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## **The Two Last Encounters between Broz and Berlinguer – the Epilogue of an Alliance**

**Abstract:** Based on unpublished historical sources from the archives of the communist parties of Yugoslavia and Italy (Archives of Yugoslavia, Belgrade; Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, Archivio del Partito comunista Italiano, Rome), this paper analyzes the two last meetings of the leaders of the two parties, Josip Broz Tito and Enrico Berlinguer. The topics are Berlinguer's two visits to Yugoslavia, in October 1977 and October 1978, which took place at the height of the inter-party alliance, after the Berlin Conference of the Communist Parties of Europe held in June 1976. The aforementioned two visits are viewed in this paper as case studies that testify to the nature of the alliance between the two parties, and illuminate the key similarities and differences between these two political actors.

**Keywords:** Josip Broz Tito, Enrico Berlinguer, Yugoslavia, Communist Party of Italy (Partito comunista italiano), Eurocommunism, Cold War

Writing about Josip Broz Tito's activities at the conference of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Havana in 1979, historian Vladimir Petrović characterized Broz's diplomatic successes at that gathering as the "swan song" of Tito's personal diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> Petrović used this term as a metaphor to describe the Yugoslav foreign policy successes from the end of the 1970s, which were not a prelude to the further growth of the country's power, influence and prestige, but, paradoxically, an introduction to its collapse and ruin, which inevitably came at the beginning of the 1980s. In fact, it was an ideologically and generationally worn out system, politically ossified and non-innovative, which was best shown by the dogmatic ideological innovations of Edward Kardelj from the 1970s, who could not count on the future. Therefore, the late 1970s were largely the "swan song" of Yugoslav socialism. What is particularly important for our topic is that this period was also the "swan song" of Italian communism. As far as the Com-

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<sup>1</sup> V. Petrović, "Havana 1979: Labudova pesma Titove lične diplomatije". In *Tito – viđenja i tumačenja*, ed. O. Manojlović Pintar (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2011), 416–436.

munist Party of Italy (PCI) is concerned, the second half of the 1970s was a period of great growth, electoral growth and international strengthening, which made the party more politically relevant than ever in its history (except, perhaps, for a brief period after the Second World War, when the PCI was part of the national government). Unlike the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), PCI was far more ideologically innovative and, through the never clearly and precisely defined strategy of Eurocommunism,<sup>2</sup> it expanded its political horizons, opportunities and influence, both within Italy and on the international scene. However, structural limitations, primarily related to the bipolar division of Europe during the Cold War, limited the growth potential of the PCI. Therefore, after an apparent strengthening at the end of the 1970s, this party spent the entire following decade in political stagnation, disappearing from the scene with the end of the bipolar division in Europe. Finally, the cooperation between the LCY and the PCI went through its “swan song” at the end of the 1970s. At that time, the two parties were extremely close and had allied relations. Their cooperation was stronger and closer than ever in the ten-year history of mutual relations, but this did not lead to more significant or larger political achievements in the following period. Nevertheless, given that the end of the 1970s undoubtedly saw the peak of the alliance between the Yugoslav and Italian communists, it is an important historical phenomenon worth investigating and analyzing in more detail. Focusing, primarily, on the two most important events which took place in inter-party cooperation at the end of the decade – the two visits of the Secretary General of the PCI, Enrico Berlinguer, to Yugoslavia in 1977 and 1978, this paper intends to shed more light on the period that was the peak of LCY–PCI relations and offer a deeper insight into the nature of the alliance between the two most autonomous communist parties in Europe by analyzing those years.

### *Introduction*

The history of the relationship between the Yugoslav and Italian communists has not been sufficiently explored in Italian and (post)Yugoslav historiography.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The alliance of communist parties of Italy, France and Spain, active since the mid-1970s, was called Eurocommunism by the international public at the time. This was an ambivalent political strategy, in which the three mentioned parties, at least symbolically, remained communist, but significantly modified their policies to be far more moderate. Eurocommunism involved, above all, the acceptance of political pluralism, closer cooperation with the non-communist left and criticism of the socialist system in Eastern Europe. S. Pons, “The rise and fall of Eurocommunism”. In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume III Endings*, ed. M. P. Leffler, O. A. Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 45–65.

<sup>3</sup> On the relations between CPY and PCI see: S. Mišić, “Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945–1956”. In *Italy’s Balkan Strategies (19th – 20th Century)*, ed. V.

The relations between the two parties in the interwar period were far from stable and intense, and apart from the fact that the secretary general of the PCI, Palmiro Togliatti, was a delegate of the Comintern at the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) in Dresden in 1928,<sup>4</sup> historiography and the available historical sources do not record more important moments in their inter-party relations. The outbreak of World War II significantly intensified the relations between the Yugoslav and Italian communists. Paradoxically, the war at the same time brought strong impulses that led the two parties to close cooperation, as well as to sharp conflicts. On the one hand, the Slovenian and Croatian national question gradually divided the CPY and PCI, because the solution to that question inevitably led to the Yugoslav-Italian territorial dispute.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the territorial issue was not the sole or even the decisive cause of the conflict between the two parties. In this respect, their different ideological conceptions were far more significant. While the PCI advocated cooperation with non-communist Allied states, the CPY dogmatically propagated conflict with the capitalist West, and tried to impose these radical views on the Italian communists.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, during the war, PCI became very dependent on its Yugoslav counterpart. This dependence was also ideological, due to a large number of Italian communists who admired the Yugoslav revolutionary model and wished for that kind of a more radical anti-fascist struggle,<sup>7</sup> as well as material,

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Pavlović (Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 2015), 281–292; С. Мишић, “Обнављање односа између Савеза комуниста Југославије и Комунистичке партије Италије 1955–1956. године”, (Renewal of relations between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of Italy 1955–1956), *Токови историје* 2/2013 (2013), 121–145; M. Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito. Tra identità nazionale e internazionalismo* (Rome: Carocci editore, 2005); P. Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa. Il PCI, il confine orientale e il contesto internazionale 1941–1955* (Gorica: Libreria Editrice Goriziana, 2010); M. Zuccari, *Il dito sulla piaga. Togliatti e il Pci nella rottura fra Stalin e Tito 1944–1957* (Milano: Mursia, 2008). The author of these lines explored the relationship between LCY and PCI in the 1960s and 1970s in his doctoral dissertation, defended at the Sapienza University of Rome (Sapienza Università di Roma) in 2020, and published several academic articles on the subject.

<sup>4</sup> B. Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918–1988, Prva knjiga* (Beograd: Nolit, 1988), 160, 261; S. Gužvica, *Before Tito. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia During the Great Purge (1936–1940)* (Tallinn: Tallinn University Press 2020), 41, 50.

<sup>5</sup> On the role of the territorial dispute between Belgrade and Rome in PCI relations, see: Karlsen, *Frontiera rossa*.

<sup>6</sup> S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia. L'URSS, il PCI e le origini della guerra fredda (1943–1948)* (Rome: Carocci editore, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 59–60, 106; E. Aga-Rossi, V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin. Il Pci e la politica estera staliniana negli archivi di Mosca* (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 2007), 106; A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti. A Biography* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2008), 162; In-

because during and immediately after the war, the Italian party received financial and various other types of aid through Belgrade.<sup>8</sup>

The Yugoslav attempts to dominate were frustrating to the leaders of the PCI. Therefore, when the Yugoslav-Soviet split occurred in 1948, the PCI and its leader, Palmiro Togliatti, had a prominent position in the communist movement's attacks on Yugoslavia.<sup>9</sup> After the Cominform resolution that expelled Yugoslavia from the group, the two parties were in conflict, and there are no official records of any mutual relations until 1956.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, LCY and PCI were brought closer together by the changes in the policies of LCY/CPY after 1948, because from that period onward, the Yugoslav party followed a much more pragmatic policy, far from the revolutionary dogmatism of the first post-war years. The short-term cooperation between the two parties from 1956 to 1958<sup>11</sup>, interrupted by the second Yugoslav-Soviet conflict in 1958, clearly indicated the enormous potential of inter-party cooperation.

Namely, since then, LCY and PCI stood together on the "right" wing of the International Communist Movement, propagating a more flexible policy, greater autonomy of national communist parties, as well as weakening Moscow's hegemony in the movement. On those ideological bases, the two parties managed to strengthen their relations in the early 1960s, forming a strategic alliance and laying the ground for future fruitful inter-party cooperation.<sup>12</sup> With the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the alliance of the two parties gained additional strength, as a result of joint and coordinated resistance to the Soviet policy, and since the mid-1970s, inter-party relations developed even further, primarily due to the stronger distancing of the PCI from Moscow,

terview of historian Paolo Spriano. In B. Valli, *Gli eurocomunisti* (Milan: Bompiani, 1976), 98; Zuccari, *Il ditto sula piaga*, 55–56.

<sup>8</sup> Aga-Rossi, Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*, 320; Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945–1956", 285–286. In an interview, Josip Kopinič stated that he was responsible for the radio connection between the PCI and Moscow during the war. He allegedly had a meeting with Gian Carlo Pajetta regarding that issue, 1940. in Ljubljana – M. Marić, *Deca komunizma. Knjiga I* (Beograd: Laguna, 2014), 233.

<sup>9</sup> Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia*, 125–132, 204, 225; Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 102–104.

<sup>10</sup> Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 104–147; Mišić, "Yugoslav Communists and the Communist Party of Italy, 1945–1956", 286–291.

<sup>11</sup> С. Мишић, "Обнављање односа између Савеза комуниста Југославије и Комунистичке партије Италије 1955–1956. године", 121–154; Galeazzi, *Togliatti e Tito*, 147–181.

<sup>12</sup> Б. Живковић, "Од новог помирења до стратешког савеза: односи југословенских и италијанских комуниста од 1962. до Тољатијеве посете јануара 1964. године", (From a new reconciliation to a strategic alliance: relations between the Yugoslav and of the Italian Communists from 1962 until Togliatti's visit in January 1964), *Историјски записи* 3–4/2020 (2021), 121–146.

which was the main result of the policies pursued by the new leader of the Italian party, Enrico Berlinguer. The crown of that inter-party cooperation was the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe, held in the summer of 1976 in Berlin, where Broz and Berlinguer worked together and managed to get the Soviets to sign a written confirmation of the key principle that the two parties propagated – the autonomy of national communist parties.<sup>13</sup>

However, it was only an apparent diplomatic success, which largely remained on paper. Shortly after the Berlin Conference, Moscow launched a political counterattack to maintain its hegemony in the communist movement. The main target of that coup was the Eurocommunist alliance in Western Europe, i.e. the alliance of the communist parties of Spain, Italy and France. Becoming increasingly isolated, the leader of the strongest Eurocommunist party, the Communist Party of Italy, in the late 1970s, decided to further strengthen his ties with the only reliable communist ally – the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Therefore, in just one year, Enrico Berlinguer made two official visits to Yugoslavia, having extremely meaningful conversations with Josip Broz Tito.

#### *Soviet attack on Eurocommunism – prelude to Berlinguer's visits in October 1977*

Only a few months after the Berlin Conference, Moscow gradually began to confront the Eurocommunist challenge. Already at the end of 1976, at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact, Leonid Brezhnev pointed out that the Western "reaction" was trying to separate the Western European communist parties from the socialist states. This statement was a clear prelude to an organized Soviet campaign against Eurocommunism. The motives for the Soviet attack were multiple and different, such as the Carter administration's initial openness to Western European communists. However, as the Italian historian Silvio Pons notes, the key reason was the Soviet fear of "centrifugal, pluralist and critical messages spread by the Eurocommunists". Soviet pressure led to reactions, and the communist parties of Italy, France and Spain organized a meeting in Madrid in March 1977, symbolically providing strong resistance to the criticism coming from Moscow. This meeting, which is considered the peak of Eurocommunism<sup>14</sup>, only led to further conflict with Moscow. Nevertheless, these gestures did not lead to the long-term strengthening of Eurocommunism, a movement that soon began to dissipate more noticeably, due to the structural problems of the three parties. While the Communist Party of France quickly returned to its more dogmatic

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<sup>13</sup> M. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu* (Opatija: Otokar Keršovani, 1983), 397–412.

<sup>14</sup> During this meeting, the leaders of the three parties, Enrico Berlinguer, Marchais and Santiago Carrillo, used the term Eurocommunism for the first time in their lives.

positions, strengthening its relations with the USSR, the PCI and the CP of Spain experienced a drop in electoral support.<sup>15</sup> An additional cause of their failure lay in the fact that the Eurocommunist movement never managed to establish more permanent relations with the non-communist left in Europe, with the exception of the successful cooperation between the PCI and the West German Social Democrats, therefore being left with little maneuvering space.<sup>16</sup>

In such circumstances, there was a re-intensification of relations between LCY and PCI, which had been less intense in the previous months. During the summer of 1977, there were three important visits, which were a prelude to Berlinguer's arrival in Belgrade in October. The first one was on June 10, 1977, when Antonio Rubbi, a key figure in the foreign policy of the PCI at that time, visited Belgrade. In the first meeting, with Aleksandar Grličkov<sup>17</sup>, Rubbi focused on the conflict between the Eurocommunist parties and Moscow. Namely, the PCI official pointed out that the Soviet Union had launched its attack on Eurocommunism at the meetings of the editorial board of the international communist journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* (Проблемы мира и социализма). Rubbi emphasized the unity of the three parties in resisting such pressures, and to Grličkov's implicit advice that a clash with Moscow should not be avoided, the Italian communist replied that the PCI would certainly not remain silent in the face of any further criticism.<sup>18</sup>

On the same day, Rubbi also met with Vladislav Obradović<sup>19</sup>, another LCY official who was in charge of contacts with PCI in those years. In addition to the Soviet attack on Eurocommunism, the two officials also discussed other international topics. The most important issue was the action of the Socialist International. While Rubbi emphasized the good relations between the West German Social Democrat leader, Willy Brandt, and Berlinguer, and the results of their recent friendly meeting, Obradović emphasized the problem of the International's activities in the Third World. Namely, the Yugoslav assessment was that the Socialist International was undermining the unity of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the LCY was strongly opposed to this. Therefore, this topic was often mentioned in the following meetings of the officials of the two parties, and

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<sup>15</sup> Especially the Spanish party, which achieved only ten percent of support in the first elections after the fall of Franco's regime.

<sup>16</sup> Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", 57–60.

<sup>17</sup> Aleksandar Grličkov, who at that time served as the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the CPY, had an extremely important role in the party's foreign policy in the second half of the 1970s.

<sup>18</sup> Archive of Yugoslavia (later on: AY), CPY – International Committee (507/IX) – 48/I-565.

<sup>19</sup> At that time, Vladislav Obradović was the head of the Department of International Relations and Relations of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the CPY.

as Obradović noted in his report on this conversation, the Yugoslav side was not satisfied with the attitude of the PCI towards this problem, considering that the Italian communists did not understand the situation and the harmfulness of the activities of the Socialist International.<sup>20</sup>

A month later, on July 12 and 13, 1977, Aleksandar Grličkov, on behalf of the LCY, visited Rome and spoke with high-ranking PCI officials in charge of the party's foreign policy - Sergio Segre, Gian Carlo Pajetta and Rubbi. The main topic of these talks was the recent visit of the PCI delegation to Moscow, i.e. the smoldering conflict between the Eurocommunist parties and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). As Pajetta stated, the goal of the Italian communists was to discuss with Soviet officials the increasingly obvious and strong efforts of Moscow to revise the decisions of the Berlin Conference, a process that Pajetta characterized as scandalous in his conversation with the Yugoslav interlocutor.

In other words, the visit came at a time when the conflict between Western European communists and Moscow intensified after the publication of the book by the Secretary General of the Communist Party of Spain, Santiago Carrillo, *Eurocommunism and the State* (*Eurocomunismo y Estado*), and the review of this book in the Soviet magazine *Novoye vremja* (New times).<sup>21</sup> The position of the PCI, according to Carrillo's book, and the debate between the CPSU and the PCE was, to some extent, ambivalent. That is to say, as Pajeta explained, the Italian communists did not want to develop a Eurocommunist doctrine, and they did not approve of the content of Carrillo's writings. Nevertheless, in the

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<sup>20</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-565. During the meeting, the internal crisis in the CP of Spain was also discussed. Obradović was interested in whether the rumors about the conflict between Secretary General Carrillo and the famous revolutionary Dolores Ibárruri, better known as Pasionaria, were true. Rubbi confirmed those rumors, pointing out that the root of that conflict lay in Ibaruri's pro-Soviet views but added that Carrillo's position was stable due to his compromise action on strengthening democracy in Spain.

<sup>21</sup> As noted earlier, it was already clear by the end of 1976 that Moscow was preparing an attack on the Eurocommunist movement. In this regard, Carrillo's book served as a *casus belli*. Carrillo's work criticized socialism in Eastern Europe, and Moscow was particularly irritated by Carrillo's claims that "the success of democratic socialism in the Western European communist parties will have a significant impact on the Eastern Bloc, and lead to numerous Prague springs." Carrillo's book was published at the end of May 1977, but thanks to KGB collaborators within the Spanish party, Moscow received a copy of the manuscript a few months earlier, and had a review prepared in advance. P. Preston, *The Last Stalinist. The Life of Santiago Carrillo* (London: HarperCollins, 2015), 225–226. According to Silvio Pons, such threats from Carrillo scared Moscow especially because the United States of America at that time was thinking about the political assimilation of Eurocommunism, as a way to promote "greater diversity" in Eastern Europe [i.e. undermining the socialist system and Soviet hegemony in the Eastern European bloc – BZ]. S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo* (Torino: Einaudi, 2006), 69.



aforementioned debate, the PCI was sharply opposed to Moscow, because they did not see the activities of Soviet propaganda as an attack on a single book, but an attempt to ban free debate within the communist movement and, most importantly, Moscow's attempt to re-impose its dominant position. Aleksandar Grlićkov fully shared the Italians' views, and the LCY and the PCI were in agreement on this issue.<sup>22</sup>

The discussion that took place in Moscow between the officials of the CPSU and PCI was of great interest to Belgrade, and most of the conversation was devoted to that topic. Pajetta reported that the talks were taking a disappointing course for the PCI, in which the Soviet side refused to reveal its political intentions and plans. The conversation between Grlićkov, Pajetta and Segre clearly showed two important phenomena that united LCY and PCI. On the one hand, neither the Yugoslav nor the Italian parties were able to gauge Moscow's policy regarding the autonomy of the national communist parties and whether the Soviets would try harder to revise the decisions of the Berlin Conference. On the other hand, both parties feared that this was precisely Moscow's intention, and that a period of more intense Soviet pressure on this matter would follow. Both Grlićkov and Pajetta strongly criticized Soviet attempts to incite internal divisions and split certain parties, primarily the Communist Party of Spain (PCE). In addition, Segre emphasized that relations with Western governments were more important to Moscow at that time than with communist parties, and Pajetta spoke about the numerous ideological pressures Moscow exerted on the PCI, primarily regarding their stance on the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968. At the end of the visit, however, Grlićkov called for caution and toned down the anti-Soviet rhetoric that had dominated the discussions until then. The Yugoslav official emphasized how important it was to be patient, to fight against anti-Sovietism, and to support every positive step in international relations. In addition, he fully agreed with Pajetta's assessment, which he specifically underlined in his report, that it was necessary to allow an "honorable exit" for Moscow in the aforementioned debate.<sup>23</sup>

At the end of the same month, July 1977, Pajetta returned the visit, meeting Grlićkov in Belgrade. The main goal of this visit was to convey to the Yugoslav side a letter in which the leader of the PCI, Enrico Berlinguer, asked Josip Broz Tito to help restore the relations between the PCI and the Communist Party of China during his upcoming visit to Beijing.<sup>24</sup> For the Yugoslav side,

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<sup>22</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-566.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Along with the letter, Pajetta clearly stated in his conversation with Grlićkov the strong interest of the PCI to restore relations with the Chinese communists, after the changes that had occurred in that party with the death of its decade-long leader, Mao Zedong. AY, 507/

the most important topic was the conflict between the CPSU and the PCE, especially given that the visit of the Yugoslav president to Moscow was to follow. Grličkov and Pajetta, in fact, only repeated the principled positions that the two parties had shared on this issue before. Although both LCY and PCI objected to certain parts of Carrillo's book and thought that it could have been critically discussed, both parties agreed that the Soviet attack was excessive and unacceptable. For the Yugoslav and Italian communists, Moscow's attack on the PCE was, in fact, an attempt to excommunicate and split the Spanish party, revealing the Soviet desire to revise the decisions of the Berlin Conference and limit the autonomy of the national communist parties. Grličkov even believed that the PCE had to defend itself more strongly against Soviet attacks. Discussing this topic, Pajetta also informed Grličkov about his brother Giuliano's impressions from his recent visit to Spain. During the visit, Giuliano Pajetta received strong expressions of gratitude from Carrillo for the support that the PCI provided him, and Pajetta's impression was that the power of the general secretary of the PCI, as well as the degree of his influence on Spanish society, was extremely strong.<sup>25</sup>

Along with the key topics of the PCI's relationship with Beijing and the conflict between the Soviet and Spanish communists, Pajetta informed Grličkov about several foreign policy activities of the PCI. First of all, the Italian communist assured him that PCI was distancing itself from Moscow. In this regard, he pointed out that Berlinguer had canceled his planned vacation in the Soviet Union so as not to create the impression that he supported the USSR in the conflict with the PCE. Pajetta added that there was a mysterious visit of a member of the Politburo of the French party to Moscow, about which neither the CPSU nor the PCF wanted to inform the PCI, thus indicating the re-alignment of this party with the USSR. Finally, Pajetta especially wanted to talk about Libya, which he had recently visited, meeting with Muammar al-Gaddafi. Pajetta visited Libya in light of the conflict between Tripoli and Cairo, and his impressions were surprisingly positive. Namely, the Italian communist said that the Libyan

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IX – 48/I-567; 568: Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, Archivio del Partito comunista (henceforth FG APCI), Esteri, MF 298, 1167. With this letter and Pajetta's visit, the two-year process of the Yugoslav mediation in restoring the relations between PCI and Beijing began. The mentioned process was successful, and the Yugoslav contribution was significant, culminating in Berlinguer's visit to the Chinese capital in 1980. S. Pons, *The Global Revolution. A History of International Communism 1917–1991*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 292. This was a very important topic in the relations between CPY and PCI in the late 1970s, which will be briefly discussed in this paper. For more details see: B. Živković, "In Quest of a New International Communist Alliance: The Yugoslav Mediation in the Renewal of Relations Between the Communist Parties of Italy and China (1977–1979)". In *Iconografie europee*, ed. W. Montanari, S. Zakeri (Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2021), 285–306.

<sup>25</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-567.

leader left an extremely good impression on him. The aforementioned meeting changed the perception of Libya in the eyes of the PCI, and the Italian party began to support Tripoli and was very critical of Egypt and Anwar el Sadat. The Italian communists lamented the Arab division, saying that such a situation only worked to the advantage of Israel and the United States of America, and begged for Yugoslav diplomatic help to alleviate the problem. According to Pajetta, the main negative influences were the actions of Saudi Arabia and Sadat, while he especially praised the positive influences of the leaders of Algeria and Palestine, Houari Boumédiène and Yasser Arafat.<sup>26</sup>

The previously mentioned visits, which took place in the summer of 1977, reflected the high level of inter-party relations, which was explicitly said by Pajetta in his interview with the Skopje-based paper *Večera*. Pajetta told the Macedonian newspaper that the relations between the two parties were an example of good cooperation, in which there was a constant and intensive exchange of opinions.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, in September 1977, at the top of the PCI, the idea of organizing an inter-party meeting at the highest level matured, and Pajetta was chosen to contact Belgrade on this issue. Pajetta spoke with Obradović, who reached President Broz through Stane Dolanc, the secretary of the LCY Central Committee Presidency, and conveyed the proposal of the Italian communists<sup>28</sup>, to which a positive response was soon received.

### *The penultimate meeting between Broz and Berlinguer* – October 1977

At the beginning of October 1977, with his close associate Anselmo Gouthier, Enrico Berlinguer visited Yugoslavia and had a meaningful conversation with Josip Broz Tito. A few years later, it will turn out that this was the penultimate in a series of meetings that the two communist leaders had during the 1970s. Although, without a doubt, the meeting between Broz and Berlinguer in 1975 was extremely significant<sup>29</sup>, this meeting in 1977 can be called their most important one. This assessment is based not only on the fact that this period saw the peak of inter-party cooperation and alliance, but above all on the fact that the talks held in 1977 in Karadorđevo strongly illustrated good mutual relations, similarities, respect and importance but also certain differences that determined the scope of cooperation between LCY and PCI.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> FG APCI, Esteri, MF 298, 1169.

<sup>28</sup> FG APCI, Esteri, MF 304, 1976–1977.

<sup>29</sup> Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 46; M. Galeazzi, *Il Pci e il movimento dei paesi non allineati 1955–1975* (Milan: Franco Agnelli, 2011), 246–247; Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 286.

The visit came at a time when the inter-party relations were better than they had ever been. Yugoslav reports emphasized this fact, and according to the Yugoslav party, the main cause of such good relations was that LCY and PCI viewed the situation in the International Communist Movement similarly, as well as the principle of autonomy of national communist parties.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, with the collapse of Eurocommunism, which was significantly threatened by the détente crisis and weak results in spreading diplomatic influence outside the communist movement, at that time, Yugoslavia was one of the most important partners for PCI. The main goal of Berlinguer's visits to Belgrade and Budapest was to strengthen the alliance with the "moderate" states in the East in order to defend the principles adopted at the Berlin Conference.<sup>31</sup>

The three main topics of conversation were the situation in Italy, Eurocommunism and the results of Broz's recent visits to Moscow, Beijing and Pyongyang. Discussing the situation in Italy, the secretaries-general of the PCI and LCY focused, above all, on the issues of terrorism<sup>32</sup> and the strength and role of the PCI. Terrorism was the central topic, and the Yugoslav president was interested to find out whether the culprits were mostly neo-fascist groups and whether there were any connections between those groups and West Germany.<sup>33</sup> Without denying that there were also left-wing terrorist organizations, Enrico Berlinguer confirmed the Yugoslav suspicions that they were primarily neo-fascists, adding that the PCI also had similar information about the influence of Franz Josef Strauss and West Germany, which was not ruled out by Willy Brandt in a recent meeting with the PCI leader. To Broz's questions about the strength of the PCI, Berlinguer replied that his party was getting stronger and that the PCI, despite heavy resistance and the fact that the conditions for

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<sup>30</sup> AY, Cabinet of the President of the Republic (KPR (837), I-3-a/44-61, Information about the Communist Party of Italy in the light of the current situation and relations between the CPY and the CP of Italy.

<sup>31</sup> Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", 60. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 78. According to Pons's research, the LCY only strengthened its importance and influence with the PCI after this visit, and upon his return to Rome, Berlinguer considered the LCY to be his main foreign policy ally. – Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 79.

<sup>32</sup> More on the rise of political terrorism in Italy at that time in: U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea 1943–2019* (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 2019), 155–165.

<sup>33</sup> Yugoslav diplomatic and security services closely followed the emergence and growth of terrorism in Italy. After the initial assessments of the influences from Washington, i.e. primarily by the CIA, during 1977 Yugoslav information pointed to West German influence, especially the conservative politician Franz Josef Strauss. П. Драгишић, *Шта смо знали о Италији? Погледи из Београда на Италију 1955–1978* (What did we know about Italy? Views from Belgrade on Italy 1955–1978) (Београд: Институт за новију историју Србије, 2019), 258–263.

his party to come to power were not ripe, became an indispensable interlocutor and actor in solving all key national issues.<sup>34</sup>

After this introductory part of the meeting, they moved on to the key topic – Eurocommunism. While Josip Broz defended Eurocommunism and the PCI at his meeting with Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow<sup>35</sup>, in the conversation with Berlinguer, the Yugoslav president was critical of this term. Moreover, he was mildly critical of Berlinguer’s policies, advising him to avoid unnecessary conflicts with Moscow and expressing his opposition to any idea of regional communism.

The Yugoslav leader started the conversation on this topic by suggesting that the term Eurocommunism should not be used because it had been invented by the “bourgeoisie”, while communism is one and the same for the whole

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<sup>34</sup> АУ, КРР (837), I-3-a/44-61, Забелешка о разговору Председника Републике и Председника СКЈ Јосипа Броза Тита са генералним секретаром Комунистичке партије Италије Енрико Берлингуером, 4. октобра 1977. године у Карађорђеву. (Note on the conversation between the President of the Republic and the President of the CPY, Josip Broz Tito, with the Secretary General of the Communist Party of Italy, Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4, 1977, in Karadordevo).

<sup>35</sup> At the meeting with Brezhnev in August 1977, great attention was paid to the issue of Eurocommunism, i.e. Western European communist parties. The leader of the USSR claimed that Moscow was satisfied with the growth of the power of the PCI and the CPE, on which it did not want to impose its views. The only thing that bothered the Soviets was a certain conflictual tendency in the relationship between Western and Eastern communists, visible above all in Carillo’s writings and positions, which Moscow assessed as “anti-Sovietism”. The Yugoslav report on the visit stressed that Moscow was most irritated by the public criticism of the USSR that came from the West European communist parties. Broz responded to the Soviet allegations by emphasizing the principles of the Berlin Conference and defending the Western parties, which he claimed were only autonomously carrying out their struggle for socialism, opening up to other progressive and democratic forces, which Yugoslavia fully supported. His only criticism concerned the “inadequacy” of the term Eurocommunism, but this remark did not detract from the general tone of support for the movement in Broz’s addresses to top Soviet leaders. In addition, the Yugoslav president also criticized the Soviet attack on Carrilo, calling for a peaceful and constructive debate, from equal positions. The Yugoslav visit report claimed that the USSR had abandoned the principles of the Berlin Conference precisely because of the conflict with the Eurocommunist parties, adding that Moscow’s attitude towards Belgrade was “softer” because the USSR wanted to use its good relations with Yugoslavia to counterbalance the problems caused by its conflicts with Western European parties. “Report on the visit of the President of the SFRY and the President of the CPY J. B. Tito to the USSR, 16–24. August 1977,” In *Југославија–СССР. Сусрети и разговори на највишем нивоу руководилица Југославије и СССР 1965–1980* (Yugoslavia–USSR. Meetings and discussions at the highest level to the level of managers of Yugoslavia and the USSR 1965–1980), Том 2, ур. Љ. Димић и др. (Београд: Архив Југославије), 2016), 799–805.

world.<sup>36</sup> Broz was particularly irritated by the use of that term because, in his opinion, it obscured the essence of the problem – the implementation of the principles of the Berlin Conference. Berlinguer defended himself by saying that the PCI did not know who came up with the term, adding that the Italian communists had always used it, albeit with some reservations. Nevertheless, in his view, the crux of the matter was the policy of the Western European communist parties, different but united by economic and traditional ties and similarities, and determined to act together, although not as a regional center of the movement. Broz responded to that by pointing out that he, despite his reservations about the term itself, had defended the essence of the policy of the Western European communists in his meetings with Brezhnev. The Yugoslav president saw that policy as the implementation of the Berlin principles and a good understanding of the local (i.e. national and regional) conditions of the political struggle. After Broz pointed out that he had defended the principles of Berlin in the meeting with the leaders of the CPSU, Berlinguer replied that Moscow was trying to challenge and limit the autonomy of the national communist parties, adding that Yugoslavia defended Eurocommunism although it did not agree with the term itself. At that moment, Broz referred again to the principles of the Berlin Conference and, in addition, profusely praised the cooperation of PCI and other West European communist parties with “progressive” forces in their countries.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Similar were the remarks of the Hungarian leader Kadar, who suggested to Berlinguer that it was important to give up any pretensions about the universality of Eurocommunism, i.e. to be consistent in renouncing the validity of the idea of different models of socialism. As noted by the Italian historian Silvio Pons, Kadar’s and Broz’s criticisms showed a crucial difference in the policies of the Western and Eastern Communist Parties. While political pluralism was a fundamental idea of Eurocommunism, based on the inapplicability of the Soviet model in the highly developed societies of the West, the idea of political pluralism did not resonate well with Eastern European communist leaders, even the more “moderate” ones. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 78.

<sup>37</sup> АУ, КРР (837), I-3-a/44-61, Забелешка о разговору Председника Републике и Председника СКЈ Јосипа Броза Тита са генералним секретаром Комунистичке партије Италије Енрико Берлингуером, 4. октобра 1977. године у Карађорђеву. (Note on the conversation between the President of the Republic and the President of the CPY, Josip Broz Tito, with the Secretary General of the Communist Party of Italy, Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4, 1977, in Karađorđevo).

At this point, it is important to mention that a few months later, in March 1978, the Yugoslav president publicly said what he thought of Eurocommunism. Namely, in an interview with *The New York Times*, Broz emphasized positions that were very similar to what he had said in the meeting with Berlinguer. For him, Eurocommunism meant taking responsibility and acting according to local conditions. He did not see the close cooperation of Western European communist parties as a regional model, which would be imposed on someone, but as a natural consequence of their independence and desire to cooperate. In addition, the Yugoslav

In the continuation of the conversation, Broz demonstrated a certain tolerance and understanding for Moscow's positions, suggesting to Berlinguer how to improve his relations with the CPSU. Firstly, the Yugoslav president emphasized the indignation of the Soviets with Carrillo's views. Defending himself by claiming not to have read the book, Broz added that it would be bad if Carrillo presented a one-dimensional criticism of the socialist system in certain countries of Eastern Europe, stressing that such a thing should not be presented in public discussion. According to the Yugoslav president, it was unrealistic to expect that such a powerful country could accept being criticized publicly. His goal during his visit to Moscow was precisely to calm that conflict. Berlinguer replied that the polemic moved away from the content of Carrillo's file to the issue of the defense of the Spanish party. Broz ended the discussion on this issue by giving a piece of explicit advice to Berlinguer. Emphasizing that no other party had such a meaningful experience of relations with Moscow as the LCY, the Yugoslav president said that he had learned one key lesson from his extensive experience. Namely, that lesson was that patience and avoiding unnecessary public conflicts are crucial in relations with Moscow, factors that successfully lead to the resolution of all problems with the USSR.<sup>38</sup>

At the end of the meeting, the Yugoslav president informed the secretary general of the PCI about his impressions from his visits to Moscow, Beijing and Pyongyang, which were very positive. Broz emphasized that Brezhnev had received him very respectfully and praised the Soviet leader as a positive force at the top of the CPSU, as opposed to "bureaucratized ideologues" such as Mikhail Suslov (Mikhail Andreevich Suslov) and Boris Ponomaryev (Boris Nikolaevich Ponomarev) (Berlinguer especially agreed with the criticism of Ponomaryev).

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leader emphasized that Eurocommunism and the Non-Aligned Movement were united by a common desire to overcome the bloc division in the world. Unlike Broz, the main Yugoslav ideologist, Edvard Kardelj, had more fundamental objections to Eurocommunism. For the Slovenian communist, the problem was the Eurocommunist abandonment of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, as well as, in his opinion, the excessive focus on parliamentary politics. Although this criticism testifies to the political differences between the CPY and the PCI, which primarily concerned the issue of political pluralism, the fact that Belgrade strongly supported the Eurocommunist movement cannot be questioned. Public declarations of support were frequent, and Eurocommunism was seen in Yugoslavia as a continuation of 1948 and a strengthening of the autonomy of national communist parties, based on Yugoslav resistance to Moscow. Marović, *Tri izazova staljinizmu*, 448–452.

<sup>38</sup> АУ, КРР (837), I-3-a/44-61, Забелешка о разговору Председника Републике и Председника СКЈ Јосипа Броза Тита са генералним секретаром Комунистичке партије Италије Енрико Берлингуером, 4. октобра 1977. године у Карађорђеву. (Note on the conversation between the President of the Republic and the President of the CPY, Josip Broz Tito, with the Secretary General of the Communist Party of Italy, Enrico Berlinguer, on October 4, 1977.)

The Yugoslav leader especially emphasized that there were no criticisms of the fact that he was visiting both countries either in Moscow or in Beijing. In both meetings, he advocated the reconciliation of the USSR and China, stressing that this would significantly weaken the position of the USA. Berlinguer was extremely interested in the reactions of the two sides to Broz's allegations, but the Yugoslav president's response was discouraging. Based on his impressions from the talks in Moscow and Beijing, Broz concluded that at that moment there were no conditions for improving the relations between the two largest communist states. As far as the visit to Beijing was concerned, the Yugoslav leader also commented positively on it, pointing out that he noticed slow yet tangible signs of China's opening to the world, and the reduction of radical rhetoric. He also informed Berlinguer about the fact that in Beijing he defended the Eurocommunist parties, propagating the restoration of relations between the Communist Party of China and the PCI. Although Chinese officials did not respond to those suggestions, the Yugoslav president assured the Italian guest that PCI would succeed in restoring its relations with Beijing.<sup>39</sup>

#### *1978 – the year of strong inter-party cooperation*

The first inter-party contact that occurred in 1978 happened at the beginning of January, when Yugoslavia was visited by a delegation from the PCI led by Adalberto Minucci, a member of the parties' secretariat and the director of the party newspaper, the *Rinascita*. The intention of this delegation was to come to grips with the new policies of the LCY promoted just before the upcoming 11th Party Congress. These were, in fact, Kardelj's theoretical innovations, labeled "pluralism of self-governing interests", which were meant to mask the political monopoly and the absence of real democracy in Yugoslavia, portraying the LCY as not just a party but as a wider democratical organ.<sup>40</sup> Even though these ideological "novelties" were a product of the rigid socialist system and therefore doomed to stay on paper without more significant influence on socio-political life in Yugoslavia, the guests from the PCI viewed them as positive, perhaps due to their mutual sympathy and good relations. They welcomed changes in the Yugoslav party and considered it one of the more innovative and original parties in all of Eastern Europe.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> I. Banac, "Yugoslav Communism and the Yugoslav State". In *The Cambridge History of Communism, Volume II, The Socialist Camp and World Power 1941–1960s*, ed. N. Naimark et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 592.

<sup>41</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-572. In the following months, the party newspaper *Unità*, and especially the correspondent from Belgrade, Silvano Goruppi, published a series of extremely



Apart from the main topic of the meeting, the two sides discussed a number of international questions. Dobrivoje Vidić, a member of the presidential committee of LCY, who led the host delegation, complained once again about the actions of the Socialist International in the Third World and its attempts to undermine the unity of the Non-Aligned Movement. Just like in the previous negotiations, the view of the PCI was not well received in Belgrade. In fact, just like his colleagues before him, Minucci considered this question less pressing and less important, thinking that the Socialist International didn't have the power to make major ripples among those in the Non-Aligned Movement.

Vidić also had complaints about the Albanian misgivings about the warming of Yugoslav-Chinese relations, but had words of praise for the new administration in Washington, believing that President Jimmy Carter and his associates had significantly more understanding for Yugoslavia than their predecessors. Minucci agreed with such an assessment of the Carter administration, adding that Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Adviser to President Carter, was more tolerant towards Moscow than his predecessor Henry Kissinger.<sup>42</sup> At the end of the talks, Grljičikov called for a renewal of dialogue between the communist parties, concluding, rather optimistically, that it seemed like the attacks on the autonomy and principles of the party were waning.<sup>43</sup>

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positive articles about the internal reforms in Yugoslavia: FG APCI, Esteri, MF 322, p. 2083; MF 330, p. 1967–1975.

<sup>42</sup> Minucci's view of Brzezinski was informed by the fact that Henry Kissinger was one of the biggest political opponents of the PCI in the international arena. Namely, fearing a domino effect in southern Europe in the mid-1970s, especially after the changes in Portugal, Kissinger strongly and publicly opposed the possibility of the PCI coming to power in Italy. To arguments that the PCI had emancipated itself from the CPSU, Kissinger once replied: "Tito is not under the control of Moscow, yet his influence is felt all over the world." However, despite PCI's initial openness to Carter and Brzezinski, Washington's policy did not change much. Precisely in the days when Minucci was in Yugoslavia, the United States of America publicly took the position that it was not acceptable for them to include communist parties in Western European governments. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", 52, 60. Yugoslavia strongly objected to such statements, and the Yugoslav press interpreted the said statement as "Washington's direct interference" in Italy's internal affairs. Драгишић, *Шта смо знали о Италији?*, 251. Therefore, the PCI quickly dispelled the illusions it had harbored towards Brzezinski at the time of the conversation with Vidić. A year later, in February 1979, at a meeting of the party directorate, Giancarlo Pajetta had a completely different attitude from Minucci. In his judgment, which was extremely close to Moscow's position on the matter, Brzezinski was actually a greater threat to world peace because he was an idealistic politician, as opposed to the realpolitik-minded Kissinger. Although Berlinguer did not fully share this view, it was clear that at the top of the Italian party the attitude towards Brzezinski became extremely negative in a short period of time. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 98–99.

<sup>43</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-572.

What most vividly paints the picture of the close relations between LCY and PCI at the end of the 1970s is the intense dynamics of their meetings and consultations about critical international topics.<sup>44</sup> The next significant inter-party meeting took place in March 1978, when Gian Carlo Pajetta and Aleksandar Grlićkov<sup>45</sup> met again. Pajetta and Grlićkov talked about a number of important international topics. Apart from the LCY once again lamenting the actions of the Socialist International in Africa, the conversation showed that, at the time, PCI and LCY shared the illusion that their relations with the eastern European parties were very good, an illusion that would be shattered in the coming months.

Apart from the already mentioned topics, there were conversations about the political state of Italy (Pajetta complained about the relationship between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists with his party), while Grlićkov revealed that the LCY and the Chinese Communist Party had renewed relations. However, the talks focused on the conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia.<sup>46</sup> Pajetta spoke about the contacts the PCI had with the Somali president Siad Barre, who the Italian communists advised to be more moderate in relations with Moscow.<sup>47</sup> The Italian communist pointed out that the expectations of the PCI were for the LCY and CPSU to influence Ethiopia to accept a more peace-

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<sup>44</sup> In addition to the aforementioned meetings, it is important to note that explicit and public support for Eurocommunism came from Yugoslavia. Thus, for example, *Borba* entered into a public polemic with the Soviet paper *Novoje vremja* on this issue, in which the Yugoslav paper strongly defended Eurocommunism and criticized the Soviet clash with Western European parties. This polemic met with a very positive response at the top of the PCI, which closely followed *Borba's* positions. FG APCI, Esteri, MF 317, 1036.

<sup>45</sup> The meeting happened on the Yugoslav suggestion, sent out at the end of February. FG APCI, Esteri, MF 317, 1038.

<sup>46</sup> That conflict, in which Moscow sided with Ethiopia in 1977 and 1978, was defined by historian Vladislav Zubok as a "proxy" war between the USSR and the USA. Namely, seeing the geopolitical power vacuum created in certain parts of Africa, the Soviet Union intensified its presence on the continent in the second half of the 1970s. As in the case of Angola, in the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia, Moscow achieved success, but paid for that victory with the collapse of détente. V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire. The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 229, 249–252.

<sup>47</sup> The Somali leader Barre was, in fact, a longtime ally of Moscow. When Ethiopia, with which Somalia was in conflict for many years, made a big turn in its foreign policy, becoming pro-Soviet after its partnership with Washington, Barre, reciprocally, distanced himself from the USSR and moved closer to the USA. Therefore, in November 1977, he expelled all Soviet personnel from Somalia and severed diplomatic relations with Cuba. N. Mitchell, "The Cold War and Jimmy Carter". In *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume III*, 75–80.

ful resolution to the conflict, which Grlićkov promised to do to the best of the Non-Aligned Movement's abilities.<sup>48</sup>

A mere month later, a delegation from the LCY, led by Dušan Popović, a member of the Executive Committee of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the LCY, visited Rome and spoke with the highest-ranking members of the PCI. The main topic of these talks was the turbulent political situation in Italy, which became even more dramatic following the kidnapping of Aldo Moro, a prominent Christian Democrat politician inclined to cooperate with the PCI. The representatives of the PCI spoke about a recently signed reform program endorsed by six political parties from both sides of the political spectrum, as well as about Moro's kidnapping.

The PCI program was judged as positive, even though it was believed that the government was too weak to put it into action. Therefore, initiatives for the PCI to join the national government started appearing. However, Pajetta admitted to his Yugoslav colleagues this was merely a political maneuver to strengthen the position of the PCI, which knew that the Christian Democrats would not be willing to make such a concession.<sup>49</sup> As for Moro's abduction, Pajetta saw it as an attack on the democratic system in the country, particularly in light of Moro's conciliatory policy toward the communists. The perpetrators of this crime, the *Brigate Rosse*, or the Red Brigades, were, at least according to the PCI, heavily influenced by local and foreign agents who wanted to destabilize the Italian democracy. Among these, Pajetta mentioned the mafia, the international "reaction", as well as the German terrorist organization *Rote Armee Fraktion* (Red Army Fraction).<sup>50</sup>

During the meeting dominated by Italian topics, a few international issues were also raised, primarily the situation within the international communist movement. Members of the PCI were pushing for a renewal of dialogue within the movement. In this view, they were encouraged by their belief that

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<sup>48</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-574.

<sup>49</sup> At the time, the PCI enjoyed an unprecedented degree of political credibility in Italy. The Italian communists' legitimacy was the result of three factors: their support for unpopular economic measures, their strong opposition to terrorism and their critical attitude towards Moscow. Therefore, the scenario of PCI entering the government seemed more realistic than ever in the period after 1947. Nevertheless, this was the maximum strength that the communists could achieve, but it still failed to yield significant political successes in the following period. Although the PCI influenced the government's program, and even voted for it, such closeness to the PCI government was a result of the sensitive political moment, i.e., the abduction of Moro, which led to the need for a broader national consensus. Moro's death created a new political reality in which the PCI no longer had its place, and the idea of a historical compromise between the communists and Christian Democrats, which Berlinguer had promoted since 1973, collapsed. Silveri, *Storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 149, 183.

<sup>50</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-576.

the Soviet attack on the CPE had been just a reaction to some internal issues within the USSR and the recent visits of the Hungarian and Polish leaders János Kádár and Edward Gierek to Rome and their interest in Eurocommunism. On the other hand, the PCI was worried about the waning cooperation within the Eurocommunist bloc, i.e., the distancing of the French Communist Party.<sup>51</sup> When the talks continued, the Yugoslav side once again complained about the actions of the Socialist International in Africa, for which they received support from the PCI for the first time ever. However, the Italian communists warned the Yugoslav delegation that many of the liberation movements on the African continent were happy with the attention they were being accorded from the International and urged Belgrade to work with the socialists and social-democrats, particularly with the Swedish social democrat Olof Palme. At the end of the visit on 29th of March 1978, the LCY delegation was received by the secretary general of the PCI. Berlinguer spoke about the Italian crisis, repeating Pajetta's sentiments. According to him, the reaction of all parties and the general public to Moro's kidnapping was positive, and he was particularly happy that the Christian Democrats and communists had come to rely on each other in the defense of the constitutional system in the country.<sup>52</sup>

A series of very significant inter-party meetings, which demonstrated the closeness and alliance between the LCY and PCI, ended with a meeting in Madrid on the 21st of April 1978. Sergio Segre and Aleksandar Grlićkov were the participants. These two party officials were delegates at the congress of the Spanish communists and took this the opportunity to consult each other on a number of important international issues. Grlićkov yet again criticized the actions of the Socialist International in Africa and its efforts to undermine the Non-Aligned Movement. Serge, more forcefully than his colleagues before him, supported the Yugoslav position, adding that his party had been worried about the growing presence of Washington and Moscow on the same continent. In that light, the PCI criticized the Cuban presence in Africa, arguing that it legitimized the increasing interference of the two superpowers in the internal

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<sup>51</sup> The positive reactions of Gierek and Kádár were an encouragement to the PCI, which until then had been under the impression of a visit to Moscow in November 1977, when Leonid Brezhnev strongly criticized Berlinguer. The Soviet leader criticized the PCI's for not being committed enough to the struggle against the NATO alliance and even implicitly threatened Berlinguer with an internal party rebellion. Faced with such attacks, Berlinguer wanted to strengthen the Eurocommunist bloc, but he did not receive support from the French party. In a broader perspective, it was clear that the collapse of the détente and the strengthening of bloc tensions had narrowed the maneuvering space of the Eurocommunist idea, a dissident movement that propagated overcoming the bloc division, heralding its imminent collapse. Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism", 59–60.

<sup>52</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-576.

affairs of the African continent.<sup>53</sup> Serge also mentioned that Israel was requesting mediation from Yugoslav and Italian communists in the country's relations with Moscow. In his opinion, this appeal emerged from some advances in Israel's policy, as well as the awareness of the local elites that the support of Washington couldn't provide enough political backing. Therefore, the PCI was ready to act as the mediator between Israel and the USSR.<sup>54</sup>

In the final part of the meeting, Segre and Grličkov discussed the relations of the PCI with Czechoslovakia, where the Italian communist informed his Yugoslav colleague of very significant and relevant facts. Segre informed Grličkov about the attempts of the Czechoslovakian party to renew its relations with the PCI, which had deteriorated following the Soviet intervention in 1968. The Italian party was preparing the tenth anniversary of this event at the Gramsci Institute, which was meant to be critical towards the Soviet aggression. The Czechoslovakian communists wanted to be part of this event, but the PCI, disappointed with the policies of this party, refused.<sup>55</sup> At that moment, Segre switched to a more important topic regarding Czechoslovakia, which Grličkov reported to his party in a separate, strictly confidential document. Namely, Segre informed them that the PCI had evidence that confirmed an earlier claim, launched by the right-leaning press, about a link between Prague and the Red Brigades. The Italian communists found out that some members of the Brigades, and high-ranking ones too, had paid two 15-day visits to Czechoslovakia. The Czechs denied this information, but this didn't convince the Italians. Segre stressed that it was very likely that the Red Brigades had Czech weapons in their possession. Finally, the Italian communist finished by saying: "This doesn't end with Czechoslovakia."<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Silvio Pons attributed this stance of PCI to the influence of Belgrade on the Italian communists: Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 88.

<sup>54</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-577.

<sup>55</sup> Frequent attacks on the PCI came from Prague, which significantly intensified at the end of 1977. The Yugoslav side closely followed that clash, especially through the Tanjug correspondent from Prague, Miodrag Đukić. One of Đukić's texts on the subject from the end of 1977, in which there is clear sympathy for the PCI, was preserved in the archives of the Italian party, testifying to the attention that the party leadership paid to the Yugoslav journalist's report. FG APCI, Esteri, MF 310, 1124–1128.

<sup>56</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-577. In the sea of different information that the Yugoslav diplomatic service received on the international background of the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro, Segre was not the only one to point to influences from Eastern Europe. Thus, for example, Yugoslavia also received information from an Italian diplomat from Lisbon about the responsibility of the USSR and the Eastern Bloc, whose alleged goal was to discredit the PCI and Eurocommunism. Драгишић, *Шта смо знали о Италији?*, 264–268.

This meeting was followed by a few uneventful months in inter-party relationships, mostly because the LCY was busy preparing its 11th party congress. However, this did not signify any deterioration in the relationship between the two parties. In fact, the very next meeting of high-ranking members proved just the opposite. In late July 1978, Stane Dolanc, secretary of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the LCY, met Giovanni Cervetti, a member of the Directorate of the Central Committee of the CPI, in Korčula. At the meeting, it was decided that the LCY would provide financial aid to the Italian party. The motive behind this request was distancing the Italian communists from Moscow and its material aid.<sup>57</sup> The scenario was similar in 1969, when the CPI ran into financial trouble after distancing itself from Moscow and also required Yugoslav financial support,<sup>58</sup> and Belgrade was more than willing to help. Besides an agreement about indirect aid, which would come through economic cooperation, Dolanc also promised to provide direct financial support.<sup>59</sup> Dolanc and Cervetti also commented briefly on the situation in Moscow,<sup>60</sup> and the Italian communist asked the LCY to inform them of the results of the impending visit of Hua Guofeng, the Chinese leader, to Belgrade.<sup>61</sup>

As Dolanc and Cervetti had agreed, this meeting occurred in September 1978, with Pajetta and Grličkov representing the two sides. However, Guofeng's visit to Yugoslavia was overshadowed by another matter, the Soviet Union's invitation to Berlinguer to visit Moscow. It was a very uncomfortable invitation for the PCI. As Pajetta put it, his party was facing accusations of not being truly autonomous, meaning that the meeting could have negative repercussions in the public opinion. On the other hand, refusing such an invitation could hardly be justified to the party members, especially given the PCI's communication with Washington. On top of all that, the PCI did not want to jeopardize the possibility of improving its relations with Beijing again. Taking all of this into account, the head of the PCI came up with a Solomonian solution. The Italian communists thought that, if Berlinguer visited Belgrade, a country whose autonomy

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<sup>57</sup> PCI decided to stop receiving financial aid from the USSR in 1978, and at the end of 1979, the decision was finalized. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 114.

<sup>58</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-430.

<sup>59</sup> Finally, on October 9, 1978, the CPY Presidency made a decision on the matter, leaving it to Dolanc to determine the exact amount. On the decision of the Slovenian communist, in December 1978, Cervetti was given 200,000 dollars. AY, 507/IX – 48/I-585. In addition, cooperation agreements were signed with several companies under PCI influence. AY, 507/IX – 48/I-588.

<sup>60</sup> According to the information that the PCI had, the political situation in the Soviet Union was unstable, and the secretary general of the CPSU, Leonid Brezhnev, was in very poor health.

<sup>61</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-579.

from Moscow wasn't being questioned by the public, any adverse effects in the eyes of the Italian public would be lessened, and the visit to Moscow counterbalanced. Therefore, Pajetta asked for an official invitation to be sent to Berlinguer to visit Belgrade as soon as possible. Grličkov agreed with this and promised to pass on the request to Josip Broz.<sup>62</sup>

Thus, an agreement was struck for the final meeting between Broz and Berlinguer, which would come a month later in Igalo. It's worth mentioning that Pajetta and Grličkov, apart from setting up the meeting, also used their encounter to touch on a number of international subjects. Between them, the most important was the idea of the Romanian leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, about a new European conference of communist parties. Grličkov and Pajetta were both strongly and unequivocally against this idea, because they were in principle against organizing such meetings in the future. Pajetta added that he was surprised that this idea came about, noting that "[they] had sworn in Berlin that this was the last time".

Apart from this topic, they spoke about the tensions between Vietnam and China, the dramatic falling out between Western European communist parties, the situation in the Horn of Africa, where Pajetta once again showed sympathy for the Somali president, Barre, and hoped that Moscow wouldn't totally isolate him.<sup>63</sup> Along with discussing international topics, Pajetta added that his party had found out that the Italian socialists were organizing a seminar on Yugoslav self-governance and wanted to organize something similar. Even though Grličkov did not show his displeasure in front of Pajetta, records of the meeting show he was disappointed. According to Grličkov, Yugoslavia would once again face the "French scenario", where the communists weren't genuinely interested in the experiences of the Yugoslav system and only showed interest in this topic to compete with the socialists, who were truly intrigued by and attracted to the principles of Yugoslav self-governing socialism.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-581.

<sup>63</sup> Such hopes were soon dashed because Ethiopia was too important to Moscow. Namely, as Odd Arne Westad noted, the most significant Marxist transformation in Africa took place in Ethiopia. O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 251

<sup>64</sup> AY, 507/IX – 48/I-581.

<sup>At</sup> the end of October 1978, the PCI sent a delegation to Yugoslavia to study self-management. In the report of the Yugoslav side, it was noted that this was the first time that the PCI had sent a delegation on its own initiative to investigate this matter. AY, 507/IX – 48/I-583. The visit led to a seminar on Yugoslav self-government held in December 1979 at the Gramsci Institute in Rome, as part of a series of seminars on systems in socialist states. AY, 507/IX – 48/I-602.

*Berlinguer and Broz's last meeting – Igalo, October 1978*

Reflecting the close alliance between LCY and PCI,<sup>65</sup> Pajetta's requests were granted. Belgrade sent Berlinguer an invitation, which eased his political position and allowed him to come to Yugoslavia following his visits to France and the USSR. On 9 October 1978, leader of the PCI came to Yugoslavia from Moscow to meet the Yugoslav president for the last time. The meeting took place on the Montenegrin coast, in Igalo, at a rehabilitation facility where the aging leader of the LCY spent most of his days, and the mood of the encounter reflected the symbolism of the place where it was held. The meeting mostly came down to Berlinguer's impressions from Moscow and curt remarks from Josip Broz, which was the polar opposite of the lively and dynamic exchange of ideas during their last meeting.

Berlinguer filled Josip Broz in on all the details of the conversations he had in Moscow. In many matters, these discussions would often escalate into conflict.<sup>66</sup> The first conversation, with Mikhail Suslov, was very tense. Berlinguer criticized the limitations on freedom of expression in the USSR, as well as the lack of democracy, which negatively affected the development of the communist movement in West Europe. In that sense, he presented a negative paradigmatic example – that of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, adding that the process of democratization of the communist party, started at the 20th Congress of the CPSS in 1956, hadn't been developed or implemented further. On the other hand, Suslov spoke distinctly negatively about Eurocommunism, considering it an invention of the bourgeoisie against the communist movement, which led the western European parties into revisionism and conflict with socialist countries. On top of that, the high Soviet official criticized China, claiming that Beijing wanted an alliance with imperialism, reminding Berlinguer that

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<sup>65</sup> A Yugoslav report written in preparation for this visit clearly demonstrates Belgrade's high degree of sympathy for the PCI. In the perception of the CPY, the Italian communists were under the influence of strong and unscrupulous attacks by several actors, from different sides, who questioned the autonomy of the PCI and its commitment to democracy. According to the court in Belgrade, the European and Italian right used all available means to attack the PCI, even terrorism. In this regard, the PCI looked negatively at the activity of the Italian socialists and their new leader Benedetto "Bettino" Craxi, who was characterized as another tool in the attack on the PCI. As far as the activities of the great powers were concerned, the Yugoslav party believed that they were directed not only against the Italian communists, but also against the development of Italian democracy and sovereignty as a whole. AY, KPR (837), I-3a/44–62, Information on the position of the CP of Italy and current political relations in Italy. The sympathies were mutual, because Josip Broz Tito was a "special partner and invaluable support" for Berlinguer.- Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, 92.

<sup>66</sup> As historian Silvio Pons noted, it was a "dialogue of the deaf". Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 290.



the Communist Party of China had, until recently, attacked the LCY and PCI. Both the tone and content of Suslov's statements deeply disappointed the leader of the Italian communists.<sup>67</sup>

The following day, Berlinguer met with Leonid Brezhnev, who had similar views, although the secretary general of the PCI pointed out that Brezhnev expressed his criticism in a much more moderate tone than Suslov. The leader of the USSR referred, above all, to the issue of human rights, which Berlinguer had raised at the previous meeting.<sup>68</sup> In his opinion, the cases that attracted international attention did not concern human rights but individuals who broke the law or were foreign agents. Brezhnev also criticized Beijing and the PCI's desire to restore relations with the Chinese Communist Party, recalling the major ideological differences between the two parties. Like Suslov, the leader of the USSR spoke of external influences that wanted to divide the communist movement. Although he did not deny the right to different paths to socialism, he considered criticism of socialist states unacceptable. Berlinguer defended Eurocommunism, emphasizing that it was not the creation of a regional center in the movement but merely the desire of Western European parties to cooperate more closely, due to the similar conditions of their respective political struggles. Regarding human rights, he added that this issue was not only important for Western European parties, but also for the prestige of Moscow itself. Finally, he addressed China's criticisms, admitting that the negative aspects of Beijing's foreign policy were still stronger than the positives, primarily its willingness to cooperate with "reactionary" forces. Nevertheless, the PCI leader believed that there were clear positive developments in that country, especially in internal politics.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> AY, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62.

<sup>68</sup> Berlinguer's choice of this question was not accidental. Namely, human rights became a central topic in the international relations of that era, and the main issue on which the USSR and other countries of the Eastern Bloc were delegitimized. Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 300. Such a prominent position of the human rights issue followed from the decisions of the CSCE. Namely, along with the acceptance of the principle of immutability of borders, which was adopted at Moscow's request, the other side requested that the principle of human rights be included in the official document. With the arrival of the Carter administration, after the electoral victory in the summer of 1976, human rights became the main point of the American attack on Moscow. Such an approach surprised Soviet leaders, accustomed to the pragmatic views and activities of the former National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger. S. Savranskaya, W. Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962-1975". In *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume II, Crises and Détente*, ur. M. Leffler, O. A. Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 155; Mitchell, "The Cold War and Jimmy Carter", 71-73; Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 234-234, 254-257.

<sup>69</sup> AY, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62; FG APCI, Direzione, MF 365, 40. Speaking about the results of his visit to Moscow, Paris and Belgrade at the meeting of the party directorate, held on October 19, 1978, Enrico Berlinguer considered the Soviet criticism of the attempts to

To Berlinguer's detailed presentation of the talks in Moscow, Broz replied briefly, in the spirit of the advice he had given a year earlier, that it was better to have a visit and in-person talks than a debate in the press. The Yugoslav president spoke most extensively about China. First of all, he believed that the Soviet press went too far in its negative reactions to Hua Guofeng's statements about the USSR during his visit to Belgrade, while strongly denying allegations that Yugoslavia was selling weapons to China. The Soviet resistance to the Yugoslav-Chinese rapprochement surprised the Yugoslav president, given that he strongly advocated the reconciliation of Moscow and Beijing. Broz saw the Chinese policy in a positive light. He believed that great changes were taking place in that country, even in foreign policy, and that this was a process that should be supported. Along with that, he pleaded for reasonable decision-making from Beijing, and for them to first establish relations with governments in the West, not with communist parties, because there was an economic need for this.<sup>70</sup>

With these statements, the official part of the conversation ended, and at the luncheon held afterwards, the two communist leaders talked more casually. In line with his interest in issues of human rights and freedoms, Berlinguer asked Broz what was happening with Milovan Đilas.<sup>71</sup> The reaction of the Yugoslav president showed that this was an extremely uncomfortable topic for him. Josip Broz emphasized his disappointment with Đilas' character and actions, which he characterized as a violation of the law and the constitution. In this regard, Broz added that Đilas had been extremely radical during the war but later presented himself as a moderate and democratic dissident. As the Yugoslav president explicitly stated, the intention of the Yugoslav regime was to force Đilas to leave the country and to prevent him from presenting himself as a martyr.<sup>72</sup>

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restore relations between the PCI and Beijing to be unfounded. The key argument he cited was the fact that both Yugoslavia and Romania, two countries committed to concessions in international relations, renewed relations with China, and there was no reason why PCI should not do the same. FG APCI, Direzione, MF 365, 37–39.

<sup>70</sup> AY, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62; FG APCI, Direzione, MF 365, 40–42, 83–89.

<sup>71</sup> Due to the good inter-party relations, the issue of dissidents in Yugoslavia was not specifically raised either in the PCI press or in conversations between officials of the two parties. Therefore, Berlinguer did not use a critical tone when talking to Broz. Nevertheless, the minutes from an earlier meeting of the PCI directorate, held on February 16, 1977, clearly show that the top of the Italian party had certain objections to the state of human rights in Yugoslavia. Giancarlo Pajetta's words from that meeting clearly reveal those objections, which primarily concerned former members of the regime who later fell out of favor. At the end of the discussion about the poor state of human rights in socialist countries, Pajetta added the following: "Yugoslavs are not kidding either. They put Đilas and the Ustasha, Ranković and priests in the same basket. I told them that they are worse than *Rudé právo* [official newspaper of the CP of Czechoslovakia - BŽ]". FG APCI, Direzione, MF 288, 127.

<sup>72</sup> AY, KPR (837), I-3-a/44-62.

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In a little more than a year of inter-party relations between LCY and PCI, analyzed in this paper, three striking phases can be distinguished. In the first period, Moscow's attack on Eurocommunism brought the two parties closer and led to Berlinguer's visit to Yugoslavia in October 1977. In those few months, both parties feared a stronger Soviet attack on the autonomy of the national communist parties. In the second phase, from the beginning of 1978, the intense relations between the two parties were imbued with the hope that a period of lull in the International Communist Movement had come and that it was possible to significantly improve relations with Moscow. Such hopes were visible in the statements of the Yugoslav president even during Berlinguer's visit in October 1977. However, from the fall of 1978, both parties did away with the illusion that the relations with Moscow could be improved. For the Italian communists, this became clear during Berlinguer's visit to the Soviet Union, and the Soviet negative reactions to the improvement of Yugoslav-Chinese relations dispelled Belgrade's illusions as well. All this was a prelude to the intensification of the tensions in the communist movement, which reached their peak at the end of 1979, with the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan.

Therefore, it can be safely concluded that the cornerstone of the extremely close and allied relations between the two parties was resistance to Moscow's hegemony in the International Communist Movement. Based on that alliance, the two parties expressed mutual sympathies on other issues as well, such as the position of the PCI in Italian politics or internal reforms in Yugoslavia. However, the material analyzed in this paper also reveals certain fundamental differences. They are, above all, reflected in a certain distancing of Yugoslavia from the fundamental ideas of Eurocommunism, i.e. multi-party pluralism. On the other hand, the lack of interest of the Italian communists in the Yugoslav system of self-governance, as well as their implicit criticism of the state of human rights in the country, reflect the fact that Belgrade was primarily a foreign policy partner for PCI, but not an ideological role model. Both parties had reservations about each other's internal policies, finding common elements primarily in foreign policy. The alliance of LCY and PCI was, above all, based on foreign policy, and it was crucially focused on the issues of international communism. The *détente* was a process that gave their alliance considerable space and importance, and with the growth of Soviet expansionism in Africa and Asia and a new

American administration focused on a tighter ideological conflict with Moscow, the preconditions for the détente were disappearing. With the collapse of the détente, the LCY and PCI alliance irreversibly lost its strength and importance, disappearing from the international scene in the last decade of the “short twentieth century”.

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