

*Dragan Bogetic*

*The Relations of Yugoslavia With the West in the Shadow of the Suez Canal Crisis*

*Summary*

The new Yugoslav foreign policy orientation, which included, together with the East and West, globally the South, inevitably implied a stern attitude concerning colonialism, i.e. neo-colonialism and a more offensive stand of Yugoslav representatives in international contacts and institutions dealing with the issue, especially in the United Nations Organization. Yugoslavia's growing interest in establishing closest possible cooperation with the newly liberated Afro-Asian states and its unconditional support for their foreign policy course, had a negative impact on Yugoslav relations with former colonial powers (especially Great Britain and France), but also on relations with the United States, due to the fact that such a strategy largely coincided with the international engagement of the USSR and its satellites.

Yugoslavia's support to Egypt with relation to the nationalization of the Suez Canal stemmed from the necessity to recognize the sovereign right of this state to manage and control a part of its territory. In that respect, Yugoslavia insisted on the stand that no state could be denied of the right to implement nationalization on its territory if it was considered to be in the interest of its people or its sovereignty. At the same time, the Yugoslav leadership requested that Egypt, through whose territory such a significant international passage passed, respect its international obligations and enable unhindered implementation of the principle of free passage through the Suez Canal.

Within the newly established climate in Western political circles, as well as public, there were growing requests to establish a firmer political and economic course towards Yugoslavia, similar to the one that characterized the relations of the West towards the rest of the socialist countries. Such a radical turn however never occurred, regardless of the increasingly obvious increase of political animosity on both sides.