

Concluding: *NEXT TARGETS FOR STALIN?*

Showdown in the



ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION ADMINISTRATION PHOTO

In Turkey, American tractors and road-building equipment, obtained through ECA appropriations, are replacing the camels used through the ages

On Russia's southern flank Communist Yugoslavia and republican Turkey and imperial Iran form a bulwark against the threat of Soviet aggression. What must we do to protect our stake?

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THE United States has a vital strategic stake in a trio of nations which may well be the strangest bedfellows ever produced by the threat of war. Grimly aligned along the southern rim of the Iron Curtain, standing virtually shoulder to shoulder—through no wish of their own—against the threat of Soviet aggression, are Communist Yugoslavia, republican Turkey and imperial Iran. All three are preparing desperately for a conflict they fear they cannot avoid.

Behind this forward echelon of the free world's Mediterranean defenses lie some of the richest prizes a war-minded nation could hope for: the oil of the Middle East; control of critical trade routes; a strategic strangle hold on a vital corner of the earth.

In an on-the-spot survey of these three countries Collier's European Team—Seymour Freidin, William Attwood and David Perlman—found much good news for America and its allies: a tough,

united, alert Yugoslavia; an equally spirited Turkey; an Iran striving desperately to build up its strength for the coming test. They also saw major shortcomings: a grave lack of war materials in Marshal Tito's stronghold; a worrisome shortage of time in Turkey; deep-rooted internal unrest in ancient Persia.

Our country and its friends have an interest in this part of the world which is hard to exaggerate. What are we doing to protect that interest, to make the most of our advantages there and to remedy the defects? Here is what Collier's Team learned.

BELGRADE

By Seymour Freidin

Americans don't like dealing with Communists; they're trying to prevent the Soviet Union from forcibly imposing its system on the free world. Why then should they be even remotely interested in the fate of Communist Yugoslavia? I asked that

question of a man high on Moscow's black list who is as important as Tito in shaping Yugoslav policy.

"We're not threatening you," he replied tersely. "Stalin is. He also threatens us. If he attacks us, we'll fight him every inch of the way."

A veteran American diplomat, conservative in his views and wise in the ways of European diplomacy, sipped his Martini thoughtfully as we discussed the plight of Yugoslavia.

"This country is on our first line of defense," he said finally. "These people must fight and they will fight. With help from us they'll fight with fury." He paused. "It's a strange thing, but two of our biggest victories in the cold war have occurred only because a Communist government—Tito's—broke with Stalin." He listed these victories as:

1. Closing of the Yugoslav borders to Greek Communist rebels—which American military men in Greece termed a decisive factor in ending the civil war there.

By *Collier's* EUROPEAN TEAM

2. Spreading of the Tito heresy in Communist parties throughout the world, resulting in mass purges by Stalin's hatchet men, many of whom don't know today who beside them may be a deadly enemy.

Yugoslavia's strange role in the East-West conflict is perhaps best exemplified by its policy toward the Korean war—a policy which strongly condemns the North Korean attack as Soviet-inspired, yet reserves some criticism for the nations helping South Korea as well.

In broader fields, the same lone-wolf attitude exists—still with a decided anti-Russian slant. For example, although Tito's combat-wise army is in sore need of arms, he feels he cannot seek outright military aid from the United States. The marshal and his advisers are firmly convinced, rightly or wrongly, that accepting weapons from America would weaken their position in the ideological war with Stalin for support among Communists the world over.

They do want and need credits, hard cash to buy tools and machinery for the factories Tito is pushing to completion in the Five-Year Plan to industrialize Yugoslavia. In keeping with their doctrine of "national Communism," as distinguished from the international Communism of Moscow, the Yugoslav governing hierarchy believes the new industries will make the nation not only militarily stronger but economically more self-sufficient.

Confronted by Dwindling Resources

In the last two years, Tito has obtained only \$55,000,000 in credits from Great Britain and the United States, and his resources are getting slimmer. What would he do with additional American credits if he got them? (His government supporters talk hopefully of \$300,000,000, but they would be overjoyed with \$100,000,000.)

The money would buy the turbines and machine tools, cranes and bulldozers, and a thousand types of building supplies to meet the industrialization program. A significant portion of that program is being carried out in the mountains where factories will maintain production even in the event of invasion.

American credits would also partially relieve the plight of the Yugoslav people who are going hungrier than usual because of this summer's fierce, crop-withering drought. Tito must feed his large

standing army, for security comes first. Without loans, he is forced to siphon off as much of the remaining food as possible to meet export commitments for desperately needed machinery from Western Europe.

Yet the exhausting work schedule continues without pause or sabotage in Yugoslavia. You can see—as I did—tens of thousands of men and women toiling by hand, building factories and houses. You can watch stolid peasants giving up drought-decimated harvests, leaving little for their families. They're performing amazing production feats for a people who started from scratch. The Yugoslavs are doing it not primarily because they love Tito, but because they love their country. And Yugoslavia is in danger.

Then, too, the shrewd, calculating realists in the government have given the people a sop unprecedented in the history of Communism: The Yugoslavs can let off some steam now without a fearful glance over the shoulder to see who's listening. A psychological device? Yes, for after being throttled so long, it's good for a man or woman to gripe. They're griping, but their work hasn't slackened.

Peasants still constitute the vast majority of Yugoslavia's population. So I went around to the farms of Croats and Serbs to sound out the peasants—the people who generally balked at collectivization and whom Tito didn't press to collectivize.

They welcomed me warmly when they heard I was an American, for "America" is a magic word in this part of the world. This doesn't mean, however, that Yugoslavia's 17,000,000 people have lost any faith and hope in their native land. On the contrary, you'll find their pride eloquently summarized in the words of Josip Milcevic, a fifty-five-year-old peasant:

"I have fought for my country in three wars. I am ready to fight again if invaders come. I have seen many governments. They are gone. We are still here."

Back in drab Belgrade, I went window shopping with Maria Krolic, a forty-year-old mother of three grown sons. The nationalized shops were pretty bare. The textiles were shoddy and the prices shocking, unless you had coupons. And you can't get enough coupons because there aren't enough consumers' goods to go round.

"Life for us is hard," Maria reflected as we ate a tasteless ice at a crowded sidewalk café. "I lost my husband in the mountains (*Continued on page 70*)

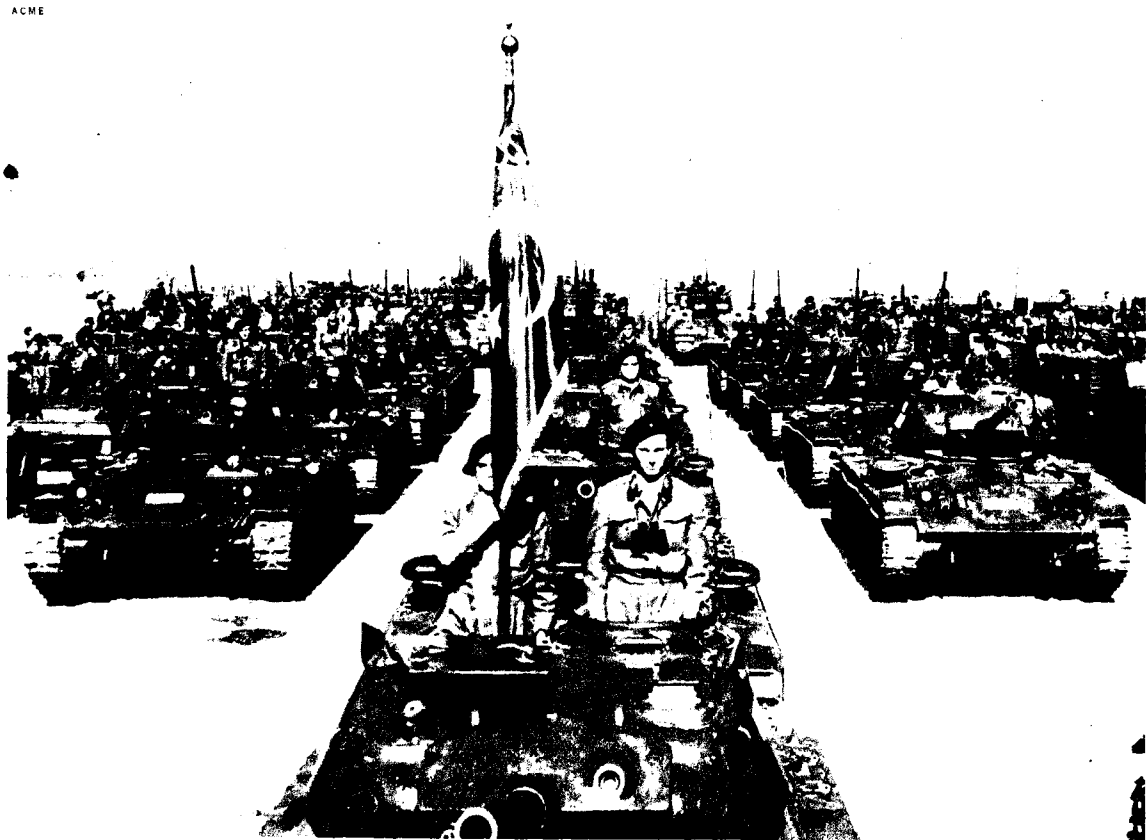



ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL CO.

Magnet attracting Soviets to Iran is this Abadan refinery. Below: Tito's anti-Stalin Communists on parade with an American-made jeep leading the way

THREE LIONS

Armored rows of evidence indicating timely and effective military aid to Turkey by the U.S.





I fumbled around on the floor and found my cap. The bill had been broken, and it almost broke my heart to look at it. I'd had it since the war