

Given that Belgrade had had no diplomatic relations with Franco’s Spain and Salazar’s Portugal since 1945 and had broken relations with Bonn in 1957, Kennan perceived a Yugoslavian retreat from Western Europe and a diplomatic break between Paris and Belgrade.¹⁴³ He was correct, although the break that would be initiated by Paris was, confusingly, not made until February 1962. The Quai questioned the wisdom of breaking relations with Yugoslavia over its recognition of the GPRA almost six months after the fact, given that negotiations between Paris and the FLN were on the verge of success.¹⁴⁴ It argued that France had nothing to gain by unnecessarily making an example out of Yugoslavia, when numerous other countries had recognized the GPRA as early as 1959. It further cautioned against isolating Belgrade from the Paris–Bonn axis, given that Anglo-Yugoslavian trade relations were prospering and that Washington continued pumping aid into the country despite its disapproval of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Belgrade’s foreign policy.¹⁴⁵ The French withheld their Ambassador, Jean-André Binoche (who had nominally replaced Broustra in mid-1961 but had yet to arrive in

¹⁴¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Letter from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 685, 11.09.1961.

¹⁴² MAE, Série Z, Carton 238, Note on Baudet’s conversation with Ambassador Smolaka in Bern, Doc. 944, 06.03.1962.

¹⁴³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 236, Telegram from the French embassy in Belgrade to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 987, 10.10.1961.

¹⁴⁴ The Evian Accords were signed the following month.

¹⁴⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, “Note pour le Ministre: Rapports franco-yougoslaves,” 31.01.1962.

Belgrade), and insisted that Černej leave Paris. Belgrade initially refused to recall Černej given that the Paris–GPRa negotiations were going on at that very moment, and deputy Foreign Minister Mates telegraphed his voyaging superiors aboard the *Galeb*, reasoning that the French were making an example of Yugoslavia because “we are a European country and are too important.”¹⁴⁶ Despite the French attitude, Tito sent a telegram of congratulations to de Gaulle following the conclusion of the Evian Accords.¹⁴⁷ Belgrade did eventually agree to recall Černej but noted that the gesture did not mean that it accepted the French line of argumentation. While Paris did not wish to make the break public, Belgrade begged to differ and published the news.¹⁴⁸

Just as de Gaulle believed that the collapse of communism was inevitable, so too the Yugoslavs believed that decolonization as a historical process was unstoppable. The Yugoslavs maintained that their Algerian policy was in no way motivated by an anti-French bias but that it was dictated by the “needs of the contemporary world and its inevitable evolution which, in perspective, is also in the true interest of the French people.”¹⁴⁹ Belgrade had done its best to contain the damage wrought to bilateral relations by the Algerian problem and to prevent it from affecting other avenues of cooperation.¹⁵⁰ In response to the French decision to withhold Binoche, the Yugoslavian press expressed sadness and disappointment and appealed to the “important results” achieved by the long history of the traditional friendship – a reference which had ceased to be commonplace in communist Yugoslavia. Arnaud noted that far from giving him the cold shoulder as they had done during the lead-up to the Belgrade Conference, his usual contacts feared a complete severance of diplomatic relations and spoke at unprecedented length

¹⁴⁶ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, Telegram from Mates to the *Galeb*, Doc. 43640, 03.02.1962.

¹⁴⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-1/232, Telegram from Tito to de Gaulle, 20.03.1962.

¹⁴⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 89/101, 05.02.1962.

¹⁴⁹ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, “Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u svetlosti alžirskog problema,” Doc. 42987, 30.03.1962.

¹⁵⁰ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, “Francusko-jugoslovenski odnosi u svetlosti alžirskog problema,” Doc. 42987, 30.03.1962.

about their sympathies to France and some, including the deputy editor-in-chief of the Slovenian periodical *Komunist*, even conceded that the French point of view was valid.¹⁵¹

Despite their efforts, after 1960 the Yugoslavs found themselves in an unfamiliar situation: having over the course of the 1950s valued their strong relations with France in all domains except economic, by 1962 only economic relations offered a modicum of satisfaction. On the diplomatic front, Belgrade was particularly affronted by the double standard that was being applied by Paris. At the same time that it ‘recalled’ Binoche in February, Paris also recalled its Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Maurice Dejean. That the French were making an example out of Yugoslavia, their “traditional friend” from whom they expected more understanding than from Russia, their “traditional ally,” was abundantly clear. In July, four months after the conclusion of the Evian Accords, Paris announced Dejean’s return to Moscow but not Binoche’s arrival in Belgrade. Arnaud urged the Quai to send Binoche immediately because his contacts at the Foreign Ministry have all expressed:

...the conviction that new avenues can now be opened for Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation. The Algerian problem now resolved, they are eager to ‘turn over a new leaf.’ It is important for us to not ‘miss the boat.’ I believe these comments to be sincere [...] and it is clear that our Ambassador would be particularly welcomed in Belgrade.¹⁵²

Binoche was dispatched to Belgrade in August and was invited to Brioni to present his letter of credence to Tito, Koča, and Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic, Bogdan Crnobrnja. Tito justified Belgrade’s position on Algeria and emphasized at length the need and desire to restore the Franco-Yugoslavian friendship “to its full splendor.” He asked Binoche to transmit his sincerest salutations to de Gaulle even though Binoche came bearing no such message from the French President.¹⁵³ Instead of sending Černež back to Paris, Belgrade sent Dimitrije “Mita” Miljković, who had previously been editor and director of *Politika*, as well as

¹⁵¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Letter from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 156, 26.02.1962.

¹⁵² MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from Arnaud to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 609/615, 10.07.1962.

¹⁵³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 670/676, 14.08.1962.

Ambassador to Bulgaria and Greece.¹⁵⁴ With the proclamation of Algerian independence and with a fresh set of Ambassadors, it appeared in late summer 1962 that a page in Franco-Yugoslavian relations had been turned.

Conclusion

From 1960 onward, Tito and de Gaulle's foreign policy projects began converging. Both leaders sought to carve out greater roles for themselves on the international stage: Tito by leading the Non-Aligned Movement, and de Gaulle by retooling the process of European integration and challenging American hegemony in NATO and beyond. That France sought to exploit Yugoslavia's influence in North Africa – whether it meant asking Belgrade to directly intervene in Cairo to moderate the FLN, or hoping to insert itself into the Third World aviation market by penetrating the Belgrade market first – attests to the esteem in which Belgrade was held in the eyes of the Third World, despite the ostensibly bipolar Cold War world and the fact that Belgrade arrived at its “Third World path” in an indirect and ad hoc fashion. Both leaders, too, desired to see Western Europe freed from American hegemony, the division of the European continent softened, and bloc logic overridden. Despite both de Gaulle and Tito's ability to challenge the superpowers' political hegemony, and despite the convergence of their foreign policy means and short-term goals, ideological bipolarity remained very real, especially in the period of 1960–1962 that marked the peak of the Cold War and of French decolonization. Tito and de Gaulle's competing world views and ultimate aims – the spreading of socialism in the Third World and the rollback of communism in Eastern Europe, respectively – contributed to the souring of relations over the war in Algeria, despite Koča's efforts to mitigate the ideological hardening in Belgrade. Yet key in this was the fact that neither party was prepared to fully

¹⁵⁴ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Lekić) to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 424308, 23.07.1962.

renounce the bilateral relationship for reasons of economy and prestige. The following chapter will examine the collision of Tito and de Gaulle's foreign policies in the Third World as they both strove to acquire greater prominence on the world stage, as well as France's continued quest to maintain its privileged place in Yugoslavia in the face of the ever-increasing Anglo-American and West German economic and cultural presence.

Chapter 5: The Tito of the West? August 1962–April 1969

Introduction

This chapter charts Franco-Yugoslavian relations from the normalization of relations in August 1962 to de Gaulle's resignation in April 1969. It argues that over the course of the 1960s the Yugoslavs, due to the similarities between the two countries' foreign policies, as well as their assumption that de Gaulle's France was de facto "anti-Western," aggressively pursued a rapprochement for two reasons: one, as a means of insurance in the case of West German nuclear rearmament, which was a prospect in 1960–1964 under the Washington-proposed Multilateral Force (MLF); and two, because of their longer-term goal of co-opting France into the Non-Aligned Movement with the aim of eventual economic and political cooperation in Africa. For de Gaulle, however, there was no question of adhering to a movement that by 1965 many in French diplomatic circles considered "*inefficace, dépassée et inutile*."¹ Moreover, with the development of the French nuclear *force de frappe* and with the "German threat" effectively addressed by the FRG's integration into NATO and the EEC, the need for Paris to pursue its traditional Eastern alliances as a security guarantee was obsolete. With the creation of the EEC gone too was the need for French investment in, and extensive trade with, Yugoslavia. Although in the first half of the 1960s Yugoslavia was still of potential interest to France as a traditional sphere of influence to be shielded from British and American economic, technical, and cultural-linguistic encroachment, two factors contributed to the loss of French interest. Paris's general post-1945 inability to compete with the Anglo-Saxons in Yugoslavia, as well as Belgrade's promotion of English- and Russian-language instruction as at the expense of French (and

¹ The phrase comes from a May 1965 note by an advisor from the French embassy in Belgrade, Louis Amanrich. Gilles Troude, "La Yougoslavie titiste vue par les diplomates français (1955–1974)," *Balkanica: Annual of the Institute for Balkan Studies* XL (2009), 174.

German), meant that by the late 1960s France no longer had the political will or resources to maintain any significant economic or cultural-linguistic presence in the Balkans.

Four Grand Designs

As seen in Chapter 3, there has been a historiographical debate on the birth of the Non-Aligned Movement. Namely, scholars have questioned the claims of Yugoslav contemporaries that the movement was born on Brioni in July 1956. Despite the emerging consensus that it was not born at the first Tito–Nasser–Nehru summit, there is no unanimity on whether the movement was, in fact, inaugurated in Belgrade in 1961. In one of the first studies of the Non-Aligned Movement, Peter Willetts made the case that it was indeed born in Belgrade in 1961. However, as early as 1966, G.H. Jansen contended that the movement did not live beyond 1961 and that the second non-aligned conference, held in Cairo in 1964, was in fact not a non-aligned conference at all, but an Afro-Asian one.² Rinna Kulla has endorsed Willetts' argument that the movement was launched at the Belgrade summit, which is the interpretation taken in this work.³ Most recently, however, Dragan Bogetić and Aleksandar Životić have argued that the movement was not inaugurated in Belgrade because most participants opposed it on the grounds of their fears of the endeavour evolving into a “third bloc,” and were reluctant to ally with a Yugoslavia that was, circa 1961, on less than warm terms with both the United States and the Soviet Union. Bogetić and Životić contended that the movement was not de facto launched until the third non-aligned summit in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1970, when a series of permanent bodies were established.⁴

² For the Jansen–Willetts debate see Peter Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement: The Origins of a Third World Alliance* (London: Frances Pinter, 1978), 14.

³ Rinna Kulla, *Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 177.

⁴ Dragan Bogetić and Aleksandar Životić, *Jugoslavija i arapsko-izraelski rat 1967*. (Beograd: ISI, 2010), 80–81; Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi 1961–1971* (Beograd: ISI, 2012), 35, 291.

Whether or not the Non-Aligned Movement was effectively inaugurated in Belgrade in 1961, Tito's Soviet-inspired outburst at the summit confirmed the impossibility of Yugoslavia's ideological and moral equidistance between the two blocs because, as "a good Marxian Communist [who] never encouraged anyone to suppose that he was anything else," doctrinal sympathies always pulled Tito toward Moscow.⁵ While Moscow approved of Tito's words, it did not approve of the Non-Aligned Movement as a whole because, according to the Soviet leadership, by working to reduce East–West tensions in order to prevent a superpower conflict Tito was only delaying the "progress of humanity."⁶ While Tito's pronouncements partially endeared him to Moscow, they also soured Yugoslavia's relations with the West, particularly with the United States, who unleashed a series of economic restrictions against Yugoslavia, including the revocation of its Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status.⁷ Although the "ideological vigour" of the Cold War tapered after the "existential crises" over Berlin and Cuba in 1961–1962,⁸ and although relations between France and Yugoslavia were normalized in August 1962 after the conclusion of the Evian Accords, decolonization continued to be a powerful factor in international relations as the Great Powers competed for influence in the Third World. It was there that the grand designs of four leaders – Khrushchev, Kennedy, de Gaulle, and Tito – came into conflict in the early 1960s. While in the early 1960s Moscow had neither experts on Africa nor a "master plan" for the Third World, it was not indifferent to Yugoslavia's (and China's) pursuit of influence in Africa and Asia, nor to Western neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism. Consequently, the Soviets focused on the preservation of their status as leaders of the anti-imperialist camp by emulating the United States in opening naval bases around the world and

⁵ George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1950–1963*, Vol. II (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), 277.

⁶ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 33–34.

⁷ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 6–7.

⁸ David C. Engerman, "Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917–1962," Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 41.

responding to “progressive” African regimes’ calls for material and moral support, thus squeezing out Yugoslavia and China.⁹ Meanwhile, the United States under John F. Kennedy’s administration became increasingly fixated upon the “virus of Marxism–Leninism” and the fear of losing the Cold War through the “back door” of the Third World, particularly Latin America. Kennedy consequently embarked upon a campaign of interventionism, most notably in Vietnam. For the duration of his presidency, his policy toward – and therefore American trade with – Yugoslavia oscillated between rejecting the country as a potential Cold War ally, and a reluctance to completely sever relations lest Tito rejoin the Soviet bloc.¹⁰

Although contemporaries and scholars have made arguments that de Gaulle either had no grand design, or if he did it was a very narrow and negative one, this work proceeds from the argument that de Gaulle did indeed have a lucid and ambitious grand design that rested on two central pillars: regaining the nation’s grandeur and overcoming the bloc logic of the Cold War through his maxim, “détente, entente, and cooperation.” In this world view, making France the leader of an independent and undivided Europe necessitated the rollback of communism from Eastern Europe, as well as helping the nations of the Third World to avoid becoming “pawns” of the Soviets and Americans.¹¹ The closest that the literature on Yugoslavia has come to arguing

⁹ Svetlana Savranskaya and William Taubman, “Soviet Foreign Policy, 1962–1975,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 151–156; Evguenia Obitchkina, “L’URSS face à la décolonisation de l’Algérie et de l’Afrique noire,” Mikhaïl Narinskiy and Maurice Vaïsse, eds., *Les crises dans les relations franco-soviétiques, 1954–1991* (Paris: A. Pedone, 2009), 138–142. For the argument that the Soviet Union and United States were “pulled” into the Third World by peripheral agency instead of pre-emptively expanding into it see Tony Smith, “New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* Volume 24, No. 4 (Fall, 2000), 567–591.

¹⁰ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 4–6, 17–18, 57–59, 98, 155.

¹¹ Martin rejects the interpretation of some historians, such as Mark Trachtenberg and John Lewis Gaddis, that the French President was little more than a man who was motivated by an irrational anti-Americanism and possessed a tremendous capacity to irritate his nominal allies. Those who have argued that de Gaulle had either no grand design or an essentially narrow and negative one include his Belgian contemporary, Paul-Henri Spaak, American diplomat Henry Kissinger, and scholars Andrew Moravcsik and Eric Roussel. Martin proceeds from the work of Maurice Vaïsse and Stanley Hoffmann who made the case that de Gaulle genuinely sought to end bloc logic. See Garret Joseph Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War: Challenging American Hegemony, 1963–1968* (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 2–4. For de Gaulle’s Third World policy see *Ibid.*, 84.

for a Titoist grand design is the case, since disputed, of a deliberate, pre-planned establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement in the mid-1950s (see Introduction). The case can be made, however, for a Titoist ‘grand design’ that, just like de Gaulle’s, genuinely sought to overcome the bipolar Cold War system and contribute to demilitarization and a de-escalation of international tensions. However, while the means and nominal ends of Tito’s strategy were not dissimilar to de Gaulle’s, the ideological ends were. His pursuit of peaceful active coexistence, mediation, and non-alignment gave his country an international weight that far surpassed its economic and military means. He too called for the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America to be wary of either superpower if they wished to remain independent, and emphasized the need to transcend the blocs and bring an end to the Cold War. While for de Gaulle this meant rolling back communism in Europe, by the early 1960s there were no indications that the Yugoslavian leadership realistically expected the Western democracies to fall to communism.¹² However, the future of the Third World remained in the balance. Like de Gaulle, who sought a greater role for France on the world stage, Tito pursued the non-aligned project as a means of both boosting Yugoslavia’s prestige and independence from the superpowers, as well as promoting “progressive elements” and propagating workers’ self-management in the Third World as a means of shutting out American, Soviet, and Chinese influence.¹³

The four grand designs were thus on a collision course in the extra-European world, driven as they were not merely by geostrategic prerogatives, but in large measure by ideology

¹² Western Europe’s postwar recovery and growing prosperity definitively dashed Marxist hopes of capitalist collapse and undermined Soviet rule in Eastern Europe. John Lewis Gaddis, “Grand Strategies in the Cold War,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 9; *Ibid.*, N. Piers Ludlow, “European Integration and the Cold War,” 195.

¹³ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 13, 67, 136–137; John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000 c1996), 273.

and competing visions of the direction of progress.¹⁴ This process of engagement in the Third World was driven by two factors: one, as détente took hold between the superpowers in Europe after near-nuclear war over the Cuban Missile¹⁵ and Berlin crises, tensions spilled into “hot wars” on the periphery;¹⁶ and two, because of Third World leaders’ own agency. As an aggregate, they (and Tito was no exception) proved resistant to superpower manipulation while being remarkably adept at manipulating Great Powers for their own, often local or regional purposes, that were couched in Cold War language.¹⁷ For his own interests, de Gaulle’s Third World policy rested on two approaches: one, penetrating Africa via an independent Algeria that was now ruled by the socialist Ahmed Ben Bella; and two, by increasing France’s presence in Latin America, largely for the purpose of “‘nose-thumbing’ Washington in its own backyard.”¹⁸ Tito’s Third World strategy rested on similar foundations. His outburst at the Belgrade Conference aside, he refused to return to the Soviet bloc and Yugoslavia’s foreign policy continued to oscillate between the two poles of the Cold War world. This oscillation, which

¹⁴ For the role of ideology in Soviet, American, and Chinese intervention in the Third World see Michael E. Latham, “The Cold War in the Third World, 1963–1975,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 259–280.

¹⁵ The Cuban Missile Crisis is not discussed in this chapter as it had little bearing on Franco-Yugoslavian relations. However, the crisis was an opportunity for both Tito and de Gaulle to exercise their respective foreign policies. Yugoslavia played an active role alongside Brazil in order to help resolve the crisis. The Belgrade Conference of 1961 having sanctioned Yugoslavia’s international engagement, the crisis provided the Non-Aligned Movement with an opportunity to contribute to a relaxation of the bipolar system not only through its own activity but by defending Cuba’s right to choose its own system of government (thus ensuring that the survival of the only socialist regime in the Western hemisphere) and urging Havana to reduce its “revolutionary” rhetoric so as to not hamper the growth of the Non-Aligned Movement. While Tito endorsed the non-aligned line against Moscow, de Gaulle, unlike the British, sided with Washington. As Maurice Vaisse has shown, de Gaulle instrumentalized the crisis to claim that a privileged dialogue existed not between Washington and London, but Washington and Paris. He also used the crisis to justify his calls for a restructuring of transatlantic relations, France’s withdrawal from NATO, and the need for Western Europe’s defense autonomy. Svetozar Rajak, ed., “Yugoslavia and the Cuban Missile Crisis: Documents From the Foreign Ministry Archives in Belgrade,” *The Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No. 17/18 (2012), 591–593; Maurice Vaisse, “La France et la crise de Cuba,” *Histoire, Economie et Société*, 13^e Année, No. 1, La France et la Grande-Bretagne devant les crises internationales (1^{er} trimestre 1994), 185, 191–193.

¹⁶ Savarskaya and Taubman, “Soviet Foreign Policy, 1962–1975,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 156.

¹⁷ Latham, “The Cold War in the Third World, 1963–1975,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 260–268; Smith, “New Bottles for New Wine,” 587–588.

¹⁸ Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War*, 79–84.

some have attributed to Kardelj more so than to Tito himself,¹⁹ was fueled largely by domestic debates on the merits of ideological solidarity over *Realpolitik*, and was tied to debates on the domestic implementation of Marxism. Building the Non-Aligned Movement and supporting Third World “progressives” provided an escape from these unending debates and the heavy economic reliance on both the Western powers and the Soviets.²⁰ While Tito maintained his friendship with Nasser, post-independence Algeria, where the FLN introduced self-management into both industry and agriculture, quickly supplanted Egypt as Yugoslavia’s chief ideological protégé.²¹ However, alienating either superpower and ‘thumbing its nose’ at the Americans was not an option for the economically-dependent Belgrade: in courting Latin America (which he visited for the first time in 1963), Tito restrained his socialist rhetoric and elaborated upon his new theory of the “powers of peace,” which included the United States and the Soviet Union, who struggled against the unnamed “powers of war” – a thinly-veiled reference to China.²²

However, the problem in Tito’s strategy was the fact that Yugoslavia, as the lone European and Caucasian country, was the proverbial black sheep within the Non-Aligned Movement. It was threatened with marginalization by those, like China’s Mao Zedong and Indonesia’s Ahmed Sukarno, who wished that the movement remain exclusively Afro-Asian.²³ This potential for marginalization from the movement that Tito had helped found, coupled with the fact that Yugoslavia’s security concerns continued to reside in Europe, together pointed in one direction: France.

¹⁹ Živojin Jazić, *Moj pogled na diplomatiju 1957–2005* (Beograd: Čigoja, 2010), 67.

²⁰ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 64, 107, 187.

²¹ Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830–2000: A Short History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 134; Norman Cigar, “Arab Socialism Revisited: The Yugoslav Roots of its Ideology,” *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 19, No. 2 (Apr., 1983), 176.

²² Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 136–137.

²³ Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement*, 13.

The Franco-Yugoslavian Rapprochement, 1962–1963

By 1962, the year in which Franco-Yugoslavian relations were normalized after the conclusion of the Evian Accords, Yugoslavia's economy was in a slump. Although its economy had grown at a steady pace over the course of the 1950s, the Soviet-style stress on heavy industry – often of the same type in every republic – at the expense of consumer goods meant that the living standard remained low. Although its GDP had quadrupled from the interwar period, productivity and consumption trailed. The former lagged due to a combination of large, inefficient enterprises and ineffective management, with appointments frequently based on wartime credentials rather than on economic literacy or management skill. Meanwhile, extensive trade with West Germany and Italy, who produced high-quality goods, as well as the interactions of Yugoslavian citizens with West Europeans through tourism and working abroad, fed expectations of better living standards.²⁴ Tito himself was little interested in economics. This meant that the decisions on freeing the economy from the model of credit-reliant extensive growth, with the aim of boosting productivity and balancing the disparities between the wealthier northwest and underdeveloped southeast, were left to Svetozar “Tempo” Vukmanović, the Montenegrin President of the Industrial Council and SIV Vice-President described by Dennison Rusinow as “an eager primitive spirit and self-confident economic illiterate.”²⁵ After the failed First Five-Year Plan of 1947–1951, the concept was resurrected and two more Five-Year Plans were introduced for 1957–1961 and 1961–1965. The overvalued dinar, which historically discouraged exports and promoted imports, was devalued – but not sufficiently enough – in 1961. Although the Yugoslavian economy had surged in the late 1950s, it hit a slump in 1961–1962 as reform targets were not met, and as unemployment and the cost of living soared. The

²⁴ Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 265–282.

²⁵ Rusinow quoted in Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 279–280. In Serbian his name is styled as Vukmanović-Tempo.

Third Five-Year Plan was thus a dead letter by 1962. As the wealthier and more developed republics (Croatia and Slovenia, and to a lesser extent Serbia) called for a freer market and a degree of economic decentralization, Kardelj and Ranković opposed diverting investment from heavy industry to processed agricultural products, tourism, and consumer goods, while Tito called for even greater economic centralization.²⁶

While the Yugoslavian economy was in a slump, French industry had incurred financial losses in the immediate aftermath of decolonization, and was seeking to profit from the expansion of the EEC and other continental avenues. Belgrade was therefore happy to note the increased French interest in investing in Yugoslavia.²⁷ Unwilling to let its anti-colonialist principles affect its relations with the West, in October 1962 the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry called for a reappraisal of Belgrade's short-term and long-term French policy. France was key for Yugoslavia on two fronts: one, as both a potential fellow European ally in the Non-Aligned Movement, given the similarities between the two countries' foreign policies; and two, since Belgrade believed that the preservation of the status quo was the key to overcoming bloc logic, in the absence of a German settlement it remained invested in a strong France as a counterweight to West Germany in the case of the latter's rearmament or reunification.²⁸

Despite the convergence of their policies, de Gaulle, in his conceit toward small countries and contempt for the United Nations, never aspired to engage with the Non-Aligned Movement. Apart from initially seeing it as a potential rival to his plans for the reclamation of French prestige in the Third World, he dismissed the second non-aligned summit at Cairo in September 1964 as merely regional, and was the only major world leader who did not send a salutation to

²⁶ Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 242, 277–288.

²⁷ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, Note on France, Doc. 442771, February 1962.

²⁸ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–29, “Plan naše aktivnosti prema Francuskoj,” Doc. 443698, 09.10.1962.; Ljubodrag Dimić, “Josip Broz Tito i jugoslovenski pogled na Evropu,” Aleksandar Životić, ed., *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu* (Beograd: INIS, 2010), 205.

the conference.²⁹ His foreign policy conception was, after all, fundamentally different from that of the Non-Aligned Movement: while its members rejected anything approaching a formal alliance with either superpower, de Gaulle never intended to remove France from the Atlantic Alliance.³⁰ Far from a *Tiers-Mondiste*, the General sought to promote France's "eternal role" as a universal moral authority and force for liberty in the world, although in practice his policy of assisting developing countries was far less altruistic than his rhetoric suggested.³¹ Despite this, Ambassador Miljković believed that the French tactical rapprochement with non-aligned countries over the course of 1962, despite his general opposition to the movement, indicated that Paris had come to the realization that "simply ignoring [the Non-Aligned Movement] could only damage French interests and could become a serious barrier to its world position."³² With that, the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry rightly concluded that the French were seeking to exploit Yugoslavia's influence in the Arab world for their own benefit while attempting to neutralize it in sub-Saharan Africa.³³ Despite de Gaulle's contempt for the United Nations, his belittling of small countries and resentment of Yugoslavia, whose influence was in disproportion to its means, the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry emphasized the favourable elements of French foreign policy – NATO reforms, making Europe more independent from the United States, controlling

²⁹ DSIP, PA, 1964 F-47, Note on Karapandža's conversation with Louis Amanrich, 10.02.1964.; *Ibid.*, 1964 F-48, "Francuska i odnosi sa SFRJ," Doc. 431423, 25.10.1964.

³⁰ Georges-Henri Soutou emphasized the centrality of West Germany to de Gaulle's decision to remain within the Atlantic Alliance. Withdrawing would have meant the removal of French troops from the FRG, and therefore a loss of leverage over Bonn. Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'alliance incertaine: Les rapports politico-stratégiques franco-allemands, 1954-1996* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), 291-293.

³¹ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 75-79, 84. Cf. Marie-Claude Smouts, "The Fifth Republic and the Third World," Paul Godt, ed., *Policy-Making in France: From de Gaulle to Mitterrand* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989), 235-243.

³² DSIP, PA, 1963 F-27, The Yugoslavian embassy's annual report for 1962 (Miljković), Doc. 41265, 11.01.1963.

³³ DSIP, PA, 1962 F-29, The Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry's monthly letter to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Drndić), Doc. 433723, 17.10.1962.

Germany, engaging with Eastern Europe, and providing aid to African countries – and floated the possibility of eventual Franco-Yugoslavian economic and industrial cooperation in Africa.³⁴

Despite the normalization of diplomatic relations in August 1962, the economic and political rapprochement proved half-hearted, and not for the lack of Yugoslavian efforts. While the Yugoslavs were keen to improve trade with France, the French sought to tie economic relations to culture.³⁵ They deemed the economic sector satisfactory, and viewed the cultural sector of bilateral relations as the deficient area. Paris's 'optimism' toward economic relations, however, stemmed not from indifference per se, but from fatalism. With tremendous economic competition from the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, West Germany and Italy, the Quai believed that when it came to improving Franco-Yugoslavian relations, "the economic domain could never provide us with possibilities as good as those in the cultural domain."³⁶

While resigning themselves to the reality of their comparative economic power, the French remained deeply unhappy about the 1961 language law which promoted the teaching of English and Russian at the expense of French (and German).³⁷ With the above considerations in mind, they continued to identify that issue as the most pressing in post-Evian bilateral relations.

| Elementary and High School Students Learning Foreign Languages in Yugoslavia, 1959 | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Serbia | Croatia | Slovenia | B-H | Macedonia | Montenegro | Nationally |
| French | 160,164 | 31,929 | 6,158 | 29,678 | 59,056 | 13,867 | 300,852 |
| German | 149,972 | 103,816 | 38,816 | 56,050 | 5,027 | 2,004 | 355,370 |
| English | 24,767 | 35,554 | 40,019 | 4,513 | 1,821 | 683 | 107,357 |
| Russian | 32,992 | 2,141 | 13 | 11,728 | 8,856 | 11,712 | 67,442 |
| Italian ³⁸ | -- | 1,464 | 432 | -- | -- | 619 | 2,515 |

³⁴ DSIP, PA, 1962 F-29, "Plan naše aktivnosti prema Francuskoj," Doc. 443698, 09.10.1962.

³⁵ DSIP, PA, 1962 F-29, "Podsetnik za razgovor druga Koče Popovića sa francuskim ambasadorom Jean Binoche-om," Doc. 443583, 18.09.1962.

³⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Letter from de Margerie to Burin des Rozières, 15.07.1964.

³⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, "Note a/s accord culturel avec la Yougoslavie," 25.11.1963.

³⁸ Italian was offered only in the littoral Italian-minority areas of Slovenia, Croatia, and Montenegro.

As seen in Chapter 2, the French were primarily concerned with the Anglo-American cultural presence and the rising popularity of English. The fact that many more Yugoslavs spoke French than English in the 1950s was seen in Paris as an effective means of undercutting Yugoslavia's economic and military ties with the British and Americans and preserving France's "traditional" role as patron of the Yugoslavian army. The Quai in particular laboured under the delusion that before the language law, French enjoyed a "privileged position" in Yugoslavia where it was learned by 75–80% of primary and secondary students. Official Yugoslavian statistics in the table above patently disprove that.³⁹ The Quai was so fixated upon the English threat that it seemed unaware of the fact that, taking the 1959 figures in the table above as an example, 36% of Yugoslavian students learned French while 42% learned German (while the remaining 22% learned English, Russian or, in a handful of cases, Italian).⁴⁰ Despite its apprehension about Bonn's economic presence in the Balkans, the Quai continuously emphasized English and Russian as competitors to French, and ignored the German threat. Even before the introduction of the language law, the popularity of English had grown substantially in Croatia and Slovenia – even edging out German in the latter – while Russian, popular in Montenegro and to a lesser extent Serbia, Macedonia, and Bosnia, nationally remained in the distant fourth position. Although French was overwhelmingly the most-learned foreign language in the traditionally Francophile but demographically and economically insignificant Macedonia and Montenegro, in the pro-French bastion of Serbia French outscored German by a margin of only 3%.

³⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 213, "Note pour le service de presse: Les relations culturelles de la Yougoslavie et de la France," 16.09.1963.

⁴⁰ If one were to add up the final column the table would appear to indicate that, in a population of less than 20 million, there were 833,536 primary and secondary students in Yugoslavia in 1959. Although it is not clear whether all students who attended primary and secondary schools in fact learned one or more foreign language, the total figure of primary and secondary students is misleading because in the 1960s one third of children above the age of five did not attend primary school. The national illiteracy rate for 1960 stood at 19.7%, down from 25.4% in 1950. See Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 295.

The new language law was promulgated for two reasons: one, to level out the learning of foreign languages that had hitherto reflected the regional preferences of the historic Habsburg–Ottoman divide; and two, to improve the international marketability of Yugoslavian citizens in an increasingly interconnected world. In practice, however, because few schools could afford to run classes in all four languages, in some institutions before 1961 French and German were the only languages on offer. The decree that English and Russian be prioritized meant that many schools suspended French and German instruction and afforded only English and Russian courses. Therefore in many schools, for a short time in 1961–1962, the teaching of French and German effectively ceased, although adjustments were later made to accommodate the traditional language preferences.⁴¹ (Although almost half of all primary school students were now taught Russian, by 1965–1966 these adjustments resulted in a fairly even nation-wide instruction of the four languages in secondary institutions.)⁴² The temporary cessation of French language instruction was the crux of the French complaint, along with the insinuation that French was no longer an international language. As a Great Power and long-time cultural hegemon of Europe, the French believed – as Binoche had told Tito on Brioni – that their culture was “not only the patrimony of the French people but also the patrimony of a number of peoples of Europe, America, and above all Africa, where the Yugoslavs were currently seeking friends.”⁴³

Binoche’s emphasis on Africa was significant. According to former DGRC chief and Quai Secretary-General Louis Joxe, a figure close to de Gaulle and now Minister of Administrative Reforms, the French President had ceased begrudging Tito for his support of the FLN but continued to resent the Yugoslavian leader for the execution of his “great personal

⁴¹ DSIP, PA, 1965 F–36, “Informacija o učenju stranih jezika u školama FNRJ,” Doc. 430839, 12.10.1962.

⁴² MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, “Fiche 52: Yougoslavie,” 31.12.1966.

⁴³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 670/676, 14.08.1962.

friend,” Draža Mihailović.⁴⁴ However, by Paris’s own admission, French resentment over the Algerian episode continued to adversely influence its relations with Belgrade.⁴⁵ De Gaulle visited Greece in early 1963 and declined to visit Yugoslavia along the way.⁴⁶ Tensions remained palpable in economic relations, too. After a 24-month trade agreement expired in November 1962, the French agreed to accord piecemeal liberalization to Yugoslavia, which Belgrade deemed insufficient in the face of its own economic difficulties. While the already-unsubstantial Yugoslavian exports to France remained steady, French sales to Yugoslavia fell precipitously in 1962 as a consequence of political tensions.⁴⁷ As a means of mending relations, in 1963 the French returned to the Zagreb international fair after an absence of several years. The French Minister of Industry, Michel Maurice-Bokanowski, headed the French delegation and met for talks with the Yugoslavian Minister of Foreign Trade, Jože Brilej, and heads of the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry’s West European desk, but demonstrably did not stop in Belgrade.⁴⁸ Binoche concluded that the visit succeeded in its ostensible aim of obtaining “*le plus grand avantage du prestige français*,” although the Yugoslavs remained unhappy that the talks yielded no results regarding further French liberalization in an effort to combat the chronic imbalance of trade: something that Britain, Italy, the Benelux, and Scandinavia had already done.⁴⁹ With the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in force since 1962 the French, for their part, were reluctant to liberalize trade with Yugoslavia (and other non-EEC partners) in order to protect the economic bloc and their own privileged position within it.⁵⁰ Moreover, the French

⁴⁴ DSIP, PA, 1964 F–48, Telegram from Miljković on his conversation with Joxe, Doc. 425361, 11.06.1964.

⁴⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 213, “Note pour le service de presse: Les relations culturelles de la Yougoslavie et de la France,” 16.09.1963.

⁴⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, “Note A/S Entretien avec l’Ambassadeur de Yougoslavie,” 26.03.1963.

⁴⁷ DSIP, PA, 1962 F–30, Embassy report on bilateral economic relations (Jakše), Doc. 443569, 15.09.1962.

⁴⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from the Quai to the French embassy in Belgrade, No. 572, 22.08.1963.

⁴⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Letter from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 742, 18.09.1963.

⁵⁰ De Gaulle forced through the adoption of the CAP, which greatly privileged French agriculture, as a precondition for France’s adoption of the common industrial market. Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War*, 22.

remained circumspect following Brilej's statement that Belgrade had a keen interest in a strong France for the sake of European stability, and wished for closer relations with the Gaullist government. Uncertain of the ultimate aim of such a broad statement, Binoche hypothesized that Belgrade's aims ranged from simple posturing and self-aggrandizement to loftier designs of cooperation in Europe and the Third World.⁵¹ Although it is likely, as Binoche postulated, that the Yugoslavian leadership had no concrete short-term goals in mind, Brilej's statements must have been authorized from above. This bolsters the notion that the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry was not alone in contemplating possible Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation in Africa, but that the thinking was reinforced by the leadership. Despite its objection to French neo-colonialism, in the constant struggle between ideology and *Realpolitik* in foreign policy, between 'hardliners' and 'liberals' on the domestic political and economic fronts, the Yugoslavian leadership determined once again that France and its independent foreign policy was a sound choice of partner, both politically and economically, both on the continent and in the Third World.

Reinforcement of the Traditional Friendship and the Franco-Yugoslavian Cultural Convention, 1964

On the political front, the year 1963 represented an improvement in the bilateral friendship. Despite de Gaulle's disinclination to visit Yugoslavia and Paris's reluctance to liberalize trade, a visit by a French parliamentary delegation in the spring was deemed successful by both sides. The visit was part of Yugoslavia's policy of large-scale "personal contacts" as a means of fostering bilateral relations. Headed by the Gaullist deputy Louis Terrenoire, the delegation was received by Tito and was most impressed by the atmosphere of freedom and the egalitarianism among the leadership in their host country. They characterized these attributes as the key to "belonging to Europe" and a new chapter in the traditional friendship and mutual

⁵¹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Letter from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, No. 585, 09.10.1963.

understanding.⁵² Terrenoire conveyed his impressions to his President who, despite admitting that Belgrade's foreign policy was essentially positive, remained "burdened by certain preconceptions" of Yugoslavia – that is, his eternal resentment over the death of Mihailović.⁵³ That same year a PCF delegation visited Belgrade. While the French Communists expressed an interest in greater cooperation between the two parties, the Central Committee of the LCY agreed to this cautious normalization and possible future cooperation only to the extent to which it would not adversely affect official Franco-Yugoslavian relations.⁵⁴

The traditional friendship was given a boost when on July 26, 1963 a powerful earthquake shook the Macedonian capital of Skopje. It killed 1,000 people, injured another 3,000 and destroyed 80% of the city, rendering almost its entire population of 200,000 people homeless. In one of the most spirited examples of international solidarity in the Cold War era, the international community rallied to provide humanitarian relief. In Paris, the National Committee for Aid for the Reconstruction for Skopje was formed and was presided over by Ambassador Miljković. Among its membership was the familiar roll-call of notable French "friends of Yugoslavia:" Jean Cassou, Jules Moch, Guy Mollet, Pierre Abelin, Louis Terrenoire, Yves Chataigneau, Gaston Deferre, the writer Jean Cocteau and the architect Le Corbusier. Given Macedonia's role in the fostering of the traditional friendship during the First World War and the persistence of pro-French sentiment in that republic, the Committee urged the French government to sponsor the reconstruction of the city's university.⁵⁵ The Committee organized fundraising concerts and collected charitable donations in the form of money and books for

⁵² DSIP, PA, 1963 F-28, Note on Koča's conversation with the French parliamentary delegation, Doc. 413680, 22.04.1963.; *Ibid.*, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Lučić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 414955, 03.05.1963.

⁵³ DSIP, PA, 1963 F-28, Telegram from Miljković to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 421557, 24.06.1963.

⁵⁴ DSIP, PA, 1963 F-28, "Informacija za druga Jakova Blaževića o predlogu CK KP Francuske za ekonomsku saradnju sa Jugoslavijom," Doc. 437197, 23.11.1963.

⁵⁵ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (M. Couve de Murville), Carton 92, "Appel du Comité National d'aide à la reconstruction de Skopje," Folio 143-144, undated.

Skopje's university library, the French government advanced a loan of 55 million francs and donated 200,000 francs, and de Gaulle himself personally donated 50,000 francs. Together along with other charitable donations in money and in kind, the total sum of the French effort – exempting the loan – stood at 500,000 francs.⁵⁶

Although French assistance to Skopje did not grip the Yugoslavian public to the same extent as the treatment of the Vinča atomists did four years earlier – partly because France was only one of many countries who participated in the Skopje relief effort and partly because, as the French themselves recognized, their contribution was modest – the Quai nevertheless observed that despite the residual tensions over Algeria, the signs of friendship that were palpable over Skopje did contribute to an improvement in relations. Points of political contention remained, namely Belgrade's continued suspicions of the Franco-German rapprochement that culminated with the signature of the Elysée Treaty in January 1963, as well as France's nuclear buildup. Despite this, in seeking French technical expertise in the modernization of its telecommunications infrastructure, Belgrade made an emotional appeal to Paris's "immediate response" to the Skopje catastrophe, where it had helped reconstruct the city's post office and telecommunications service pro bono.⁵⁷

The high point in Franco-Yugoslavian relations in this period was the conclusion of a cultural convention in June 1964. Belgrade had first called for the conclusion of such a convention in 1960.⁵⁸ With tensions over Algeria and the new language law, however, the

⁵⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 294, "Note A/S Comité français d'aide à la reconstruction de Skoplje," 08.10.196.; *Ibid.*, "Note a/s: Voyage d'un ingénieur français à Skoplje," Doc. 6, 28.09.1963.; *Ibid.*, Letter from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 952, 18.12.1963.; *Ibid.*, Carton 280, "Note pour le Ministre de l'Industrie: La catastrophe de Skoplje et l'aide internationale à la reconstruction de la ville," 07.09.1963.

⁵⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 213, "Note pour le service de presse: Les relations politiques de la France et de la Yougoslavie," 16.09.1963.; DSIP, PA, 1966 F-41, Letter from the Yugoslavian PTT Union to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 429708, 11.08.1966.

⁵⁸ DSIP, PA, 1962 F-29, "Podsetnik za razgovor druga Koče Popovića sa francuskim ambasadorom Jean Binoche-om," Doc. 443583, 18.09.1962.

Yugoslavs temporarily desisted on the grounds that full reciprocity with regard to cultural relations in general, and language instruction in particular, was impossible to achieve, given the lack of interest among the French to learn Serbo-Croatian (let alone Slovenian or Macedonian).⁵⁹ Given the long-standing French stake in one-way cultural relations, Belgrade resumed its calls for a cultural accord in late 1962. At the Yugoslavs' repeated request, the Quai acquiesced in order to gain an advantage on the issues of French language instruction and literature distribution in Yugoslavia. The accord was a matter of prestige for both parties since France had signed no such convention with any other socialist regime.⁶⁰ The accord was signed in June during Joxe's official visit to Belgrade. In attributing political significance to the convention, the Quai identified Joxe's visit as the deciding factor in advancing bilateral relations, given the alignment between the two countries' foreign policies.⁶¹ The Yugoslavs, too, placed much hope in the greater rapprochement that they hoped would result from the cultural convention.⁶²

The cultural convention regulated the status of French language instruction in Yugoslavia to mutual satisfaction. The Yugoslavs agreed to the target figure of 25% among primary and secondary students: since four major international languages were offered in Yugoslavia, the two sides agreed that it was only reasonable that a quarter of all students should learn French. Belgrade also agreed to increase French language instruction in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia, where historically French lagged behind German, and more recently behind English. Moreover, the Yugoslavs increased the quota of sales of French literature, while the French improved the living conditions for Yugoslavian students studying in France. Parallel to the cultural accord, the

⁵⁹ DSIP, PA, 1962 F-29, The Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry's monthly letter to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Drndić), Doc. 433723, 17.10.1962.

⁶⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, "Note a/s accord culturel avec la Yougoslavie," 25.11.1963.

⁶¹ DSIP, PA, 1964 F-48, Telegram from Miljković on his conversation with Puaux, Doc. 423698, 28.05.1964.

⁶² MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from Charpentier on his conversation with Crnobrnja, Doc. 1025, 25.06.1964.

two sides also concluded an agreement regulating the hiring of Yugoslavian workers in France – the first such agreement with a foreign country for Belgrade, who had hitherto been extremely reluctant to export its workforce despite growing unemployment – while the French promised to take steps to curb the increasingly violent activity of Croatian political émigrés in France.⁶³

Upon Joxe's return to Paris, Minister of Information Alain Peyrefitte announced to the press that Joxe's visit, the first by a Fifth Republic minister, was ushering in a new era in bilateral relations, and cited Joxe's statement that the way was now open for Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation in the Third World. The Gaullist *La Nation* accorded front-page status to these news.⁶⁴ However, despite its satisfaction at the conclusion of the cultural convention, Binoche noted that the French continued to resent Belgrade over its support of the FLN, which continued to hinder – and often completely paralyze – bilateral relations.⁶⁵ The Yugoslavs remained cognizant of the fact that all recent improvements in bilateral relations had solely stemmed from their initiatives. While further avenues for rapprochement remained, Miljković urged Belgrade to harbour no illusions about the uphill battle they continued to face, because any meaningful reconciliation was not going to happen quickly.⁶⁶

Economic Relations and Great Power Competition, 1964–1966

In his New Year's 1964 message, as he had in his December 1959 press conference, de Gaulle once again alluded to the eventual "liberation" of the peoples of Eastern Europe. His statements were interpreted as a "direct insult" in Belgrade, despite Binoche's claim that the

⁶³ DSIP, PA, 1965 F-36, Text of the cultural convention signed by Joxe and Zeković, 19.06.1964.; *Ibid.*, Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry report on bilateral relations, Doc. 42525, 15.02.1965.; Fred Singleton, *Twentieth Century Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press), 179.

⁶⁴ DSIP, PA, 1964 F-48, Telegram from Miljković to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 428743, 06.07.1964.

⁶⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 521/524, 29.06.1964.

⁶⁶ DSIP, PA, 1965 F-36, The Yugoslavian embassy's annual report for 1964, Doc. 42525, 15.02.1965.

phrase “totalitarian regime” did not read as an insult in French.⁶⁷ While the year 1964 was thus off to an unpleasant start, French willingness to conclude a cultural convention was seen as a gesture of good will and as an indication of a desire for closer relations. With this positive signal from Paris, the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry collegium met in March 1964 to elaborate a more active policy toward France. While Tito, in his reluctance to subordinate ideology to *Realpolitik*, traveled the globe in pursuit of his ideologically-aligned vision of non-alignment, Koča and his two deputies, Marko Nikezić and Veljko Mićunović, continued their attempts to preserve the country’s bloc equidistance without abandoning the general party line of implementing Marxism at home. However, if Yugoslavia was to remain politically independent from the Soviet Union, it would by necessity have to continue to be economically dependent on the West, since economic relations with the Third World were yielding limited results.

As the Yugoslavian leadership continued to engage in heated domestic debates on economic reform, by 1964 Tito and Kardelj joined the camp of the reformers, although they thought of decentralization as “de-étatization” (*deetatizacija*), or a Marxist “withering away of the state.” With an economic upturn in 1963 following the slump of 1961–1962, by 1964 inflation and a threat of recession loomed.⁶⁸ Having faced a serious food shortage in 1963 (prompting Tito to ask Washington for 1.3 million tonnes of wheat in aid), “de-étatization” depended upon the Western powers’ willingness to liberalize trade, issue loans, reschedule debt payments, and make other financial accommodations.⁶⁹ Despite the French reluctance to liberalize trade to any meaningful degree, Koča remained committed to improving Yugoslavia’s

⁶⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, Note on Kveder’s conversation with Binoche, Doc. 4541, 07.01.1964.

⁶⁸ Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 277–301.

⁶⁹ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 156–157. The 1961 wheat aid was made under the provisions of PL 480, under which sales of surplus American wheat to Yugoslavia began in 1954. These sales were either under Title I (‘soft sales’ for dinars, not dollars), or Title III (grants). The 1961 wheat delivery was made under Title III. For an overview of PL 480 sales and aid to Yugoslavia see John R. Lampe, Russell O. Prickett, and Ljubiša S. Adamović, *Yugoslav–American Economic Relations since World War II* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 53–60.

relations with France, even as his ‘anti-Soviet pragmatism’ was becoming an object of derision among the party elite.⁷⁰ The Foreign Ministry argued that French diplomacy stood to “objectively contribute to the strengthening of positive processes in the world” (that is, détente and an end to the Cold War) despite the narrow interests and ultimate aims of de Gaulle’s foreign policy, which were at ideological odds with Belgrade’s own policy. This détente would partly be assured by increasing French affirmation on the world stage, which was evidenced by the broadening of French cooperation with Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. Having nominally surpassed the stumbling block of Algeria and with limited French economic concessions in the way of liberalization since late 1962, the Foreign Ministry called for greater Yugoslavian initiative in furthering both political and economic cooperation.⁷¹

The Foreign Ministry’s suggestion resulted in a flurry of activity which was welcomed by the Quai. Reciprocal parliamentary delegation visits took place in the second half of 1965, as did visits by delegations of the SFIO, CGT, and UFAC (*Union Française des Anciens Combattants*).⁷² There were favourable developments on the economic front, too. A six-year commercial accord was concluded which accorded Yugoslavia de facto OEEC status in terms of its trade with France and other members of the franc zone (Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, the Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Mauritania, and Chad).⁷³ The duration of the trade accord was noteworthy since a long-standing Yugoslavian grievance against its Western creditors was that they granted only short-term trade agreements for the sake of their own

⁷⁰ Aleksandar Nenadović, ed., *Razgovori s Kočom*, 2nd edition (Zagreb: Globus, 1989), 28.

⁷¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, Foreign Ministry collegium notes on France, Doc. 49570, 28.03.1963.

⁷² MAE, Série Z, Carton 290, Letter from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 856, 06.10.1964.; *Ibid.*, Letter from the French Foreign Ministry to the French embassy in Belgrade, Doc. 6, 21.07.1964.; *Ibid.*, Carton 290, Letter from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 57, 08.01.1964.; *Ibid.*, “Note a.s. voyage en Yougoslavie d’une délégation de l’U.F.A.C.,” 13.03.1964.; *Ibid.*, “Communiqué sur la visite en Yougoslavie de la délégation de la S.F.I.O.,” Doc. 393, 04.05.1964.

⁷³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, “Accord commercial entre la République Française et certains états africains membres de la zone franc, d’une part, et la République Socialiste Fédérative de Yougoslavie, d’autre part,” 25.01.1964.

political interest, disregarding the long-term needs of Yugoslavia's economic development.⁷⁴ A further advancement in economic relations was facilitated by the favourably-inclined Minister of Finance, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who in 1964 advanced an additional credit of \$30 million for use in Yugoslavia's new seven-year plan, which included the construction of the Pančevo oil refinery, a fertilizer plant in Kutina, as well as an order of locomotives from the French manufacturer Alstom.⁷⁵ The French also greeted the reduction, driven by economic reality, in Tito's ideological hostility to the "economic bloc" of the EEC, which accounted for almost one third of Yugoslavia's trade.⁷⁶

To continue consolidating the apparent rapprochement, on the heels of the conclusion of the cultural convention the Quai was eager to see the Joxe visit reciprocated by hosting a Yugoslavian figure of equal or greater stature in Paris. While Ambassador Binoche proposed that an invitation be extended to Ranković, Tito's heir apparent, the Quai preferred Koča. The decision to invite the long-serving Foreign Minister was made on the grounds that "he is not only familiar with French culture, but is very well-disposed toward us."⁷⁷ This revised assessment of Koča contrasted with the Quai's warning in the 1950s that it was "dangerous to see him as a Francophile," but coincided with the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry collegium's own spring suggestion of more frequent meetings with French government members.⁷⁸

Koča visited Paris in late 1964, at the end of an eventful year that saw encouraging signs of a bilateral rapprochement, as well as the French recognition of China, the fall of Khrushchev, the death of Thorez, and the second Non-Aligned conference in Cairo (where Tito minded his

⁷⁴ Dragan Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad 1952–1955: Jugoslovensko približavanje NATO-u* (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 2000), 178.

⁷⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, "Note a.s. Crédits à la Yougoslavie," 24.09.1964.

⁷⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 233, Letter from Binoche on Tito's foreign policy pronouncements to Finnish journalists, Doc. 488, 02.06.1964.; MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, "Note A/s la Yougoslavie et le Marché Commun," 18.08.1966.

⁷⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Letter from de Margerie to Burin des Rozières, 15.07.1964.

⁷⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, Foreign Ministry collegium notes on France, Doc. 49570, 28.03.1963.

words to avoid another provocation of the West⁷⁹). Although on the eve of Joxe's visit to Belgrade Ambassador Miljković noted that he perceived a softening on the part of de Gaulle toward Yugoslavia, Koča disagreed.⁸⁰ Even though Joxe had met with Tito, Koča was not offered a meeting with anyone above Foreign Minister Couve de Murville, and so did not press the matter and sensed that the French did not wish to attribute much significance to a visit that was not endorsed by de Gaulle. Although the conversations were frank, they did not reveal anything new and Koča was rankled that his visit to Paris, which coincided with visits by his Czechoslovak and Bulgarian counterparts, was subsumed under the banner of “three socialist ministers” by the French press.⁸¹

Koča was not surprised by the French reservations with which he was greeted.

Attributing the origins of this attitude to de Gaulle, he wrote that the General:

...likely finds it incomprehensible and even ‘unreal’ that a small ‘Balkan’ nation can have a relatively important role in international relations. He must especially be bothered by the fact that such a nation is so active, present, and influential in Africa. Given the current French policy, [...] one must suppose that [the French] have a great interest in the ‘bloc’ countries where they are more likely to gain a position, given the processes which have been going on there as of late.⁸²

He concluded that in the eyes of the French his visit was merely a signal of their intent to improve bilateral relations and was not intended to be a vehicle with which to immediately improve the relationship. Given the fact that “objective factors for improvement” remained, he urged that Belgrade continue observing and analyzing the situation in Paris.⁸³

These “objective factors of improvement” included the potential for international cooperation due to the similarities between the two countries’ foreign policy projects, as well as, as far as the Yugoslavs were concerned, significant room for growth in economic relations.

⁷⁹ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 162.

⁸⁰ DSIP, PA, 1964 F-48, Telegram from Miljković on his conversation with Joxe, Doc. 425361, 11.06.1964.

⁸¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, “Kratka ocena posete Koče Popovića Francuskoj,” Doc. 447006, 03.12.1964.

⁸² AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, “Kratka ocena posete Koče Popovića Francuskoj,” Doc. 447006, 03.12.1964.

⁸³ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, “Kratka ocena posete Koče Popovića Francuskoj,” Doc. 447006, 03.12.1964.

However, the reason for France's half-heartedness toward Belgrade lay in the fact that for Yugoslavia, as a middle power promoting a 'third way' between the two blocs, was a potential rival on the international stage. Yugoslavia's ambivalent relationship with Moscow also stood to complicate matters for de Gaulle as he shifted his focus to a rapprochement with the Soviets from 1964 onward. De Gaulle's re-evaluation of the Soviets stemmed two factors. The first was his belief that the Sino-Soviet split rendered the United States the world's only de facto superpower, in which case there was no need for the world to be categorized into two blocs. Given the fact of the Chinese threat to Soviet hegemony and the liberalizing tendencies within the bloc, de Gaulle believed that Moscow could be persuaded to loosen its grip on the satellites and abandon its ideological project. The second factor was the cooling in Franco-German relations due to the inclusion of a preamble, forced through by the Americans, which emphasized the FRG's ties to the United States and NATO, the departure of Adenauer, and de Gaulle's shift toward Moscow.⁸⁴ As Garret Martin has shown, the ultimate aim of the shift was to convince the Kremlin to release the satellites and reunite the continent, in which scenario Paris and Moscow, not Washington, would "contain Germany" while the Western European bloc, independent of the United States, would check Russian power.⁸⁵ Yet Yugoslavia remained of use to France precisely for these reasons. The traditional friendship could be exploited for a dual purpose: one, to keep out the Germans for the sake of consolidating France's position within the EEC; and two, to keep out the British and Americans. The British, having "missed the bus" to the Treaty of Rome in 1957, had themselves tried to assume leadership of the continent through the seven-

⁸⁴ Soutou, *L'alliance incertaine*, 283, 301–302; Maurice Vaisse, *La grandeur: La politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle, 1958–1969* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 363–364.

⁸⁵ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 10, 51, 65–69.

member European Free Trade Association (EFTA), established in 1960 as a rival to the EEC.⁸⁶ The Anglo-French rivalry for continental supremacy continued with two British bids to join the EEC in 1963 and 1967, which were vetoed by de Gaulle because British (and by extension American) exclusion from the continent was not only necessary to maintain the Paris–Bonn axis and ensure that France remained the only nuclear power within the EEC, but was a precondition without which de Gaulle could not obtain a relaxation of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe.⁸⁷ However, despite the miracle of “*les trente glorieuses*” of 1945–1975, the French economic presence was no match for neither the Americans, the British, the Germans, the Italians, nor the Soviets in Yugoslavia. In the period 1960–1965, French exports to Yugoslavia were consistently exponentially higher than imports. This meant that from the end of the Second World War to September 1965, Yugoslavia had accumulated a \$100 million debt to France (out of its total \$1.2 billion debt to the West), mostly in the form of commercial debts. As Belgrade’s 1965 economic reforms once again failed (with the exception of the agricultural sector, which responded favourably), Yugoslavia’s worsening economic situation became even more critical given the professed political interests of both parties.⁸⁸ For Yugoslavia, France was the ninth largest source of imports behind Italy (from whom the Yugoslavs imported four times as much as they did from France), the United States and West Germany (two and a half times as much as from France), the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Great Britain, and Poland. For Yugoslavia’s exports, France was a distant twelfth customer behind Italy (who imported seven times more from Yugoslavia than France did), East Germany and Great Britain (three times as much), the

⁸⁶ The British were also to play a key role in Kennedy’s grand design, torpedoed by de Gaulle, of a transatlantic free trade area between the United States and British-led Europe. Vaisse, *La grandeur*, 161.

⁸⁷ For the British “missing the bus” to the EEC and the creation of the EFTA see Wolfram Kaiser, *Using Europe, Abusing the Europeans: Britain and European Integration, 1945–1963* (London: Macmillan, 1996), Chapters 2–4. For Anglo-French continental rivalry see James Ellison, “Britain, de Gaulle’s NATO Policies, and Anglo-French Rivalry, 1963–1967,” Christian Nuenlist, Anna Lochner, and Garret Martin, eds., *Globalizing de Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958–1969* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010), 135–149.

⁸⁸ For the failure of the 1965 reforms see Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 286–289.

United States, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, India, and Hungary. As seen in Chapter 3, however, the French remained committed to their interwar ways of tying future economic development to Belgrade's debt repayment. For that reason the Quai's economic and financial direction noted in September 1965 that "our sales to Yugoslavia will continue to stagnate as long as the Yugoslavian economy remains in disorder."⁸⁹

The problem for Belgrade lay in the disconnect between the economic reality and the political ideal. Titoist Yugoslavia and Gaullist France were in agreement on a great number of international questions: the need for Western Europe's independence from the United States, a dislike of NATO, the need for an integration of the two halves of Europe, peaceful bloc coexistence and an end to the Cold War, Third World aid, the accession of China to the United Nations, and hostility to American interventionism in Vietnam and elsewhere. While they were in fundamental disagreement over conceptions of diplomacy – namely the roles of the United Nations and "smaller powers" on the world stage – they were in opposition on two points: nuclear proliferation (of which France was a partisan), and the question of West Germany's future. While both countries condemned the MLF, the French held that an "organic integration" of the FRG into continental structures was far preferable to a "negative restriction" of it. While the French had taken a "historic, political, and psychological about-face" on Germany after the Second World War, the Yugoslavs did not.⁹⁰ Having lost two million people in the Second World War out of a population of 15 million (a far greater absolute and proportional loss than that sustained by the French) and economically reliant upon West Germany in an eerie reminder of the 1930s, the Yugoslavs continued to fear German power.⁹¹ Belgrade believed that in an era

⁸⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, "Note A.S. Relations commerciales et financières franco-yougoslaves," 17.09.1965.

⁹⁰ Soutou, *L'alliance incertaine*, 7.

⁹¹ For the figure cited for Yugoslavian losses in the Second World War see Svetozar Rajak, "The Cold War in the Balkans, 1945–1956," Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 211.

of détente it was the scenario of “negative restriction” that was far less dangerous to continental stability and security because, as Koča told Couve, with Germany’s rehabilitation “the same German question, differently put,” would remain unanswered.⁹²

Given the similarities of views and Belgrade’s desire for a French counterweight to Bonn’s potential power, the Yugoslavs bemoaned the fact that the bilateral relationship with France lacked a “material foundation.”⁹³ By contrast, Belgrade had no diplomatic relations at all with its third most important trading partner, West Germany. That Yugoslavia relied heavily on both the United States and the Soviet Union was understandable: they were the world’s superpowers who had a political-strategic stake in Yugoslavia, and with whose economic might few other countries could compete. Belgrade’s close trade with the two Germanies, Italy, Czechoslovakia, and Austria also represented the continuation of pre-1945 structural realities: exchange between neighbouring densely-populated industrialized countries that depended on food imports, on the one hand, and a less densely-populated country with a large agricultural sector like Yugoslavia, on the other hand, was logical. However, with the trauma of the Second World War, the fact that Yugoslavia’s former occupiers, Italy and (West) Germany, were its top two economic partners was not to Belgrade’s taste or comfort, and the Yugoslavs consistently sought to remedy this situation by appealing to France, but to little effect.⁹⁴

Despite the French reluctance to liberalize trade or cooperate with Yugoslavia on the international stage, Paris was instrumental in Bonn’s partial softening of its anti-Yugoslavian attitude in the last year of Adenauer’s tenure, which stemmed from a stalemate over

⁹² As Koča told Couve, “when the Western countries discussed German disarmament, the conversation ended with German rearmament. Now that the conversation is on how to prevent German nuclear rearmament, the solutions being floated all point toward German nuclear rearmament.” AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-7, Note on Koča’s conversation with Couve, Doc. 355, 25.11.1964. Cf. MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Telegram from the French Foreign Ministry (Lucet) on Couve’s conversation with Koča, Doc. 733/46, 26.11.1964.

⁹³ DSIP, PA, 1965 F-36, The Yugoslavian embassy’s annual report for 1964, Doc. 42525, 15.02.1965.

⁹⁴ See n.80.

Yugoslavia's reparation demands for victims of Nazi pseudo-medical experimentation, forced wartime labour, and unpaid dues for those who had legally worked in Germany before the war.⁹⁵ Aware that the Yugoslavs wanted a strong France to counterbalance West Germany, the French were eager to see Bonn and Belgrade normalize their relations as a means of furthering their goal of bridging the continental divide and creating a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.⁹⁶ Having been made uneasy by the rapprochement between de Gaulle and Adenauer, the defender of the Hallstein Doctrine, the Yugoslavs welcomed the more open foreign policy approach of Adenauer's successor, Ludwig Erhard.⁹⁷ Because Belgrade had replied much more positively and thoughtfully to Erhard's 1966 "peace note" than Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the Soviet Union did, Paris concluded that its composure and genuine desire to normalize relations with the FRG showed "how much the Yugoslavian leadership's thinking is influenced by French conceptions of a European settlement."⁹⁸ Erhard's partial revision of the Hallstein Doctrine, however, did not assuage Belgrade's concerns. On numerous occasions from 1963 onward, the Yugoslavs stated to the French in no uncertain terms that the fact that more than half of

⁹⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Note on the Quai's conversation with the Yugoslavian embassy's second secretary (Milić), 12.08.1964. Since France had become the guarantor of West German interests in Yugoslavia in 1957 and the de facto mediator between the two, the Yugoslavs had hoped to use French influence to their favour in order to settle reparations with Bonn. The French, however, were not unconditional in their support of the Yugoslavs' claims, fueling further resentment in Belgrade. For Yugoslavia's reparations claims against West Germany see Bogetić, *Jugoslavija i Zapad 1952–1955: Jugoslovensko približavanje NATO-u* (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 2000), 167–174, 237–238; Zoran Janjetović, "Nemačka odšteta žrtvama pseudomedicinskih eksperimenata u Jugoslaviji," Slobodan Selinić, ed., *Spoljna politika Jugoslavije 1950–1961* (Beograd: INIS, 2008), 415.

⁹⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 283, "Yougoslavie, Fiche 27: Attitude générale à l'égard de la France," 31.12.1966.; *Ibid.*, Carton 282, Circular telegram from the French Foreign Ministry (Puaux), Doc. 238, 19.09.1966.

⁹⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Note on the Quai's conversation with the Yugoslavian embassy's second secretary (Milić), 12.08.1964.

⁹⁸ The "peace note" was Erhard's offer to restore economic relations with the countries who had recognized the GDR and with whom Adenauer had severed diplomatic relations. MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, "Fiche a.s. Réaction de la Yougoslavie à la 'note de paix' allemande du 25 mars 1966. Comparaison avec les réponses de la Pologne, de la Tchécoslovaquie, de la Hongrie et de l'U.R.S.S.," 19.08.1966.; *Ibid.*, "Note A/S: Relations politiques entre la France et la Yougoslavie," 06.09.1966. For the Hallstein Doctrine see Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 497

Yugoslavia's exports were destined to West Germany and Italy alone was in neither the economic nor political interest of either Yugoslavia or France.⁹⁹

The French response to Yugoslavia's calls was anemic. While in hindsight the refusal to further bilateral trade before Yugoslavia "got its house in order" unwittingly made France a more responsible lender than the United States and West Germany, it was disagreement over the role of Germany on the continent that undermined Franco-Yugoslavian relations. Historians are divided on the question of whether the French saw Germany or the Soviet Union was the chief postwar threat. The conventional view is that Germany remained the primary security concern for the French, and that these concerns were the inspiration behind the ECSC and the process of European integration.¹⁰⁰ This reasoning, in turn, is the inspiration behind the "triumphalist" literature surrounding the Franco-German reconciliation which culminated with the signature of the 1963 Elysée Treaty.¹⁰¹ Others have claimed that the Soviet threat supplanted the German one in the minds of French leaders as early as 1947, and that official anti-German rhetoric was intended for domestic consumption only.¹⁰² Whether one sees European unification through a lens of Franco-German reconciliation, or through a negative one – that the project was launched by France as a means of reining in its 'hereditary enemy' – the fact remained that by the 1960s West Germany was sufficiently integrated into continental structures that it was not a political threat to French designs on the continent and beyond. In other words, the division of Germany

⁹⁹ DSIP, PA, 1963 F-28, Note on Koča's conversation with a French parliamentary delegation, Doc. 413680, 22.04.1963.; *Ibid.*, 1964 F-48, "Francuska i odnosi sa SFRJ," Doc. 431423, 25.10.1964.; *Ibid.*, 1966 F-41, "Informacija o tehničkoj saradnji između SFR Jugoslavije i Republike Francuske," Doc. 423210, 05.07.1966.

¹⁰⁰ Guy de Carmoy, *The Foreign Policies of France, 1944–1968*, trans. Elaine P. Halperin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 23, 81; Herbert Tint, *French Foreign Policy since the Second World War* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1972), 5–7.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Elie Barnavi and Krzysztof Pomian, *La révolution européenne, 1945–2007* (Paris: Perrin, 2008), 8, 234–268; Corinne Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil, eds., *Le traité de l'Elysée et les relations franco-allemandes, 1945–1963–2003* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2005), 9–11; F. Roy Willis, *France, Germany, and the New Europe, 1945–1963* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), vii, 32.

¹⁰² Michael Creswell, *A Question of Balance: How France and the United States Created Cold War Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 5–10.

having rendered it France's demographic equal and territorial junior, the FRG became the cornerstone of French foreign policy.¹⁰³ As he told Peyrefitte, "we decided to make a policy of entente with the Germans to the detriment of our relations with Russia, with Poland, with Czechoslovakia, with Yugoslavia."¹⁰⁴ The main challenge to French authority in Europe came not from Bonn, but from London and Washington. Thus for Gaullist France, which was far from an economic titan, Yugoslavia was not the battleground upon which Paris was to struggle against Bonn for economic supremacy because in the 1960s the EEC, as a collective, had the potential to be a credible competitor to Washington. French interest in Yugoslavia was therefore confined to its struggle against the British and Americans – as evidenced by the language controversy – as a means of reasserting France's Great Power status and realizing de Gaulle's grand design of ending the Cold War. With the Yugoslavian military reducing its dependence on the Americans and relying more and more on Soviet supplies of materiel in the years 1962–1968,¹⁰⁵ the American military presence in Belgrade temporarily disappeared, and so too did the French.

Televisions and Trains: Yugoslavia's Economic Decentralization and the End of French Influence

Belgrade continued to press for closer relations with France despite the latter's increasing disengagement. In 1965 ex-Ambassador to Cairo, Marko Nikezić, whose mother was French, replaced Koča as Foreign Minister.¹⁰⁶ He continued pursuing his predecessor's course of maintaining bloc equidistance and correcting his leadership's tendencies toward "non-alignment against the West," although he did not succeed in preserving the Foreign Ministry's autonomy

¹⁰³ For the equalizing effect of the division of Germany on the Paris–Bonn balance see Piers Ludlow, "European Integration and the Cold War," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 191. For Soviet bloc objections to the Franco-German reconciliation see Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 54.

¹⁰⁴ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 54.

¹⁰⁵ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 72.

¹⁰⁶ Ranko Petković, *Subjektivna istorija jugoslovenske diplomatije 1943–1991* (Beograd: Službeni list, 1995), 50.

that Koča had carved out.¹⁰⁷ That same year the Yugoslavian diplomatic calendar was dominated by Peyrefitte's visit to Belgrade, as well as Tito's Eastern European tour and visit to Algeria.

Binoche wrote to the Quai that despite their commitment to the Non-Aligned Movement, the Yugoslavs genuinely regretted 'the Algerian episode' (although they were perhaps too proud to admit so publicly), and were sincere in their desire to develop closer relations with France. Faced with the reality of their economic reliance upon the West, and with their long-term aim of cooperation with the French on the world stage, the Yugoslavs placed much hope in seeing French technical expertise rival that of West Germany and Italy.¹⁰⁸ As part of this, Peyrefitte's visit to Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana, which came about at the Yugoslavs' initiative, was intended to promote French culture and especially French technical expertise at the expense of Bonn in the historically Germanophile and economically advanced Croatia and Slovenia.¹⁰⁹ With regard to cultural relations, the French were unhappy that their language had lost ground in the traditional Francophile areas, as well as the fact that the national learning rate of French remained below 25% as stipulated by the 1964 cultural convention. To this Peyrefitte's Yugoslavian counterpart and host, Gustav Vlahov, remarked that the figure of 25% was a medium- to long-term goal and not a contractual obligation to be met by an arbitrary deadline. Still unhappy with the language issue, Paris hoped for more success on the technical expertise front. While the Yugoslavs were interested in a series of cooperation projects – between the national press and radio services, newspaper and periodical editing, and telecommunications,

¹⁰⁷ Jazić, *Moj pogled na diplomatiju*, 86.

¹⁰⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 280, Letter from Binoche to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 970, 18.10.1965.

¹⁰⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 281, "Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre A/s. Voyage en Yougoslavie d'un membre du gouvernement français," 08.07.1965.; *Ibid.*, "Fiche A/S Suggestions pour le voyage de M. Peyrefitte en Yougoslavie," 03.09.1965.

among others – the French were most interested in promoting their analog colour television system, SECAM, at the expense of the West German PAL and American NTSC.¹¹⁰

Promoting its own television system in competition with the Americans and West Germans was another component of France's strategy of carving out a dominant role on the continent. A group of key French figures – including Joxe, the head of the Quai's political direction Gabriel Puaux, Couve's chef de cabinet Caron de Beaumarchais, as well as de Gaulle's chef de cabinet and former Belgrade chargé d'affaires Etienne Burin des Roziers – had met with Ambassador Miljković to emphasize the General's personal interest in seeing Yugoslavia adopt SECAM. With the British favouring the NTSC and the West Germans promoting PAL, Paris was eager to sway Eastern Europe to adopt its system. Initially, the situation was hopeful: in early 1965 the French and Soviets signed an agreement on the latter's adoption of SECAM.¹¹¹ However, it was here, in the mid-1960s at the juncture of Yugoslavia's economic difficulties and "de-étatization" reforms, that the French bid in Belgrade would founder. While the Macedonian Vlahov himself was partial to SECAM, he warned Peyrefitte of the bureaucratic and technical difficulties of implementing it in Yugoslavia due to the wealthier northern republics' preference for the technically superior and more competitively priced PAL.¹¹²

The Yugoslavs ultimately opted for PAL. This was a bitter blow to the French, especially since the television talks had come on the heels of a preceding dispute that escalated beyond reasonable proportion. The French were eager to win the contract for the electrification of the (rather sparse) Yugoslavian railway network, which included the sale of almost 200 electric locomotives to Belgrade. The French company Alstom was pitted against competition from the

¹¹⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, Résumé of Peyrefitte's conversations with Vlahov, Doc. 05527, 23.10.1965.

¹¹¹ DSIP, PA, 1965 F-38, "Informacija o zainteresovanosti francuske vlade da SFRJ usvoji francuski system TV u boji – SECAM," Doc. 42079, 31.03.1965.

¹¹² MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, Résumé of Peyrefitte's conversations with Vlahov, Doc. 05527, 23.10.1965.

Swedes and the Japanese, both of whom were offering much more favourable terms to the heavily indebted Yugoslavia. For example, the Swedes offered to purchase 40% of the construction material for the locomotives from Yugoslavia, while the French offered only 10%.¹¹³ Paris, however, was willing to issue additional credits to Belgrade for this lucrative project, and the Yugoslavs initially agreed.¹¹⁴ To further force Belgrade's arm, the French predicated all future credits on the locomotive purchase.¹¹⁵ While many other economic opportunities remained – such as Pechiney's construction of an aluminum plant in Titograd (the accord for which was signed in 1968), and talks of a license manufacturing deal between Renault and Crvena Zastava (which ultimately fell through in 1967 to the advantage of the Italian automaker Fiat)¹¹⁶ – Paris continued pressing Belgrade on the issue, warning that it believed bilateral economic relations to be deteriorating and indicated that should the Alstom deal fail, it may turn to other “more favourable” markets instead. Although Binoche agreed with Nikezić that the fate of bilateral economic relations should not hinge on one deal, he could not sway his capital.¹¹⁷ The failure of the 1965 reforms had resulted in a major devolution of public works and construction responsibilities, and the republics were divided on the issue.¹¹⁸ While the Serbian, Macedonian, and Bosnian party leaderships and workers' councils favoured the French proposal,

¹¹³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, “Note pour le Ministre a/s: Insuccès rencontré dans la vente de locomotives en Yougoslavie,” 09.09.1966.

¹¹⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, “Note pour le Ministre A.S. Vente de locomotives électriques à la Yougoslavie,” 25.11.1964.

¹¹⁵ DSIP, PA, 1965 F–36, The Yugoslavian embassy's annual report for 1964, Doc. 42525, 15.02.1965.

¹¹⁶ DSIP, PA, 1968 F–36, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy to the Foreign Ministry on the conclusion of the Pechiney–Titograd accord, Doc. 412922, 05.04.1968.; *Ibid.*, 1966 F–39, Letter from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry to the General Director of Crvena Zastava, Doc. 411115, 26.04.1966. For the failure of the Renault–Zastava negotiations see DSIP, PA, 1967 F–36, The Yugoslavian embassy's report on Franco-Yugoslavian economic and cultural relations (Martinović), Doc. 418393, 23.05.1967.

¹¹⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, Note on Nikezić's conversation with Binoche, Doc. 49030, 13.03.1965.

¹¹⁸ Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918–2005* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006), 279.

it appears that in the end economic rationale carried the day and the decision was made in favour of the Swedes due to pressure from the Croatian party elite and federal bodies.¹¹⁹

The French were stunned at the decision since in their estimation the Alstom locomotives “corresponded perfectly” to what the Yugoslavs were looking for, and the French deemed their own product quality and technical assistance to be far superior to those of the Swedes.¹²⁰ Tito’s remarks to Nikezić on the matter shed light on the decision-making process in Yugoslavia. By some accounts, Tito rarely made decisions unilaterally, preferring to consult with his inner circle and follow the majority opinion.¹²¹ While he would only begin releasing the reins of power from 1974 onward due to his advanced age and declining health, from the mid-1950s his attention was almost exclusively dedicated to foreign policy and his personal diplomacy. Never much interested in economics, he yielded to others (who were not necessarily more economically literate than he was) in that arena, while maintaining foreign policy firmly in his hands until his death in 1980.¹²² Regarding the locomotive purchase, he told his new Foreign Minister that the financial sacrifice of purchasing the costlier French locomotives would have been worth the political gain of strengthening Franco-Yugoslavian relations and reducing West Germany’s economic presence, since not buying the engines from Sweden did not threaten to damage relations between Belgrade and Stockholm. After all, he told Nikezić, “it was [Yugoslavia’s] task” to improve its political and economic relations with France.¹²³

¹¹⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, Letter from Pierre Sudreau, President of the *Fédération des industries ferroviaires*, to Couve, 10.08.1966.; *Ibid.*, “Note A/s: Cooperation ferroviaire franco-yougoslave,” 18.08.1966.

¹²⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, “Note A/s: Cooperation ferroviaire franco-yougoslave,” 18.08.1966.

¹²¹ Blažo Mandić, *S Titom: Četvrt veka u Kabinetu* (Beograd: Dan Graf, 2012), 38.

¹²² Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Tito, Yugoslavia’s Great Dictator: A Reassessment* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992), 76–80; Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 279, 295.

¹²³ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, Note on Nikezić’s meeting with Tito, 31.05.1965.

The Tito of the West?

With Nehru's death in 1964, Tito's influence within the Non-Aligned Movement grew and was coupled with a new era of tensions in Yugoslav–American relations.¹²⁴ Washington was growing suspicious of Moscow's rapprochement with Belgrade and other non-aligned capitals, which was driven by the Sino-Soviet split and Mao's own incursions into the Third World (to 1966).¹²⁵ In addition, Tito bitterly criticized Lyndon B. Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam, telling Nikezić that:

...American policy is becoming more and more ruthless, that the USA is turning into the policeman of the world, that they're angry at us and at [Tito] personally because we criticize their policy. We must keep doing that regardless of what they think because that is in our interest, as well as in the interest of the countries with which we have close relations.¹²⁶

Although Tito sought to broker peace in Vietnam, neither of his key non-aligned partners, India and Egypt, were willing to sacrifice their economic relations with Washington and Moscow, respectively, while the Viet Cong was not about to alienate its top benefactor, China, by liaising with "revisionist" Belgrade.¹²⁷

De Gaulle faced a similar situation. He too sought to broker peace in Vietnam, and hoped to become a mediator between East and West as a means of gaining leverage against Washington vis-à-vis his designs of French grandeur. While Tito found himself alone in the Third World, de Gaulle's efforts to mediate over Vietnam were, according to Yuko Torikata, "systematically blocked by U.S. stubbornness" and suspicions of China, with whom de Gaulle succeeded in establishing practical relations regarding the Vietnamese problem.¹²⁸ His "search for peace" in

¹²⁴ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 161.

¹²⁵ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 165; Latham, "The Cold War in the Third World, 1963–1975," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 262–275. The coups against Ben Bella in Algeria and Sukarno in Indonesia in 1965, as well as the start of the Cultural Revolution in China in 1966, signalled the end of a coherent Chinese Third World policy in the 1960s. See Latham, 273–275.

¹²⁶ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, Note on Nikezić's meeting with Tito, 31.05.1965.

¹²⁷ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 204–208.

¹²⁸ Yuko Torikata, "The U.S. Escalation in Vietnam and de Gaulle's Secret Search for Peace, 1964–1966," Nuenlist *et al.*, eds., *Globalizing de Gaulle*, 155–163.

Vietnam, and the communist rapprochement it entailed, was part of his Western strategy. Upset by the deterioration in Franco-German relations after Adenauer's demission, de Gaulle returned to France's "traditional ally," Russia, and unleashing an "all-out war" against continental integrationism and Washington's hegemony. Between July 1965 and September 1966 he boycotted the EEC during the so-called "empty chair crisis," threw the Atlantic Alliance into a genuine crisis by withdrawing French troops from NATO command, and delivered a "thunderbolt" of a speech in Phnom Penh. He also visited Latin America and the Soviet Union – the former in fall 1964 as a means of undermining American hegemony there, and the latter in June 1966 in order to foster East–West détente – all the while keeping France firmly in the Western camp, despite the public challenges to American hegemony and overtures to the East.¹²⁹

Although Franco-American clashes were an annual ritual in the years 1963–1968, de Gaulle was ultimately unable to mediate on Vietnam.¹³⁰ Given that he was following in Tito's footsteps – both leaders had taken an anti-American (and thus a de facto pro-Soviet) turn, and the Yugoslavian leader had preceded de Gaulle in visiting Latin America in 1963 and the Soviet Union in 1965¹³¹ – Belgrade once again saw an opportunity to solidify a Franco-Yugoslavian rapprochement. The Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry recognized that France's interest in Latin America stemmed largely from political concerns – augmenting French prestige by challenging American hegemony – while the Latin American nations themselves expected much economic and technical assistance from Paris, whose resources in that regard were limited.¹³² Both the Yugoslavian Ambassador to Venezuela and Tito himself, however, warned that the significance

¹²⁹ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 45–73, 91, 107, 121; Vaïsse, *La grandeur*, 532.

¹³⁰ For an overview of Franco-American crises in the 1960s (for which, it must be said, the Americans bore equal responsibility) see Vaïsse, *La grandeur*, 363–412; Soutou, *L'alliance incertaine*, 258–287.

¹³¹ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 136; MAE, Série Z, Carton 233, Telegram from the French Ambassador to Washington (Alphand) to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 3225-29, 10.06.1965.

¹³² DSIP, PA, 1964 F–48, "Francuska i odnosi sa SFRJ," Doc. 431423, 25.10.1964.

of French foreign policy must not be underestimated.¹³³ Despite earlier allegations of neo-colonialism, in his conversations with Ben Bella during his visit to Algeria in 1965, Tito took the time to emphasize de Gaulle's "constructive efforts" to bring about peace in the world – particularly with regard to the war in Vietnam, American hegemony within NATO, and the German question.¹³⁴ De Gaulle's 1966 visit to Moscow, too, was widely hailed in the Yugoslavian press as a testament to "the realism of French diplomacy" in its pursuit of the "reinforcement of peace."¹³⁵ While Tito unquestionably bent eastward, it appeared that his version of ideologically-coloured non-alignment and good relations with France were not mutually exclusive on account of France and Yugoslavia's shared anti-American sentiments. Or perhaps he realized, as one scholar has pointed out, that multiple challenges to superpower hegemony were going to be more effective than solitary ones.¹³⁶

The year 1966 saw a series of high-level bilateral exchanges. With the Quai's complaint that Belgrade was not "active enough" on continental matters, the Yugoslavs hoped that a visit to Belgrade by their friend Maurice Schumann would help clear the air: while Schumann himself wished to dispel "certain misunderstandings" between the Yugoslavs and de Gaulle, the Yugoslavs wished to float their proposal for a meeting of European heads of parliament.¹³⁷ The main point of conversation between the two parties was their disagreement on the German question. The French believed that with American disengagement from Europe a reunited and non-nuclear Germany would not pose a security threat, and that reunification of the two polities,

¹³³ DSIP, PA, 1964 F-47, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Ambassador to Venezuela (Belemarić) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 441252, 05.10.1964.

¹³⁴ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, Note on Nikezić's meeting with Tito, 31.05.1965.

¹³⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 283, Letter from Francfort to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 102, 29.01.1966.

¹³⁶ Jussi M. Hanhämäki, "Détente in Europe, 1962–1975," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 203.

¹³⁷ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, "Zabeleška sa sastanka kod predsednika SIV-a Petra Stambolića o jugoslovensko-francuskim odnosima," 21.05.1965.; DSIP, PA, 1966 F-41, Telegram from Miljković to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 424690, 28.06.1966.

with their differing socioeconomic systems, would be possible via confederation. The Yugoslavs, recognizing the GDR and continuing to harbour concerns regarding the FRG's rearmament, did not believe that reunification was a prerequisite for continental normalization, but rather that the reverse was true.¹³⁸ Within the space of three months, however, the Yugoslavian position on the German question evolved. As part of his year-long Eastern European tour to 'promote détente and normalization' (that is, to encourage satellite emancipation), Couve visited Yugoslavia to repay Koča's 1964 visit to Paris. Well in advance of the visit, Prica instructed Miljković to ask the Quai for an official French evaluation on bilateral relations, as well as to emphasize Belgrade's desire for deepening bilateral relations on all fronts.¹³⁹ Meeting with Tito, Koča (who replaced the ousted Ranković as Vice-President of the Republic) and Nikezić, Couve discovered that his interlocutors had aligned their position on Germany with that of France, diverging from the bloc line of accepting the two-Germany status quo. Emphasizing that German reunification would be the product of, and not a prerequisite for, détente, Tito conceded that a reunified non-revanchist Germany would not pose a threat to peace in Europe.¹⁴⁰

The motivation for the Yugoslavian about-face stemmed from the expectation of American disengagement from Europe and a desire to normalize relations with Bonn. While de Gaulle attacked the Bretton Woods monetary system, forced through a unanimity clause on voting in the EEC, and worked to undercut the Johnson administration's schemes to include the FRG in US-NATO nuclear sharing arrangements, Bonn was losing its economic and technical supremacy in Yugoslavia to Italy.¹⁴¹ With these developments, Germanophobia in Belgrade

¹³⁸ DSIP, PA, 1966 F-41, Note on Djerdja's conversation with Schumann, Doc. 427390, 08.07.1966.

¹³⁹ DSIP, PA, 1966 F-38, Telegram from Prica to Miljković, Doc. 42862, 19.01.1966.

¹⁴⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, French Foreign Ministry circular on Couve's visit to Belgrade, Doc. 238, 19.09.1966.; DSIP, PA, 1966 F-41, Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry circular (Prica), Doc. 432281, 21.09.1966.

¹⁴¹ For nuclear non-proliferation discussions during the Johnson administration see Francis J. Gavin, "Nuclear Proliferation and Non-Proliferation during the Cold War," Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the*

seemed to lessen. Moreover, the fact that West German tourists flocked to the affordable Yugoslavian littoral while the FRG was an attractive destination for hundreds of thousands of Yugoslavian *Gastarbeiter* (mostly young, poor, under-educated and unemployed Croatian men) was interpreted by Tito, publicly at least, as a sign of the absence of animosity between the two peoples.¹⁴² (The fact that many of these men would be radicalized by the Ustasha ‘old guard’ in exile in the FRG was a separate matter.¹⁴³) Bonn did, however, continue to pose a problem for Belgrade by vetoing any and all Common Market negotiations with Yugoslavia, which had acceded to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in July 1966.¹⁴⁴ With the EEC accounting for 28% of its total trade, more formal ties with the Common Market were a logical step for Yugoslavia. Having requested the opening of negotiations in late 1962, despite neighbouring Italy’s support, French reluctance and vehement West German opposition meant that the issue remained unresolved.¹⁴⁵ Erhard’s “peace note” notwithstanding, the Yugoslavs, who, as Tito reminded Couve, were not the ones who broke off diplomatic relations, refused to take the initiative on the restoration of relations between Bonn and Belgrade and so little progress was made.¹⁴⁶

The prospects of a Franco-Yugoslavian rapprochement in 1966 were the highest they had been since the normalization of relations in August 1962. With a new round of trade liberalization in January 1966, Yugoslavian exports to France were scheduled to increase by

Cold War, Vol. II, 407–408. For de Gaulle’s attack on Bretton Woods and the EEC unanimity clause see Soutou, *L’alliance incertaine*, 287–288.

¹⁴² Mate Nikola Tokić, “The End of ‘Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement:’ Cold War Politics and Émigré Croatian Separatist Violence, 1950–1980,” *Social Science History* Vol. 36, No. 3 (Fall, 2012), 441 n.19; MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, French Foreign Ministry circular on Couve’s visit to Belgrade, Doc. 238, 19.09.1966.

¹⁴³ Tokić, “The End of ‘Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement,’” 431–433.

¹⁴⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, French Foreign Ministry circular on Couve’s visit to Belgrade, Doc. 238, 19.09.1966.; *Ibid.*, “Note A/s La Yougoslavie et le GATT,” 17.08.1966.

¹⁴⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 283, “Note A/s La Yougoslavie et le Marché Commun,” 18.08.1966.

¹⁴⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, French Foreign Ministry circular on Couve’s visit to Belgrade, Doc. 238, 19.09.1966.

50%.¹⁴⁷ A series of agreements on debt rescheduling, technical assistance, as well as on social security for Yugoslavian students and workers in France, were also signed.¹⁴⁸ Although the Quai was clearly working toward improving relations with Yugoslavia and while de Gaulle was promoting East–West dialogue, Belgrade’s hopes that the Couve visit and exchanges on the two countries’ patently similar foreign policies would help “dispel certain French prejudices” toward Yugoslavia came to naught.¹⁴⁹ De Gaulle continued to refuse to visit Yugoslavia (although admittedly Belgrade never extended an official invitation, preferring to send out “feelers” to avoid the potential embarrassment of seeing an official invitation refused).¹⁵⁰ While the economically-underdeveloped Yugoslavia was making respectable inroads in Africa given its modest means, some circles in Belgrade had much grander aims. The *Skupština*’s foreign policy committee bemoaned that Yugoslavia, as the socialist country with the strongest position in the Third World, did not use its position to influence France’s policy in Africa and elsewhere outside of Europe.¹⁵¹ For de Gaulle, yielding to any such Yugoslavian “influence” was beyond consideration. Despite what was perhaps Belgrade’s wishful thinking that de Gaulle saw Yugoslavia as a rival in the Third World (which in reality was not a priority for him since global affairs took precedence¹⁵²), the Yugoslavian leadership rightly concluded that with regard to the Third World, the General was chiefly concerned with American competition to French presence in Africa.¹⁵³ While in de Gaulle’s eyes Tito had for years been consistently working against

¹⁴⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 282, French Foreign Ministry circular on Couve’s visit to Belgrade, Doc. 238, 19.09.1966.

¹⁴⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 283, “Liste des Traités et Accords (1er semestre 1966),” Doc. 940, 09.08.1966.

¹⁴⁹ DSIP, PA, 1966 F–41, Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry circular (Prica), Doc. 432281, 21.09.1966.

¹⁵⁰ DSIP, PA, 1966 F–41, Telegram from Miljković to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry on Mihaljinc’s conversation with Schwæbel, Doc. 435085, 29.09.1966.

¹⁵¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, “Zaključci sa XXIII sednice Odbora za spoljne poslove i medjunarodne odnose,” Doc. 655, 18.12.1965.

¹⁵² Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War*, 82.

¹⁵³ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28–9, “Zabeleška o informativnom sastanku u Odboru za spoljne poslove i medjunarodne odnose o najnovijim kretanjima u Francuskoj i njenim odnosima sa Jugoslavijom,” 02.02.1966.

French interests, from Suez to Algeria and beyond,¹⁵⁴ neither he nor the Quai reacted to Tito's visit to Algeria in 1965, on the eve of Houari Boumédiène's overthrow of Ben Bella. The basis for bilateral Algerian–Yugoslav relations was Algeria's neophyte status; Yugoslavia was much better versed in statehood and international relations, yet faced many of the same problems as Algeria on both the domestic and international fronts.¹⁵⁵ In the first three years of Algeria's independence, Belgrade provided aid in credit and in kind, and sent technical experts in the fields of agriculture, engineering, and health care. Yugoslavian enterprises built textile and juice factories and a tannery, and were looking to expand into the ship-building and oil and gas industries.¹⁵⁶ Practically speaking, however, Yugoslavia was of no threat to France in Algeria because Paris had taken efforts to consolidate its post-independence position there. Algerian relations were intended to be a model and weather vane for Paris's relations with other Third World countries, especially the Arab League, and the French needed to be on good terms with the Algerians in order to succeed elsewhere. And in the mid-1960s Franco-Algerian relations were good. In addition to Algeria serving as a sizeable market for French exports, the French retained their position by keeping metropolitan troops in the port of Mers-el-Kébir (to 1968) and in the Sahara (where Paris carried out nuclear tests). The French maintained a hand in Algerian oil and gas extraction and production through a bilateral oil accord signed in July, while French private and public aid was pumped into Algeria's agricultural and cultural sectors.¹⁵⁷ De Gaulle took pains to present Franco-Algerian cooperation as a model for post-colonial relations, and following this model France entrenched itself economically and militarily in its other former

¹⁵⁴ Troude, "La Yougoslavie titiste vue par les diplomates français," *Balkanica*, 178.

¹⁵⁵ AJ, A KPR, I-2/24-1, "Zabeleške o jugoslovensko-alžirskim razgovorima prilikom posete Druga Predsednika Alžiru," 15.04.1965.; AJ, A KPR, I-2/41-1, Manuscript of Zdravko Pežar, *Alžir* (Kultura, 1959), 38–47.

¹⁵⁶ AJ, A KPR, I-2/24-1, "Zabeleške o jugoslovensko-alžirskim razgovorima prilikom posete Druga Predsednika Alžiru," 15.04.1965.; AJ, A KPR, I-2/41-1, Manuscript of Zdravko Pečar, *Alžir* (Kultura, 1959), 38–47.

¹⁵⁷ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 80; Vaïsse, *La Grandeur*, 463–468, 629; Stora, *Algeria*, 258–259.

African colonies, substantiating Marxist allegations of neo-colonialism.¹⁵⁸ Further, de Gaulle's opposition to blocs on the grounds that they were "unnatural" and hegemonic translated into a theory of "natural" zones of influence in the world: the Anglo-Saxon, Slavic (read: Russian), and Francophone zones, among which there was neither space nor historical justification for Yugoslavia's presence in Africa.¹⁵⁹ He thus considered, or at least feigned to consider, Yugoslavia inconsequential to French interests in its former colonies.

1967–May 1968: A Real Rapprochement at Last?

According to *Le Monde* editor Jean Schwœbel, Couve too often yielded to de Gaulle, who in principle refused to participate in egalitarian dialogue with countries smaller than France and who resented Tito's Yugoslavia for enjoying international prestige for having been the first to put into practice the principles of active neutralism and non-alignment.¹⁶⁰ Despite the existence of "objective prerequisites" for a long-term Franco-Yugoslavian rapprochement on "both the bilateral and international fronts," by the close of 1966 Yugoslavian aspirations of "contributing to the reduction of misunderstandings in Europe and the advancement of an atmosphere of trust and cooperation of European countries toward the constructive resolution of questions of European security" in cooperation with France were yielding no results. In Belgrade's eyes, while a bilateral rapprochement would "suit the international position and standing of our country," it would also suit France's own interest, even if de Gaulle was evincing little attraction.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Richard Joseph, "The Gaullist Legacy: Patterns of French Neo-Colonialism," *Review of African Political Economy* No. 6 (May–Aug., 1976), 4.

¹⁵⁹ Etienne Burin des Rozières, "Le Non-Alignement," Elie Barnavi and Saül Friedländer, eds., *La politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1985), 72–73.

¹⁶⁰ DSIP, PA, 1966 F–41, Telegram from Miljković to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry on Mihaljinc's conversation with Schwœbel, Doc. 435085, 29.09.1966.

¹⁶¹ AJ, A KPR, I-5-b/28-8, "Zaključci sa XXIII sednice Odbora za spoljne poslove i medjunarodne odnose," Doc. 655, 18.12.1965.

This did not deter the Yugoslavs from continuing to court Paris. In January 1967 Vlahov reciprocated Peyrefitte's visit. Lauded by the new French Ambassador to Belgrade, Pierre Francfort, as an affable man whose open-mindedness and pro-French sympathies were genuine, the primary aim of Vlahov's visit was to further regulate and facilitate the distribution of French literature in Yugoslavia, as well as to encourage technical cooperation in radio and television.¹⁶² Despite the fact that bilateral cultural relations in general, and the results of Vlahov's visit in particular, were benefiting the French in their pursuit of grandeur far more than they did the Yugoslavs (who were chiefly concerned with more pressing economic matters), Vlahov took the time to salute de Gaulle's foreign policy during his visit, saying that France enjoyed "deep and unanimous sympathies from all Yugoslavian citizens on account of its independent and constructive policy in Europe and in the world ... [which contributed to] the consolidation of peace and international security in Europe and elsewhere."¹⁶³ That year also marked the renewal of a bilateral nuclear accord, a visit to Paris by Foreign Minister Nikezić, and yet more French (and international) aid for the victims of another earthquake, this time in Debar.¹⁶⁴ The two notable events for bilateral relations that year, however, were the eruption of the Arab–Israeli Six-Day War in June, and a French ban on the import of Yugoslavian pork products in October. While one provided an opportunity for a real and practical rapprochement on the international stage, the other was yet another source of bilateral political tension.

The Six-Day War began when Israel preventively attacked the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria) as a result of years of border clashes with Syria, as well as Nasser's calls for

¹⁶² MAE, Série Z, Carton 283, Letter from Francfort to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 1523, 28.12.1966.; *Ibid.*, Carton 292, "Procès-verbal des entretiens Bourges-Vlahov des 10 et 12 janvier dernier," Doc. 000783, 07.02.1967.

¹⁶³ MAE, Série Z, Carton 292, AFP telegram, "Un déjeuner franco-yougoslave," Doc. AFP132, 10.01.1967.

¹⁶⁴ For the renewal of the nuclear accord see MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, "Note a.s. Relations bilatérales franco-yougoslaves," 30.09.1967. For the Debar earthquake see MAE, Série Z, Carton 293, "Note A/s Secours à la Yougoslavie," Doc. 6416, 06.12.1967.

greater anti-Israeli coordination among the Arab states.¹⁶⁵ The short war, during which Israel swiftly conquered the Sinai, West Bank, Gaza, and Golan Heights, became a focal point of international attention and provided an opportunity for cooperation between Paris and Belgrade. Both capitals were former allies of Israel who now condemned “America’s client” and sought to mediate the conflict to carve out influence for themselves.¹⁶⁶

For the first time in a long time the two countries found themselves in agreement at the United Nations, with France endorsing Yugoslavia’s pro-Arab resolution that called for the return to the status quo ante bellum at the expense of the pro-Israeli Washington-endorsed Latin American resolution that appealed to Israel’s right to existence.¹⁶⁷ In an effort to further coordinate action, Tito sent a letter to de Gaulle via Koča in August, informing the French leader of his own mediation efforts vis-à-vis Cairo, Moscow, and Washington, praising the community of views between Paris and Belgrade, as well as lauding de Gaulle’s efforts to preserve peace. Maintaining that the Arab leaders were realistic and reasonable men, Tito believed that further insistence on concessions from them would only exacerbate the situation. In writing to de Gaulle, he hoped for an exchange of views and indicated that he was prepared “to further discuss and cooperate with You and Your government [on the Arab–Israeli question] as well as on other questions of mutual interest.”¹⁶⁸

De Gaulle’s response was predictably backhanded. He affirmed that Tito’s initiatives were “useful for facilitating conversation” but that ultimately it fell to the Great Powers (read: not Yugoslavia) to work toward a resolution of the crisis. While agreeing in principle to the

¹⁶⁵ Michael Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Rosetta Books, 2002), 20–25.

¹⁶⁶ Bogetić and Životić, *Jugoslavija i arapsko-izraelski rat*, 99, 132.

¹⁶⁷ Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War*, 144–146.

¹⁶⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-1/235, Letter from Tito to de Gaulle, 24.08.1967.

utility of bilateral Franco-Yugoslavian consultations, de Gaulle kept Tito at arm's length.¹⁶⁹ However, his reluctance to cooperate with Tito in any meaningful way did not change the fact that France and Yugoslavia found themselves in a similar position. By publicly supporting the Arabs and denouncing Israel – Tito in particular sending the maximum level of aid that Yugoslavia was capable of providing to Egypt and Syria, even though he privately recognized Israel's right to existence and urged moderation on Nasser – both leaders destroyed any semblance of a balanced policy in the Middle East. The end result was a radicalization of the intransigent Arabs, who turned to the Soviets for material assistance and moral support. While the Yugoslavs succeeded in alienating their Arab friends by privately urging restraint on Cairo, and angered Washington by confining their counsel to the private sphere, the French position on the conflict damaged its already-strained relations with both Washington and Bonn. Both leaders, therefore, found themselves isolated and their strategies undermined in a world that was no longer multipolar. Thanks to the middle powers' inability to regulate international crises and the consequent Soviet advance in the Arab world, the Six-Day War helped convince Washington and Moscow of the need for greater cooperation between the superpowers alone.¹⁷⁰

Yugoslavia's anti-Israeli position further cost it friends in France. Jean Cassou resigned as president of the *Association France–Yougoslavie*, writing to Tito that he was compelled to defend Israel's right to life and existence just as he had defended Yugoslavia's right to the same some 15 years earlier.¹⁷¹ Léo Hamon, himself of Russian Jewish origin, contemplated rejecting the offer to become president of a new Franco-Yugoslavian parliamentary grouping and sought Ambassador Ivo Vejevoda's counsel. While Vejevoda tactfully skirted the issue, his reasoning that

¹⁶⁹ AJ, A KPR, I-1/235, Response from de Gaulle to Tito, 06.09.1967.

¹⁷⁰ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 147, 195; Bogetić and Životić, *Jugoslavija i arapsko-izraelski rat*, 96, 121, 206–215.

¹⁷¹ DSIP, PA, 1967 F–34, Letter from Jean Cassou to Tito (trans.), Doc. 427191, undated (1967).

the Arab–Israeli conflict was the only point of contention between the senator and Belgrade seemed to have an effect, since Hamon did accept the presidency.¹⁷² Despite the polarizing nature of the Arab–Israeli conflict, during summer 1967–early 1968 communication between the two isolated capitals intensified, de Gaulle’s reservations notwithstanding. During his September visit to Paris, Nikezić met with the General for an open, one-on-one conversation during which the latter expressed support for Tito’s five-point program for resolving the Middle East crisis, and encouraged Belgrade to continue marshalling support of as many countries as possible in order to avoid superpower collusion. While not failing to mention Mihailović (although no mention was made of Algeria), the General nominally accepted an unofficial invitation to visit Yugoslavia, a visit he said that he hoped to undertake before it was “too late” for him.¹⁷³

The Middle East crisis and the subsequent loss of international prestige and influence for Yugoslavia prompted Tito to breathe new life into the Non-Aligned Movement, which had not seen a summit since the September 1964 meeting in Cairo. When asked at a press conference in Belgrade in early 1968 if his government envisaged the participation of other European countries at the next non-aligned summit, Nikezić replied: “Why not? You can imagine the weight that the conference would have if, for example, France were to attend.”¹⁷⁴ Apart from de Gaulle’s disdain for small countries and the Non-Aligned Movement, many in Paris were skeptical of the motives behind Belgrade’s charm offensive. While the Quai acknowledged that Yugoslavia’s desire for a rapprochement with France was sincere, it nevertheless charged Belgrade with seeking to “exploit the friendship capital” for its own gain and that Tito “yearned” to see de Gaulle visit

¹⁷² DSIP, PA, 1968 F–35, Telegram from Vejvoda to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 427539, 29.07.1968.

¹⁷³ DSIP, PA, 1967 F–38, Telegram from Nikezić in Paris to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 431927, 16.09.1967.; *Ibid.*, Doc. 432767, Note on Nikezić’s conversation with de Gaulle, 20.09.1967.

¹⁷⁴ MAE, Série Z, Carton 284, “Note A/S Initiative du Maréchal Tito pour une nouvelle conférence des pays non-alignés,” 27.02.1968.

Yugoslavia in order to augment his own prestige in Eastern Europe and the Third World.¹⁷⁵ Although Ambassador Francfort was unusually hostile, writing that it was only the Yugoslavs who “believed to see” an “apparent” community of interests between the two countries, the Quai counseled that it was in France’s interest to indulge Belgrade.¹⁷⁶

The practice of regular bilateral consultations between the two countries’ foreign ministries, the decision for which had been made during Nikezić’s visit to Paris, began in early 1968.¹⁷⁷ Amid this there were encouraging signs that Tito and Kardelj’s sentimentality-driven pro-Sovietism, which had accelerated since 1961, was beginning to correct itself. After more than a decade, in June 1966 Belgrade had normalized its relations with the Vatican.¹⁷⁸ The normalization with Bonn followed in January 1968, a development in which the French had been instrumental.¹⁷⁹ However, while the bilateral foreign policy consultations were convivial and thorough, nothing concrete came of them. The French still remained dissatisfied on the language issue as the national learning figure for French, sitting at 22.0%, ranked last among the four languages, behind Russian (31.8%), German (23.1%), and English (22.5%). While dominant in classical gymnasia, it was losing out in primary and secondary schools where Russian prevailed, as well as in technical schools where German was favoured. This meant that French was stagnating, remaining the preserve of the (mostly) Serbian ex-bourgeoisie.¹⁸⁰

The Yugoslavs quickly countered these French concerns by raising the issue of Yugoslav émigré extremism in France. Since the end of the Second World War Communist Yugoslavia’s leadership had been urging the French government to take measures against political émigré

¹⁷⁵ MAE, Série Z, Carton 283, “Note a.s. Rapports politiques entre la Yougoslavie et la France,” 06.09.1967.; *Ibid.*, “Yougoslavie, Fiche 27: Attitude générale à l’égard de la France,” 31.12.1966.

¹⁷⁶ MAE, Série Z, Carton 284, Letter from Francfort to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 430, 19.03.1968.; *Ibid.*, Carton 283, “Note a.s. Rapports politiques entre la Yougoslavie et la France,” 06.09.1967.

¹⁷⁷ MAE, Série Z, Carton 284, “Note a/s Consultations franco-yougoslaves (28 février–1er mars 1968),” 07.03.1968.

¹⁷⁸ MAE, Série Z, Carton 223, Letter from Francfort to the French Foreign Ministry, Doc. 779, 28.06.1966.

¹⁷⁹ Martin, *General de Gaulle’s Cold War*, 174.

¹⁸⁰ MAE, Série Z, Carton 225, “Yougoslavie: Fiche 52,” 31.12.1966.

agitation that was increasingly taking the form of terrorism across the West: from Ustasha terror plots in West Germany to mass demonstrations and security breaches during Tito's visit to the United States in 1963.¹⁸¹ While the Quai was sympathetic to the Yugoslavs' grievances, French security organs seemed less so. The first significant act of Yugoslav émigré terrorism in France occurred on November 26, 1966. Three days before Communist Yugoslavia's national holiday, a bomb exploded inside the Yugoslav expatriate club located in the basement of the Ambassador's residence on Trocadero. There were no injuries and while the material damage was minimal, the embassy's warnings in advance of the attack to the Prefecture of Police seemed to have fallen on deaf ears, and it remained unclear if any internal investigation resulted from the embassy's intervention at the Quai.¹⁸²

A similar attack was repeated in February 1968, this time with deadlier results. The bomb blast killed one man and injured 19 other people, including four seriously. The Yugoslavian embassy had once again warned the Paris police ahead of time and searched all individuals entering the club the night of the attack, but to no avail. This time Belgrade lodged a formal protest in response to the French government's inaction, drawing attention to the fact that the crux of the matter, according to the Yugoslavs, was not the lapse in security but a general

¹⁸¹ Croatian "freedom fighters" carried out their first major attack in West Germany on November 29, 1962 when they stormed the office of the Yugoslavian Trade Mission, killing the Serbian porter. The frequency and severity of their attacks increased after the Prague Spring of 1968 and the "Croatian Spring" of 1971. See Tokić, "The End of 'Historical-Ideological Bedazzlement,'" 422, 438. Tito's visit to the United States in October 1963 was marred by Croatian émigré demonstrations. According to Kennan, the Yugoslavian delegation was housed in Colonial Williamsburg because the United States government could not guarantee it protection from protesters, some of whom were clad in Nazi uniform. In New York, in addition to demonstrators gaining access to the hotel lobby in the face of NYPD "sympathy and tolerance," two men breached the security perimeter and accessed the floor of the Waldorf Astoria on which Tito was staying. Security concerns prompted a last-minute cancellation of a lavish reception that Tito was scheduled to host. Kennan, *Memoirs*, Vol. II, 313–314; M.S. Handler, "Yugoslavs Cancel Reception by Tito; Say Police Fail to Assure Adequate Protection," *The New York Times*, October 23, 1963, 15.

¹⁸² DSIP, PA, 1966 F–38, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Martinović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 441594, 27.11.1966.; MAE, Cabinet du Ministre (M. Couve de Murville), Carton 92, "Note A/S Fête nationale yougoslave – Protection des immeubles diplomatiques et consulaires yougoslaves," Folio 4, 24.11.1966.

atmosphere of tolerance toward émigré terrorist organizations in Paris.¹⁸³ The situation was made even worse the following year when an attempt was made on Ambassador Vejvoda's life. While the United States, Great Britain and West Germany had successfully taken measures against émigré terrorism, in France no one was brought to justice in response to the attacks.¹⁸⁴

Hollow French assurances that the émigré issue would be dealt with did not assuage Belgrade's concerns.¹⁸⁵ While the issue patently angered Belgrade, the Yugoslavian leadership was placed in an uncomfortable position: despite its frustrations, it did not want to damage its relations with France which, after all, was one of the terrorists' aims. The attacks were kept out of the press in both capitals, and Belgrade did its best to ensure that the situation did not turn into an anti-French campaign.¹⁸⁶ However, émigré terrorism, as well as France's myopic fixation on the auxiliary matter of language acquisition, could only impede bilateral relations.

As always, economic relations remained the central problem for Belgrade. Although Yugoslavia's trade with the EEC was increasing, its trade with France was simultaneously falling.¹⁸⁷ In October 1967, weeks after Nikezić and Couve met to reaffirm the joint commitment to improving bilateral relations on all fronts, France banned the import of (low-price) pork from extra-EEC countries with the intent of protecting the privileges that the CAP accorded to its own producers.¹⁸⁸ This profoundly affected not only Yugoslavia, already struggling with a chronic trade imbalance, but also other Eastern European countries that de Gaulle had been courting, the majority of whom also relied on agricultural exports.¹⁸⁹ In response to protests from Belgrade

¹⁸³ DSIP, PA, 1968 F-35, Note on Uvalić's conversation with Serge Gélade, Doc. 46515, 18.12.1968.

¹⁸⁴ DSIP, PA, 1969 F-43, Note on Nikola Mandić's conversation with Gélade, Doc. 46316, 03.03.1969.

¹⁸⁵ DSIP, PA, 1966 F-38, Telegram from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Martinović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 441595, 29.11.1966.

¹⁸⁶ DSIP, PA, 1968 F-35, Note on Uvalić's conversation with Gélade, Doc. 46515, 18.12.1968.

¹⁸⁷ DSIP, PA, 1967 F-38, Telegram from the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry (Milovanović) to the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris, Doc. 435047, 20.10.1967.

¹⁸⁸ A common market for pork, eggs, poultry, and grains was established on July 1, 1965. Vaïsse, *La Grandeur*, 560.

¹⁸⁹ MAE, Série Z, Carton 229, "Note A.S. Entretien avec le Conseiller commercial yougoslave," 16.10.1967.

against such “discrimination,” the French quickly lifted the ban but imposed a duty on all extra-EEC products (exempting Austria) that were being sold below the EEC’s minimum price.¹⁹⁰

Despite continuing problems in economic relations, in the first half of 1968, on the eve of civil unrest in France in May and Moscow’s intervention in Prague in August, Franco-Yugoslavian relations seemed to have at last transcended the stumbling block of Tito’s past support of the FLN. In practical terms, though, the Yugoslavs were little closer to their goal of close cooperation with France on the world stage than they had been in 1963. Despite promising signs of a rapprochement in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, in his own pursuit of grandeur de Gaulle showed no interest in engaging with Tito. By the late 1960s, despite Belgrade’s persistence in deepening political and economic relations (and remarkable restraint on the issue of émigré terrorism), France was finding itself squeezed out by the German, Italian and Anglo-American economic presence. Having mitigated the German threat by integrating the FRG into the EEC and having seemingly resigned itself to its comparative economic weakness, from the mid-1960s onward French interest in Yugoslavia was relegated to concerns of language as a means of augmenting French continental prestige.

May 1968–April 1969: The Collapse of de Gaulle’s Grand Design

In May 1968 student discontent that had been brewing since November 1967 erupted on the streets of Paris. Spreading quickly to both blue- and white-collar workers nationwide, the events of “*Mai 68*” culminated with massive right-wing counter-demonstrations and a surge for the Gaullists at the polls despite the ageing de Gaulle’s aloofness to the events around him.¹⁹¹ As in France and elsewhere in Europe, Yugoslavia’s post-secondary student population boomed

¹⁹⁰ DSIP, PA, 1967 F–38, Telegram from Vejvoda to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 436742, 27.10.1967.; *Ibid.*, 1968 F–36, Monthly report from the Yugoslavian embassy in Paris (Cerović) to the Yugoslavian Foreign Ministry, Doc. 42815, 22.01.1968.

¹⁹¹ Judt, *Postwar*, 409–413.

after 1945. The boom having given rise to a series of problems and grievances, the Yugoslavian government had in its typical fashion implemented ad hoc rather than systematic solutions which satisfied no-one. In June a series of student protests and faculty strikes erupted in Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Niš, and Kragujevac, leading to police barricades of university buildings. Like de Gaulle, who left on a scheduled visit to Romania during the Paris protests, Tito found himself on Brioni during the Yugoslavian demonstrations and chose to remain there, offering no comment for a full week on a situation that had taken him by complete surprise. When he finally broke his silence, his conciliatory tone disarmed the protesters. Although public witch-hunts were avoided (he could hardly prosecute the student and faculty leaders who were criticizing Yugoslavia's economic policy from the left), Tito made moves to further consolidate his position and prevent a repeat of such events.¹⁹²

Both de Gaulle and Tito's domestic positions were shaken by the protests but strengthened after, at least temporarily. However, the Soviet intervention in Prague in August brought de Gaulle's grand design to a complete stop, dashing his hopes of "liberating" Eastern Europe and establishing a new continental order along a Franco-Soviet axis. Meanwhile, the pro-Americanism of his EEC partners had hamstrung his efforts to challenge Washington's hegemony. With no progress made on Bonn's normalization with Moscow and the satellites, de Gaulle's plans for NATO and the EEC also failed to yield the desired results. The NATO alliance had managed to survive the crisis provoked by de Gaulle's withdrawal of French troops and regained a sense of purpose through the Harmel Report, which promoted "deterrence and détente" vis-à-vis the Soviet bloc. Circumvented in NATO, de Gaulle was also brought down by collusion between "the five" as Italy, West Germany and the Benelux continued to hold the door

¹⁹² Hrvoje Klasić, *Jugoslavija i svijet, 1968*. (Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2012), 88–91, 169–181, 218–240; Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 301–302.

open for British accession to the Common Market.¹⁹³ Austrian Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky pointed to the crux of de Gaulle's predicament by asking, "How do you want to pursue a great foreign policy in today's world, if the Anglo-Saxon countries hate you?"¹⁹⁴

Tito's grand design was also being brought into question. With no signs of an abatement of America's bombing of North Vietnam which had begun in early 1965, and with continuing tensions in Palestine over Israel's occupation of the West Bank, in March 1968 Tito once again wrote to de Gaulle in an effort to address the international situation. Hoping to marshal greater cooperation between the "countries that support a policy of peace and independence," Tito proposed a summit of "non-aligned and other peace-loving nations" that would "mobilize the international public in favour of peace, independence, and economic progress:" an unambiguous invitation for France to de facto join the Non-Aligned Movement.¹⁹⁵ Meeting with Ambassador Vejvoda, de Gaulle questioned the difference between "non-aligned" and "peace-loving" nations (in response to which the Ambassador proffered the example of Pakistan, with whose president the General had very recently met), the skeptical French leader continued to interrogate Vejvoda without expressing an opinion on the summit proposal.¹⁹⁶ Although no copy of the reply to Tito's message exists in French archives, prompting de Gaulle's biographer Jean Lacouture to speculate whether the lack of response stemmed from his preoccupation with domestic affairs in early 1968,¹⁹⁷ the original of the General's reply is held at the Archive of Yugoslavia in Belgrade. The reply amounts to little more than a diplomatically effusive "thank you but no thank you" in response to Tito's summit invitation.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 171–174, 197.

¹⁹⁴ Kreisky quoted in Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 196.

¹⁹⁵ AJ, A KPR, I-1/236, Letter from Tito to de Gaulle, 07.03.1968.

¹⁹⁶ AJ, A KPR, I-1/236, Telegram from Vejvoda to Tito, 15.03.1968.

¹⁹⁷ Jean Lacouture, *De Gaulle: The Ruler, 1945–1970*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991 c1985), 411–412.

¹⁹⁸ AJ, A KPR, I-1/236, Letter from de Gaulle to Tito, 28.03.1968.

De Gaulle thus made it clear, if any further clarification was in fact needed by 1968, that he had no desire to cooperate and coordinate with Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement on the international scene. In addition to the rebuff from de Gaulle, Tito's bid for a new regional role was thwarted from other quarters. The increasing Soviet presence in the Eastern Mediterranean was jeopardizing Tito's aims of neutralizing the region by expelling any and all foreign presence from it. It was the pro-Sovietism of the "progressive forces of the Mediterranean" that objected to the distinctly non-Mediterranean Soviet Union's retreat from the basin and torpedoed the Belgrade-sponsored Mediterranean Conference of April 1968.¹⁹⁹ Moscow's encroachment into the Mediterranean, and Belgrade's retreat from its own "backyard" and the regional locus of the Non-Aligned Movement, was therefore clear.

Belgrade thus found itself in a perplexing situation: if it wanted to retain its position and influence in the Non-Aligned Movement, it would need to realign itself with Moscow.²⁰⁰ Unable to resolve this dilemma, when the new Czechoslovak leader, Alexander Dubček, invited Tito to visit Prague in July 1968, the invitation was readily accepted and the faltering non-aligned project was temporarily relegated to the background.²⁰¹ When Moscow intervened in Prague the following month and justified its actions by appealing to the need to protect socialist internationalism, the thinly-veiled threat to Tito's regime was clearly understood in Belgrade.²⁰² Unlike the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, during which Tito condemned and then condoned Soviet actions, the Yugoslavian leadership made no such about-face over the Prague Spring. The Soviet intervention, however, placed Belgrade in another awkward situation. With a resumption of danger from the East, in late summer 1968 the dispositions of the Yugoslavian army were

¹⁹⁹ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "The Evolution of Yugoslavia's Mediterranean Policy," *International Journal* Vol. 27, No. 4, The Mediterranean (Autumn, 1972), 539–543.

²⁰⁰ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 214.

²⁰¹ Klasić, *Jugoslavija i svijet, 1968.*, 397.

²⁰² Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 247.

moved to the country's eastern borders, revealing to the international community that on the eve of the Prague Spring Yugoslavian troops had been concentrated on its western borders, as though anticipating a Western attack. That Yugoslavian troops had been concentrated on its border with Italy only highlighted the extent of Tito's anti-Americanism and hostility to NATO which had been steadily growing since 1961. In many ways a repeat of 1948 and 1958, for Yugoslavia 1968 represented once again international isolation and a diplomatic crossroads.²⁰³

While Tito found himself in an all-too-familiar predicament, de Gaulle was in a cul-de-sac. Moscow's rigidity and hostility to his plan to unite Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals by "liberating" the satellites had undermined his grand design, while his rows with NATO and the EEC weakened his influence over Bonn and therefore the foundation of his grand design of "disengaging Europe from the bloc system."²⁰⁴ Yet, if East and West were converging anywhere in the world, it was in Yugoslavia as Tito once again swung to the West in response to the events in Prague.²⁰⁵ "Scared to death" (in Washington's words) of Moscow and pessimistic about the prospects of realizing a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, Tito steadied Yugoslavia's foreign policy toward the nascent Non-Aligned Movement, coupled with close economic ties with the Common Market.²⁰⁶ De Gaulle, however, would not remain in office – or alive – long enough to witness the results of this new turn.

Conclusion

The parallels between France and Yugoslavia's foreign policies – prompted by their shared geopolitical interests and further fueled in the 1960s by their shared hostility to American

²⁰³ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 249–262, 280–285.

²⁰⁴ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 154–155, 174–178.

²⁰⁵ Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 280.

²⁰⁶ Tito's interview with Jean Raymond Tournoux for *Paris Match* (October 28, 1968) in Josip Broz Tito, *Intervjui*, ed. Zdravko Židovec (Beograd: NIRO Mladost, 1980), 321–325; Bogetić, *Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi*, 285, 334.

hegemony – provided an opportunity for potentially meaningful international cooperation. Both leaders had successfully challenged the hegemony of the superpower to whose ideological bloc they belonged. De Gaulle's policies reached their peak in 1965–1966 over the EEC and NATO crises while Tito, having challenged Soviet power from the earliest days of the Cold War, extracted international clout from his non-aligned status and position as leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. The grand designs of both leaders were compromised by two factors: one, the disconnect between their ambitions and their countries' means; and two, the strategic–ideological polarity that remained very real despite effective political challenges that the two leaders (and arguably others) mounted to political bipolarity. Neither man was able to pry Latin America away from Washington's grasp, while many “progressives” in Asia and Africa preferred to ally themselves not with Yugoslavia, who in the 1960s was on poor terms with both superpowers, but with the far more economically and politically powerful Chinese (in the case of the Viet Cong) and Soviets (in the case of the Arabs).

Part of de Gaulle's failure in the Third World lay in the fact that it was not a top priority for him.²⁰⁷ For Tito, however, the international prestige and domestic legitimacy that he derived from his leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement could not provide solutions to the internal problems that plagued Communist Yugoslavia. Belgrade, trapped in a near-permanent impasse between the twin goals of implementing Marxism at home and preserving its independence from the Soviet Union, was forced to accept its economic dependence on Western Europe for which economic ties with the Third World were no match. For both political and economic reasons, as well as for the sake of continental and global considerations, therefore, the Yugoslavs saw France as an optimal ally. However, de Gaulle's determination to keep France firmly in the Atlantic Alliance – despite rhetoric that frequently suggested otherwise – in addition to his

²⁰⁷ Martin, *General de Gaulle's Cold War*, 82.

antipathy toward communism and a distaste for smaller powers (Yugoslavia falling into both of those categories), precluded any measurable cooperation on the international stage. Meanwhile, the incompatible nature of the two countries' economic bases hamstrung any growth in trade that could underpin political collaboration.

By the late 1960s, Tito and de Gaulle's designs foundered upon the rock of continental geographic–economic realities and the superpower condominium that was reinforced by the Six-Day War. Having been pushed out from their place of privilege in Yugoslavia by the West Germans, Italians, British and Americans while securing a favourable position for themselves in the EEC and their former colonies, the French abandoned all pretence at practical presence and influence in Southeastern Europe in the last three years of de Gaulle's presidency. While bilateral relations generally improved after de Gaulle's demission, on account of Georges Pompidou and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's partiality to the Yugoslavs (and to the Non-Aligned Movement in the case of Pompidou),²⁰⁸ a series of more concerted measures to improve Franco-Yugoslavian economic relations in 1969–1970 failed to significantly transform the situation over the long term.²⁰⁹ Despite the improvement in political relations after de Gaulle, the proverbial Achilles' heel of Franco-Yugoslavian economic relations would remain exposed until the end of the Cold War and the end of Yugoslavia.

²⁰⁸ Pompidou endorsed non-alignment at a press conference in 1969, evaluating it as “a good and desirable policy” and one that the French could not but support. See DSIP, PA, 1969 F–44, “Informacija o bilateralnim odnosima, spoljnoj i unutrašnjoj politici Francuske,” Doc. 432747, 15.09.1969. Tito met with Pompidou in October 1970 and Giscard d'Estaing in October 1976 (Giscard also visited Yugoslavia in 1970 as Minister of Finance). See Thomas Schreiber, *Les actions de la France à l'Est, ou les absences de Marianne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 129, 152.

²⁰⁹ More concerted efforts to broaden economic relations were made by both sides in 1969. In May a delegation from the *Conseil national du patronat français* (CNPf, the national employers' union) visited Yugoslavia and met with Tito. This was followed by a Yugoslavian national trade exhibition in Paris that autumn, billed as “the most important exhibition that Yugoslavia has ever mounted abroad, with the aim of attracting French business.” For the CNPF delegation visit see MAE, Série Z, Carton 292, Report on the CNPF mission to Yugoslavia, 12–17 May, 1969. For the exhibition see MAE, Série Z, Carton 293, “Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre a/s: Visite de M. Grličkov et exposition nationale yougoslave à Paris,” 14.08.1969.

Conclusion: A Traditional Friendship?

The Second World War and the Cold War wrought tremendous change to both France and Yugoslavia, as well as to Franco-Yugoslavian relations. While the communist takeover that many feared in 1945 never happened in France, in Yugoslavia the Partisans rapidly seized power and overthrew the Karadjordjević dynasty. The two countries, allies from the First World War, thus embarked upon two very different socioeconomic paths to reconstruction. But the division of the continent did not signal an end to bilateral political, economic, and cultural relations. On the contrary, the bilateral relationship endured and remained robust over the course of the 1950s and 1960s. In the aftermath of its humiliating defeat of May 1940, in a world dominated by the superpowers France sought to regain its status as a Great Power, not only by a dogged determination to hold on to its empire or harnessing the process of European integration, but also through a “policy of presence,” albeit a defensive one, in Yugoslavia. While in the first postwar years the French sought to protect their economic interests in Yugoslavia against nationalization, after 1950 their focus shifted to securing their “traditional” economic, military, cultural, and linguistic presence against British and American competition.

As Chapter 1 demonstrates, the Yugoslavs were equally motivated by self-interest. Showing that neither 1945 nor 1948 were the caesurae in European and Yugoslavian history, respectively, as conventionally believed, the chapter charts Tito’s ambivalent policy toward France. He, like the French themselves, sought to co-opt the legacy of Francophilia in Yugoslavia for his own aims of obtaining international legitimacy for his regime. His Marxism, which drove him to promote ties between the French and Yugoslavian proletariat, did not preclude a realist interest in France as a vital source of trade, diplomatic support, and regime legitimation.

Although the onset of the Cold War brought a chill to Franco-Yugoslavian relations in 1947, the situation evolved after the Tito–Stalin split of June 1948. The Balkans were a key theatre in the first decade of the Cold War. Tito frustrated both the West and the Soviets with his support of the Communists in the Greek Civil War, and his belligerence over Trieste. But it was his regional ambition and independent streak which threatened Moscow’s hegemony and prompted Stalin to expel Yugoslavia from the Cominform in an effort to impose homogeneity upon the international communist movement.¹ It was this event, misconstrued in the West as a nationalist rebellion and a conscious attempt at emancipation from the Soviet Union, that brought international renown to Tito and Communist Yugoslavia.² Chapter 2 traces Yugoslavia’s Western turn and hopes for a rapprochement with France, particularly under the premiership of the Radical Pierre Mendès France. As Yugoslavia turned West, Mendès France’s predecessors, the Christian Democrats Bidault and Schuman, overcame their aversion to communism to defend France’s position in Yugoslavia against British and American incursions. Although the argument is not made that the Fourth Republic was “decadent” in any way, the evidence in this chapter qualifies its excessive rehabilitation by those who, in shattering the myth of the Fourth Republic’s alleged incompetence, argued that its leaders were most shrewd and articulate. Instead, Chapter 2 presents an image of successive resource-strapped governments who were constantly on the defensive in Yugoslavia.

Together, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 chart Franco-Yugoslavian relations during the rapidly-changing international climate of 1953–1962: from the death of Stalin and the Khrushchev

¹ Jeronim Perović, “The Tito–Stalin Split: A Reassessment in Light of New Evidence,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 9, No. 2 (Spring, 2007), 34–56; Svetozar Rajak, “The Cold War in the Balkans, 1945–1956,” Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 198–213.

² Beatrice Heuser, *Western ‘Containment’ Policies in the Cold War: The Yugoslav Case, 1948–1953* (London: Routledge, 1989), 40–41.

Thaw, to Suez and Budapest, from colonial war in Algeria to crises over Berlin and Cuba. Chapter 3 enhances our understanding of Yugoslavian non-alignment, and makes the case that Belgrade did not flee from the continent to the Third World in 1955–1956. Rather, having elaborated a cogent foreign policy of “active neutralism” or non-alignment, Belgrade lost its footing as it tried simultaneously to reconcile with the Soviet Union, maintain friendly relations with the West, and make inroads into the Third World. It was the last point that brought it into direct conflict with France. As the chapter demonstrates, the Yugoslavs reasserted their principled commitment to anti-imperialism and support of leftist movements in the Third World, while the ruling French Socialists (and Communists) compromised themselves with their nationalist position on Algeria. Although tensions between Paris and Belgrade eased with de Gaulle’s return to power, as Chapter 4 shows, they re-emerged in 1959 due to the general international atmosphere and Belgrade’s support of the FLN.

The resurgence of Franco-Yugoslavian acrimony coincided with the peak in international tensions. Yet, remarkably, neither side abandoned the “traditional friendship.” Despite their increasing influence in the Third World the Yugoslavs, on several occasions, genuinely sought to placate the French and did their best not to alienate them, while Paris maintained its “policy of presence” in Yugoslavia and hoped to exploit Belgrade’s clout in the Arab world to its own benefit. It was precisely at that point that the convergences between Titoism and Gaullism first became evident. As Chapters 4 and 5 show, the two leaders’ means and short-term aims – to challenge superpower hegemony and bring an end to bloc logic and the Cold War – were identical. Where they differed was in their ultimate ends: the promotion of socialism in the Third World and the rolling back of communism in Eastern Europe, respectively. Although Belgrade continued its pursuit of a rapprochement with France, both for global calculations as well as

insurance against West German rearmament, de Gaulle never intended to engage with Tito and the Non-Aligned Movement. Meanwhile, it was the very success of de Gaulle's policies – the shaping of a Common Market that was favourable to France, the development of the French nuclear arm, as well as the successful challenge to American hegemony within the Atlantic Alliance – that rendered the pursuit of grandeur in Yugoslavia obsolete after 1966.

The first major finding of this work is that contrary to dominant narratives, neither the destruction wrought by the Second World War nor the ideological divide imposed by the Cold War swept away, or precluded the revival of, pre-1945 structures. Franco-Yugoslavian political, economic, and cultural relations were largely resumed, and both Paris and Belgrade had an interest in resuscitating and co-opting Yugoslavian Francophilia for their respective ends. Cultural relations were revived, from exchanges of high culture to *Poilus d'Orient* visits to the Salonika Front, which Tito allowed despite the problematic nature of Serbia's pre-1918 history in Communist Yugoslavia. Politically, economically, and militarily, too, the French did not simply retreat from Eastern Europe in 1945. Rather, they sought to stake their Great Power claim in Yugoslavia against the British and Americans over the whole of the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, until de Gaulle successfully reasserted French power in other theatres. Likewise, the new regime in Belgrade worked to exploit leftist and popular pro-Yugoslav sentiment in France for international legitimation and diplomatic support over its claims to Trieste in the early Cold War. Beyond 1954, that Belgrade remained invested in the continent in general and France in particular shows that it did not dichotomize between Europe and the Third World. That its non-aligned policy and leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement remained compatible with Europe, and that France remained engaged in Yugoslavia after 1945, demonstrates that the political and

ideological division of Europe after the Second World War was not hermetic and that Yugoslav non-alignment was not singularly Third World-based, as has been thought.

The second significant finding of this study pertains to the Cold War, and points to the multiplicity of challenges to superpower hegemony and the similarities of said challenges, in this case Titoism and Gaullism. In doing so, it reintroduces an ideological element into a field dominated by realist accounts of state behaviour. Although both Tito and de Gaulle were shrewd pragmatists, the ultimate aims of their foreign policies were to a significant degree conditioned by ideology. Tito sought to promote socialism in the Third World while de Gaulle wished to create a Europe “from the Atlantic to the Urals” to challenge American hegemony – a goal that was predicated upon, among other things, the liberation of Eastern Europe from Soviet Communism. Thus even for the middle powers the Cold War was essentially ideological, even if de Gaulle maintained that ideologies were ephemeral and transitory. This notion is further reinforced by an assessment of the successes of Tito and de Gaulle’s challenges to the bipolar Cold War system. De Gaulle successfully challenged Washington’s hegemony in Western Europe and the Atlantic Alliance, and proved that geopolitical bipolarity was negotiable in the 1960s. Tito’s Yugoslavia, as Svetozar Rajak has argued, played an integral role in challenging Moscow’s ideological and political hegemony in the Soviet bloc and prompting Khrushchev to unleash “the forces of liberalization” that ultimately brought down the Soviet Union from within.³ However, non-alignment was not an ideology but was merely a political strategy, and Tito’s Communist faith never wavered. The ideological and geostrategic conflict between the superpowers, as David Engerman has shown, was one of bloc membership, where progress was

³ Svetozar Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, Comradeship, Confrontation 1953–1957* (London: Routledge, 2011), 4–5, 211–214.

evaluated based on which side was better able to export its socioeconomic system.⁴ In this system, neither capitalist France nor socialist Yugoslavia was able to find a non-ideologically-tinted “third” alternative to the Cold War duality. It was this non-negotiable ideological duality that prevented the Gaullist liberalization of Eastern Europe, the practice of Yugoslavia’s moral equidistance from the two blocs, as well as Franco-Yugoslavian cooperation and mobilization of the wider world in overcoming the bipolar order in the second half of the 1960s.

This dissertation has shown that there is merit to studying relations between Eastern and Western European middle powers and restoring Yugoslavia to the post-1945 narrative beyond the Tito–Stalin split and its collapse (which, not coincidentally, came with the end of the Cold War). Doing so contributes to the integration of the histories of the two halves of the continent, reminds us that the end of the Second World War did not sweep away pre-1945 ties and structures, and mitigates the tendency to “other” Eastern Europe in general and Southeastern Europe in particular. Further, while Gaullism has been lauded as “historically having represented one of the most significant alternative conceptions of the evolution of the Cold War beyond the established East–West conflict,”⁵ and while Romania’s Nicolae Ceaușescu is known as “the de Gaulle of the East,”⁶ Tito’s Yugoslavia must be incorporated to the Cold War narrative as having been the first to seek an end to the bipolar system by, among other tactics, employing the legacy of its “traditional friendship” with France.

⁴ David C. Engerman, “Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917–1962,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 33.

⁵ Frédéric Bozo, “France, ‘Gaullism,’ and the Cold War,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II, 159.

⁶ J.P.D. Dunbabin, *The Cold War: The Great Powers and Their Allies*, 2nd edition (New York: Pearson Education, 2008 c1994), 536. It was Khrushchev’s decision to withdraw Soviet troops from Romania in a bid to placate Tito that paved the way for Ceaușescu’s own dissent from the Kremlin. Vojtech Mastny, “Soviet Foreign Policy, 1953–1962,” Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, 322.

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Archive of the Cabinet of the Marshall of Yugoslavia (A KMJ)

I-2-a/27, 30–33; I-3-b/211, 214, 220, 222, 227; I-3-d/62

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I-1/232, 235–236; I-2/24-1; I-2-/6; I-5-a/3–4; I-5-b/28-2–4, 7–9

Archive of the Federal Executive Committee (A SIV)

130/620, 635

The Historical Archives of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia (IAB)

Fond Koča Popović (Legat Konstantina–Koče Popovića)

Cartons 7, 38

Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris–La Courneuve, France (MAE)

Série Z: Europe – Yugoslavia

Cartons 3, 22–24, 26–27, 34–38, 41, 70, 75, 79–82, 88–91, 94, 105–106, 113, 117–120, 136–137, 141, 143–144, 148, 155, 160–161, 170, 176, 181–186, 213, 222–223, 225, 229, 233, 236–238, 280–4, 286, 290, 292–294

Foreign Ministers' Cabinet Papers

No. 57 – Robert Schuman

No. 17 – Antoine Pinay

No. 14 – Christian Pineau

No. 38, 92 – Maurice Couve de Murville

Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nantes, France (MAE–N)

Série B: Belgrade Embassy Papers

Cartons 25, 79

National Archives, Paris, France (AN)

| | |
|---|---------------|
| <i>Fond Charles de Gaulle, 1940–1958</i> | 3AG/261 |
| <i>Papiers des chefs de l'état de la Quatrième République</i> | 4AG/104, 106 |
| <i>Fond Geneviève Tabouis</i> | 27AR/102, 175 |
| <i>Fond Georges Bidault</i> | 457AP/97 |
| <i>Fond Vincent Auriol</i> | 552AP/182 |
| <i>Fond Christian Pineau</i> | 580AP/13 |

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| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| <i>Ministère de la Defense: Yougoslavie, 1951–1969</i> | 14 S 217–218, 221–222 |
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