

# Why Was Yugoslavia Expelled from Cominform?

Written by Matt Evans

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This essay examines the reasons why Yugoslavia was expelled from Cominform, an international Communist organisation dominated by the Soviet Union. This event proves vital in understanding the history of Yugoslavia as well as post-war Communism, as it marked the first official rift between Communist states. The orthodox view that dominated Tito-era literature, subsequently accepted by Western scholars, was that the Tito-Stalin split was due to Yugoslavia, as early as 1941, pursuing a separate path towards socialism that could not be reconciled with the Soviet Union.[1] However, due to the increasing availability of both Yugoslav and Soviet era archives, this view has come under cogent scrutiny.

This essay will contend that the instigator for Yugoslavia's expulsion was Stalin, from late 1947, aiming to cement his hegemony over the Eastern Bloc, and thus would not tolerate a Yugoslav foreign policy that acted free of Moscow's control. As a response, Stalin expelled Yugoslavia to set a precedent for the rest of the satellite states. To demonstrate this, I will examine the key flashpoints of Yugoslav interference in Albania, Greece, and their influence in a proposed Balkan Federation. However, I will also argue that two other interlocking factors were key to the expulsion. Firstly, that scepticism towards increasing Soviet influence was present since the late 1930s amongst large sections of the population and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY). Secondly, that there was an ideological dimension dispute over the role of popular fronts. The first section of the essay will deconstruct Cominform's official reasoning for the expulsion in order to illustrate that this was not justified. Secondly, I will also deconstruct the traditional orthodox view, established by official Yugoslav historian Vladimir Dedijer[2], as it proved to be misleading. Following this, I will go on to explain the real reasons for Yugoslavia's expulsion. To construct my argument, I will draw upon contemporary findings by, amongst others, Perović and Bjelakovic, as well as primary documents from the time.

The communiqué released on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1948 lists eight official reasons to justify Yugoslavia's expulsion. However, three issues recur. Firstly, that Yugoslav domestic policy has diverted to such an extent that it is now incompatible with that of Cominform, allegedly representing a "departure from Marxism-Leninism".[3] This accusation is repeated numerous times in the communiqué. Secondly, it periodically denounces the CPY's foreign policy towards the USSR, describing how it is being conducted in the same way it treats "bourgeois states".[4] Thirdly, the communiqué states that nationalism has infiltrated the senior ranks of the Party and subsequently impacts policy.[5]

Historiography, from both the era of the split and contemporary findings, is rightfully unanimous in rejecting Cominform's accusations. Research in recent decades by Banac and Perović has corroborated this. Perović asserts how Yugoslavia was dedicated in pursuing the Stalinist route to socialism. For instance, the 1946 Yugoslav constitution was effectively a copy of the Soviet constitution of 1936.[6] Banac writes that the CPY rapidly adopted Soviet policies, across all aspects of society. Regarding agriculture, by March 1948, 347,441 hectares of land in Yugoslavia, largely comprising of confiscated farms in Vojvodina, were under cooperative cultivation. Likewise, Yugoslav peasant work cooperatives were the first to be established and also the most numerous, with 1,318 existing by the end of 1948.[7] Additionally, Banac claims how education, press, publishing, literature and the arts, theatre and film were sovietised.[8] In order to consolidate power, the CPY had also adopted Stalinist methods of control, exemplified through their ruthless crushing of opposition groups, often more harshly than Communist parties in other Eastern European states.[9]

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Consequently, it appears that Cominform had little justification for expelling Yugoslavia on the grounds of creating an economic and political model that was at odds with Marxism-Leninism. In fact, in most cases, Yugoslavia had moved further to emulating the Soviet system than any other newly formed Communist state. This is even more impressive when this was decided through conscious decisions by the Yugoslav leadership, rather than orders from Moscow.[10] Gibianskii rightfully concludes that the only truth to the Soviet's accusations was their criticism of anti-democratic procedures in the CPY and the secret nature of its activity, however, in reality the Kremlin had little concern for this.[11] Therefore, it is clear that this was used as a smokescreen for the real reason of Yugoslavia's expulsion.

The explanation provided by Cominform was never truly been taken seriously by scholars and the media. For instance, *The Times*, writing as early as July 1<sup>st</sup>, highlighted how the split may have occurred due to disputes over foreign affairs.[12] Instead, the theory that dominated literature for the subsequent decades was established by official Yugoslav historian Vladimir Dedijer, and perpetuated through the succeeding decades by both Yugoslav and Western scholars, without sufficient scrutiny.

Dedijer's influential works *The Battle Stalin Lost* and *Tito Speaks* were instrumental in establishing and propagating the traditional view of the Tito-Stalin split. In these works, Dedijer argues that it was primarily the "aggressive tendencies of the Soviet Union toward Yugoslavia"[13] along with the Soviet desire to exploit Yugoslavia economically that determined the rift.[14] Scholars now emphasise that Dedijer's analysis suffered from inaccuracies, misrepresentations and deliberate selectiveness that mean that from an academic point of view his writings now should be treated as little more than pro-Yugoslav propaganda.[15]

The gradual release of Soviet and Yugoslav era archives has invalidated the view espoused by Dedijer. Instead, other interpretations have developed. This essay now argues that the instigator for Yugoslavia's expulsion was Stalin's increased desire to cement his hegemony over Eastern Europe. However, firstly it contends that two other interlocking factors were key in triggering this. Firstly, an aversion to the Soviet Union that had been present amongst large sections of the Yugoslav population and the CPY since the 1930s. Secondly, ideological differences over the nature of popular fronts.

It is firstly important to establish that Yugoslav relations and attitudes towards the Soviet Union were never entirely harmonious. Rifts can be traced back to the late 1930s, demonstrated with the purge of CPY leader Milan Gorkić in 1937 and Comintern almost adopting a decision to dissolve the CPY in 1938.[16] Disagreements also occurred throughout the Second World War. This was most evident over Belgrade's territorial claims over Trieste in early 1945, which brought Yugoslavia to the brink of war with the Allies.[17] Therefore, despite most CPY members continuing to view the USSR as the "abstract ideal"[18] senior CPY members had perhaps refused to trust Stalin and regarded him with suspicion.

This scepticism of the Soviet Union can be extended to large sections of the Yugoslav population. While in places like Montenegro support for Stalin was high[19], many citizens were reluctant to the possibility of the USSR increasing their influence in the region. Munevera Hadžišehović describes how most Muslims were opposed to the Russians due to their suppression of Muslims in central Asia and the perceived cultural disparity with the Russian Orthodox Church.[20] Hadžišehović goes on to write that it was not only Muslims who were opposed to the USSR, describing Croats and Slovenes as peoples who traditionally leaned more "toward Europe in their way of life, work habits, and religion".[21] This distrust of Russia only increased when stories (in certain cases fabricated and exaggerated) of behaviour such as vandalism from Red Army soldiers spread throughout the country. This resulted in the Yugoslav government protesting to the Soviets about this, with Bjelakovic describing it as the first time Moscow had faced such a reaction from a supposed satellite country.[22]

It can thus be concluded that while undoubtedly large sections of the population wanted to bring about a socialist revolution to Yugoslavia, this was to be done without significant foreign, specifically, Soviet interference. This is perhaps borne out of the fact that the Yugoslav peoples had been subject to multiple foreign rulers for centuries, and now that independence had been achieved, were not willing to simply become a satellite state of the Soviet Union. That Tito's government subsequently protested to Moscow about Soviet behaviour implies a Yugoslavia that is

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confident, assertive, and willing to act independently. This subsequently turned out to be increasingly problematic for Stalin as Yugoslav power and influence grew in the post-war years.

Of course, this alone was not responsible for the split. For throughout the entire Cold War era, the Soviet Union had faced substantial opposition from both politicians and citizens of its satellite states, yet no other state successfully broke away from an alliance with it until the late 1980s. However, what it does imply is that Tito, still consolidating his power in Yugoslavia, would have to put the national interest of Yugoslavia first, ahead of Soviet demands.

Alongside the aversion to the Soviet Union, Swain has argued that there was an ideological element to the dispute. Swain writes that the principal ideological disagreement was over the nature of the popular front.[23] For Tito, popular fronts “from below” were central to the Partisans’ struggle against the Axis, with the resistance based around new liberation (popular front) committees.[24] Likewise, key to the Partisans’ resistance were the “People’s Councils” (freely elected local governments) as well as “proletarian brigades” which were mobile and big military units capable of conducting independent actions in various Yugoslav regions.[25] On the whole, the Partisan forces fighting the Axis were diverse. Swain uses the example of the Slovene Liberation Front, which included nationalist and social democratic parties alongside communist forces to demonstrate this.[26]

This was opposed by Stalin, who had been sceptical of popular fronts “from below” since events during the Spanish Civil War, during which Swain writes he “betrayed the popular front movement in favour of a pact with Nazi Germany.[27] Instead, Stalin later proposed and preferred the concept of popular fronts “from above”, and coalition governments. However, Stalin was able to do little, preoccupied with the Soviet’s own fight against Nazi Germany. This can be demonstrated with Tito establishing a provisional government in Jajce on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1943, rumoured to be against Stalin’s will, but powerless as he was at the Tehran Conference.[28]

Swain provides the example of Greece to demonstrate how Stalin and Tito clashed ideologically. Between October 1943 and mid-1944, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) had modelled itself closely on the CPY, even sending a permanent representative to liaise with the Yugoslavs.[29] Following this, it had changed course and instead joined a coalition government.[30] Tito, questioning this, responded by reinforcing his own influence over Greece, encouraging the disastrous December uprising.[31] As a response, the KKE once again changed stance, now deciding to pursue democratic coalition politics, a tactic endorsed by Stalin.[32] Overall, this conflict demonstrates substantial ideological differences between the two leaders.

Despite Stalin’s animosity to popular fronts “from below”, their impact on the split was not due to their role in the fight against the axis, but more because of the fact that Yugoslavia had exported the concept of them to neighbouring Communist forces during the war and after. This is demonstrated as Yugoslavia rapidly became one of the focal points of Communist resistance against fascism. Partly, this is due to Yugoslavia acting as the transmitter for Moscow’s messages to the rest of Europe, which *de facto* gave Tito increased influence.[33]

While I have used the work of Swain to highlight how the CPY influenced the KKE, it was not just in Greece where Yugoslavia was influential. Swain writes how Yugoslav communists were regularly in contact with Italian, Bulgarian, and French communist movements.[34] Many communist movements also favoured Tito over Moscow. For instance, leader of Italian partisans Luigo Longo, informed Dimitrov in July 1944 of the success of the partisans and their potential for power via Zagreb rather than via Rome, where Soviet advisers resided.[35]

However, what would have worried Stalin the most was that this did not stop at the war’s end. Instead, it only increased. Following victory, Yugoslav leaders sought to expand their ideological clout. This can be demonstrated through Tito visiting all of the people’s democracies between 1945-47, reportedly speaking to hundreds of thousands of people as well as meeting multiple leaders.[36] This was successful, as by late 1947, Bulgaria and Romania had adapted to the Yugoslav style of popular fronts.[37] Furthermore, Tito was arguably more influential than Stalin in the early months of Cominform’s existence, persuading communist parties to avoid the “parliamentary cretinism” of coalition politics.[38]

This was problematic for Stalin. With the Soviet Union responsible for setting up all Communist governments in

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Europe apart from Yugoslavia and Albania, it would have come as a shock that any other state would have attempted to influence those governments, and thus challenge Stalin's dominance. Despite Belgrade's almost worship-like stance to Moscow, as will be mentioned, it had been pursuing to expand its influence across the region since its existence. Moreover, not only were they challenging the Soviets, they were promoting an ideology of popular fronts "below" that the USSR had denounced since the 1930s. Consequently, Swain is correct to conclude that this ideological dispute was key in worsening Yugoslav-Soviet relations and contributing to the split.

The two aforementioned determinants were crucial in cementing tensions and hostility between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. While they were key, they were not the most causal factors in the run-up to the split. Instead, the principle reason for the expulsion was due to Stalin, from late 1947, becoming increasingly eager to reinforce and increase his hegemonic control over Eastern Europe as the Cold War became more apparent. As a consequence, a Yugoslavia, free from Moscow control, and becoming increasing self-assertive in the region, had to be punished, in order to set a precedent for the rest of the newly formed Communist Bloc. To demonstrate this, I will firstly establish some of the core components of Stalin's thinking in this period, before going on to show how disputes over Albania, Greece, and a Balkan Federation, proved to instigate the expulsion.

From 1945 to the end of 1947, Shoup notes how although the USSR established the new Communist states, the new satellite leaders were in fact granted a considerable amount of freedom and flexibility that allowed them to consolidate their power in accordance with local conditions.[39] It is worth noting here that Tito had enjoyed more freedom of action from Stalin than any other East European leader.[40] However, this flexibility in policy was to be short lived, with most historians agreeing that by the start of 1948, Soviet strategies in Europe had undergone a dramatic alteration.[41] Contemporary evidence implies that with statements like the announcement of the Marshall Plan, the Soviets became increasingly preoccupied with perceived American expansionism. Parish writes that this resulted in Stalin adopting the strategy of "confrontational unilateral action to secure Soviet interests".[42] Consequently, Rajak is correct in saying that by the end of 1947, Stalin's aim was to consolidate Soviet hegemony by creating a Soviet Bloc across Eastern Europe, and create it through the process of Sovietisation.[43]

Firstly, conflict over Albania was one of the key contributing elements in heightening Soviet-Yugoslav tensions. Due to the close proximity, ethnic and cultural similarities, along with both liberating themselves from Axis occupation, Yugoslav-Albanian relations had remained close since the Second World War. The two countries quickly became deeply allied with each other, with Albania effectively becoming reliant on Yugoslavia economically and militarily. For instance, since the end of World War II, Yugoslavia had effectively controlled the Albanian army. Between 1945 and 1948 it had spent over 700 million dinars on supporting and equipping it.[44] Likewise, by the start of 1948 there were 225 Albanians studying in Yugoslav military academies.[45] It could be said that Albanian leader Hoxha viewed Tito almost as a guarantor, with him apparently begging Tito to form a federation with Yugoslavia in June 1946, as it would be the only way to avoid an "imperialist attack" on his country.[46] Therefore, it would seem to be only a matter of time before Tito realised his desires and Albania would be incorporated into the Yugoslav Federation.[47] What ended up concerning Stalin the most with Albania occurred early in January 1948, when Tito decided to deploy Yugoslav Army Units to defend Greek communist bases in Albania, without the permission of Stalin and Hoxha.[48]

However, it would be wrong to say that Stalin was opposed to Tito's interference in Albania, as on the whole, he had encouraged it. Djilas notes in his discussions with Stalin, he had expressed little interest in Albania, even claiming that Yugoslavia should "swallow" it.[49] What infuriated Stalin was the fact that he had not been consulted about this issue, and had instead found out through the press.[50] Regardless of this apparent lack of interest, Stalin had responded by expanding the Soviet Union's own presence in the country. Bjelakovic concludes that in 1947 the Soviets sent more military instructors, engineers, doctors, and other technical personnel than Yugoslavia.[51]

Therefore, it becomes clear that in principle, the Soviet Union was not opposed to increasing Yugoslav influence in Albania, or even incorporation into Yugoslavia. Rather, what Stalin opposed was that this increasing influence had occurred without Soviet influence. This, occurring at a time when Stalin tightening Soviet control over Eastern Europe, consequently proved problematic. This issue becomes a recurring theme when looking at the other instigators of the split.

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Stalin's increasing unwillingness to allow other states to have their own foreign policies is clear when looking at events in Greece. As aforementioned with ideological clashes, Greece was a major source of conflict between Tito and Stalin. With its origins in a power vacuum caused by German withdrawal in October 1944, Greece slid into civil war with the British (who remained the USSR's wartime ally) supporting the establishment against the Greek People's Liberation Army (EAM), dominated by the KKE. As has already been stated, from the start of the conflict, Yugoslavia had been the prime source of assistance to the KKE, providing them with weapons, financial help, contacts, as well as setting up the Communists' Free Greece Radio Station for propaganda purposes.[52] Yugoslav rhetoric and support for the Communists increased even after the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, and condemnation from the UN.[53] This widely contrasts with the Soviet Union, who were hesitant to help the KKE, with Stalin instead preferring an end to the conflict and the KKE to pursue parliamentary means.

Undoubtedly, from an ideological and strategic perspective, Stalin would have wanted the Communists to win the civil war. However, Stalin's reluctance to aid the Greek Communists tells us greatly about his rationale and thinking. Stalin, in this period, was becoming increasingly conservative, in vast contrast to the revolutionary zeal of Tito's Yugoslavia. Even though the wartime ties of the Grand Alliance had disappeared, Stalin remained committed to his famous "spheres of influence" agreement with Churchill, which pledged that Greece was to have 90% "predominance" by the West.[54]

In reality, he was presented with little choice. Despite victory in the Second World War, the Soviet Union was left decimated physically and financially, with a population that was averse to further conflict. Regardless of its increasing great power status, the Soviet Union, along with every other state, was now in the shadow of the United States, whose Gross National Product by 1950 was approximately three times that of the USSR's.[55] Additionally, much to Stalin's annoyance, it remained the only state with a fully functioning nuclear arsenal.

This proved problematic in relation to Greece. The British, originally providing the Greek government with the vast majority of its resources and funding, had effectively relinquished their support by late 1946. As a consequence, the United States took its place as the leading Western backer. This was officially confirmed with the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947. This subsequently made Stalin even more reluctant to aid the Communist forces, as it would have the potential to trigger direct contact with the United States, something he was completely opposed to.

The link here to Soviet-Yugoslav relations is complex. As has been mentioned, American announcement of the Truman Doctrine had no effect on the CPY regarding scaling back support for the Communist forces. However, what proved concerning for Stalin here was the West's poor understanding of Communism. For the vast majority of Western politicians, Communism was still assumed to be a monolithic ideology with little variation, with all parties following orders dictated by Stalin. Stalin and Molotov were aware of this, with Molotov stating that when figures such as Tito and Dimitrov speak, it is equivalent to all of the USSR speaking.[56] Thus, they knew that Yugoslav actions in Greece could have led to dangerous international complications, with the West regarding the Civil War as an indicator of Soviet expansionist plans.[57]

Consequently, Yugoslavia's involvement in Greece meant Stalin had to attempt to bring Belgrade back into line. While at times he had praised their attempts at rebelling against the West, he did not want it to result in direct conflict, especially with the United States. For Stalin, looking at Yugoslav actions in the broader context of the emerging Cold War, their antagonisms of the West were not worth leading into all out conflict, which Stalin knew would result in defeat. Therefore, it is clear that the disagreements over Greece were central to the conflict, for that they exposed substantial foreign policy differences between Tito and Stalin. For Stalin, he was increasingly interested in consolidating power in states where Communism had already been established, and advocating parliamentary socialism in democratic states. Thus, any antagonisms of the West had to originate from Stalin rather than one of the puppet states. Conversely, Tito, was more vociferous in his attacks against the West and sought to continue to export revolution.

Thirdly, and proving to be the pivotal factor, was the disagreement over a proposed Balkan federation. The notion of a Balkan federation is old, with it becoming a goal of Balkan Socialism as early as the nineteenth century.[58]

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However, this aim became realistic during WWII, when Tito aimed to establish Yugoslavia as the regional hegemon. To do this, as early as mid-1943, he proposed the idea of forming a united headquarters of the partisan movements of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania and Greece. This goal ultimately failed though, as Tito was unwilling to agree on a structure that provided each member with an equal voice.[59]

As aforementioned, Yugoslavia had already been expanding its ties with neighbours Albania since the end of WWII. This proved of little concern to Stalin, who was disinterested in the state, and had little involvement in its rebellion against Axis control. However, Tito not only sought ties with Albania but also across the entire Balkan region. Tito and Bulgarian leader Dimitrov had met throughout 1947 and the first significant step took place in August of that year, when Yugoslavia and Bulgaria signed the Yugoslav-Bulgarian Treaty on Friendship and Mutual Assistance, known as the Bled Agreement. This acted as a prelude to a customs union and was enacted without the approval nor knowledge of Moscow.[60] By December 1947, the customs union was established, which also included Albania and Romania, with plans already set up for a future Communist Greece to join.[61] This was extended in January 1948 when Dimitrov, in an unauthorised public statement, spoke about a projected Bulgarian-Greek-Yugoslav federation.[62]

As with Tito's previous foreign policy initiatives, this was conducted without Moscow's knowledge and thus concerned Stalin. In response to the announcement, Stalin summoned Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to Moscow. The main goal of this meeting was to reinforce both Tito (who refused to go and was represented by Kardelj) and Dimitrov that the Soviet Union should remain the preeminent force in Eastern Europe.[63] Following the meeting, not for the first time, Yugoslav representatives were required to sign a formal agreement with the Soviet Union compelling Yugoslavia to consult Moscow on all foreign policy issues.[64]

What proved surprising was that instead of Stalin opposing the concept of the federation, he was in favour of it. However, in disagreement with Tito's plans, (who wanted Bulgaria to have status equivalent to one of the Yugoslav republics) he wanted Bulgaria to have equal rights to Yugoslavia, essentially emulating the former structure of Austria-Hungary.[65] What more, Stalin urged the creation of the federation immediately, and proposed that other federations should be created, such as between Poland and Czechoslovakia.[66]

When initially examining Stalin's words, it would appear contradictory to my argument. Stalin's statements on the surface imply that he is willing to offer states, including Yugoslavia, a significant amount of freedom of self-determination. However this is not the case. For Stalin, at this stage in his career now a veteran of diplomacy, was aware that some form of union between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria was becoming increasingly inevitable. With Stalin progressively concerned about Tito's actions as a whole, Swain writes that he instead used the concept of a Balkan federation to attempt to bring Tito back under control.[67] By doing this, it would thus become a lot easier for the Soviet Union to dominate Yugoslavia, and restrict Tito's influence. Likewise, Stalin obviously realised even if Tito's power was limited through a federation, Yugoslavia would still comprise the dominant proportion of Europe's second most powerful Communist State, therefore having the potential to influence neighbouring countries. Therefore, with Stalin proposing two other federations between Poland and Czechoslovakia, and Romania and Hungary, this would diminish the potential for Yugoslav influence. If Stalin were to achieve this, he would have managed to carve up Eastern Europe into three sizeable states, with all three wielding approximately equal influence, yet all significantly weaker than the Soviet Union. This would have corresponded with Soviet thinking at the time, which was becoming increasingly preoccupied with American attempts to increase its influence across Europe.

Soviet-Yugoslav relations after the meeting degenerated rapidly, with Yugoslavia rejecting Stalin's proposals under the impression that they would be allocated a subservient role in the proposed federation. Likewise, Belgrade refused to accept Moscow's demand to have the final say over their foreign policy.[68] This proved to be the final straw for Stalin. Between then and the next few months, extraordinary messages were exchanged between members of the Soviet and Yugoslav hierarchy, where each side accused the other of multiple crimes.[69] Additionally, as quickly as March 18<sup>th</sup> Soviet military and civil advisers were withdrawn from Belgrade.[70] After the escalation in tensions, on June 28<sup>th</sup>, Yugoslavia was expelled from Cominform.

When inferring from the deterioration in the relationship it appears that the Soviet Union had exhausted all viable

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methods of aiming to control Tito. Of course, on many occasions since the Second World War, Moscow had attempted to control the CPY's foreign policy and guarantee that it would be consulted prior to action. As has been aforementioned these had failed. However, what proved different in the incidences of Albania, Greece and Balkan Federation, was that they had occurred at a time when Stalin was attempting to cement his hegemony over Eastern Europe.

Unaware of Tito's popularity amongst the Party members and the population, the USSR failed in their attempts to purge him and his close associates. Thus, with being unable to remove him, from Stalin's perspective, he had no choice but to expel Yugoslavia from Cominform. The motive for doing this was to set an example to the rest of the Eastern Bloc; to not deviate from and disobey the Soviet Union's orders. This can be reinforced as during the same period, Moscow also heavily criticised the Polish and Czechoslovak leadership, accusing them of committing similar crimes as Yugoslavia.<sup>[71]</sup> However, Yugoslavia, whose relationship with the USSR had rarely been cordial, posed the biggest threat to Soviet hegemony both geopolitically and ideologically and thus had to be made an example.

In sum, this essay firstly dismissed the views espoused by Cominform and then by Vladimir Dedijer. Instead, it has argued that the primary reason for Yugoslavia's expulsion from Cominform was due to Stalin's increasing unwillingness to tolerate their independent foreign policy. Despite multiple attempts to rein in Tito's revolutionary expansionism, these had failed. This was problematic for Stalin, who towards the end of 1947, increasingly wanted to cement Soviet hegemony over Eastern Europe, amidst fears of American expansion into Europe and heightened tensions with the West. Stalin therefore, had become progressively more conservative in his foreign policy outlook, in sharp contrast to the revolutionary exuberance of Tito. This essay has demonstrated this through the major flashpoints of Albania, Greece and a proposed Balkan Federation, where in all three cases Yugoslavia had challenged Soviet supremacy. From the CPY's perspective, it had to resist Soviet influence, due to widespread scepticism of Stalin and the USSR from both the population and the party. This had originated in the 1930s, and increased during the Second World War. In addition, it has also used the work of Swain to argue that there was an ideological determinant in the split, over the role of popular fronts. These were an essential part of Tito's newly established state while opposed by Stalin. What was problematic, was that Tito had exported this ideology to neighbouring states such as Romania after the war's end. This reinforces the view that Yugoslavia posed a threat to Soviet hegemony. Overall, the expulsion was due to Yugoslavia's challenge to Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe, and was thus expelled to be made an example of to the rest of the Eastern Bloc.

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### Footnotes

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