

JOSIP BROZ TITO

Josip Broz Tito, Marshal of Yugoslavia was born on May 25, 1892 in the little village of Kumrovec near Klanjec in Croatia. Upon finishing elementary school in his birthplace, he learned the locksmith's trade in Sisak from 1907 to 1910. He spent the next year doing practical work in the mechanic trade in Zagreb where he immediately joined the class trade union movement. From 1911 to 1913 he worked in the metal factories in Slovenia /Kamnik/, Czechoslovakia /Chenkoy/ and Austria /Wien and Wiener Neustadt/. In 1913 he was conscripted into the Austrian army in Zagreb.

The war that broke out in 1914 found him a non-commissioned officer. He was wounded in 1915 and together with his entire battalion taken prisoner on the Russian front. He spent thirteen months in the hospital in Svyozhevsk after which he worked in the Ardatov district, in Simbirsk and Kargur in the Perm province.

After the outbreak of the February Revolution in Russia in April 1917, he went to Leningrad where he participated in the well known July demonstrations. Being among the many war prisoners with socialist convictions he had to flee from the organs of the provisional Kerensky Government to Siberia where he took active part in the workers' revolutionary movement in Omsk. He stayed in Siberia until 1920 when he returned to his country where, having become a member of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, he at once became active in the struggle for the rights of the working people.

From 1920 to 1924 he worked in Zagreb, Bjelovar and Kraljevica as a locksmith, but he was soon fired because of his work in the labour movement. In 1926 he left for Serbia and worked for a year in Smederevska Palanka. He became the chief labour leader there but was soon fired again.

After this he completely devoted himself to political work and in 1927 became the secretary of the Metal Workers' Federation of Croatia, as well as secretary of the local party organization in Zagreb. The most revolutionary and the most progressive elements there soon started to rally around Tito, who fought for the purgation of the Party policy and against the "right" and "left" groups in it. His struggle for the unity of the movement, known as the so-called "Zagreb line" quickly attained numerous followers in other Yugoslav countries outside of Croatia.

Tito's work could not stay unnoticed by those in power in Yugoslavia at that time, who were gradually preparing to introduce an open dictatorship which was realized on January 6, 1929. The policy for which he fought, that is the struggle for unity on the basis of principle and for the purgation of detrimental elements, meant a strong unification of the forces of the labour movement. That is why Tito was under constant watch of the police which, after having arrested him twice, in 1927 sentenced him to seven months' imprisonment. Next year, 1928, after being taken into custody three times he was brought before the court for the protection of the state. Tito is among the first of all prisoners in Yugoslavia who openly defended the movement for which

he fought before the court. He declared that he didn't recognize the court and that only the decisions and the resolutions of his Party were valid for him, that he didn't recognize the reactionary law for the protection of the state on the basis of which he was being sentenced, because it was a temporary law which was not approved by the people and that it would, therefore, be pitiful if the labour fighters feared this temporary anti-popular law.

He was sentenced to five years imprisonment. He served his sentence in the Lepoglava and Maribor prisons.

After his release in 1934 by the decision of the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, Tito left the country and went to Vienna where he entered the leadership of the movement. At the end of 1934 he was sent to Moscow where he stayed two years. Upon his return from Moscow in 1936, Tito very quickly became the head of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. An energetic purgation of the hostile and detrimental elements in the Party began under his leadership and the Central Committee returned to the country from abroad. That is the largest and most important event in the life of the labour movement at that time, an event which later had great political results. In the storms that were coming, the people of Yugoslavia had a well organized and revolutionary movement which was capable of leading them through the struggle and emerging victorious. Having properly estimated the situation Tito formed a Military Committee attached to the Central Committee. Already in 1940 this committee started with active preparations for armed resistance against the invasion which was being prepared by the fascist aggressors. Along with the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, Tito was the central motor in the organization and the leading force of the people across whom the defiance of resistance and the spirit of new socialist patriotism was transferred into the masses.

When the armed attack of Hitler's Germany upon Yugoslavia finally came in april 1941 and the king and his government left the country, the Central Committee of the Party headed by Tito was the organized staff which led the masses of people into the revolution and struggle for the freedom and independence of the nation. Under Tito's leadership the collection of arms, the organization of military units, sabotage, etc., began. When Germany attacked the Soviet Union the struggle especially flamed up violently. It was then transformed into a real popular insurrection. Tito organized this insurrection, was its leader and Supreme Commander of the National Liberation Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia from the very beginning. During the struggle these detachments developed into the National Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia from which the Yugoslav Army definitely emerged at the beginning of 1945.

During the war Tito distinguished himself as an extraordinary military talent and thanks to his abilities in the discovery of new forms of fighting against the invader, the new army, which, after the downfall of the royal army betrayed by its generals, emerged from the popular resistance, endured all the hardships and attacks of its numerous enemies - Germans, Italians and their vassals, the domestic traitors.

At the historical Second Session of the Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia on November 29, 1943, Tito was named Marshal of Yugoslavia and elected President of the National Committee of Liberation of Yugoslavia which then was the Pro-

visional Government. That is how Tito by general choice of the democratic forces took over the leadership of the country.

After the Liberation Tito led the tremendous movement of the people for the reconstruction of the country, the healing up of wounds inflicted by the war, for the creation of conditions for the development and industrialization of the country and for the increase of the economic prosperity of the people. The Five Year Plan for the industrialization and electrification of the country was brought into effect under his direct leadership in 1947, as well as a whole series of significant economic measures which enabled the proper and speedy development of Yugoslav economy. Industry, banks and trade were nationalized, enterprises given to the workers for management, the agrarian reform was carried out and a strong movement for the formation of working cooperatives in the village began. During the development of the country Tito has in economic policy accordingly executed the motto of the brotherhood and unity of the Yugoslav peoples directing a policy of extensive assistance to the economically backward republics, which all the more strengthened the internal strength of the country.

Tito set the foreign policy of Yugoslavia into the direction of popular principles for the defence of the sovereignty of the peoples and the preservation of peace, thus consolidating the prestige of Yugoslavia in the democratic world. He is the initiator of the conclusion of the treaties of alliance with the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Albania, Rumania, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. When the Soviet Union, at first through the Cominform, and later directly tried to introduce and legalize unequal relations with Yugoslavia in the economic, political and other fields, the whole country headed by Tito gave determined resistance to this attempt. Tito especially elaborated these questions in his report at the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1948 /when he was again elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia/, as well as in his other speeches. Tito immediately perceived the essence of the dispute which was masked by various mottoes and brought out the fact that not only was this an act that humiliated Yugoslavia, but that it also meant a cancellation of the principles of equality among socialist countries in general. This enhanced the prestige of Yugoslavia in the democratic world and gave a proper meaning to this dispute which has caused widespread interest in the world.

In the course of his political and military activities Tito distinguished himself as a political writer and theoretician. Fighting for the unity of the labour movement from 1927 on he actively wrote for the labour papers of that time "Borba" /"Struggle"/ and "Radnik" /"The Worker"/. While abroad, Tito was for some time editor of the magazine "Proleter" /"Proleterian"/, organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and also wrote for the reviews "Rundschau" and "Welt". After the Central Committee returned to the country he was the editor and chief associate of "Proleter" which was then being illegally published in Belgrade and Zagreb. During the National Liberation Struggle he wrote for "Borba", organ of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and for the "Bulletin of the Supreme Headquarters of the National Army of Liberation of Yugoslavia and of the Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia". His articles and discussions always gave an accounting and sharp and clear analysis of the previous periods of struggle, pointed out further perspectives, perceived the essential

and special moments and characteristics of the Liberation Struggle in Yugoslavia and underlined the specific features, effective methods and means of struggle.

Even though the peoples of Yugoslavia are very similar and close, they lived separate lives until 1918. There are a few men in their history who were equally great and significant for all the peoples of Yugoslavia at the same time. The life and work of Tito show that not only is he the most significant figure of all the peoples of new, democratic Yugoslavia, but that he also is one of the most important figures which the Yugoslav peoples have had in their history.



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