

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP  
AND YUGOSLAVIA IN THE EARLY COLD WAR*Emanuele PARRILLO*via Stefano Borgia 82, 00168 Roma, Italia  
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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this paper is to investigate the attitude of the U.S. and the U.K. toward Tito's Yugoslavia from 1948 until 1953. Furthermore, the research will underline the differences between the policies and the aims of the Anglo-American allies toward the Balkan country. This work is based on the documents of the Foreign Office, kept in the National Archives of United Kingdom, on personal papers of Ernest Davies, from the London School of Economics archives and on the Foreign Relations of United States' series. This analysis points out that although the goals and strategies of the US and UK toward Yugoslavia were the same, nevertheless some British peculiarities arose in the Anglo-American relationship with the Balkan country: the British concerns over the Yugoslav attitude toward colonialism, the importance of the inter-party ties in the strengthening of the British-Yugoslav relation during the early '50, the British role in the Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement.*

*Keywords: Special relationship, wedge strategy, Southern Flank of NATO, Greco-Yugoslav relations, Western aid to Yugoslavia*

LA "RELAZIONE SPECIALE" ANGLO-AMERICANA E LA JUGOSLAVIA  
NELLA PRIMA FASE DELLA GUERRA FREDDA

## SINTESI

*Lo scopo di questo articolo è indagare l'atteggiamento di Stati Uniti e Regno Unito nei confronti della Jugoslavia di Tito dal 1948 al 1953. La ricerca vuole anche sottolineare le differenze tra le politiche e gli scopi degli alleati anglo-americani verso il paese balcanico. Il lavoro è basato sui documenti del Foreign Office, conservati ai National Archives del Regno Unito, sui carteggi personali di Ernest Davies, dagli archivi della London School of Economics e sulle serie dei Foreign Relations of United States. Questa analisi evidenzia che nonostante gli obiettivi e le strategie di Stati Uniti e Regno Unito verso la Jugoslavia furono gli stessi emersero alcune peculiarità britanniche nelle relazioni anglo-americane con il paese balcanico: le preoccupazioni britanniche riguardo l'atteggiamento jugoslavo verso il colonialismo, l'importanza dei rapporti intra-partitici nel rafforzamento del rapporto anglo-jugoslavo nei primi anni '50, il ruolo di Londra nel ravvicinamento greco-jugoslavo.*

*Parole chiave: Special relationship, wedge strategy, Fianco Meridionale della NATO, relazioni greco-jugoslave, aiuti occidentali alla Jugoslavia*

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the U.K., U.S. and Yugoslavia during the early Cold War has been examined in several works by the English-speaking historiography. Notably, the studies of Lees (1978 and 1997), Heuser (1989) and Lane (1996) are all based on primary sources mainly from the TNA, The National Archives of United Kingdom<sup>1</sup> and the NARA, National Archives and Records Administration of the United States. These works analyse the attitude of the Anglo-Americans toward the Yugoslavs, stressing the aims of the wedge strategy and the strategical importance of Yugoslavia in the Southern Flank of NATO after the outbreak of the Korean War. Lane's work analyses the attitude of the British toward Yugoslavia from the Second World War until 1949. Lees underlines the differences between the policies of the Truman administration and the Eisenhower one, pointing out the role of the Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in the resumption of the wedge strategy during the de-Stalinization period. Heuser's work is focused on the Western strategies toward Yugoslavia until Stalin's death, underlining the failure of the wedge strategy and the predominance of the strategical importance of Yugoslavia after 1950. Recently the studies of Laković (2015; and Laković & Tasić, 2016), have dealt with the military aspects of the relationship between the Yugoslavs and the West and the role of the Adriatic sea in the supply of arms to Yugoslavia.

The main policies and goals of the US and the UK toward Yugoslavia were the same: supporting the independence of Tito from Moscow due to the strategical importance of Yugoslavia in the Western Defense System and the disruptive role of Tito's heresy in the Communist movement. Nevertheless the paper analyses the relationship between the Anglo-American and Yugoslavia highlighting the peculiarities of the British attitude toward Yugoslavia.

In fact the Anglo-American attitude towards the Yugoslavs contributes to show some differences between the two main Western allies, notably the British' aim of regaining their importance in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, and their general concerns toward decolonization.

Thus this paper underlines the role played by the U.K. in the Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement and in the Yugoslav relationship with Greece and Turkey overall, suggesting that the British were trying to exploit the situation to strengthen their aims of a British led Command in the Middle East.

The last aspect of the British peculiar relations that the paper underlines is the role of the Labour Party in the Anglo-Yugoslav relationship. Djokić (2006) and Unkovski-Korica (2014) have analysed the inter-party relationship in the 50s. This research will analyse, in particular, the attitude of the Foreign Office toward this relation, considered as an asset in the general British relationship with the Yugoslavs.

1 The National Archives have been created in 2003 by the merger of Public Record Office, PRO and the Royal Commission of Historical Manuscript.

## 1948–1949: THE WEDGE STRATEGY

When the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) was expelled from the Cominform on June 28th 1948 the Western diplomats in Belgrade were astonished.

In fact Yugoslavia was considered by the West the staunchest ally of USSR, due to the proactiveness of Tito and his fellows in playing a pivotal role in the Balkans and a very proactive foreign policy that often collided with the Western Powers. Yugoslavia claimed Trieste, Austrian Carinthia and supported the Communists in the Greek Civil War. The fact that the Yugoslav delegates were given a leading role at the foundation meeting of the Cominform in September 1947 and that Belgrade was chosen as the seat of the new organization confirmed the Western impression that the Yugoslavs were considered the finest allies by the Soviets.

Both the Americans as well as the British considered the expulsion of the CPY and the firm answer of the Yugoslavs towards the Cominform resolution an event of outstanding importance. On 30th June Charles King, the British chargé d'affaires in Belgrade, underlined that the CPY was attempting to set up its own brand of communism in opposition to the Kremlin party line and that for the first time there was a chance of the establishment of a heresy in a firm territorial basis. King's analysis pointed out that "the effect of a heresy firmly established in a whole European country must be incomparably greater and raise at once the parallel of the opposition of Constantinople to Rome" (TNA FO 504/2, No. 18).

The American Embassy in Belgrade also understood the ideological importance of the rift and both the chargé d'affaires Reams as well as the military and naval attachés, Partridge and Sweetser, asked instructions from Washington on 29th June 1948. The former recommended to the Department of State a statement which, not referring directly to Yugoslavia, would have reminded the world of "the US' principles protecting territorial integrity of small nations." The Department advised to wait and see the clarification of the situation (FRUS, 1948/IV, 1077). The Policy Planning Staff (PPS) of U.S., led at that time by George Kennan, wrote a report about the issue on the 30th of June. The report, PPS35, would become the NSC/18 on September of that year once the National Security Council concurred with the conclusions of PPS35. The PPS underlined that it was the first time in history that a communist country was independent from Moscow. However, Tito's Yugoslavia was still a communist country hostile towards the West.

The PPS highlighted the ideological importance of the split stating that the rift between the Yugoslavs and the Cominform represented a chance for the West to split communist unity. Nevertheless the PPS pointed out that it was important to manage the issue very carefully. A strong Western support would lead to accusations from the Soviet Union but at the same time if the West failed to offer assistance to the Yugoslavs the Soviet could show to the Satellite that there were no alternatives to a close relationship with them.

The PPS35 recommended that "the line which should be adhered to by representatives of the Department in private conversation, with respect to the attitude of this

Government, should be substantially as follows: “This Government would welcome a genuine re-emergence of Yugoslavia as a political personality in its own right. [...] We recognize that Yugoslavia’s internal regime continues to be one which is deeply distasteful to our people and that as long as such a regime exists, Yugoslav-American relations can never take on quite the cordiality and intimacy which we would wish. On the other hand, we also recognize that if Yugoslavia is not to be subservient to an outside power its internal regime is basically its own business. The character of that regime would not, in these circumstances, stand in the way of a normal development of economic relations between Yugoslavia and this country or – as far as we are concerned – between Yugoslavia and the countries of western Europe, provided Yugoslavia is willing to adopt a loyal and cooperative attitude in its international relationship” (FRUS, 1948/IV, 1080).

Two documents contribute to explain the policy adopted in the first months after the split by the United States toward Yugoslavia. These documents are the paper drafted from the Policy Planning Staff on the 30th June 1948 and the report of the National Security Council, NSC 18/2, issued on the 19th of February 1949, after that the Cominform economic blockade of Yugoslavia was strengthened by the creation of the COMECON. The importance of Yugoslavia was ideological. The existence of a Communist country independent from Moscow was considered an erosive and disintegrating force in the Soviet sphere. For this reason the Western Powers had to keep Tito “afloat” resuming trade with Yugoslavia. The wedge strategy, giving economic support to the Yugoslav communism without political conditions, was created. It would be one of the pillars of the American and British policy toward Yugoslavia during the early Cold War.

Nevertheless Yugoslavia’s foreign policy remained hostile toward the Western Powers. Sir Charles Peake, the British Ambassador in Belgrade, pointed out that “the Yugoslav delegates gave full support to the Communist cause at meetings of the United Nations and other international conferences and the Yugoslav Government quickly followed the Soviet lead in recognising the State of Israel and the Communist “Government” of Korea. Nor had there been by the end of the year any sign of a decrease in the anti-Western output of the Government propaganda machine (TNA FO 504/2, No. 18). Most importantly, the Trieste issue and the Yugoslav support to communist guerrilla in Greece remained in the foreground of the Anglo-American concerns toward Yugoslavia.

In February 1949 the UNSCOB<sup>2</sup> reported that there had been no material changes in Greek-Yugoslav frontier relations and that the guerrillas continued to maintain supply bases in Yugoslavia and to cross to and from Yugoslavia (TNA FO 371/78768 R 921634/4228).

Due to this reason Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean, the most important British envoy in Yugoslavia during wartime, suggested to pay a visit to Tito, who considered him

2 The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans was established in November 1947, after the Greek government complained to the UN Security Council of the interference by its northern communist neighbours in the national affairs of Greece.

a personal friend, to deal with the Yugoslavs. At that time the British were trying to arrange a trade agreement and an economic loan to the Yugoslavs but although both the American as well as the British Embassies had argued the importance of not tying political conditions to the forthcoming aid the Foreign Office was not totally convinced of acting in that way. Nevertheless Ambassador Peake argued that it would be unwise for Maclean to imply that Tito must stop supporting the Greek Communist if he still wished to receive British economic support (TNA FO 371/78768 R 921634/4228).

The Foreign Office finally endorsed the opinion of Peake. In fact the British Ambassador in Belgrade had suggested a further option: Maclean, speaking as a member of the House of Commons, might say that “if Yugoslavia aid to Greek rebels ceases, some economic assistance from our side to Yugoslavia would probably pass with little or no notice, but that, on the other hand, if such aide were to continue any special economic aid to Yugoslavia would inevitably expose you to considerable criticism in the House and this course would mean a lot of publicity with is clearly most undesirable from Tito’s point of view” (TNA FO 371/78768 R 921634/4461).

Finally Maclean reached Belgrade on the 6th of May. He recalled that Tito had privately given the British Government the express assurance that he would close the Greek-Yugoslav frontier and give no further help to the Greek Communist guerrillas (Maclean, 1957). In fact Tito announced the closing of the border to his former allies in a speech held in Pula on the 10th of July 1949. In September 1949 Edvard Kardelj, the then Yugoslav Foreign Secretary, reported in front of the General Assembly of United Nations the threat of USSR against Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> It was the first time that the Yugoslavs publicly accused the Soviet in front of the whole World. John C. Campbell<sup>4</sup> recalled in his work: “Thus, more than a year after the break, Yugoslav foreign policy was publicly unhooked from the Soviet line. The conflict could no longer be called a dispute between Communist parties of no concern to the outside world. It was a dispute between governments, and one of those governments was forcefully reiterating the point that the law of nations and especially the Charter of the United Nations applied to relations between Communist states as between any others” (Campbell, 1967, 17).

In the autumn of 1949 the Soviets enhanced the Sovietization of Eastern Europe charging the “Titoist” in the satellites communist parties. Peake reported that: “as was pointed out by both the Yugoslav and the Cominform press, the accused in this case was not Rajk but Marshal Tito and his “clique”. The Yugoslav leaders were described as having committed all the worst crimes in the Communist calendar. By the end of the trial it was established, to the satisfaction of the Communists, that Tito and his supporters were, and always had been, “imperialist agents”, in international affairs and “Fascists” in the Government of their own country.” (TNA FO 504/2, No. 15).

3 During August 1949 there was a “war of notes” between the Soviets and the Yugoslavs. The Soviets withdrew their Ambassador from Yugoslavia threatening the Balkan country due to the treatment reserved to the Soviet citizens who lived there and to the Yugoslavs accuses over Carinthia. (TNA, PRO, FO 504/2 no.14)

4 John C. Campbell was an American Officer in charge of Balkan affairs at the State Department, specialist of Eastern Europe and member of the Policy Planning Staff.

Hence the Rajk trial had started the purges of “titoist” elements in the Soviet Bloc that was endorsed by the second resolution of the Cominform in November 1949. Further the USSR and its Satellites denounced the treaties of friendship and cooperation with Yugoslavia. This resulted in the complete isolation of the Yugoslavs as was pointed out by the British Chargé d’Affaires Cecil King (TNA FO 504/2, No. 15).

These events resulted in an increasing fear of the Western Powers of the possibility that Yugoslavia could be attacked by the Soviets or their Satellites. Yet in September the Policy Planning Staff anticipated the conclusions of the NSC 18/4, underlining the high risk of a soviet or satellite’s attack to Yugoslavia and, most importantly, the threat that such an attack would have represented for the Western position in Greece and Italy. The worst predictions suggested that if the Soviets could succeed in destroying Tito’s regime, it would be difficult for the West to stop communism in Greece (FRUS, 1949/V, 948–950). Nevertheless whether the Americans were increasingly concerned with the strategical importance of Yugoslavia for the Western Defense, the British Ambassador thought that the purges of the “Titoist” elements in the Soviet Bloc had “reduced Yugoslav influence behind the Iron Curtain and in Communist-dominated organisations practically to nil” (TNA FO 504/2, No. 15). 1950 would have led to a more comprehensive analysis of the immediate effects of Tito’s heresy on the Soviet Bloc. However the Western diplomats appreciated the Yugoslav approach in the United Nations, King considered the election of Yugoslavia to one of the non-permanent seats on the Security Council one major victory of the Yugoslavs. The former were trying to secure support on a governmental level to their cause (TNA FO 504/2, No. 15). It seem interesting that, while analysing the Soviet attitude toward Yugoslavia the British Chargé d’affaires in Belgrade pointed out that the main aim of Stalin was to force the Balkan country into the arms of the West. In fact “the greatest danger for the Soviet Union consist not simply in the existence of Tito’s Yugoslavia but in the existence of Titoism or ‘national’ or independent communism as an alternative to the Soviet variety” (TNA FO 504/2, No. 15). On December 26th the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia signed a trade agreement that included an official loan. It was the first governmental economic aid from a Western Power to Communist Yugoslavia.

#### 1950–1953: YUGOSLAVIA AND THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF NATO

1950 represented a watershed in the Anglo-American policy toward Tito’s Yugoslavia. The outbreak of the Korean War in the summer and the Chinese intervention in the autumn of that year, highlighted the needs of strengthening NATO. During that year Greece and Turkey applied to join the North Atlantic Treaty paving the way to the first enlargement of the alliance in 1952. Yugoslavia’s strategical role between Italy and Greece would have been even more important cause of that. Due to this reason the British, making use of personal diplomacy, tried to improve the relationship between Yugoslavia and her Western-oriented neighbours. During the same year Yugoslavia suffered an important drought that brought the country close to famine and led the Yugoslavs to ask economic aid to the West. It resulted in the Yugoslav Emergency Relief Act of 1950



that represented the first congressional aid to the Balkan country. Hence the strategical importance of Yugoslavia and the structuring of the Western economic aid became the milestone of the relationship between the Western Powers and the Yugoslav until 1954.

In 1950 the British made an important attempt of strengthening the Greco-Yugoslav relations due to their interest in leading a pro-Western Defense System in the Eastern Mediterranean. During that summer the first official visit paid by a Labour Party' delegation in Yugoslavia occurred.

Using the Private Papers of the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Ernest Davies, the article will highlight the role paid by his visit to Austria, Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia to enhance the British ascendancy on the Yugoslavs.

As we have seen the intervention of Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean contributed to ending the Yugoslav support of the Greek communist. The next move from the West would be the promotion of a Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement. Once again the British exploited their ascendancy over the Yugoslavs to suggest this action. On April 1950, after general Plastiras became Greek Prime Minister, the Yugoslav had proposed that Ministers be appointed at Belgrade and Athens.

Nevertheless the Macedonian question broke into the Greek-Yugoslav rapprochement bringing the negotiations to a stalemate (TNA FO 371/87693 RG 10392/16).

Due to this reason when Ernest Davies, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, asked Ernest Bevin if he had any objection to his forthcoming holiday trip in Yugoslavia the latter proposed to Davies to make an unofficial political tour of South-eastern Europe as a whole (LSE, DAVIES 3/13/71). It resulted in the Davies' tour of Austria, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece during the summer of 1950. According to the report that Davies sent to the Foreign Secretary the main goals of the visit were: "regard these countries in relation one to the other and to assess to what extent they constitute a political entity in the front against Russian expansion. I tried to ascertain what defects there were in their relationship and what obstacles stand in the way of friendly relations with their neighbours." Davies underlined that the "objective of the West is to muster the maximum resistance to Russian expansion in order to preserve the independence of the Western countries and of the rest of the free world. The means employed is the mobilisation of the united resources of the Atlantic Pact countries in their common defence and through special arrangements with some other countries." (LSE, DAVIES 3/13/71) The Under-Secretary then stated that apart from Italy none of those countries was a member of the Atlantic Pact. The best solution would have been "to include them all within the Atlantic Pact or some similar association having close connections with the Atlantic Pact. However, the Americans have not yet been able to extend their commitments in the Mediterranean Area beyond those implied in the Truman Doctrine." (LSE, DAVIES 3/13/71). The problem therefore would have been to find some way of consolidating those countries without bringing them into the Atlantic Pact and taking into account the peculiar position of Yugoslavia. Hence Davies suggested that: "one way of doing this might be to organise a "Mediterranean Pact" under British leadership but the provision of the material resources required to make it a reality would doubtless be beyond our present capabilities" (LSE, DAVIES, 3/6, 6). After the outbreak of the Korean War the

reevaluation of the strategic importance of the Eastern Mediterranean opened the debate between the British and the Americans. The former wanted to tie the Eastern Mediterranean defense to the Middle East, the Americans were concerned over the European theatre (Chourchoulis, 2009). Davies' report suggested that Bevin was trying to evaluate whether the British could bring the Eastern Mediterranean countries closer, achieving a political success in front of the United States. He considered Yugoslavia as well as Spain and Albania one of the missing links in the chain of Atlantic and Mediterranean countries stretching from the Channel to the Bosphorus (LSE, DAVIES 3/6, 19). Davies' analysis outlined the importance of the coordination of the Anglo-Americans in those countries in order to strengthen the anti-Soviet front. However the Under-Secretary was very glad to notice that "Greece is susceptible to both British and American influence. By and large I should say that the Greeks look Britain for leadership and would prefer to regard America purely and simply as a meal ticket. Greece gladly accepts British military tutelage and would consider favourably any positive suggestions backed by Britain for closer military cooperation with other friendly countries, e.g. Turkey. This does not include Yugoslavia and is unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future" (LSE, DAVIES 3/6, 23). Davies sent this report to Bevin the 6th of September 1950. His sentence on Yugoslavia was due to the failure of his attempt to mediate between the Yugoslavs and the Greeks during the summer tour.

In fact Davies and the British had been driven to bring the Greeks and the Yugoslavs closer by the openings of the Yugoslav Ambassador in London Brilej after the outbreak of the Korean War. Once in Athens the British Under-Secretary met Politis, his Greek counterpart, who had prepared two draft statements to subject to the Yugoslavs. These statements pointed out that the two states, resuming full diplomatic relations, would abstain from interfering in all matters of domestic jurisdiction of other countries concerned (Stefanidis, 1986, 338). However the Yugoslavs refused to act in such a way and told Davies that they preferred to offer a counterproposal directly with the Greek Chargé in Belgrade.

Bevin made an ultimate attempt to mediate with the Greeks, during his stay in New York for the General Assembly of the United Nations. There, the British Secretary of State said to Politis that since listening to M. Vyshinsky's speech at the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20<sup>th</sup> September he was "more than ever convinced that it was important for Greece and Yugoslavia to come together and resume diplomatic relations with one another. He said that his attitude on this question was already well known to both countries and he stressed how important it was that the southern crust of Europe, from Italy to Turkey should be strengthened. He had tried to get Yugoslav's relations with her neighbours and with Great Britain on a better basis, and he reiterated his view that there were many economic problems on which these countries could get together" (TNA FO 371/87696 RG 10392/100). The Greek Under-Secretary replied that no Greek Government could show its weakness on the Macedonian Question (TNA FO 371/87696 RG 10392/100). Politis then gave to Bevin a document of complaints for the Yugoslav attitude toward Greece. Hence the British agreed with the Americans that there was nothing further to be done but it was essential to keep the long term objective



in view and watch for developments favourable to a new approach (TNA FO 371/87696 RG 10392/104). The real improvement of the Greek-Yugoslavs relations took place due to Yugoslavia's request of aid to the West that led to the signing of the Mutual Defense Assistance Program by the United States and the Yugoslavs on November 1950. The Greeks had to facilitate the transit of food through Salonica to Yugoslavia. This time both the American as well as the British diplomats in Athens and in Belgrade pressed Venizelos, the new Greek Premier, about the opening up of the Salonica railway and asked the Yugoslavs to show their readiness to cooperate with the Greeks (Stefanidis, 1986). This put the whole matter on its proper footing. The British used their influence to impress on the Yugoslavs that in return they should send back the Greek officers and men who had been captured by the Greek rebels and who had not yet been returned to Greece (TNA FO 371/87696 RG 10392/110). Finally Yugoslavia showed her willingness to cooperate and sent back the Greek officers, then proposed the exchange of Ministers to Athens. On the 28th of November Venizelos made an official declaration on the restoration of diplomatic relations to the Greek Parliament. He expressed the hope that Turkey would be associated in the cooperation between Greece and Yugoslavia. These three countries, said Venizelos, will contribute towards the consolidation of peace in the Balkan Peninsula and would constitute a barrier to any threat to the independence of their peoples (TNA FO 371/87697 RG 10392/128). Davies' tour and the British efforts to negotiate the Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement had showed the limits of the British leverage in the Balkans. Commenting the first official visit of a Labour delegation in Yugoslavia the British Ambassador pointed out that: "there is no doubt that they are sincere in their sympathetic interest in British Socialism, and would prefer to deal with the United Kingdom than the USA, but in view of the fact that the latter has most of the shekels we might be able to play a useful role as intermediary" (LSE, DAVIES, 3/11, 60). During the summer of 1950, Yugoslavia had faced a severe drought that worsened its economic situation bringing the country to request emergency food aid of 50million\$ from the US in early October. Lampe underlines that "until that moment the Eximbank was consistently the State Department's favored source for such assistance rather than a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, participation in the European Recovery Program, or a direct congressional grant. Any of these alternatives, it was believed in Washington, would be likely to take even longer for approval" (Lampe, Prickett & Adamović, 1990, 32). Acheson thought that aid could be given through the Mutual Defence Assistance Program, although sending supplies to Yugoslavia by MDAP would require that Yugoslavia agreed to sign a bilateral agreement with the United States (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1450).

Tito made clear that Yugoslavia could not participate directly in the ERP and the US also had problems with this solution. Therefore, the MDAP settlement seemed the best option. The US Ambassador in Yugoslavia, George Allen, had to sound Tito's willingness about the signing of a bilateral agreement between Yugoslavia and the US.

The US Department of State and the US Cabinet had decided to explore the possibilities of granting aid to Yugoslavia through the use of MDAP. Therefore, the US informed their European allies of the proposal made to the Yugoslavs.

On the 31st of October Ambassador Allen broke the unexpected news that Tito was favourable to sign a bilateral agreement with the US. Allen explained to the Marshal that “in order to obtain funds for assistance prior to Congressional action, it might be necessary to use money already appropriated for overseas military aid. In order to utilize these funds, American Government required certain undertakings on the part of Yugoslavia. I then read to the Marshal the verbatim text of the proposed agreement” (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1489). The US Ambassador said to Tito that: “funds in question had been appropriated by Congress in the same legislation as that which provided funds to implement North Atlantic Pact” (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1489). Tito feared Soviet propaganda about his rapprochement with the West so Allen prepared the Marshal to the event of such ideological attacks. The US Ambassador said that Tito had asked a text of the suggested agreement to study it, and that he felt confident that the agreement could be reached (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1497).

The Department of State informed the members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Congress over the possibility of getting emergency assistance to Yugoslavia through the Mutual Defence Assistance Act.

The US were attempting to reach an agreement with Yugoslavia, a Communist state. The US Congress had to approve this bilateral agreement, thus the Yugoslav Government had to take a step toward the US public opinion. The Yugoslav Ambassador in the US, Popović, asked what measures Yugoslavia could take to improve chances of a US action on food assistance (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1497). The Department of State underlined that Yugoslav attitude toward its Western neighbours was changing and the US public opinion appreciated the Yugo-Greek rapprochement and Tito’s fulfilment of UN obligations in case of war. The Department of State thought that Yugoslavia could do even more. Further, Acheson suggested to Allen that Yugoslavia could avoid taking a hostile position in the UN Security Council toward the issue of the seat of Communist China in the Security Council. Also the issue of personal freedom was considered important. On this, Allen suggested to the Yugoslavs to increase the degree of political and religious freedom (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1494).

Finally the US Ambassador in Yugoslavia George V. Allen proposed the agreement to the Government of Yugoslavia on the 20th of November.

Referring to the Mutual Defense Assistance Act, Allen stated that “the US Government was prepared to supply assistance in aid of food requirements of the armed forces of the Yugoslav Government on the following mutually agreed basis that (1) the Yugoslav Government will use the assistance exclusively for the purpose for which it is furnished, namely, in furtherance of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, to prevent the weakening of the defense of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslav; (2) that the Yugoslav Government agrees not to transfer to any other nation the assistance furnished pursuant to this agreement without the prior consent of the US Government; (3) that the Yugoslavs Government will provide the United States with reciprocal assistance by continuing to facilitate the production and transfer to the United States, in such quantities and upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed on, of raw and semi-processed materials required by the United States as a result of

deficiencies or potential deficiencies in its own resources, and which may be available in Yugoslavia. Arrangements for such transfers shall give due regard to requirements for domestic use and commercial export of Yugoslavia; (4) that your Government is prepared to make available to the Government of the United States of America dinars for the use of the United States of America for any administrative expenditures within Yugoslavia in connection with assistance furnished by the United States of America to Yugoslavia arising out of this agreement. Our two Governments will at the appropriate time initiate discussion with a view to determining the amount of such dinars and to agree upon arrangements for the furnishing of such dinars (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1505).

The day after the Yugoslav Deputy Foreign Minister Mates stated that the Yugoslav Government was in full agreement with the text.

On the 26th of November President Truman announced his conclusion that it was essential to use up to \$16 million of funds appropriated for the Mutual Defense Assistance Program to provide food for Yugoslavia in an amount equivalent to the immediate food requirements of the Yugoslav armed forces.

1950 was a year of outstanding importance in the relationship between the West and Yugoslavia. The outbreak of the Korean War enhanced the Western fear of a Soviet strike in Europe, notably in Yugoslavia, stressing the strategical importance of Yugoslavia in the Eastern Mediterranean. As it has been seen the US formalised the economic aid to the Balkan country with a Congressional Law, the Yugoslav Emergency Relief Assistance Act of 1950. The Congress approved a law that was giving aid to a Communist country in a period in which McCarthyism and the China Lobby were heavily questioning the policies of the Truman Administration. Nevertheless Congress gave his approval to the economic aid due to the strategical importance of Yugoslavia that was underlined by President Truman. One of the staunchest criticism to this policy came from the Catholic lobby who contested the harassment of the Archbishop of Zagreb Stepinac (Lees, 1997).

Furthermore 1950 marked the beginning of the relationship between the Labour Party and the CPY. After Davies' visit a delegation led by the General Secretary of the Labour Party, MP Morgan Phillips, visited Yugoslavia in September 1950. The Labour Party had accepted the invitation by the People's Front of Yugoslavia, the great board that covered the CPY. The Phillips' report of this visit underlines that even though Yugoslavia was considered a police state "there were some signs of liberalisation within the country like the halt of collectivisation of land and the slight increase in freedom of expression". The impression of Phillips was that "the Yugoslav Government had permitted these measures in order to ensure the support of the people" (LSE, DAVIES, 3/7, 56). When the Labourist met Tito, Phillips asked why the delegation had been asked to visit Yugoslavia. Tito had replied that "they wished progressive opinion in the West to be informed about their difficulties. They did not object to criticism but wanted to make sure that their critics knew what their difficulties were" (LSE, DAVIES, 3/7, 58). Tito had started the offensive to the Socialist Parties of the Western Europe.

During his conversation with the Yugoslav leader Phillips questioned his guest about the Yugoslav attitude on the United Nation Security Council. At that time Yugoslavia

had abstained on the condemnation of the Korean aggression. Tito asserted that “Korea was a battle ground for two conflicting world blocs. For this reason Yugoslavia could not give her unqualified support to the Western Powers in their resistance to Soviet-inspired aggression” (LSE, DAVIES, 3/7, 58). Otherwise if the Soviets would have attacked Norway the latter would have the fully support of Yugoslavia in defending her independence (LSE, DAVIES, 3/7, 58). Furthermore the Labour Secretary stated that if the choice before the UK was whether to assist Yugoslavia to keep her head above water economically and thus assist a Communist dictatorship to survive, or whether to allow her to succumb to the Cominform blockade and thus assist in the establishment of a Cominform regime in Yugoslavia (LSE, DAVIES, 3/7, 58).

This statement confirmed Unkovski-Korica (2014, 33) analysis that the delegation would appear to have accepted the Yugoslav calls for aid. More important the British delegation extended an invite to the Popular Front to reciprocate their visit in UK. The first visit of a Labour Party Delegation to Yugoslavia paved the way for a relationship that contribute to strengthen the ties between the West and Yugoslavia. When Djilas and Dedijer, two prominent members of the CPY visited Great Britain they brought with them an important request of military aid.

Since the early 1950 the Americans had tried to establish a small working group of American, British and French officials who would meet in Washington at technical working level to “discuss present views of their governments and coordinate their planning in event future determination that the Yugoslav Government should be accorded certain military assistance” (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1433). The French agreed on the 24th of July and the British on the 10th of August.

The 26th of September the Department of State suggested that “the technical working party should hold its first meeting on Monday, October 2, 1950 in Washington and that it continue to meet thereafter as necessary” (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1458). The Tripartite Military Meeting about military aid to Yugoslavia was finally established. It should have been the tool of the Western Military aid toward Yugoslavia. The Committee appears to have met four times: October 2, 12, 23 and 25 of 1950 and completed a paper which set forth the requirements to be used for planning for peacetime and emergency military material assistance to Yugoslavia under a variety of possible situations. The paper was referred to the three governments for consideration (FRUS, 1950/IV, 1483). In October Tito received the new French Ambassador in Belgrade Baudet. Marshall Tito used the occasion to make a direct request for the supply of arms by the West to Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav leader made it clear that he was thinking not only about the purchase of arms envisaged in the new trade negotiations with France but of aid on a much larger scale and on the basis of very long-term credits. He gave the impression that he would prefer such aid to be effected in a less direct manner respect to a direct aid from the US. Thus he asked the French to be the ones providing and distributing the aid (TNA DEFE 7/215). Although on October 30th Mates called Baudet to make sure that his remarks on so delicate a subject not be distorted.

Mates said to Baudet that “the remarks of Marshal Tito about the supply of arms to Yugoslavia from the West were only in nature of “speculation”. Then Baudet asked if he

had to put the question of the military aid to his government and Mates said that “Tito had intended only to put up an idea for our most secret consideration and that himself would raise the matter again when he thought the moment would be opportune” (TNA DEFE 7/215).

The interpretations that both the British diplomats as well as Baudet had given about this episode were that the Yugoslav Politburo was divided on the desirability and timing of a request for arms from the West (TNA DEFE 7/215).

This first approach influenced the Tripartite Working Group in Washington that on the 30th of November stated that “it is necessary to provoke a definite request (of aid) from the Yugoslav Government or this assistance should not be forthcoming on their own initiative. The Committee also proposed “that a small team of service experts should be sent out to investigate Yugoslavia’s requirements on the spot otherwise planning on this question can hardly be realistic until we have knowledge about the precise nature of the Yugoslav requirements (TNA DEFE 7/215).

The British took those recommendations very seriously and the Defense Committee proposed that the Foreign Secretary should invite Acheson and Schuman, during the forthcoming meeting of the NATO at Brussels, to agree to a tripartite approach to the Yugoslav Government with an offer of eventual military aid (TNA DEFE 7/215).

The British also proposed to the other Governments associated with them in controlling East/West trade that they should cease to treat Yugoslavia as an Eastern European Country. The security objection that prevented the export of these goods should not be applied to her for goods of military significance (TNA DEFE 7/215).

According to the British documents: “It was felt, particularly by the Americans that the Yugoslavs would not be ready to accept military aid from the West Powers” (TNA DEFE 7/215).

The Western then had to wait for an official request of aid by the Yugoslavs. The Americans did not want to create trouble to Tito. In January both the British and the Americans had changed their policy toward the export license and communicated to the CoCom<sup>5</sup> that they would export both munitions and strategic materials to Yugoslavia.

Out of the blue, during the visit of Djilas and Dedijer to London and Paris, the Yugoslavs asked the British to provide arms. Djilas wrote in his memoirs that the Yugoslavs had chosen to request military aid to the British for the connection between the Yugoslav Communist Party with the Labour Party. According to him “the British Labour Party, along with other European socialists, provided a bridge toward collaboration with the West. The Yugoslav leadership decided at that time to cooperate with the Socialists Parties of Europe, freeing themselves to the prejudice that only the Communists Party could represent the working class.” He then recalled that “only the Socialist parties thought and acted undogmatically in the light of the realignment brought about by the Soviet-Yugoslav dispute” (Djilas, 1985, 273–274). Djilas and

5 The CoCom was the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls, its task was managed a multilateral embargo that restricted the export of strategic goods from its member states to the Soviet Union and the COMECON countries.

Dedijer reciprocated the visit of the Labour delegation to Yugoslavia that took place on September 1950. Djilas, who was referred in the British documents as the number three of the CPY (TNA PREM 8/1574) officially went to London for a meeting at Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, but the real reason was that the request of military aid. He first spoke with Ernest Davies, who summarized the British reaction on this approach: “This, however, was the first official request they had made for arms. He urged that his request should be known by as few people as possible” (TNA PREM 8/1574).

This should be kept out of the administrative channel as far as possible in order to avoid the danger of a leakage which might provoke a Russian attack.

Davies says that similar informal request had been made to the Americans and the French but “we seem in fact to be the only power whom the appeal has been made so frankly and at such high level. We know that the approach to M. Parodi in Paris was more hesitant and less precise, and that up till 30th January nothing so definite has been said to the Americans either in Washington or in Belgrade. [...] Indeed it is only this month that we have modified our previous policy of prohibiting, on security grounds, the export to Yugoslavia of all material clearly designed for military use and development” (TNA PREM 8/1574). Davies, who was also a member of the Labour Party, thought that the Yugoslavs chose to make the request of aid to the British for the affinity between the Labour Party and the CPY. The report of the conversation in fact stressed that Djilas said: “the Yugoslavs found themselves in greater sympathy with and greater understanding of British Policy because Britain was a European Power and at the same time had a Labour Government” (TNA PREM 8/1574).

The Yugoslav Minister then asked the British to take certain practical steps: notably a statement that Britain would support Yugoslav independence and the provision of material aid.

Finally Djilas said that the Yugoslavs were much interested in the possibility of creating an Eastern Mediterranean grouping. They realised that their interests lay very close to those of Greece and Turkey and they found themselves working together in greater harmony. “He thought that there could be no formal pacts or arrangements amongst them. To create formal instruments would simply give the Russian a propaganda weapon” (TNA PREM 8/1574).

The American Ambassador reported that “Milovan Djilas, currently on visit to London, has made direct Yugoslav arms request to Attlee and Sir Andrew Noble, Assistant Under-Secretary of State. Djilas spoke of Yugoslav desire for certain arms, machinery, raw materials and license rights for manufacture arms. Request was couched in general terms without indication amount or specific nature of material Yugoslavs envisaged” (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1714). Because of this the British Prime Minister Attlee informed Djilas, on the 2nd of February, that in order for the British Government to consider the Yugoslav request, it would be necessary to have lists of Yugoslav requirements, together with an indication of desired priorities and other data. Meanwhile the French Prime Minister, René Pleven, visited Washington with the Secretary General of the French Foreign Office, Alexandre Parodi. Once in Washington the French delegation



met the Director of the Office for Eastern European affairs and talked about military aid for Yugoslavia. Parodi “said that the French Government was very concerned about the possible threat of Soviet aggression against Yugoslavia and believed that it was in the interest of the Western Powers to do what they could to strengthen the Yugoslav military position (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1715). Finally on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1951, the Yugoslav Ambassador in London, Brilej gave the list with the Yugoslav request of aid to Davies.

Once in London Dedijer and Djilas were the guest of the Labour Party. Handler, a British diplomat, recalled a conversation that he and Dedijer had had in Paris. Handler remarked that the Yugoslavs: “had been extremely impressed by their visit to England. M.Dedijer remarked that although what the Labour Party said was far to the right what it has done was very much to the left. They were particularly struck by the quality of the Labour leaders and trade unionist who they met.” (TNA FO 536/43). The Yugoslav Parliamentary delegation would enhance the ties between the Labour Party and the CPY. Davies said to Dedijer that the Laboruist would have showed to their Yugoslav homologue the nationalised industries and the social services, in particular the National Health Service, led by Aneurin Bevan. Davies wrote that the Yugoslav delegation would have been one of the most important parliamentary delegation that would visited the UK (LSE, DAVIES, 3/17, 13). During the first half of the '50 this relationship would have been of outstanding importance to the relationship between the West and the Yugoslavs.

The Yugoslav had yet made an unofficial request of aid to the Americans through their diplomat Velebit. The Americans were preparing a covert shipment that would have represented a gesture of goodwill toward Tito. Both the Americans as well as the British needed a list of military equipment to fulfill the Yugoslav request. Due to the lack of time the American Secretary of State, during a press conference on Yugoslavia held the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, stated that: “those who had it in their power to unleash or withhold acts of aggression should know that new acts of aggression committed in the world would strain the fabric of world peace to a dangerous extent. That is the broad policy of the US. Our attitude toward aggression is indicated very clearly in our action in regard to Korea and the UN and in supporting the UN (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1733). The day after Aneurin Bevan said in the House of Commons that an attack upon Yugoslavia would be a matter of concern to the British Government.

To coordinate the military aid to Yugoslavia the Western Powers resumed the Tripartite Working Group and the Tripartite discussions were begun at the Department of State on April 9. The Tripartite Committee was not commissioned this time to issue a study but rather to serve as a forum for the exchange of information on the efforts of the three countries to assist Yugoslavia through the supply of military equipment (TNA DEFE 7/216/8). The Tripartite Committee on Military Assistance to Yugoslavia started his works alongside the Tripartite Official Conversation on the Economic Aid, the first was held in Washington, the latter in London and would became the technical platform with witch the Western Powers would assist “heretic” Yugoslavia to survive Soviet pressure and to escape from international isolation.

During the Tripartite Meetings the Americans informed for the first time the British and the French that “they have decided, in view of the time factor, to send, without awaiting our agreement, a considerable additional shipment of military supplies to Yugoslavia immediately. Against all this, the most that we seem able to offer is a quantity of small arms and ammunition a few incinerators and some bakery vans” (TNA DEFE 7/217/22). The British documents show that the Foreign Office, now led by Herbert Morrison<sup>6</sup>, was very concerned about the fact that the American role in giving the military assistance to Tito was overwhelming. Morrison himself sent a letter to Shinwell, the British Minister of Defence, underlining that: “We are delighted to see the Americans making such a determined effort to meet Yugoslavia’s immediate needs and we cannot in these days, hope to match American resources. Nor I think would the Yugoslavs expect us to do so. But the insignificance of our contribution compared of those of the US and France has political implications and the disparity of the offers will, I fear, give the Americans an opportunity to take complete control of the re-equipment and re-armament of Yugoslavia and to push us into the background. There are two objections to this: first the policy of “keeping Tito afloat” requires careful handling and the Americans are not usually skillful at playing the lead in a situation where delicacy of touch is important. Secondly, the Americans may, if they exercise a predominant role in Allied policy towards Yugoslavia, drag us into unwelcome commitments. They seem for example to favour contributing token land forces if Yugoslavia is attacked, an idea to which our Chiefs of Staff are firmly opposed.” (TNA DEFE 7/217/22). Due to this reason the Foreign Office started a quarrel to push the Ministry of Defence to make a further effort to increase the British contribution to the re-armament of Yugoslavia. Despite these efforts the British were very limited in their capabilities to give a strong military aid to the Yugoslavs. The Yugoslavs had sent the then Chief of Staff, General Koca Popović to Washington and General Todorović to UK and France to deal with the Western. During his stay in the United States Popović had twelve meetings in the Pentagon (Laković & Tasić, 2016). Popović as well as Todorović complained of the low level of his contacts and showed his dissatisfaction with the amount and types of materiel that could be obtained with a short term delivery (TNA DEFE 7/219/39; TNA DEFE 7/218/24). During a dinner with Averell Harriman and Robert Joyce of the PPS, the Americans explained that the US had a contractual obligations with their NATO’s allies but proposed to the Yugoslav Chief of General Staff that General Collins, the US Army Chief of Staff, could visit Yugoslavia to resolve those issue in direct talks with the Yugoslav official (TNA DEFE 7/218/24). On June 13 1951, General Eddleman and Popović signed an agreement that provided for a rapid shipment of military equipment to Yugoslavia and consultations between military experts of both countries (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1816). The Yugoslav General then had a conversation with Acheson that under-

6 Herbert Morrison was a prominent member of the Labour Party and replaced Bevin, terminally ill, on March 1951.

lined “that we (the US) realized the existence of the threat of aggression against Yugoslavia and other free countries and trusted that the Yugoslav Government saw that all of us would have to work together to end that threat” (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1816). Then he asked about US officers going to Yugoslavia for technical talks and Perkins added that “our military representatives regarded this as necessary as a means of becoming acquainted with types of Yugoslav equipment, training and other aspects of the problem” (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1816). The General replied that for political reasons the Yugoslav Government thought that it would be premature to have an American military mission go to Yugoslavia at that stage. He said that the technical talks should begin in the United States and that later it could be seen how things would develop. The Yugoslav reluctance toward the possibility of American advisors on Yugoslavia would be the most problematic issue to reach an official agreement in the forthcoming months.

While Popović was travelling to London, the Tripartite Arms Committee had met in Washington. There Brigadier General Olmsted opened up the meeting by stating that talks with Popović had been conducted in a friendly atmosphere and that the Americans as a result of these discussions were convinced that if attacked the Yugoslavs would fight, if necessary alone. Olmsted also confirmed that the US had already sent one shipment of arms to Yugoslavia and that in addition a second covert shipment which would be two to three times larger than the first was going to be sent to Yugoslavia soon. Most importantly Olmsted inquired whether the UK shipment would be sent by covert or open means and underlined how they told Popović that Yugoslavia would have to comply with normal U.S. legal requirements for arms aid (TNA DEFE 7/219/69).

Popović seemed rather unhappy about this, particularly over the establishment of a M.A.A.G.<sup>7</sup> in Yugoslavia. Olmsted thought however that they could get over this hurdle by covering the M.A.A.G. in an enlarged attaché establishment (TNA DEFE 7/219/69). Once in London Popović recommended to the Foreign Secretary Morrison that: “the execution of orders placed with British manufactures should not be delayed by the British licence system and that as regards priorities Yugoslavia should be given equality of treatment with the NATO countries” (TNA DEFE 7/220/24). The British showed their willingness and revisited the policy of the allocation of army equipment. The Defence agreed that a new priority scheme should be worked, new commitments to other countries that were not formally allies, such as NATO or Commonwealth countries, could be accepted if it was shown that the advantages to be gained more than offset any interference with the requirements of the above mentioned countries (TNA FO 371/95545 and also TNA DEFE 7/221 40C). Popović continued his travel among the Westerners and visited Paris. There the Yugoslav Chief of Staff had met the Supreme Commander of NATO, General Dwight Eisenhower. The latter asked Popović whether Communist Yugoslavia would fight shoulder to shoulder against the Soviet system with the Western

7 M.A.A.G. or Military Assistance Advisory Group would consist of U.S’ military advisors who would were sent in the signatory country and was considered by the American as a part of the “umbrella” of the Mutual Security Program.

capitalistic system (Lees, 1997, 106–107). The Yugoslav replied that Yugoslavia had broken with the Soviet due to their imperialistic system and that its soldier “would aid in resisting aggression alongside the soldiers of Western Europe” (Lees, 1997, 106). Although the British and French made great efforts to deal with the requests of the Yugoslavs the latter returned home with the idea that from the practical standpoint they would have to look principally to the US for military aid. In fact, on June 28th the Yugoslav Ambassador in Washington had finally presented the formal request for military assistance under the Mutual Defence Assistance Program. Since that moment became clear that the US would have provide the burden of the Western military aid to the Yugoslavs. The legal way to provide this aid would have been the Mutual Defence Assistance Program. The bargaining reached a stalemate on the issue of the M.A.A.G.

As the last technical obstacles were being removed, President Tito and the American Ambassador Allen signed a bilateral military assistance agreement in Belgrade on November 14 which resulted from negotiations covering a period of over three months (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1863).

The Text of the Bilateral Agreement between the Government of Yugoslavia and the Government of the USA on Military Aid referred to the framework of the Charter of the United Nations. It recalled the principles of the United States’ Act that provided for the furnishing of military assistance to certain nations as the Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949, as amended, and the Mutual Security Act of 1951. Thus the Agreement consisted of seven articles. The most important were the following: Article I stated that the U.S. would make or continue to make available to the Government of the FPRY: equipment, materials, services, or other assistance in accordance with such terms and conditions as may be agreed. The Government of Yugoslavia “undertakes not to transfer to any person not an officer or agent of that Government, or to any other nation, title to or possession of any equipment, materials, information, or services, received on a grant basis, without the prior consent of the Government of the United States. The Yugoslavs would provide the U.S. with “reciprocal assistance, by continuing to facilitate the production and transfer to the U.S. of raw and semi-processed materials required by the United States of America as a result of deficiencies in its own resources which may be available in Yugoslavia. The Article V with which “the Yugoslav Government agreed to receive personnel of the US Government who would be accorded facilities to observe the progress of the assistance furnished pursuant this Agreement. It is understood between the two Governments that the number of such personnel will be kept as low as possible. Such personnel who are US nationals, including personnel temporarily assigned will operate as a part of the Embassy of the United States under the direction and control of the Chief of the Diplomatic Mission, and will have the same status as that of other personnel with corresponding rank of the Embassy of the United States”. Article VI with which Yugoslavia commit itself to make the full contribution permitted by her resources to the “development and maintenance” of “her own defensive strength and the defensive strength of the free world” and “to take such action as may be mutually agreed upon to eliminate the causes of international tension (TNA FO 371/95547 R 1142/234).

The British looked at this agreement as “a major step in the development of closer relations between Yugoslavia and the West. It is a sign of increasing confidence on the part of the Yugoslav regime, as they would not have dared to make such an Agreement a short while ago” (TNA FO 371/95547 R 1142/234). With their typical attitude toward the Americans the document underlined that: “It is to be hoped that the Americans will use discretion in wielding their new influence.” The British Embassy in Belgrade commented that “the kernel of the agreement, (and the point which was most hotly disputed) appears in Article 5. It provides for the reception of American personnel to observe the progress of the assistance. In fact, an American Military Mission is to be set up in Belgrade, headed by Brigadier-General John W. Harmony” (TNA FO 371/95547 WR 1142/234). The British documents suggested that Tito was particularly anxious to get “heavy armaments, nevertheless the Americans were reluctant to let the Yugoslavs have any tanks (TNA FO 371/95547 WR 1142/234). Hence they thought that the Americans had decided to supply a certain quantity of heavy equipment in return for a Yugoslav concession on the point of the establishment of the Military Mission. The signing of the MDAP was a landmark event in the rapprochement between the Yugoslavs and the West. It was the first and only military agreement between a communist country and the US during Cold War.

The Bilateral talks that the Yugoslavs had had with the US, the UK and France had demonstrated to the Yugoslavs the strength of the Americans and the weakness of the Europeans.

During 1951 the American showed to the Yugoslavs that they could help them more than the British and the French, both economically and militarily. Thus Yugoslavia decided to look to the Americans as their main contributor. The end of the Labour era in the U.K and the return of Churchill and Eden seemed to cool the relations between Yugoslavia and Great Britain. In fact the new British Ambassador in Belgrade, Ivo Mallet, was summoned by Tito who asked him if the change of government in the United Kingdom would involve some change in British policy towards Yugoslavia (TNA FO 536/YW43). The American Ambassador in Belgrade attributed this change of attitude to the “rankling memories of the Churchill-Stalin 50–50 deal on Yugoslavia, may be partly responsible but following are other likely factors [...] as the decline of the British prestige in the Middle East.” (FRUS, 1951/IV, Part 2, 1871). Nevertheless, the British would continue to have an important role after that the Conservative Government regained the trust of the CPY.

The Americans and the other Western powers had improved their relations with the Yugoslavs creating a strong framework with which to help the Yugoslavs resist Soviet pressure: the Tripartite economic aid of 1951, the long-term loan of the World Bank, thorough the IBRD, and the Mutual Defense Assistant Program. Nevertheless the Western countries still had to deal with the inclusion of Yugoslavia in the Western Defence System. To deal with this matter the Americans would need to handle with care the relations with its allies, the British primarily, but also the Italians, who were at odds with the Yugoslavs due the Trieste issue, and the new entries of NATO, the Greeks and the Turkish, two important actors in the Western relationship with Yugoslavia.

## TYING YUGOSLAVIA TO THE WESTERN DEFENCE SYSTEM: PAVING THE WAY TO THE BALKAN PACT

The strategic importance of Yugoslavia, underlined by the Americans and British analysts, was enhanced by the enlargement of NATO to Greece and Turkey that was formalised during the Lisbon meeting of NATO on February 1952. Due to this reason Yugoslavia's role in the defence of the Southern Flank of NATO became of outstanding importance. Even the Turks and the Greeks were very interested in military cooperation with the Yugoslavs due to the fact that they shared the same menace: Cominformist Bulgaria.

On the 10th of February 1952 a telegram from Ankara by the American Ambassador McGhee informed the Department of State that during the visit of the Greek Foreign Minister Venizelos to Turkey, held from the 29th January to February 5th, informal discussion between Venizelos himself, Fuad Köprülü, the Turkish Foreign Minister, and the Yugoslav Ambassador in Ankara, Radovanović, took place.

The visit happened in a moment when the cooperation between Greece and Turkey was very high: both countries had just joined NATO and both were in need of a coordinated military strategy. During Venizelos' visit the Greeks and the Turks shared their view on a rapprochement with Yugoslavia and the President of Turkey Celal Bayar expressed approval to the exchange of Ministers and good relations developed between Greece and Yugoslavia and encouraged Venizelos to seek even closer cooperation with the Yugoslavs (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 590–591).

McGhee reported also that Köprülü told him that Greeks and Turks would attempt to develop closer military coordination with the Yugoslavs in the event of an attack by the Soviets. The Turkish Foreign Minister asked McGhee if the Americans would be able to press the Yugoslavs through Ambassador Allen. A few days later, on the 13th of February, the Acting Secretary of State James Webb stated to McGhee that the Department was pleased of the attitudes of Greeks and Turks toward Yugoslavia but was not inclined to favour at that time a US approach by Ambassador Allen as suggested by McGhee and Köprülü.

This decision was due to the fact that “the strategic planning has not yet progressed to point where coordination with Yugoslavia may be undertaken” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 592).

On the other hand, “the Department does not wish discourage any efforts made by Greeks or Turks to establish closer relationship with Yugoslavia and particularly to develop atmosphere for freer discussion and greater cooperation between the three countries” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 592). The British were also very interested in the talks among Greeks, Turks and Yugoslavs. David Scott Fox, His Majesty Ambassador to Ankara asked to the Turkish Under-Secretary of State, Nuri Birgi about the possibility of some agreement between Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia had been discussed during Venizelos' visit.

Nuri Birgi replied that “the question had naturally been touched on in the general “tour d'horizon” with M.Venizelos (TNA FO 371/102503 WU 11945/2). He further



added that in his own view “the “North Atlantic Pact ought ideally to be extended eventually to include Yugoslavia and also some of the Middle East States, but the Turkish Government were always very cautious and practical in such matters and they fully realised that quite apart for other objections, there was no immediate prospect that Yugoslavia would be ready to enter into the Pact or into an alliance with Greece and Turkey” (TNA FO 371/102503 WU 11945/2).

The British Ambassador in Athens said to the Foreign Office that the Greek Under-Secretary of State Averoff talked with him of the advantages that would follow if the Yugoslav army “could be brought in” (TNA FO 371/102503 WU 11945/3). The Ambassador thought that “the Greek are now anxious that Yugoslavia should be associated in some way with the Atlantic defence community and both press and public are alert for any sign that such a development is imminent.” (TNA FO 371/102503 WU 11945/3). Furthermore he stated that they would probably welcome a proposal to include Yugoslavia into the Atlantic Pact and are impatient with what they think are Tito’s undue hesitations (TNA FO 371/102503 WU 11945/3).

Nevertheless the main goal of the Anglo-Americans at that moment was to resume the military Tripartite planning with the French in respect to Yugoslavia and then approaching Tito to held military talks with Yugoslav officials through an appropriate military representative of the three powers (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1267). The Memorandum of Discussion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, held in Washington, April 9, 1952, confirms that the Americans preferred to talk directly with the Yugoslavs and did not want to bring the matter of the ties between Yugoslavia and Greece to NATO’s council before a military talk would be held among the Yugoslavs and the Americans (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1284). Thus the involvement of Greece and Turkey in the military talks between Yugoslavia and the Anglo-American was considered premature and Perkins, the American Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, pointed out that he was sure that the Yugoslavs would not include the Greeks in the military talks (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1276).

The Memorandum also shows that the JCS thought that the Yugoslavs were concerned about an isolation from the Western Security System (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1275). Nevertheless when the Yugoslavs asserted to the Greeks that they could consider their Yugoslav frontier as covered and protected by the Yugoslav army, the latter showed their desire for immediate staff talks.

Throughout the next several months the Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav rapprochement continued, with visits by military and political representatives to each other’s capital (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 597). During these visits the Yugoslav attitude was different from the Greek and the Turkish one. Despite the talks stressed the importance of cooperation between the armies in case of a Soviet attack the Yugoslavs excluded to sign a military pact (Laković & Tasić, 2016). Hence the Yugoslav showed their willingness to cooperate with the Greeks and the Turks but underlined that no real military commitment would have been taken.

On the 18th of June 1952 a meeting was held between the Department of State and the Joint Chief of Staff to deal with the organization of the Tripartite Meeting with

Yugoslavia. The NATO role of the Western representative should not have been evident to the Yugoslavs; due to this reason the JCS thought that General Thomas Handy would be the right man instead of Admiral Carney, who at that time was CINCSOUTH of NATO (Lees, 1997, 114–115). During a follow-up meeting with the British and the French it was decided that the former should represent the three powers in the military talks with Yugoslavia (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1293).

As we have seen the military talks with Yugoslavia would have been led by an American General but also the British tried to influence the Yugoslavs resuming the good relations with the UK that had characterised the last years of the Labour Government. In fact, on June 17<sup>th</sup>, the Yugoslav Ambassador in London had invited the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden to come to Yugoslavia as an indication of the solidarity of the Western powers with his country (TNA FO 371/102179 WY 1052/2). Soon after Eden met Maclean to receive an advice. The latter said that he thought a visit by the Secretary of State would be very valuable, especially if it could be the means of bringing about closer association between Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia, which he thought was a necessary next step in defence arrangements for the Mediterranean and Middle East (TNA FO 371/102179 WY 1052/3).

It seems important to keep in mind that the visit of Eden would have been the first visit of the Foreign Minister of a Western Powers to Yugoslavia since the Communist had arose to power. Hence the British Ambassador in Belgrade underlined pros and cons of a visit of such an importance. Mallet said that “the main risk is that Tito will cash in on the prestige and credit which your visit will give him and will continue to conduct both his internal and external policies on the same lines as hitherto. So far as external affairs are concerned, a few examples will illustrate what I mean.

On Colonial aspects the Yugoslavs rejected our representations to support our case at UN. They have recently refused the French request that they should vote against a special session of the Assembly on Tunis. They are making themselves the champions of the under-developed countries, in after luncheon speeches, proclaim that we are allies, and however we may be in the same camp, the Yugoslavs continue to criticise the colonial exploitation by Her Majesty Government and the French Government of dependent peoples and to support nationalist aspirations in countries like Tunis and Morocco.

Nor can one ignore the internal side. However much Tito may be evolving towards the West he is still a professed Marxist and his regime is still totalitarian. The regime therefore tolerates no rivals in the field of the loyalty of its citizens. In consequence religion is being attacked and in particular the Catholic religion which is controlled and supported from outside the country.

Your visit will provide an opportunity of really ascertaining what Tito’s attitude over Trieste is and of presenting him in a forceful manner with the arguments in favour of reasonable settlement” (TNA FO 371/102179 WY 1052/10).

The British Foreign Secretary had met both De Gasperi and Schuman in Strasbourg the day before he reached Belgrade (Eden, 1960, 224). During his stop Eden promised the Italian Prime Minister that he would not make concessions to the Yugoslavs over Trieste and the former committed himself to not provoke Belgrade in those days.

Finally Sir Anthony Eden arrived in Belgrade on the 17th of September and met Tito the day after. During his visit he would have to suggest the date of the military talks to the Yugoslavs but the French ambassador in London, Renè Massigli, told him that “as regards Trieste, whether we considered that we ought to proceed with the tripartite demarche on strategic planning he recalled that the French Government’s view had been that to make Tito an offer on strategic planning would increase his intransigence over Trieste. He was told that Marshal Tito had made it clear that he was anxious to start talks and that we should probably consider it right to make the proposed demarchè fairly soon (TNA FO 371/102179 WY 1052/58).

As a result of this Eden felt that addressing the issue of military talks the next day would be a mistake (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1309). He also proposed to bind military talks to some political issues, first of all the one of Trieste (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1309).

However, the Americans considered the military planning with the Yugoslavs a separate issue from the problem of Trieste and sent a strong response to Eden’s suggestion: “we strongly disagree with Eden proposal to modify this approach in such fashion as directly to link proposed military talks with Yugoslav concessions on Trieste, we have been guided by principle on one hand that it was imperative for reasons of over-all West defense to accomplish our joint military purposes without permitting political issues to interfere and principle on other hand that we continue to make clear to Tito that our desire for military cooperation does not detract from importance we attach to ultimate solution of the Trieste question. We believe that efforts to create a conditional relationship between proposed military talks and Trieste problem rest in part on erroneous assumption that military talks would result only in net profit to Tito whereas in fact it is greatly in interest of three powers that after two years of delay we get down to concrete discussions with Tito in military sphere” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1310).

The next day the American Ambassador in Belgrade reported that Eden was inclined to think that the subject of military cooperation would unavoidably come up during his talks with Tito but he would not force the issue, and he would not make mention of the fact that the three powers were contemplating a tripartite approach on that subject and, more importantly, would carefully avoid making the Trieste settlement a condition for military aid or cooperation. He felt that he must refer to the fact that improved relations between Yugoslavs and Italy would make any plans for military cooperation in that area more effective since supply lines to Yugoslavia must come through Italy (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1311).

The American Ambassador terminated his telegram stating that soon after he had met Ivo Mallet, the British Ambassador in Belgrade, and both agreed that British and American positions are not far apart because both the Foreign Office and the Department of State had the opinion that questions regarding Trieste and military cooperation should follow separate and parallel courses and that political pressure should be avoided (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1311).

Hence was decided that the tripartite military talks would took place from 16 to 20 November 1952.

According to Rajak, Belgrade hoped that General Handy would give a concrete Western commitment toward Yugoslavia in case of a Soviet strike. Only in that case the Yugoslavs would disclose their defence plans and coordinate them with the West (Rajak, 2010, 33). General Handy instead made an opening statement saying that the purpose of the talks was to learn the Yugoslav situation as fully as he could in order that tripartite military group in Washington could undertake tripartite contingency planning, based on reports of that talks” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1316).

On the 20th of November the American Ambassador in Yugoslavia analysed the Tripartite Meeting that was just finished. Allen underlined that talks “became rather warm” due to the fact that the Yugoslavs repeatedly accused the Western that they were demanding more operational and strategic information than they were willing to give (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1391). General Handy made absolutely clear that he could not give any commitment toward further military talks and General Dapčević agreed that it depended upon certain policy decisions at government level (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1391).

As has been said the Westerns and the Yugoslavs had different perceptions and expectations about these talks. Allen opinion was far from being negative: “the talks accomplished their essential purpose since contact on planning level was established and ground was laid for continuation. Moreover, we have at least followed up Tito’s initiative in suggesting these talks” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 1391).

The Yugoslav’s feeling with the tripartite military talks was quite the opposite. According to Rajak Tito and his ministers were persuaded by the attitude of General Handy toward an American commitment to defend Yugoslavia that Western strategists have accepted that a Soviet or Satellite attack on Yugoslavia could be limited to a local war (Rajak, 2010, 33). It could be assumed that the recent victory of the Republican candidate in the Presidential elections, General Dwight Eisenhower, and the strong anti-communism of his electoral campaign contributed to give to the Yugoslavs that impression.

Thus it resulted that Yugoslavia’s policy should follow a dual-track. On one hand the Yugoslavs should negotiate a regional pact with Greece and Turkey without committing themselves to NATO, on the other hand they would also try to engage the Big Powers, notably the United States and Great Britain, to a commitment about the defense of Yugoslavia. The latter would be seen during Tito’s visit to Great Britain in the following months.

Soon after the Handy’s talks took place the visit of a Greek military mission to Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs took advantage of the situation to show to the Greeks that their attitude toward a military agreement was changed. Mallet, from Belgrade, reported to the Foreign Office that: “the Yugoslav military delegation proposed that they should get down to concrete military planning. The Greeks who had not expected their visit to be more than a goodwill, wired for instructions and were able to inform the Yugoslavs four days later that their Government was prepared to enter into detailed military discussion” (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/24).

The Americans were very concerned over the importance of underlining to their Balkan allies that they favoured maximum possible progress in contingent military

planning between Greeks and/or Turks and Yugoslavs, but that they considered that there should be no commitment of forces at that time. Such commitment must of course be subject to governmental decision at time emergency arises in light all circumstances and in consultation with NATO allies as appropriate (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 599).

The Turkish seemed immediately careful to this aspect of the military negotiations with the Yugoslavs.

Nevertheless the most interesting proposal came from Ankara. On January 6th 1953 McGhee reported the Turkish Foreign Minister expressed his view that “time will soon be ripe to attach Yugoslavs to NATO, preferably by direct entry. He has impression that Yugoslavs desire such a solution and will be in position to accept admission into NATO in two or three months” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 604–605).

Furthermore Köprülü added another interesting option: “if direct entry into NATO is not possible, an alternative solution should be sought through creation of separate three-power alliance such as the European Defence Community, with reciprocal guarantees with NATO” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 604–605).

Since the visit of the Turkish delegation in Belgrade, on December 1952, the Turkish Foreign Minister became the stronger supporter of the integration of Yugoslavia into the Western defense system.

Hence both the Department of State as well as the Foreign Office had to consider the matter raised by Köprülü: the question of the political framework in which future arrangements between NATO and the Yugoslavs could be made.

Both the Department of State as well as the Foreign Office thought that the Italians would be raise problems toward the strengthening of military ties with Yugoslavia as they had done in the past. In fact De Gasperi talked with Köprülü in December 1952 and went to Athens explaining to the Greeks the Italian position about the possibility of a military pact among Greeks, Yugoslavs and Turks.

Tito was ready to freeze the Trieste issue but the Italians wanted that the Yugoslav rapprochement with the West subordinated to the solution of the Trieste question.

The Foreign Office was very disappointed with the Italian attitude toward the Balkan cooperation and the same document points out that: “It is in our interests to support the Yugoslav-Greek-Turkish rapprochement. It is also in our interests to try to bring about a sensible solution of Italo-Yugoslavs problems. The former strengthens the periphery of Western defences; the latter weakens their central front. We cannot, therefore, really enjoy the satisfaction of seeing Italian diplomacy over-reach itself and being too clever by half. But the Italians see sense without losing face will have to wait until after the Italian elections” (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/8).

These considerations were expressed to Köprülü before his visit to Yugoslavia. Köprülü seemed very impressed and according to the British documents “he realised that Yugoslavia was probably not yet ready for NATO, or NATO for Yugoslavia. Turkish was firmly determined to do nothing which might in any way conflict with NATO but the organization of Balkan defence seemed to be necessary in the interest of NATO and the Minister for Foreign Affairs’ desire was to improve the atmosphere and gradually bring Yugoslavia along” (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/10).

Hence Köprülü insisted with the idea of “a regional combination linked with NATO, a regional organisation perhaps resembling EDC and linked with NATO but not with the EDC.” Peake, then British Ambassador in Athens, also warned the Foreign Office on Tito’s aims: “they were not joining NATO and it was therefore essential for them to have some other protection. [...]” and he added that “nor can I exclude from my mind the thought that he has also got his eye on the Italian Government and that it would suit him to be able to indicate to them that Yugoslavia can get on well enough with her neighbours without Italian participation, if the Italian Government remains, as he thinks, intransigent about Trieste” (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/55).

The British course of action would have been to encourage the military talks between the Balkan countries recalling Greece and Turkey their obligations toward NATO (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/28).

Helm, the British Ambassador in Ankara, reported that his American colleague McGhee had endorsed a pact of friendship that would not conflict with NATO obligations and had suggested to Köprülü that at the time of signature it might be publicly stated that Italian adhesion would be welcomed” (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/28).

Peurifoy, the American Ambassador in Athens, had the same opinion saying that “Embassy considers that in view apparent willingness if not eagerness of parties, Greece and Yugoslavia should be encouraged to reach political understanding. In order to avoid conflict with NATO obligations such mutual political obligations should be drawn in flexible terms along lines of Article 5, by which attack on one country would be considered as an attack on both and which would hence obligate Greece and Yugoslavia to consider appropriate measures in the light of the circumstances then existing, presumably on basis previous joint military plans” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 612).

At the end of January 1953 both the Turkish as well the Yugoslavs informed the ambassadors of the Western Powers that Tito proposed a tripartite treaty of friendship between Greece-Turkey-Yugoslavia. Peurifoy and Mallet, had had the same impressions, “that the treaty would provide for tripartite consultation in event of threat to security of one of members, would be drafted as to make clear that no provisions proposed treaty would conflict with or derogate from obligations Greece and Turkey as members of NATO” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 614).

Mallet also underlined that Turks and Yugoslavs had agreed that Italy could not fail to be interested in a Balkan agreement and the proposed arrangements could not threaten the legitimate interest of Italy (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/27).

On the contrary they should strengthen the strategic position of Italy in as much as it was proposed to include a special clause aimed at Italy and foreseeing the accession of other countries on a footing of equality.

However the American Ambassador in Ankara, McGhee asked for a further encouragement because “such an attitude on our part should provide maximum opportunity for guiding course of pact negotiations along lines desired by the United States.” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 614).

McGhee suggested that an early completion of the pact was advisable. Otherwise “delay in any substantive step in that direction, stated the Ambassador would probably



tend to discourage Yugoslavs and might in fact militate against their eventual effective collaboration with West” (FRUS, 1952–1954/VIII, 614).

Hence the Greek-Turk-Yugoslav negotiations started in Athens in the mid of February 1953.

The recommendations of the Department of State and the Foreign Office to their Ambassadors in the Balkans followed these lines: take account of Greek and Turkish obligations to NATO and leave the way open for adherence by other countries (TNA, FO 371/102191 WY 1076/45).

On February 28 in Ankara, the Treaty of Friendship and Assistance between Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey was signed by the Foreign Ministers of the three contracting states. Known formally as the Treaty of Ankara the text did not include the provision advocated by the Yugoslavs for the appending to the treaty of any tripartite military agreements subsequently to be negotiated by the three parties.

After the signature of the treaty Köprülü and Stephanopoulos, the Greek Foreign Secretary, repeated that the way was open for the participation of any country of goodwill (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/80).

Once the Treaty of Ankara has been signed the Anglo-Americans asked to the Greeks and the Turks to instruct their representatives at the North Atlantic Council meeting to make statements to assure the Council that the treaty did not extend the obligations of NATO, that the military plans that they make with the Yugoslavs would be submitted to SACEUR through the Greek and Turkish representatives at SHAPE and that their Governments would not endorse these plans until SACEUR has approved them. SACEUR would keep the Standing Group fully informed of his actions in the matter (TNA FO 371/102191 WY 1076/75).

The Anglo-Americans had succeeded in bringing Tito closer to NATO without committing themselves to the Yugoslavs defense. Nevertheless Yugoslavia had acquired a strategical importance in the defensive plans of the Western. In fact the country would be a fundamental way of access both to Greece as well as Italy and could contribute to take the Soviet Bloc far from the Adriatic Sea and in isolating Albania.

The forthcoming visit of Tito to the United Kingdom would be a good occasion for the British to strengthen their relations with the Yugoslavs. The Western and Southern Department of the Foreign Office thus suggested to raise the following points during Tito’s visit: “Tito might be assured of our common interest in resistance to aggression and of our conviction that an attack upon Yugoslavia would lead to general war in which we should all be involved. The three Western Powers will be ready to resume military talks as early as feasible, possibly in a couple of months’ time.

While there can naturally be no question of making future defence planning dependent upon a solution of the Trieste problem, Tito might be reminded that there can be no sound foundation for Western defence in the area concerned so long as Italo-Yugoslav relations are as bad as they are.

Yugoslav attacks on our colonial policy, which betray ignorance of British theory and practice, are unfavourably received by British public opinion. Nor do they help us to damp down criticism Yugoslav religious policies” (TNA FO 371/107835 WY 1054).

According to Svetozar Rajak Tito was informed of the death of Stalin on the 6<sup>th</sup>, just before he left Yugoslavia to reach the United Kingdom. When he met Sir Winston Churchill on March 17<sup>th</sup> the British Prime Minister asked his view about the new regime in USSR. The Marshall replied that “the situation had not been very greatly changed for the moment by Stalin’s death” (TNA FO 371/107835 WY 1054/C).

Talking about the resumption of the tripartite military talks Tito stated that: “at the Handy talks there had been a fundamental difference of view as the Tripartite military representatives had envisaged planning for a localised war waged by the Soviet Russia and the Satellites against Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs on the other hand started with the premise that every conflict in Europe would at once become general.” The British Minister of Defense then reassured Tito that “there could be no localized war in Europe” and Eden expressed his view that the three governments (UK, USA and France) would then propose fresh talks” (TNA FO 371/107835 WY 1054/C).

On Trieste Tito argued that he was for the maintenance of the status quo but Eden replied “that HMG could not leave forces in Trieste indefinitely: there were badly needed elsewhere” (TNA FO 371/107835 WY 1054/E).

More importantly the two Governments declared their common interest in resistance to aggression and in the preservation of national independence. Such a public statement also underlined that the British did not consider the case of a local war in case of a Soviet attack to the Yugoslavs.

Such a visit resulted in a great success both in Yugoslavia as well as in the United Kingdom and can be considered the apex of the Yugoslav-British relations since the end of the war.

## CONCLUSIONS

Both the US as well as the UK understood the ideological and strategic importance of the expulsion of the CPY from the COMINFORM. Until 1950 the Anglo-Americans hoped to drive a wedge into the Soviet Bloc by keeping Tito, a Communist then independent from Moscow, afloat. Nevertheless the purges of Titoist elements in Eastern Europe turned the wedge strategy into a long term policy. The outbreak of the Korean War enhanced the American military presence in Europe and led to the first NATO enlargement, making Yugoslavia an important asset in the Western Defense System. The strategical importance of the Balkan country led the Anglo-Americans to give State aid to the Yugoslavs, both in the economic field as well as in the military one. The United Kingdom tried to play an important role in the relationship with the Yugoslavs thanks to the links established by the Labour Party in 1950. As it has been said the British played a role of outstanding importance in the Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement since Maclean’s visit to Belgrade in 1949.

Nevertheless, when the Western countries had to give money and arms to the Yugoslavs the British had to consider their economic weakness. This inevitably affected their hope of a leading role in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Americans took the burden of the economic and military aid to the Yugoslavs and became the leading power in

dealing with them. When the Conservative Party regained power at the end of 1951, the British could still play an important role in dealing with the Yugoslavs thanks to the wartime linkage existing between the CPY and the Churchill Government. These good offices led to the Eden's visit in Yugoslavia, in the autumn of 1952, and of Tito's to London, in March 1953.

1952 paved the way to a closer inclusion of Yugoslavia in the Western defense system, even with the main obstacle of the Trieste issue. When the tripartite meeting, led by General Handy, failed to accomplish a real cooperation with the Yugoslavs the latter turned to their Balkan neighbours to form a regional alliance linked to NATO. The Ankara treaty represented the first step to the Bled pact of 1954 that formalised the Balkan Alliance.

The Anglo-Americans succeeded in keeping Tito afloat. Nevertheless the death of Stalin and the slow normalization of the Yugoslav relationship with the Soviet Bloc weakened the military and strategical gains of the Western policy toward Yugoslavia. The ideological value of the Tito-Stalin rift would be revalued by the Anglo-Americans during each major crisis of the Soviet Sphere. The UK and the US shared the same goals toward Yugoslavia. Even though the British hoped to regain their prestige with their diplomatic ties and their experience in international diplomacy the importance of the American commitment made the US the final arbiter of the Western policies toward Yugoslavia.

ANGLOAMERIŠKI “POSEBNI ODNOSI” IN JUGOSLAVIJA V ZGODNJEM  
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## POVZETEK

Članek analizira angloameriški odnos do Jugoslavije med letoma 1948 in 1953. Razhod med Moskvo in Beogradom lahko smatramo za pomembnega tako iz ideoloških kot strateških razlogov. Zahod je želel izkoristiti razdrobljeni vpliv jugoslovanskega komunizma na sovjetski blok, strateški vidik razdelitve pa je poudaril vlogo Jugoslavije pri obrambi Grčije, Italije in Turčije. Izbruh korejske vojne in širitev NATA, ki je sledila, sta okrepila pomen Jugoslavije v zahodnih vojaških načrtih. To je pripeljalo do angloameriške gospodarske in vojaške podpore Jugoslaviji. Ankarska pogodba iz leta 1953 in Blejski pakt iz leta 1954 med Jugoslavijo, Grčijo in Turčijo sta ustvarila razmere, ki so jugoslovansko federacijo posredno povezale z zahodnim obrambnim sistemom. Kljub temu sta počasna sprostitev napetih odnosov med Moskvo in Beogradom po Stalinovi smrti ter grško-turške težavne razmere na Cipru ohladili vojaški pakt, tako da je jugoslovanski nekonformistični komunizem na Zahodu pridobil nov pomen. V raziskavi uporabljeni viri britanskih arhivov so pokazali, da so londonska prizadevanja obdržati glavno vlogo v vzhodnem Mediteranu Veliko Britanijo pripeljala do posredovanja pri zbliževanju Grčije in Jugoslavije. Kljub temu so raziskave pokazale, da so zaradi ameriške gospodarske in vojaške pomoči ZDA imele prevladujočo vlogo pri odnosih med angloameriški zavezniki in Jugoslavijo.

*Ključne besede:* Special Relationship, wedge strategy, južni bok NATA, grško-jugoslovanski odnosi, pomoč Zahoda Jugoslaviji

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