

two countries as cordial as those that already exist between the two peoples.

How long will it be until the President of the French Republic makes an official visit to Canada?

Eastern Europe

Yugoslav foreign policy's ambivalence towards *détente*

By Francine Friedman

Yugoslavia's dilemma concerning its role in world affairs has increased as the decade draws to a close. The Soviet-American *détente* process promised, at the beginning of the 1970s, an era of peace and de-escalating world tensions. But *détente* also presented Yugoslavia with the problem of how to maintain its large influence (large relative to its population, size, and level of development) in the light of a possible superpower condominium. The departure from government of President Josip Broz Tito, who is a major unifying factor in multinational Yugoslavia and the principal architect of its nonalignment policy, is imminent. The question of the extent of Yugoslavia's unity and strength of purpose in his absence has increased Yugoslavia's ambivalence towards Soviet-American *détente*. The process itself is currently fraught with inconsistencies and deadlocks so that even the promise of a decline in world conflict is endangered. In this situation, Yugoslav ambivalence towards the Soviet-American *détente* in the decade of the 1970s and the effect of the vagaries of the *détente* process on Yugoslav relations with the major actors in both the East and the West warrant examination.

Yugoslavia has achieved outstanding social, economic and cultural progress since the end of the Second World War. The formerly backward agrarian country has become a moderately-developed industrial nation with a comparatively modern working class.

Yugoslavia's present-day international status was achieved through the determination to maintain the independence for which the partisans fought during the Second World War. It has tried to follow an independent foreign policy despite its strategic location in the his-

torically-unstable Balkan area, between the two military-political blocs, and in proximity to the volatile Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean areas. Furthermore, Yugoslavia is situated between two different socio-political systems but belongs to neither; it is a European country outside the European bloc system, a Communist regime outside the organized socialist community. As a result, Yugoslavia's concern has been to protect not only its territorial integrity and political independence but also its unique socio-economic system of "socialist self-management".

The country's situation is reflected in its unique foreign policy. Having established contact with newly-independent countries of Asia and Africa in the early 1950s, Yugoslavia became a leader of the nonaligned movement. The nonaligned countries rejected great-power hegemony, power politics and colonial relations as well as the special role of the great powers as political leaders and sole decision-makers in international relations.

Yugoslav leaders publicly and consistently emphasized that Yugoslavia's national interest would be served best if it followed its own ideological principles without interference from either the Soviet Union or the United States. In the eyes of many non-Yugoslav observers, however, the country's chosen policy of nonalignment contradicts its desire for "socialist

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Between two systems and belonging to neither