

LABOR ACTION

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Looking Back on 1954's Headlines

By GORDON HASKELL

It is exceptionally difficult and perhaps unwise to attempt to summarize the socio-political developments of a year in a single phrase or sentence. In any event, the year 1954 seems, to this writer, to defy any such short-hand description. No "trends" are clearly discernible. In fact, one of the striking things about it, as viewed through the headlines of LABOR ACTION, is the similarity if not identity of one of the major notes with which the year began and on which it ended.

**Dulles' Announcement Means
No 'Little Wars—Atom War or Nothing—As
Washington Adopts 'Preventive War' Line** (Jan. 25)

**Fateful Decision: U. S., NATO Announce They
Will Initiate Use of Atom Bombs in a War** (Dec. 27)

The headline at the beginning of the year was a comment on Dulles' famous speech of January 12 in which he pronounced the doctrine of "instant retaliation" at places and by means of "our own choosing" as the answer to Stalinist aggression. And the year closed with the official adoption of this theory or its equivalent by a group of reluctant NATO partners, together with the decision to equip and train NATO forces for atomic warfare and no other.

Actually what this means is that it took the American government a year to get the NATO allies to accept the military doctrine which had been adopted by this country early in 1954. This acceptance was achieved despite the plain demonstration in Indochina that the doctrine cannot work in each and every case of Stalinist expansion.

While we are on the topic of nuclear warfare, another headline serves to remind us of one of the other great events of the year:

**That Bang You Heard in the Pacific
Was U. S. Foreign Policy Blowing Up** (April 12)

This was a summary of our comment on the explosion of the H-bomb in the Pacific which once more confronted the world with all the awful potential of this new weapon of mass destruction. Military authorities proclaimed at the time that

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**WASHINGTON CRACKS THE WHIP,
BUT MENDES' THIN MARGIN MEANS—**

The French Do NOT Accept German Army

By A. STEIN

An epidemic of "bad nerves," showing the usual symptoms of shock, sudden fits of political chills and fevers, exaggerated hope and equally wild despair, has been very much in evidence for the past several days in Washington and London. The cause of this illness—which has impartially struck down such notable governmental figures as President Eisenhower (in the midst of his happy Christmas vacation) and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, England's Prime Minister Churchill and his Foreign Minister Anthony Eden—has been diagnosed as their complete bewilderment and inability to anticipate the outcome of the French National Assembly's debate and vote on the rearmament of West Germany under the Paris Treaty.

Up to Friday, December 24, Washington and London were still reflecting Premier Mendès-France's optimistic belief that he commanded a large majority in France in favor of West German entry into the new military coalition, the Western European Union. Believing himself the "indispensable man" of the wretched Fourth Republic, Premier Mendès-France did not at first stake the life of his government on the outcome of the vote.

The actual result in the National Assembly, rejecting West German entry in-

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London New Statesman and Nation

Murder and the SIU: The Paul Hall Story

By BEN HALL

A hired gunman complete with sawed-off shotgun was arrested in Montvale, New Jersey as he drove past the home of Paul Hall, secretary-treasurer of the Atlantic Coast District of the Seafarers International Union (AFL). He admitted that he had been promised \$15,000 to murder Hall and named as his employer the Tampa port agent of the SIU, Ray White, who is running against Hall in current union elections November 15 through January 15. White was arrested in Florida.

Hall has ruled the SIU on the East Coast since 1948, cutting down opposition by physical force. He was a leading member of the board of trustees of the AFL longshoremen's union in its fight with the ILA. The fight inside the SIU, the murder attempt, and all the ramifications shed light on the nature of the SIU administration and produce additional facts to explain why the AFL effort on the waterfront, which relied on the SIU (and the Teamsters Union), was defeated.

Ray White is president of the AFL Central Trades and Labor Council in Tampa. Hall now charges that White, who is opposing him for re-election, is a paid agent of the International Longshoremen's Association. He cites, as proof, the fact that William E. Higgs, a close associate of White, spoke at a mass rally of the ILA in Brooklyn on February 26.

But Higgs was once part of the Hall machine. The White faction, in an effort

to take the election machinery out of Hall's hands, went to court to force the union to turn over the counting of the ballots to the Honest Ballot Association. Higgs testified that he personally had helped Hall to falsify and rig past elections by destroying ballots and stuffing boxes. The court ruled, however, that this had no bearing on the present election; just because the count was crooked in the past doesn't mean that it is necessarily crooked now: so ruled the judge. This logic doubtless seems cloudy to Higgs.

Hall is lucky to have escaped death. But so is Higgs, who is now Hall's enemy. Last month (reported Bergen County prosecutor Calissi) the car he was driving in Tampa was sprayed with bullets.

Apparently there is an earnest election contest in progress in the SIU.

After this introduction into the military aspects of the election, it may seem pointless to discuss the campaign in its

more literary aspects. Still it should be recorded somewhere, even if only as a minor sidelight. Both sides have issued handbills.

CHARGES AND REPLIES

Hall's enemies, who now stand openly accused of an assassination attempt, have leveled charges against him in signed and unsigned leaflets. These accusations are worth reporting mainly because of the reply they elicit from Hall's friends.

The anti-Hall faction accuses his administration of stealing money. "A common thief," they charge, is a union trustee. "Let's have our funds investigated and watch some of Hall, Inc. go to jail." Another leaflet accuses him of dipping into the welfare funds.

The Hall faction replies in similarly polished terms, noting that White and his followers are crooks, phony rats and maniacs. Here, at least, they stand on the solid ground of invective, but when they "answer" the charges against Hall they enter a world all their own.

To the charge that they are crooked they answer: "Also, why should our funds be investigated when Paul Hall employs auditors and bookkeepers of his own choosing to audit our books."

Nor are they dismayed by charges that they run crooked elections. They reply: "There has been a rumble in our union for a long time about extra ballots being

printed and our election procedure being crooked. However, we know better, as our Secretary-Treasurer under the constitution . . . is responsible and has to account for every single ballot printed. Therefore all our ballots in our past elections are accounted for by our Secretary-Treasurer." In brief, how could Hall be a crook or a fraud when the constitution obligates him to be honest?

It seems too, that the Hall regime is democratic. One of its leaflets explains "Why the Galveston Hall Was Closed." It seems that there were various anti-Hall resolutions "signed in Galveston by about 80 phonies, including maniac Keith Alsop, Agent of the Port. These resolutions were presented to the regular meeting of October 20, 1954. Of course these resolutions were duly signed and perfectly in order with our SIU constitution and democratic procedure."

And so? Now comes the explanation: "Well, brothers, we won't be having any more membership resolutions from the 80 phonies in Galveston, including Alsop. We have had Bill Hall and Ed Mooney putting pressure on the phonies who had signed and shipped out. Now, Brother Williams [a Hall man] in New Orleans has introduced a resolution to close the Galveston Hall and bring that goof, Alsop, to New Orleans, as patrolman. We may have to take the same action in Savannah and

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Murder and the SIU: The Paul Hall Story — —

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Tampa if these rats continue to fight our set-up."

This concludes the complete explanation of why the Hall regime closed down the Galveston union hall.

Now we remember that it was Paul Hall, who, with Dave Beck, was to help the AFL bring democracy, honesty, good clean unionism, and reform to the New York longshoremen. The miracle is not that the AFL lost the NLRB elections

but that it came so close to winning, burdened as it was with such banner-bearers.

FIGHT STILL ON

Postscript: Beck, who was supposed to be a big enemy of the ILA racket-infested leadership, has been discussing with ILA President Bradley a possible affiliation with the Teamsters Union.

Nevertheless, the movement to get rid of the longshore rackets is far from dead.

It seemed for a time that the AFL International Brotherhood of Longshoremen

had been struck a mortal blow when the New York Shipping Association agreed to sign a two-year agreement with the ILA providing for a wage increase, union shop, and no-strike pledge. But when the agreement was submitted to the rank and file, in an election conducted by the Honest Ballot Association, it was rejected by a vote of 6,199 to 4,500, with the AFL campaigning strongly against the contract.

In Brooklyn, where Anthony Anastasia called for the adoption of the contract, members of his local voted it down by 2,721 to 1,515. A small majority of long-

shoremen voted to keep the ILA, but the ILA machine is not solidly entrenched.

The AFL union received another unexpected boost when the 4,000-strong Local 333, United Marine Division, representing tugboatmen, voted to secede from District 50 of the United Mine Workers and join the AFL. This local had been Bradley's home local; he once presided over it. It had never been accused of racketeering, and when the ILA was expelled from the AFL it joined Lewis' outfit. This turn of events jolted Bradley, who was "shocked and surprised."

Looking Back on 1954's Headlines — —

(Continued from page 1)

the whole NATO concept had been rendered obsolete with the advent of the H-bomb, as had been navies and mass land armies of any kind.

But the fate of humanity cannot be determined solely by the question of who has more and bigger bombs. Much of world opinion was aroused by the American H-bomb tests to protest against the continuation of these dangerous experiments, and against the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of a tiny and often irresponsible group of men symbolized by the bomb.

ANOTHER KOREA?

U. S. Policy in Indochina Drifts to War (Feb. 12)

Starting early in the year, the Indochina crisis suddenly grew in intensity, reached a high point at the battle of Dienbienphu, while Dulles was waving A-bombs and snarling threats much to the dismay of the French and even more so of the other American allies in all parts of the world.

**No U. S. Troops to Indochina!
Not a Drop of Blood, Not a Cent
To Support French Colonialism in Asia** (April 26)

By the end of April this country appeared, in the face of all logic, to be on the verge of going to war. But the Stalinists did not flinch at Dulles' bluff (if such it was), and quickly made such enormous strides that the French had to sue for peace to avert a complete disaster and rout in their rich Asian colony.

At the ensuing conference, the United States was placed in the unique position of a great power with no real status at the conference:

**America's Blind Alley in Geneva:
No Policy, No Friends, No Hope** (May 3)

This was the end-product of Dulles' line of bluff and bluster. Mendès-France, who had just become premier of France on the basis of his promise to work out a solution for Indochina, made the best deal he could get. The result: another divided country, the fate of which is to be decided not by its own people but by the great powers in whose game it is but a pawn.

**The War Crime Against Guatemala:
U. S. Is Accomplice of Reactionary Rebels
Guilty of Moscow-Style Fake 'Liberation'** (June 28)

If John Foster Dulles proved himself unable to compete in the big leagues with the professionals of the cold war, his brother Allan, head of the Central Intelligence Agency, demonstrated that, say what you will, this great country can still throw its weight around in the sand-lot division in Central America.

With a degree of cynicism matched only by the Stalinists themselves, a group of reactionaries, financed and supported by a horde of CIA agents, and with the blessing of U. S. interests, overthrew the legally elected government of Guatemala by force and violence. The old landlord class, and particularly the biggest exploiter in the country, the United Fruit Company, were put back in power, while the labor movement, the peasant organizations, and all the reforms instituted by the Arbenz government were brutally crushed. The world was given a concrete illustration of what this government really means when it talks about freedom, democracy, the rights of small peoples, and the like.

**This 'Coexistence' Talk:
What's It Really About?** (July 19)

Throughout the year, the Stalinists waged a propaganda campaign on the possibility of peaceful coexistence between the worlds of Stalinism and capitalism, and on the desirability of big-power negotiations to reach an agreement on all outstanding differences as the basis for a long era of such peaceful coexistence.

The demand was picked up by mass sentiment all over the world. The horrors of H-bomb warfare, or even of another world war on the old model, induced millions to look to some kind of inter-imperialist deal as the only hope of peace in our time.

By the end of the year, even the Eisenhower administration had to give some lip-service to the idea of peaceful coexistence. But the fact that a breathing-spell had opened up in the cold war, and hence that to millions an illusion of the transformation of this breathing-spell into real peace assumed an air of reality, did not alter the cold facts: no real basis for negotiations of any kind of permanent deal had been established. And the division of the world proposed by either side as a basis for peaceful coexistence was indignantly rejected by the other as an attempt to dictate a robbers' peace.

**"You Could Almost Reach Out and Feel
The Atmosphere of Fear in the Chamber"
As the CP-Outlawing Bill Passed Amid an Orgy of Hysteria
Led by Yellow-Liberals** (Aug. 23)

Congress adjourned amidst an unprecedented scramble, led by the Democratic "liberals," to get both parties down on record as willing to pass the most vicious and drastic laws against the weak American Communist Party.

This exhibition of fear and the repressive anti-democratic measures which result from it capped a year in which civil liberties found themselves under steady and continuing attack.

**The Senate Votes to Censure
But McCarthyism Goes Free** (Dec. 13)

We jump ahead a little, because the hysteria over the anti-"Red" laws in Congress and the general state of what has come to be known as McCarthyism in the country are very closely connected.

McCarthy, the man, got his lumps this year as never before. He was put on the defensive in a long, mixed up and inconclusive bout with the army. Then, on a

motion to censure him, a majority of the Senate expressed its displeasure of his baiting of other senators and other infringements of the rules of the "gentlemen's club."

But whatever may befall McCarthy and his efforts to set up an independent center of power inside (or, if necessary perhaps, outside) the Republican Party, the vote by Congress on the anti-Communist law demonstrated how deeply McCarthyism has eaten into the fabric of civil liberties in this country.

**Court Bans Racist Education;
Next Goal: Outlaw All Jim-Crow!** (May 24)

Of course, reaction did not have things all its own way in the United States, either in the field of civil liberties or of civil rights. Resistance to the witchhunt appeared to be growing as the year wore on. And a major blow was delivered to the right of racial segregation when the Supreme Court ruled that it must be ended in the schools throughout the nation. Though the court left the question of handing down implementing decrees till later, there can be no doubt that this decision will give the Negroes and whites who want to fight segregation an enormous boost in their struggle.

EDC Death Ends an Era in Europe (Sept. 6)

**The German Rearmament Pact:
Big Step Onward to a Dead End** (Nov. 1)

These two headlines, coming about two months apart, indicate the frenzied efforts of the United States to organize its allies in Europe and get West Germany tied into the alliance and armed to the teeth.

The European Defense Community was killed by the French National Assembly. A new scheme was immediately cooked up and put into form as the Paris Agreements. But at year's end their fate hung in the balance in France, and in Germany a major struggle was developing over them.

**Democrats Get the Edge in Congress in Midterm Swing, But
Near-Deadlock is the Result
Of Issue-less, Idea-less Election** (Nov. 8)

The headline may have put it a little strongly. There was no real clash of ideas, or more accurately of programs, in the election. But to a nation which had watched the Eisenhower-big-business combine in power for two years the issue seemed to be between the Democrats who stand for the "little man" and the Republicans who are for the rich.

In an atmosphere dominated by the witchhunt and all its ramifications the real issues had little chance to get debated, even if one were to assume that there were any figures in the two major parties who had a desire to debate them. And the end-result was a near-deadlock, with a slight swing in favor of the Democrats.

**American Voices Speak Out Against
The Imperialism of Both War Camps** (Nov. 15)

In response to an appeal from Asian socialist parties for a world-wide celebration of an International Freedom Day primarily as a demonstration against colonialism and the oppression of under-developed nations, a meeting was held in New York on October 29. Sponsored by a number of prominent liberals and socialists, this meeting sought to demonstrate that there is not complete unanimity in the United States behind the oppressive policies of this government. This was the beginning of a tradition which may well grow in importance in American and world politics as the years go by.

French Guns Against the Algerian People (Nov. 22)

In contrast to this demonstration against colonialism came the intensified repression of the independence movement in North Africa, and the flint-faced opposition of the United States to any and all liberation movements which might endanger or even inconvenience American military preparations and those of her allies.

On balance, it can be said that 1954 has been a year of relative stalemate in the cold war. It does not appear, however, that the forces of human liberation, of the Third Camp, have utilized this period to any great degree to advance their own state of independence and organization. They remain as the great potential for peace and freedom. Let us hope that 1955 will see a marked advance in the realization of this potential.

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DJILAS BRANDS

THE TITO TOTALITARIANS

By HAL DRAPER

Act II of the Djilas affair in Yugoslavia has opened with two scenes, one a dramatic public declaration by Djilas.

The latter, Djilas's call for a new socialist party against the totalitarian regime, is an act of personal and political courage and integrity outstanding on the political scene in the world today. It has all our admiration and respect, not to speak of whatever its impact may be on the real possibilities for socialism inside Titoland.

The initiative was quietly taken by the Tito regime when its Control Commission reopened the case of Vladimir Dedijer. Dedijer—who ironically is best known abroad as the author of the worshipful official biography of Tito—was the only one who stood up for Djilas during last January's purge session of the Central Committee.

As we noted at that time, his behavior at the CC meeting was more courageous and outspoken than that of Djilas himself. Moreover, it was Dedijer who was the man responsible in particular for printing Djilas's heretical articles in the official press (until the Djilas-Dedijer "journalistic putsch" blew up).

DEDIJER IN DOCK

In January Tito personally made it clear that no one holding Djilas's views could belong to the ruling state party; but no immediate steps were taken to expel Dedijer. That stage has now been reached. The intervening time was useful for two reasons: to let Dedijer himself "cool off" and perhaps bethink himself of the wisdom of his course aside from political reasons; and also to let the scandal cool off, since the Tito regime was quite perturbed by the necessity for openly acting like true-blue Stalinist purgers in the startled eyes of their Western democratic friends, especially those who were being wooed with bedtime stories about the basic democratization and de-Stalinization of Titoland.

So it was not until a week ago that Dedijer was once again put in the dock: *Do you recant or not?* The Control Commission wanted to know whether he still held the views he had expressed. Dedijer answered by walking out on their inquisition, on the ground that they had no right to ask such questions.

The next thing that he and Djilas decided to do was even "worse": they decided to strike back by "leaking" this episode to the foreign press, thus putting the Titoist inquisitors on the spot.

MITROVIC CASE

Incidentally, it is now also revealed (that is, "leaked" in the same way) that a second member of the CC has similarly been called up before the Control Commission. This was Mitra Mitrović, a woman leader of the ruling party. Her case also stemmed from the January purge session.

What had her crime been, if (as is true) Dedijer was the only one to speak in support of Djilas? The answer is interesting.

She made the mistake of trying to duck. She did not support Djilas—but she did not denounce him. Aside from Dedijer and Djilas, she was the only other CC member whose speech was out-of-line, even if only in this rather negative respect.

What then did she say? When the present writer was reading the transcript of the speeches at the January CC meeting to purge Djilas, it was indeed her speech more than anything else which gave one the feeling of insight into the semi-bewildered, semi-frightened state of mind of the run-of-the-mill CC members as this bombshell was bursting upon them. Yet, not two consecutive sentences that she uttered, in her impromptu talk, can be quoted that make good sense. This is indeed one reason for its total effect. From unfinished phrase to hanging sentence, she skittered about in the speech like a broken-winged partridge hen. You read its tortured sentences and they shouted: panic and confusion.

But she did not line up with Djilas's executioners, even though she also slunk away from Djilas's side. (It is impossible to say whether it is relevant to mention that she was Djilas's ex-wife.)

Well, the executioners have not forgotten. They gave her a year in which to be confused. Now she has to take sides: to revile Djilas with the others, or else go with him. All the words that have been written by foreign pro-Titoists about the Titoists' fundamental "break with the Stalinist system" will not help her to skitter very long before the Control Commission.

The "leak" has reported only that, unlike Dedijer, she did not walk out on them. A transcript of her discussions with the inquisitors would undoubtedly be quite a document. . . .

DJILAS BLASTS BACK

The chronology would seem to indicate, then, that it was the regime that started punching in this round. The unique event, however, is that the victims did not lie still for it, but slugged back.

That they were in position to do this was not due to the kindness of the regime, but to the contradictions of the Titoists' position between Stalinism and Western capitalism. In any case, Djilas-Dedijer took advantage of their opportunities.

In an interview given to the N. Y. Times correspondent in Belgrade, where Djilas has been living quietly in a small flat, the former leader issued a public blast against the ruling totalitarian party and called for a new democratic socialist party.

The interview was "public," that is, all over the world except in Yugoslavia itself. In effect, Djilas had turned to the foreign press as a sounding-board, knowing that there would be echoes bouncing back into the country. The first public echo was the voice of Edvard Kardelj, heading the regime during Tito's absence in Asia, as the vice-president ripped into Djilas.

The advances in Djilas's oppositionist views, as shown by the interview, are naturally great as compared with his pre-January articles.

In one passage he summarizes the distance his judgment has gone: "It is clear now that we have obtained only certain freedoms, as in art and literature, which can be distinguished from stupid Soviet 'socialist realism,' but not in basic ideological and political questions. I have felt that the political aspect of our system is in essence close to Stalinism."

DISILLUSIONED

Djilas, says the Times correspondent, "disclosed an attitude of frustration and disillusionment. His great disillusionment, he asserted, came during the crises he precipitated."

Djilas then goes on to give a thumbnail sketch of the progress of his disillusionment since the 1952 Sixth Congress of the party, when he thought some real steps were taken toward democratization. (For the facts behind this illusion, see LA for last Feb. 15.)

But now "the essence," he said, "more or less, is freedom. We have no legal possibilities for full expression. What I wrote in my articles [a year ago] existed in the people, but the only one who could express it was a leading person.

"I knew that a discussion would start and that I would lose. But I supposed that the discussion would be democratic, as in the West. I did not expect an inquisition.

"Because we had had our Sixth Congress, I thought we could have our first more or less free discussion in Yugoslavia. But it did not take place. We had in fact reached political stagnation."

At another point he said: "I am a democratic socialist. The name communism is good, but it has been compromised. It is a synonym for totalitarianism, in this country as well as in Russia. What is the use of an ideal name? I

handed in my Communist card for moral and political reasons. Why remain in the party when I cannot say anything? Why pretend?"

PERSPECTIVE

What then is Djilas's perspective? Perhaps naturally, this is cloudy from the dispatch, and it is difficult to say whether it is clouded more by correspondent Raymond's write-up or by Djilas's caution or uncertainty.

In the first place, he indicates that he thinks he can "get away with it," that is, escape physical liquidation. He stated to Raymond:

"I am taking a risk, but one cannot go on without some risk. In our present system, we cannot know what will happen. However, I think that nothing bad will happen, and it will mean a lot for our country to have a citizen say what he thinks."

The most immediate reason for the public declaration is entirely clear. Referring to the docketing of Dedijer, he said: "This is an attempt to frighten the democratic elements in the party. Such elements exist, but they are unorganized, whereas the party itself is in the hands of undemocratic forces."

The first hope is that the international spotlight will at least save the lives of Dedijer and perhaps others, or at least slow up or soften up the inevitable blood purge. But is there a second hope that the call for a new party will really organize the unorganized oppositionists, or even that Djilas wants this to happen?

Here is the dispatch's section on this point:

"Referring to rumors that he intended to lead a movement against Marshal Tito, M. Djilas declared:

"I did not organize a faction. I have studied the position in Russia, Trotsky, etc. Their mistake was that they wanted to be better Leninists than Stalin. The solution here, I felt, could be only democracy, not a Djilas program or group against Tito. This country has had enough revolutions."

"I am not against illegal work out of fear. But it has no aim. I thought that the Communist party must permit freedom of discussion.

"Now I see this is impossible. Another political formation should be constructed. . . ." (Then Djilas goes on to say he is for a new socialist party but not for freedom for parties in general, specifically not now for the return of the "old parties.")

"In ten years, perhaps, possibilities for political democracy will develop, perhaps sooner. . . . Inevitably, however, it [the regime] will have to relent."

The dispatch continues: "However, it is not the time for a drastic change," M. Djilas continued. "Even worse elements could come. . . ."

And then Djilas says: "If we have peace for ten years, modern technology will make it impossible for this small country to retain a totalitarian apparatus."

DJILAS'S THEORY

Now what does this add up to? Is this simply a formal disclaimer of orientation toward underground work, while really looking in that direction? It does not sound like it, especially if we take it in the context of the ideas on the subject which Djilas expounded in his articles of a year ago, echoes of which reappear here.

While the quotes given in the Times interview are rather erratic in use of tense in shifting from Djilas's former views to whatever views he holds now, the whole sounds like a continuation of Djilas's former theory that democratization is literally inevitable, and that no opposition organization is necessary to fight for it. A new note which even reinforces this is the reference to "modern technology," which can only be a pickup from Isaac Deutscher's theory of the inevitability of the democratization of Stalinism.

A year ago also, Djilas was writing the same thing to his followers against organizing "a Djilas program or group." (See LA for last Feb. 8.)

When the interviewer later asked Djilas about the "new course" in Moscow, Djilas unwittingly but flatly contradicted his own theory. "Changes do exist



in Russia, but basically there is no change. Russia will go further and then she will halt without changing her essence."

Why is it impossible for the Russian Stalinists to cross the line, whereas it is inevitable for the Titoists who are "in essence close to Stalinism"? It is difficult to know how Djilas reconciles these two thoughts, though it is well to remember that he is no heavy thinker.

CARDS AND SPADES

In any case, the decisive thing about the future of democratic socialist opposition in Yugoslavia is not necessarily Djilas's personal role—and certainly not necessarily Djilas's personal political clarification. As the present writer mentioned in the course of articles last February on the Djilas opposition, there is good reason to believe that his personal political evolution is in the direction of reformist social-democratic ideas, insofar as he has formulated any larger framework than the demand for democracy.

It is necessary to mention this again in view of a question which possibly may not occur immediately to American readers, who may tend to regard the N. Y. Times simply as a big newspaper with a large circulation in which one can get wide publicity.

The question is: Why did Djilas choose the N. Y. Times as the organ with which to address his followers and the world? This is not a matter of ridiculous "principled" notions against "using the capitalist press." It is a question of obvious tactics within the framework of given political ideas.

As everyone knows, the reflex of Stalinism is to accuse any and every opponent of being a capitalist-restorationist and an agent of Wall Street. This is just as true, though more muted, in Yugoslavia, where the regime itself is presently getting its palms tickled with "Wall Street" gold. In the Titoist party circles, in the bureaucracy, the muted issue behind the whole Djilas affair—the political ground on which the party ranks were rallied against Djilas, aside from the sheer exercise of Tito's authority and the state's power—was this: *We must fight twice as hard against the danger of capitulation to Western capitalist ideas PRECISELY BECAUSE of this gold and these relations.*

By choosing as his own organ the main journalistic representative of American capitalism, Djilas has given his enemies cards and spades. Why not the London Daily Herald? or in fact, a big newspaper of any other country but America? or best, a general release to the whole world press?

This is the angle Kardelj picked up for his first attack. "Blackmail," he yells, as he explains that Djilas is counting on hiding behind the piles of dollars which (coincidentally) Belgrade is just now getting from Washington. It is perfectly true that Djilas has a right to seize an opportunity stemming from the regime's position. But it is a pity that he does it in such a way as to prove his opponents' case for them.

As we go to press, the news is that the regime has not contented itself with party expulsion for Dedijer. He is up for criminal prosecution, on the charge of "hostile propaganda"! The totalitarians are too enraged (or frightened?) to leave their foreign apologists much reason to continue the self-deception about the "democratization" of Titoism.—H. D.

LONDON LETTER

Strike Looms on Nationalized Railways

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, Dec. 22—An important railway strike is brewing. The issues go back to Christmas a year ago, when a London Letter wrote about the aborted strike on the railways.

At that time the National Union of Railwaymen was pressing for a 15 per cent increase in wages for all its members to catch up with the cost of living.

Well, that strike was averted by an agreement to raise wages from 6 to 10 per cent above their then level, but it was nevertheless felt by the railwaymen that the increase was an interim one. It came into operation last March.

American readers need hardly be reminded that the railways in Britain have been nationalized since 1948, and that the Tory government has expressed no interest in denationalizing them. The \$50,000,000-a-year interest on government stock with which the former owners have been compensated is much more profitable than the somewhat irregular profits they had derived from an industry which they had let decay.

Such an essential public service even under private control had not dared to raise its prices up to the general level of increase, so that its falling real revenue was not enough to maintain capital investment in it. To earn more, the railways put up their prices. This increased the general cost of living, because of extra cost of transport of most fuels and raw materials. Also, especially in the underground services in London, it discouraged more and more people from traveling by railway, and thus further decreased income.

When the National Union of Railwaymen appeared before the Transport Commission—an impartial body—the Transport Executive was able to demonstrate clearly that the money was non-existent. Any further increase of wages would have to be followed by increased prices, unless they were prepared to decrease compensation to former owners. There was no third solution.

Thus the all-round wage increase of railwaymen last March ushered in increased fares and tariffs, contributing their bit to the creeping inflation.

The railwaymen, however, felt that their 6 per cent increase was not enough, and they asked for the full rise which had been suggested before last Christmas. All right, said the minister of transport, put it to arbitration.

No, thought the union, this will only prove that the railways are very poor, but that is not only the railwaymen's responsibility, it is a national responsibility.

NEW FORMULA

Then Jim Campbell, of the NUR, struck on a new formula. If the railwaymen needed more wages, a government subsidy could give it to them without an increase in the general cost of living.

The government and the Labor Party did not like this idea as it had always been intended that nationalized industries would be autonomous financially, however essential were the services they provided.

Exchanges between the two sides went on until the National Union of Railwaymen's Executive announced that it would bring out its 400,000 members on strike on January 9 if its claim for the full 15 per cent rise had not been accepted be-

fore then. The railwaymen, the underground men, some lorry drivers and many other ancillary workers would be affected. It would bring a large part of London, and the export industry, to a complete standstill.

The strike was to be officially supported, and every worker, married or not, would be entitled to \$5 a week strike pay.

The government took panic. A cabinet meeting was held at No. 10 Downing Street, which Sir Walter Monckton, minister of labor, and Boyd Carpenter, minister of transport, were called in to attend. The Tories were divided between those who wanted to bring in the troops at the slightest provocation, and those who cautioned diplomacy.

A suggestion that the NUR should go to arbitration had already been rejected by it. If the government inter-

vened in the not-yet started negotiations, it would undermine the authority of the arbitrating machinery. Furthermore the government felt that a strike so soon after Christmas, and so soon after the last settlement, would not have popular support.

It has therefore adopted the age-old Tory policy of "wait and see," in order to gauge public support for measures to destroy the strike. The NUR is hoping to force a settlement without recourse to such a strike, which might not be popular.

I should like to take this opportunity of wishing all my friends, personal and political, a very happy New Year from this side of the herring pond. I hope that for you 1955 will bring more progress than has 1954. The world needs it badly.

The French Do Not — —

(Continued from page 1)

to the new coalition by a vote of 280 to 259, showed that Mendès-France had seriously overreached himself and that a first-rate crisis had once more arisen in the Atlantic Alliance between France and her two senior partners.

That crisis has not been eased by the fact that on Monday, December 27, Mendès-France tied the life of his government to the outcome of the vote, thereby forcing the French National Assembly to reverse itself. This time the French parliament voted by a thin margin for the preliminary articles granting West Germany "sovereignty" and allowing Bonn to take its place in NATO.

The fiction that Germany is being re-armed with French consent is dead and buried. The threats and pressures emanating from Washington and London immediately after last Friday's vote (that West Germany would be re-armed no matter what the French did) show that the Atlantic Alliance is not a coalition of equals. France can remain within the Atlantic Alliance and reap the benefits of American aid both at home and throughout her empire only by submitting to the political and military plans dictated by Washington.

NATURE OF "REVOLT"

The political evolution of Mendès-France from the time he took office last June down to the present shows that the leading circles of the French bourgeoisie and their political representatives understand the raw facts of life—agonize over them as they may.

Until several months ago, Mendès-France could still talk about "parallel discussions" with both Washington and Moscow to find a way of settling the German problem, i.e., prevent German rearmament. By the time he was through with his recent visit to Washington—where not incidentally he discussed American guarantees for French annexation of the Saar, American support for terror against the national independent movements in North Africa, and American financial support to maintain French troops in Indochina—he had shifted to complete agreement with the American line: first rearm West Germany, then talks with Russia.

The revolt of the French National Assembly which took place on Friday, December 24, was compounded of several disparate political elements. The largest group voting against the new Western European Union and German rearmament was the Catholic Popular Republicans headed by Bidault and Schuman.

It was ironic that this party, consistently pro-American, should have discredited and endangered the new American plan to rearm West Germany. But this party, which misruled France for so many years with the aid of American subsidies, sees itself in danger of being condemned to political limbo with each success won by Mendès-France, and it seeks his downfall. And Bidault, like so many French politicians, is consumed by a passion for personal revenge.

However, when the final test comes, the Popular Republicans dare not vote against the American plan to arm the Germans—not if they hope ever to come back to power and turn to Washington for more subsidies.

Of more interest is the opposition of the Gaullists and the extreme right-wing conservative Independents. Mendès-France has wooed and to a large degree won the support of these groups for his domestic and imperial policy.

While they dislike his "concessions" in North Africa, they understand he is just as intent as they are on preserving France's empire. Their quarrel has not been one of principle but of degree. They have acted to brake and limit his program of colonial "reforms."

MENDES AND DE GAULLE

So well do the Gaullists like Mendès-France that not only has De Gaulle himself spoken favorably, but the ideologist of the Gaullists, the famous novelist André Malraux, has come out in favor of a new non-Marxist "Left," with Mendès-France as its center!

On the question of Germany, however, the Gaullists have pursued an implacable, chauvinist line. Till now they have pinned all their hopes on following a "neutralist" course, that is, of arriving at some agreement with Russia at Germany's expense. They have urged that to ratify any agreement rearming West Germany would close the door to such a Franco-Russian rapprochement and prepare the way for West German military hegemony in Western Europe. It was for these reasons that a section of the Gaullists voted against the Paris treaty on December 24.

If now the Gaullists have yielded to Mendès-France it is, first, because they fear the domestic crisis that would follow his downfall; and secondly, because Moscow has left the "neutralists" high and dry. Throughout the period of crisis that began with the defeat of EDC on August 31, Moscow has made not one proposal they could use to beat back the American program.

While the French and English neutralists have proposed all kinds of fancy schemes for "neutralizing" Germany, the Russians have maintained their troops in Eastern Germany, propped up the hated puppet Ulbrecht regime, and kept repeating their dreary plan for creating a provisional all-German government that would ensure the presence of the East German Stalinists in power. Mendès-France has not been slow to use this argument against the Gaullists, the genuine "neutralists," and the Stalinists proper.

The vote against German rearmament on December 24 in the French National Assembly was, therefore, no genuine expression of popular and justified French fears of a reborn German militarism, fears that are shared by the English and West German peoples as well.

It did serve, however, to show that relations between the American ruling class and its reluctant French satellite are not exactly as cordial and frank as we are told so often they are.

ISL to Challenge 'Listing' by N.Y. State Board

The November issue of *Civil Liberties in New York*, issued by the New York Civil Liberties Union, announced that the State Civil Service Commission has added "seven groups to its list of subversive organizations."

Among the new organizations added to the state list are the Independent Socialist League, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party. The basis for this listing is not known, since the State Civil Service Commission has followed closely the pattern set by Truman's attorney general by drawing up the list in secret.

It is doubtful whether all or even most of the organizations knew of their listing, since no charges have ever been presented to any party or group and not a single hearing has been held prior to listing. What criteria the State Civil Service Commission followed is likewise not known. The presumption is that it merely took over the attorney general's list of "subversive organizations."

If that is what it has done, or if it has employed some unknown body of its own construction to draw up the list, the Commission did not even formally employ the new procedures adopted by its Republican brethren in Washington—grant hearings to any new organizations which it added to the list.

In the case of the Feinberg Law, which called for still another list on employment in the public schools, the announced policy was that no organizations would be listed without a prior hearing, where presumably charges would be presented to any organization to be proscribed. Evidently that policy is not for the Civil Service Commission.

CLU INTERESTED

The Independent Socialist League immediately protested this listing by the State Commission and in a letter to Albany made inquiry along the following grounds:

On what basis did the State Civil Service Commission decide to list the ISL on its index? What criteria and charges led to this listing? When did the Commission make its decision? What administrative procedures exist that would permit a listed organization to challenge its decision through a hearing or any other means?

The ISL has already been in consultation with the Workers Defense League and the New York Civil Liberties Union and discussed the possibilities of taking legal action against the State Civil Service Commission with them.

George E. Rundquist, Executive Director of the New York CLU, has expressed an interest in the case and is now examining the case of the ISL against the attorney general in order to determine what steps can be taken in the New York situation.

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THE POLITICS OF EXISTENTIALISM

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'Challenge' Reviews the Year

Founding of YSL... Fear and Resistance on Campus... Militarization & Unemployment

By MAX MARTIN

The *Young Socialist Challenge* was not yet in existence at the beginning of 1954; it made its bow on February 22. Its birth, however, was heralded in the pages of *LABOR ACTION* from the very first issue of the year, and earlier.

Since the fall of 1953, since the split of the Young People's Socialist League from the Socialist Party, comrades from the YPSL had been writing for "Youth and Student Corner" and "Student Socialist" sections of *LABOR ACTION*. Articles by members of the YPSL commingled with those by members of the Socialist Youth League; the two organizations were later to unite and form the Young Socialist League, publisher of *Challenge*.

This situation reflected the drawing together of the two groups, their successful collaboration in political work, and the fact that the unity negotiations which the YPSL and SYL had been conducting since the previous Thanksgiving weekend were going well. Indeed, the "Youth" sections of *LABOR ACTION* during the first six weeks of 1954 were taken up with discussions of the plans for the YSL and its founding convention. The headline of January 11 read:

A New Young Socialist League Shapes Up

At that time, negotiations for unity had proceeded to the point where one could say that unity would definitely be consummated. Subcommittees of the resident committees of the SYL and YPSL were working on a draft program to be presented to the convention, as well as a draft constitution and draft slate for the YSL National Executive Committee.

The few remaining details were ironed out in the following weeks, and by January 18 a definite date for the unity convention had been set. The YPSL and SYL published a Joint Convention Call and the second and third issues of the "Joint Discussion Bulletin of the YPSL-SYL," in which the documents to be presented to the convention appeared.

The February 8 issue of "Student Socialist" was headlined, "Convention to Launch New United Young Socialist League" and it contained an appeal to militant pacifist-socialists by Michael Harrington to join the YSL, as well as statements from the YPSL and SYL, greeting unity. The issue of February 15 reported the preparations of the branches of the two groups for the convention, and on February 22 the first issue of the *Challenge* appeared, carrying the announcement of the founding of the YSL.

New Young Socialist Movement Says: Against Both War Camps!

(March 1)

This four-page issue of *Challenge* contained a full report of the convention proceedings and articles dealing with the tasks facing the new organization. The convention had adopted a resolution on the war, expressing its opposition to both war camps and calling for a Third Camp struggle against all of the imperialist war-makers.

It had adopted also a "Tasks and Perspectives" statement outlining the views of the convention on the solutions for the various political and organizational problems facing the YSL, and a general draft program for the League, and had elected the YSL's NEC. The convention considered the press question and made plans for the publication of the *Challenge* and for a discussion bulletin.

Then the delegates of the YPSL and the YSL met separately to ratify the decisions of the joint convention and to dissolve. Thus the YSL had been launched.

Fear on the Campus: Four Case Studies

(April 5)

This *Challenge* headline represented a round-up of anti-Academic Freedom incidents at four schools, in which the anti-civil-libertarian trends which had been the pattern of political life in the country for years continued apace.

Students endeavoring to distribute the *Challenge* at a meeting on the theme of "man's right to knowledge and the free use thereof" at Columbia University, in connection with its bicentennial anniversary, had been forcibly prevented from doing so. At New York University one of the student newspapers had launched a vicious and slanderous witchhunting attack on the YSL, falsely claiming that the YSL was a Stalinist organization. At the University of California in Los Angeles, the administration had further chipped away at student rights. The student newspaper, the *Bruin*,

was no longer to accept controversial political advertising, and it began to suppress controversial articles.

At the Northern branch of the University of California in Berkeley, a professor had been fired for deploring apathy on the campus, and off-campus student political meetings began to be attended by a photographer taking pictures of those present.

Sporadic student resistance to the witchhunt took a turn for the better during the spring. The *Challenge* reported, for example, three conferences or meetings of students in the New York area, on Academic Freedom.

Must Our Youth Die in Indochina?

(April 26)

With increasing victories by the Stalinist Vietminh in Indochina and the growing realization that France could no longer continue to hold on to its colony, the danger of American intervention loomed. Vice-President Nixon revealed that the government was considering sending ground forces to Indochina. The anxiety of American young men grew as they became aware of what might be lying in wait for them. Mainly because of the resistance to U. S. entry into France's "dirty colonial war" from its allies, and also because of resistance from the American people, the intervention plans fortunately never materialized.

Resistance to Witchhunt Grows: Where Do We Go from Here?

(May 17)

and

Robin Hood vs. McCarthy

(May 17)

In the spring of 1954 there appeared a number of encouraging signs of resistance to the witchhunt among students. Prominent among these was the Green Feather movement, which had sprung up in several midwestern campuses and then spread to other schools.

The movement took the form of the organization of Robin Hood clubs, vague and amorphous associations of students opposed to McCarthyism. In some cases the clubs circulated petitions opposing the witchhunt; in others they passed out buttons carrying the Green Feather symbol on them.

These clubs lacked any real ideology, were confused in nature, and showed that they lacked any ideas about what they wanted to do. At the same time, in several places, they included a large number of Stalinists and Stalinoids among their membership and in other instances were influenced by illusions about Stalinism in their entirety.

Even with these limitations, the Robin Hood clubs were a welcome development. They showed, in a crude and immature form, that acquiescence to the witchhunt was not and would not be the permanent pattern on the campus.

Unfortunately, though, its limitations precluded a meaningful development of the movement. The lack of clarity in the ranks of these groups about what they wanted to do about the witchhunt resulted in its disappearance in a number of places by the time the fall semester rolled around. In other schools, the clubs continued to exist throughout the year, but in a less active form.

Young Worker Victim of No-Work Economy

(July 26)

As the recession deepened, hundreds of thousands of spring high school graduates were finding it impossible to obtain jobs. Many of these enlisted in the army, seeing this as the only solution to their problems.

These unemployed youth did not even appear in the unemployment figures issued by the government, since its statistics were based on those collecting unemployment insurance, and the recent graduates, not having worked before, were not entitled to such compensation.

Playing and Learning at the YSL Camp

(September 13)

The first National Summer Camp-School was successfully held by the YSL. It brought together over 50 YSL members and friends for classes, political discussion, and recreation, and helped cement the national character of the YSL.

The camp had been preceded by several other events, playing a similar role: a Midwestern tour in March and April, an Educational Conference in New York at the end of June, and a national tour in July and August.

At UCLA, Opposition to Loyalty Oath Organizes Student Committee for Action

(October 4)

Under a rider to a bill adopted by Congress, all ROTC enrollees began to have to fill out "loyalty" certificates in order to register for ROTC. This meant that at those schools in which ROTC was compulsory for all male students, the oath would become a prerequisite for attending school. Student resistance began to manifest itself at such schools as UCLA.

Faced by a small group of students who refused to sign the oath, various school administrations had to reverse their previous rulings to the effect that non-signees would not be eligible to enroll in ROTC (and hence face dismissal from school) and announce that such students would be able to take "informal" ROTC.

"Lily-White" Criminals Fan Race Hatred In the Fight Against School Desegregation

(October 25)

The Supreme Court Decision outlawing racial segregation in the schools had been an important blow against Jim Crow. The fight to implement this decision was now to begin. "Lily-white" bigots began to move to prevent the Supreme Court decision from being carried out. Battles over integration took place in Baltimore, Milford, Delaware, and other cities. Most of these ended with victories for civil rights.

These struggles, however, had occurred in "border" areas. In the South, itself, fewer efforts toward integration were made. On the contrary, governors and legislatures of some Southern states prepared to circumvent or defy the ruling in various ways, thus underlining the struggle which lay ahead to make integrated schools a reality.

Harvard 'Crimson' Survey Raises the Question—Is There a Witchhunt on the Campus?

(November 22)

A special issue of the Harvard *Crimson* devoted to Academic Freedom had presented a survey of the civil-liberties situation on the campuses. At school after school, Michigan University, South Carolina, U. of Nevada, Nebraska (to mention only a few) there had occurred violations of Academic Freedom in the preceding year. Teachers dismissed, loyalty oaths required, textbooks investigated, student clubs banned: the record was a dismal one.

Most disturbing of all, however, was the fact that in the face of the facts which the *Crimson* itself presented, the paper was able to pose the question of whether or not there really was a witchhunt, whether its dimensions were being exaggerated.

That such a position can enjoy a standing among some liberals, in some academic circles and even among some students was testimony to the extent to which the ideas of the whitewashers of the witchhunt had permeated the minds of those who are its victims, students and teachers.

Gov't Proposes Disguised UMT Program To Push the Militarization of Youth

(December 27)

As the year closed, the Eisenhower administration announced its proposals for military training for American young men. The administration's program involves placing all young men under the control of the military for from 8 to 10 years. This program will, because of its deceptive nature, tend to overcome the resistance of many to UMT. Socialists have the task of educating the public to the true nature of the administration's plans.

It is clear that concern and struggle among young people in the coming year will occur on this front as well as over questions of civil liberties and academic freedom.

A DISCUSSION BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT
OF THE DILEMMA OF FRENCH SOCIALISTS

The 'NEW LEFT' In FRANCE

A Case Study of Opportunism

By ANDRE GIACOMETTI

On December 4-5 three small organizations of the Left, the Centre d'Action des Gauches Indépendantes (CAGI), the Union Progressiste (UP) and the Jeune République (JR) called a joint convention in an attempt to outline a policy for the independent Left, and to examine the conditions for their unification into a new organization, the *Nouvelle Gauche Française* or New Left. In the provinces, this unification has already taken place. In February and May 1954, the New Left participated as such in the municipal elections in Cherbourg and in Rouen.

This is the latest in several attempts, since the end of the war, to create an organized tendency on the Left, independent of official social-reformism and of official Stalinism. As such, it deserves attention from revolutionary socialists.

Many of the problems it attempts to deal with are the very problems independent revolutionary socialists must solve: How can the working class escape the paralysis caused by its polarization between two unacceptable alternatives? Where can independent socialists find a point of leverage to pit the strength of independent class action against the alien class interests that dominate the labor movement? Where to make a beginning?

To know whether the New Left can answer these questions, it is necessary to know what it is and why it is entering the political scene at the present time.

Two in the Spectrum

The oldest of the three organizations participating in the convention is the Jeune République. It was founded in 1921 as a liberal Catholic group with reformist-socialist tendencies, and participated in the Popular Front government of 1936 and in the post-war "Third Force" governments, along with the SP and the MRP. Although it includes non-Catholics today, its general complexion remains religious.

Throughout its political history it has remained a small movement of intellectuals, never exceeding five representatives in Parliament. After the evolution of the MRP from an equivocally liberal group to an undisguised party of reaction, the JR remains the only political representative of liberal and left Catholicism. Its positions are supported by publications such as *Esprit* and *Témoignage Chrétien*, and it has a certain working class following in the CFTC (Catholic trade-union federation).

The Union Progressiste is a small, more or less independent-Stalinist group. It has four representatives in Parliament who vote on all important issues with the CP, controls *Libération*, a daily for intellectuals who find *L'Humanité* too crude, provides the "non-communist" elements in the CGT leadership (Le Léap, Le Brun), as well as occasional recruits for the espionage apparatus of the CP. (Labrusse, a high functionary in the Ministry of Defense and a member of the UP Directing Committee, was recently arrested in the "leak case" for passing classified military information to the CP.)

The UP differs from the CP to the extent that it includes, besides Stalinist agents, a number of fellow-traveling bourgeois who find the CP too "sectarian," and would like it to follow a "liberal" Popular Front policy, within the framework of which their political procuring

would be recognized and respected. The UP publishes a monthly bulletin called *Union Progressiste*.

The "Independent Left"

The Centre d'Action des Gauches Indépendantes has a different political complexion. It was formed about two years ago to collect some of the wreckage of the RDR, in particular those elements who neither followed the "crusaders" of *Preuves* (Altman, Rousset, Parisot, etc.) nor capitulated unconditionally to Stalinism, as Sartre did. This includes, among others, Claude Bourdet, Jean Rous, Yves Déchezelles.

It also includes remnants of the provincial RDR groups, particularly in Toulouse and in Cherbourg. The CAGI publishes a fortnightly called *Le Libérateur*.

Politically it contains every shading of independent socialist, neutralist, Titoist, Bevanite, left Catholic, left Gaullist and Stalinoid opinion, held together by the grim determination not to allow theoretical clarity to interfere with unity. Like the JR and the UP, it is predominantly composed of journalists, students, teachers and other intellectuals.

The Stalinoids

Two other organizations should also be mentioned here because, even though keeping their distance from the New Left, they are generally sympathetic to its efforts and can be expected to support it. They are the Mouvement de la Libération du Peuple (MLP) and the Parti Socialiste de Gauche (PSG, ex-Parti Socialiste Unitaire). Both are independent Stalinist groups.

The MLP, alone among all "progressive" groups, is predominantly composed of workers (about two thirds). Its members would be in the CP but for the fact that they are Catholics. They distrust the CP's "Marxist atheism" and maintain a separate political organization because they feel that, as Catholics, they have a special role to play when the CP proceeds to "build socialism" in France. They are the nearest thing to a political expression of the worker-priests' movement. Their publications are *Monde Ouvrier* and, unofficially, *La Quinzaine*.

The second organization, the PSG, is very similar to UP, except for its historical origin (split from the SP) and for the fact that it is less reliable from the CP's point of view, having been known, for instance, to develop Titoist tendencies.

Loose Association

The New Left, then, is at present a loose association of three to five organizations. Whether it will exist as an organized party on the national level is doubtful; but even now, and in the recent past, it has been a political mood, even a political tendency.

It has provincial affiliates: the Mouvement Socialiste Révolutionnaire in Toulouse, the Fédération Progressiste in Cherbourg, other groups in Nancy, Rouen, Le Havre, Montpellier and elsewhere. It has at its disposal an influential weekly, *France-Observateur*, in which all its tendencies are represented. It exerts some influence in the daily *Combat*. It has a foothold in the student movement, with *Tribune Etudiante*. It even has some working class support: leaving aside the "progressives" of the CGT, it is supported in good faith by the *Combat Syndical*

minority in F.O. and the *Reconstruction* minority in CFTC.

What has been the politics of this coalition? In what way has it intervened in recent political life?

The wide variation in political traditions and allegiances has necessarily led the three groups to seek unification on a certain number of specific issues connected by vague generalities, rather than on fundamental political agreement. From the beginning, the New Left has stressed its determination to avoid "old ideological dissensions" and "old sectarian quarrels." Its spokesmen have warned against those who, by their "sectarianism" and "intransigence," would place obstacles in the way of unity. In practice, this has meant that all discussions on orientation have been kept on the most superficial level possible.

Reticent on Communist Party

In an effort to justify its existence, the spokesmen for the New Left have continuously repeated that the two traditional parties of the working class no longer fulfill their function; but they do not clearly explain in what way they have failed to do so. Many attacks are being leveled against the impotence and the political corruption of the SP in general, but today this requires neither perspicacity nor courage. Often what is attacked is the "sectarianism" of the SP which keeps it from collaborating with the CP.

On the subject of the CP and of Russia the New Left has been notably more reticent. The susceptibility and quick temper of the CP are well known in these circles, so one must tread gingerly.

Fundamental criticism of Stalinist politics has been completely absent from the press of the New Left. On the contrary, all efforts are being made to convince the CP that the New Left is not hostile to it, and that it won't do anything the CP does not approve of. In short, the New Left conceives of itself as an independent force only to the extent that its "independence" does not interfere with CP politics.

Vague Formulas

In the absence of fundamental political agreement, the New Left has only succeeded in finding a common ground of vague formulas:

"We agree to end the Indochinese war, we oppose German rearmament, we attempt to bring about, on the internal level, a great movement in favor of the disinherited." (Paul Rivet, Conference for a New Left, May 29.)

"All these groups claim to belong to the working-class movement. All aim to build a socialist society founded on the collectivization of the basic means of production and the administration of the collectivized enterprises by the workers themselves. All, in the immediate future, aim to promote the unity of action of the whole working class toward specific aims on the economic and social level. It was not difficult, under these conditions, to agree on an orientation document which was approved, practically unanimously, by the participants at the conference." (Yves Déchezelles, *Le Libérateur*, July 4.)

In addition to such purposely equivocal formulas, the groups of the New Left were able to reach agreement on another point, which constitutes a basic element of their policy and their fundamental reason for existence: to bring about a Popular Front:

"How can we exist, unless we are a link between SP and CP?" asked Andre Denis (in *Le Libérateur*, June 6).

"Thanks to its independence, our organization will be the only one capable of promoting a Popular Front," explained Gilles Martinet at the National Conference for a New Left, on May 30. "It is impossible to tilt the balance in favor of the popular forces without the unity of all these forces, including the Communists. On this point we intend to clearly reaffirm what has been the essential aim of our struggle since the creation of the Union Progressiste." (Gilles Martinet, *Union Progressiste*, Sept.-Oct. 1954.)

Hails Mendes-France

The trade-union policy of the New Left is analogous: support to the CGT's policy of united action, to be achieved not by rank-and-file committees but by negotiations between the

The 'New Left' in the Old Blind Alley . . .

top leadership of the great federations. [The CGT is the Stalinist-led trade-union federation.]

The advent of the Mendès-France government caused a great stir in the press of the New Left. One might think that its Popular Front policy would place it in opposition to a bourgeois government, liberal though it may be by some standards. The PCI, which has an established reputation for sticking to its mistakes, also advocates a united CP-SP government¹ but opposed Mendès-France from the start on this basis.

Not so the New Left. We have been treated to the spectacle of sharp—nay, implacable—critics of social-democracy rallying to the support of bourgeois politicians. Not that the New Left has ceased to be for a Popular Front—but now it is for a Popular Front which should support the Mendès-France government!

The "Intelligent Bourgeoisie"

On July 4, *Le Libérateur* could hardly restrain itself: "The experience Mendès-France has begun. We congratulate ourselves very sincerely. One may hope that this Parliament, which led France to disasters, will allow the experience to develop. With Mendès-France, the intelligent bourgeoisie has come to power, more or less supported by the least rotten sections of the capitalism of our country. . . ."

However, no rose without thorns: "the fundamental error of Mendès-France seems to us to be his belief that our country can be restored without the support of the mass of the population, of the wage-earners."

On August 15, the same paper wrote: "What are we to think of the achievements and of what we know of the intentions of Mr. Mendès-France? . . . We know that he will not touch the capitalist regime. His primary aim is not even the improvement of the living conditions of the workers. But if one thinks that he alone is capable today of putting the house in order, one should consider his action as a whole: timid, perhaps, confined to a narrow framework which he will not seek to broaden, no doubt, but beneficial nevertheless. The Mendès-France government corresponds more or less to a conservative government in a country like Great Britain, where the capitalist ruling class has not resigned from its duties, and does not launch the nation on insane ventures. . . . The peculiarity of the French political situation is that an intelligent and constructive policy cannot be carried out without the support of the Left, even if this policy is not fundamentally Left."

Logic of a Policy

The enthusiasm of the New Left strategists for Mendès-France ("P.M.F." for his friends) was based above all on his ending of the war in Indochina and on his stand against EDC, in other words, on foreign policy issues and, in particular, on those affecting the Stalinist bloc. In exchange for these positions, they gave the government every benefit of doubt on North African policy, even though it was clear that no fundamental changes were to be expected; they carefully avoided taking any position on the split of the Algerian MTLD; they did not attack the government's reactionary wage policy, but hinted that the workers might demand more when Mendès-France would have time to busy himself with them.

Only when the government announced its support of the Paris agreements did the enthusiasm drop. Feeling free at last to vent his bitter disillusionment, Claude Bourdet announced that it was hardly worth while to have changed governments, while Gilles Martinet argued that in this difficult moment the government should nevertheless be supported "by all progressive forces," because the stronger its support on the "Left," the better it could resist the pressures on its Right. . . .

Contrary to appearances, there is no contra-

1. A controlled experiment, as it were, so the workers can see once more that the two "reformist" parties are incapable of defending their interests.

dition for the New Left between supporting a Popular Front and supporting Mendès-France. The deeper logic of its politics explains these illogical positions, which are only two different aspects of the same opportunism.

Opportunism and Pro-Stalinism

The New Left will not oppose Mendès-France because it does not oppose capitalism. What it opposes is inefficient capitalism, stagnant capitalism. It opposes the French bourgeoisie not as such, but because it is subservient to the U.S., because it has "resigned from its duties," and because it "launches the nation on insane ventures." Now, the British bourgeoisie, here we have something else. . . .

This crudely reformist attitude should place the New Left somewhere in the right wing of the SP. If it does not go there, it is because of its pro-Stalinist orientation. But the pro-Stalinism of the New Left is itself a product of its opportunism, of the same envious admiration for efficient bureaucracies, efficient ruling classes, efficient manipulators. The Russian bureaucracy may be an exploitive ruling class, but it develops production, while the French bourgeoisie allows it to stagnate; it may have a brutally imperialist foreign policy, but it knows what it wants, while the French bourgeoisie does not; it may exert a ruthless totalitarian dictatorship, but it is led by men of iron, while the French ministers, in Sartre's words, have "a girl's nerves" and "faint on the speaker's platform."

We have here, in the thinking of the New Left, particularly of the Union Progressiste, the ideology of a peculiar social type, which seems to form the backbone of all movements on the Stalinist periphery.

The Neo-Stalinist Type

They are bureaucratic cadres of bourgeois society: teachers, writers, administrators, scientists, civil servants, technicians, one may add trade-union leaders, who are perceptive enough to understand the corruption and the irreversible decay of the society they live in. In times and places where a revolutionary alternative to capitalism exists, they may rally to it. More often they do not, because, in general, their social position and background keeps them from having any understanding or sympathy for revolutionary struggles of the masses.

In the old socialist movement they might have been Bernsteinian revisionists. But in France today, another alternative exists, visible and active in all fields of social life: the Stalinist alternative. In Stalinism, the "progressive" bourgeois finds the ideal solution to his predicament: a movement which abolishes the contradictions of capitalist society which he experiences in his everyday activities, yet satisfies his bureaucratic craving for hierarchy, order, power and recognition.

For the writer, it has publishing contracts in Moscow; for the scientist, Peace Prizes; for the trade-union bureaucrat, exercise of effective

power. It does not necessarily require deep commitment: a few signatures, a few speeches and articles are sufficient. He need not join the party.

He is allowed a few mental reservations, while feeling that he is riding the wave of the future. He has no fear of "revolution," because he knows that in the society of the future he will be part of a privileged ruling class, just as he has always been.

No Road for Socialist Workers

For all those who are striving to create an independent socialist organization, which would express on the political level the independent class action of the workers, outside and against the crippling bureaucracies, outside and against the servants of one or the other imperialism, it is clear that the New Left is not the organization they hope to build. The task it has set itself is not to assist the working class in its resistance against its class enemies; on the contrary, it is offering its cooperation to every enemy the working class has.

It is not surprising, in view of these facts, that it should not be determined by developments within the working class. The most significant recent development in the labor movement has been an increase in militancy coupled with an increasing disaffection of the workers for their traditional organizations. A genuinely independent, organized Left could yet arise from this development, and in turn offer a foothold for the independent forces in the labor movement. The New Left, on the other hand, has nothing to offer but a united front of the bureaucracies the workers are deserting.

Much more than to the awakening of the French working class, the New Left owes its existence to the turn in Russian policy after Stalin's death. Now that the Communist Party is attempting to create a broad front of all people who, for good or bad reasons, oppose U. S. policy, now that it is once again extending fraternal invitations to the SP for united action, and that its supporters spend the best of their time to show how peaceful, benign and benevolent the rulers of Russia really are—what better time for a "New Left" to arise and to call for the "union of all good leftists"?

It would be unfair to suggest that the New Left is a front-organization established with CP approval. This is certainly and obviously not the case. But it is all the fairer to ask how much of a chance Gilles Martinet, Claude Bourdet and the rest of them would have to play a political role if the CP happened to follow a "hard" line.²

Last of a Series

It would also be unjust to suggest that the rank-and-file supporters of the New Left, in the F.O. and CFTC minorities, in the provinces, among the former members of the ASR, do not seek to create, through the new coalition, an opportunity for independent socialist forces to crystallize. For many of them, the venture of the New Left would have no meaning if it did not eventually lead to the reorganization of the scattered independent socialists. Conscious of the shortcomings of the New Left, distrustful of the Stalinists in U.P., they still do not see any other point of leverage at which to make a beginning.

However, it seems to us that these comrades have not drawn the necessary conclusions from the collapse of the RDR, of which the New Left combines every weakness, lacking at the same time some of its advantages. Indeed, if the New Left shows anything, it shows the degeneration of centrist experiments in France.

From the PSOP to the New Left, what a re-
(Turn to last page)

2. Such as when, in the U. S., Alexander Bittelman called the Sweezyite *Monthly Review* a "danger," and accused it of trying to "build up a cadre and resources for the launching at some future date of an anti-Marxist party moving in the direction of a Titoist set-up, acceptable to, and approved by, Wall Street's State and Justice Departments." (*Political Affairs*, May 1951.)

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The Arena for Socialism in France . . .

(Continued from page 7)

vealing devolution! In spite of its many weaknesses, the PSOP was yet recognizably an independent socialist party. It arose as a result of a widespread leftward movement in social-democracy, at a time when Stalinism was brutally revealing itself as a reactionary force (Stalin-Laval Pact 1935). The rise of the PSOP was a part of the great revolutionary upsurge of which the sit-down strikes of June 1936 were another aspect. In short, it was linked to profound, progressive changes in the attitudes of the French working class. The PSOP also contained a substantial revolutionary wing, without illusions concerning either Stalinism or social-democracy.

It failed because it proved unable to develop clear ideas of what it was and where it was going. Its collapse was inevitable after it failed to develop a consistent revolutionary policy, especially on the war question, that is, on the conflict of two imperialist blocs.

The RDR Experiment

A reorganization of centrist and revolutionary socialist forces was attempted, under much more unfavorable circumstances, in 1947. It did not correspond to any important leftward developments in the working class, and failed to get working-class support comparable to the PSOP's. The new organization, the RDR, was mainly composed of intellectuals, contained a great variety of divergent tendencies, and suffered throughout its brief existence for an appalling confusion of ideas. Nevertheless, many of its adherents had understood the reactionary nature of Stalinism, and the fact that any valid independent movement of the Left must oppose both imperialist blocs.

The RDR collapsed because it remained isolated from the bulk of the working-class movement, because it failed to achieve more than verbal unity, because of its lack of experienced cadres, and because it proved unable to develop clear ideas of what it was and what it was going to do.

Today we have the New Left. It includes a vast majority of intellectuals, and some of them of the worst kind. It has even less bona-fide working-class support than the RDR had. It does not even attempt to reach theoretical clarity, because it knows it could not stand the strain. It includes in its ranks a substantial group which behaves in its relations to the CP like Ben Bolt's Alice, who "wept with delight when you gave her a smile, and trembled with fear at your frown."

What is left? A number of bourgeois liberals, Christian neutralists, neutralist pacifists, progressive Gaullists, and a handful of independent socialists with neither courage nor ability to face up to their political responsibilities.

Not Between but Against

Nevertheless, the appearance of the New Left on the French political scene may not have been entirely negative. Since it does not rouse many hopes, it will not cause much disillusion.

On the other hand, it brings to the fore once again, even though involuntarily and indirectly, vital questions which remain to be answered. If the forces of independent socialism cannot be reorganized in the New Left, where can such

a reorganization take place? On what political basis can a genuine Left arise?

All useful thinking on the subject must start with the recognition of a political fact: today, independence of the Left does not mean independence *between* the two imperialist blocs, but independence *against* them.

An independent Left cannot derive its strength parasitically from one or the other bloc of powers, or by exploiting a turn in their policy. The only source of strength it can have is the one the socialist movement had in its beginnings: the continuous, irrepressible struggle waged by the working class against its exploiters in all countries. It must support every manifestation of this class struggle: in East and West Germany, in Czechoslovakia, in France, in England, in North Africa and in all other countries.

Its aim is not to be a link between enemies. Its aim is, on the contrary, to strengthen, to co-ordinate, to clarify the struggle of the working class, to prepare the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism in the world, and the defeat of reformist opportunism and of Stalinism in the labor movement.

In Italy, the success of the Independent Socialist Union (USI), as against the stagnation of the "new leftist" Unità Popolare, has demonstrated the solidity of Third Camp socialism as a political basis for an independent Left. What an independent socialist program in France could be was suggested by Marceau Pivert in his article "Front démocratique et social ou Front révolutionnaire?" in *Démocratie Proletarienne*, October 1953.

Alternatives

Another basic fact of the situation is that in France an independent socialist party, organized on these or other principles, has little chance of success at the present time. The existing splits are already too numerous, and the workers will not support yet another organization, however correct its policy may be.

The experience of the PCI proves this. Granting that the PCI's position on Russia is false, granting that it is a bureaucratic and sectarian organization—it is still an organization that for a long time has stood for working-class independence from both imperialist blocs. If the workers had been prepared to support such a party, a false policy might have kept it small but would not have caused it to decline into insignificance.³

However, independent socialists must not necessarily create new parties: they can enter the SP and reorganize as a left wing within it.⁴

When Jean Rous suggested entry into the SP at the beginning of the year, a great outcry was raised in the ranks of the New Left. This was the case especially among the former members of the ASR, who had left the SP to join the RDR, and who have a stake in proving that

3. The existence of a successful separate Third Camp socialist organization in Italy, the USI, might be considered as an argument for the building of a separate organization in France. However, in this respect the Italian and the French situations are very different. In France, there is only one political mass organization in the non-Stalinist labor movement: the SP. On the other hand, the extreme fragmentation of Italian socialism (PSI, PSDI, MAS and USI) has transformed Italian social-democracy from a mass party into a reformist cadre-party, where entry is politically useless. The PSI has a dictatorial internal set-up which makes it difficult for an organized "autonomist" tendency to make itself heard openly. Moreover, the USI itself is a union of revolutionary socialist tendencies which all developed previously in mass-parties: CP, PSI, PSDI and *Action Party*.

4. There are, of course, still other points of view. *Révolution Proletarienne* confines its activities to the trade-union movement. *Socialisme ou Barbarie* rejects activity both in parties and in the trade-union movement, and works for the rise of workers councils, outside and against the traditional organizations. It is impossible, within the framework of this article, to deal in detail with these positions. Suffice it to note here, that *Révolution Proletarienne* does not seem to see its way clear of a pro-U. S. position which might well endanger its existence as an independent political movement. *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, a group of revolutionary Third Camp socialists, unfortunately combines great perspicacity and solidity in its political analyses with a crippling sectarianism. Under the impact of the degeneration of political life in France, it has retired to positions which Marxists, in a happier time, had considered infantile disorders.

nothing can be done within the SP. Yet the fact remains that the only place where independent, internationalist, Third Camp socialist positions are effectively defended today is *Correspondance Socialiste Internationale*, a monthly published by a group in the SP led by Pivert.

What Is the Problem?

It may be objected, and it has been objected, that the SP today is hopelessly immersed in a reformist and opportunist swamp; that its social composition is predominantly petty-bourgeois and that its age composition is too old; that it is discredited among the workers; that it is dominated by a solidly entrenched bureaucracy; that all these factors make the development of a left wing within it unlikely.

While all this is true, it is also beside the point.

The problem before us is not to transform the SP into the leading party of the working class, nor to "take it over," nor to "build a party within a party." Our problem is, first, to find an arena in which to make the voice of independent socialism heard; second, to rally the scattered independent socialists.

This double task, creating a pole of attraction and rallying the independent socialists around it, can be undertaken in the SP alone. While the SP does have a predominantly petty-bourgeois social composition, it still has an audience among the workers, particularly those of F.O. and CFTC. While the SP is discredited among the working class, it is still supported, for lack of a better alternative, by workers who are discontented with its leadership and its policies. While the SP is dominated by a heavy-handed bureaucracy, so are the trade unions, which does not prevent left-wing minorities from organizing within them.

Membership in the SP also makes it possible for independent socialists to remain in direct touch with the other parties of the international socialist movement and, in particular, to integrate themselves in an international socialist Left. Since the rise of largescale centrist movements in European and especially in Asian socialism, this is a political advantage which cannot be neglected.

The Indicated Road

In spite of its weaknesses, which make it practically impossible for the SP to become a leading party of the working class, it still reaches an important working class audience and the "socialist milieu" the New Left hopes to reach. This appears to be recognized by the New Left itself, which finds it necessary to attack the SP strongly and often, while at the same time appealing to the SP's "healthy elements" to join it.

We are all aware, of course, that building a left wing in the SP is a tedious, difficult and hazardous task. CSI has already had difficulties with the SP leadership, and it will doubtless run into trouble again. Eventually, if Pivert and his friends succeed in extending their influence, they might even be expelled, although they will do everything in their power not to be. But if they are, they will leave the SP as a stronger group than any of the isolated independent socialist groups can hope to become in the same length of time. Meanwhile, CSI is making its voice heard. So doing, it is achieving more and reaching a larger audience than any other independent socialist group is doing at the present time.

Today, there are many things that the CSI tendency lacks. It lacks a comprehensive position on colonial questions; it lacks a trade-union policy; it lacks sufficient clarity in its appraisal of Bevanism; it lacks a concrete and explicit program in general. However, by its continued existence and activity, CSI has proven that the voice of independent socialism can be raised in the SP and that it can be raised there more effectively than outside of it.

We would like to invite discussion of the foregoing article, not only in general from all readers interested in the problems of rebuilding the socialist movement, but particularly from readers in France.—Ed.

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