

## Matter of Fact by Stewart Alsop

### THE KREMLIN'S ACE

Belgrade—If you want to see how dangerous the new Soviet policy of sweet reason can be to the West, this is the place to come.

In the good old days of Josef Stalin, Yugoslavia was, in every practical sense, a staunch ally of the United States. This was not because the Yugoslavs loved us. When the Soviets were daily threatening the "Fascist beast, Tito," the Yugoslav dictator led the country into an alliance with the West because there was nothing else he could do.

Consider the difference now. Yugoslavia is not now an ally of the Soviet Union. But Yugoslavia is most definitely no longer an ally of the United States either. An East-West contest has been joined here, in which the new Soviet rulers hold some very high cards indeed. When Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin came here a few weeks ago, they were much laughed at in America as ridiculous characters in baggy pants. But the ridiculous characters in baggy pants have already succeeded in pulling Belgrade much nearer to Moscow, and much further from Washington than at any time in the last seven years.

This is not to suggest that Yugoslavia is about to become again a satellite of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, the Yugoslavs will fight rather than knuckle under to the Kremlin. On this one point, the disputatious Yugoslavs, from Marshal Tito down to the ragged drivers of the incredibly decrepit Belgrade taxis, are all absolutely in accord.

Nor does it mean that Yugoslavia is at all likely formally to rejoin the Eastern bloc. The Yugoslav leaders are anything but fools, and there would be nothing for them to gain and a great deal to lose in a formal alliance with the Soviets.

The real danger is different. The real danger is that Yugoslavia will become, not a formal member of the Eastern bloc, but

a kind of fellow-traveller of the East—sometimes criticizing Soviet policy, but generally supporting the Soviets and running interference for them.

IN THIS capacity Yugoslavia could be a great deal more useful to the Kremlin than in the old satellite status. To the end of establishing just this sort of relationship with Yugoslavia, the ridiculous characters in baggy pants have been playing their cards carefully and well.

The opening play, of course, was the visit to Belgrade. Since then, there have been all sorts of exchanges of missions and protestations of mutual regard. But the Kremlin's ace of spades was the economic deal which Yugoslav economic czar Vukmanovic proudly brought back from Moscow a few days ago.

The real significance of this deal can only be understood against the background of Yugoslavia's economic situation. When Stalin slapped the economic blockade on Yugoslavia after the break, Tito desperately borrowed money from the West on any terms he could get. He now owes money to most of the countries in Western Europe, and most of the debts come due next Dec. 31.

The sums involved are not huge—the total comes to around \$130,000,000. But Yugoslavia's economic situation is still just short of desperate, and Tito's "capitalist-minded" creditors—to use Tito's own phrase—are pressing for their money. In this situation the Soviets—who of course caused Yugoslavia's worst troubles in the first place—have come dashing to the rescue.

The Kremlin has the deserved reputation of being more tight-fisted than an Armenian rug dealer. But now the Soviets have cancelled \$90,000,000 in Yugoslav debts, and they have given Yugoslavia long-term credits coming to nearly another \$90,000,000. The terms are really generous, which suggests how far the Russians are willing to go in their courtship of Tito.

Moreover, there is certainly still the hankering in the Yugoslav-Communist bureaucracy to do things the Russian way. The hankering is not all ideological, either. Unquestioned central dictation comes far more easily to Communist bureaucrats than the relative flexibility and decentralization which Tito has introduced here since the break.

VUKMANOVIC himself, who had an unhappy time in Washington some months ago, may well be one of the "Russians," as they are known here—the "Russians" are bureaucrats and party men who want, largely to abandon the West and to reforce close ties with Russia. If Yugoslavia defaults to its Western creditors, amid loud mutual recriminations, while the Soviets extend credits on easy terms, the hands of the pro-Soviet party bureaucrats will be immensely strengthened. As usual in such situations, American policy seems to be to

## Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS  
Ranger-Naturalist

It's that time of the year again, the hurricane season.

Although nature may unleash this most lethal weapon of her arsenal as early as May or as late as December, most of the hurricanes will occur this month (September 32 per cent), with October (26) and August (21) running a close second and third.

In power unleashed, this vast whirlwind makes even the hy-



drogen bomb seem little more than a puny puff of wind because in a single day a full-fledged hurricane expends enough energy to drive every bit of the world's machinery for three to four years.

Fittingly, everything about a hurricane is overpowering. In dimensions, it may swirl over an area 600 miles wide and 2,000 miles long, embracing 1,200,000 square miles.

In speed, although its progress may be limited to 30 miles an hour, the howling winds within it may range from 150 to 200 miles an hour, exceeded only by the internal winds of a short-lived tornado.

In duration, it may last five days of furious tempest. In rainfall, the blinding down-pour accompanying may exceed an inch an hour. During a blow in the Philippines, it dumped 43.99 inches of rain within 24 hours.

Seventy per cent of the world's hurricanes—also called typhoons and cyclones—occur in the West Indies and the China seas and occasionally these may sweep as far north as Ottawa,

look on languidly, waiting for disaster to happen before taking last-minute hugger-mugger action. Actually it should not be really difficult to work out in advance some sensible American-European economic policy toward Yugoslavia, which would tide Yugoslavia over, which would not be very costly and which would tend to tie the Yugoslav economy into the West.

In this case it might even turn out to be true, as the Yugoslavs loudly insist, that the new Yugoslav contact with the Soviets will ultimately pull Moscow toward the West rather than Belgrade toward the East. But if things are allowed to drift until Tito's visit to Moscow some months from now, it is almost mathematically predictable that the ridiculous characters in baggy pants will have their way, and Yugoslavia will become an immensely useful fellow-traveler of the Eastern bloc.

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Canada and Hakodate, northern Japan.

If it were possible to ride an airplane high above a hurricane, it would usually look like a huge black doughnut, from 250 to 600 miles across, and turning (counterclockwise north of the equator, clockwise, south). The blackness would be due to the tremendous circle of thunderclouds from which lightning would be flashing, thunder rolling and rain falling in prodigious amounts. Yet due to the terrifying winds, the rain would be driven almost horizontal.

As for the inside of the circling doughnut, that would be a 15-mile or so hole—an island of peace within the storm. This so-called "eye" of the hurricane is often without clouds, without a trace of rain, and the winds in it are gentle breezes. While outside of it, the howling tempest circles full blast.

Advancing 30 miles an hour, the quiet "hole" of this tremendous whirling doughnut, provides a half-hour truce after which the raging storm falls again with unabated fury—but

in exactly the opposite direction, and accompanied by the same devastating winds, low-flying clouds, lightning, thunder and rain.

At sea, unlike on land, this "hole" is far from a temporary haven to the sailor—here, it is most dangerous for a ship to live because seas run up cone-like, and waves break over the vessel from all sides at once.

Every hurricane, of course, must die—either by running too far from the tropical latitudes of its birth or by traveling over uneven ground which hinders the free flow of the winds and fails to supply the necessary moisture to keep the storm going.

The most destructive hurricane in American annals occurred September 21, 1938. Brewed 1,800 miles east of Cuba, it roared westward toward Florida, veered north, charged along the coast, and then struck with a fury of 186 miles an hour the full length of the coast from New Jersey to Massachusetts, finally wearing itself out near Ottawa. Then within 24 hours, skies cleared, winds gentled to a whisper—but left behind was utter devastation: 13,898 buildings destroyed entire forests

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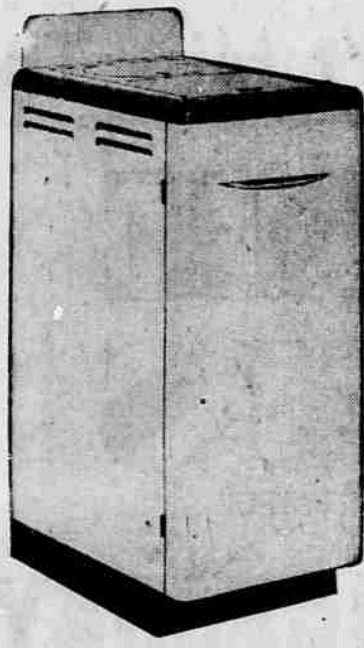
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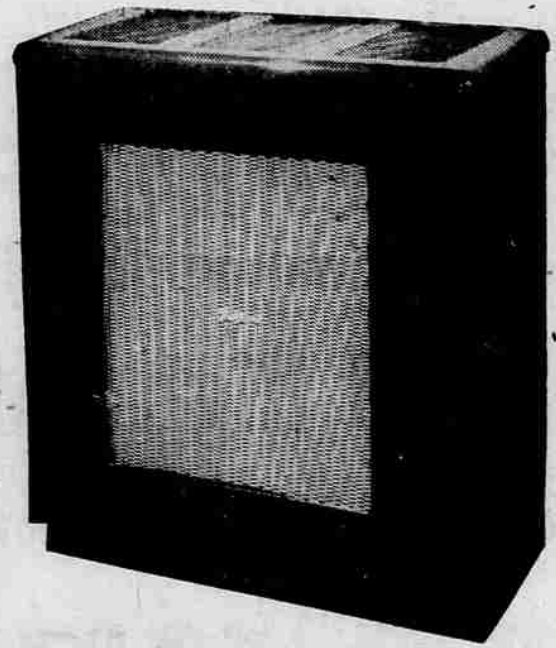
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