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DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM IN EUROPE

By ADOLF STURMTHAL*

I

THE departure of the French Socialists from the government early in 1950, even though they returned in a few months, marked the end of a stage of postwar history in Europe. For the first time since liberation France was governed by a coalition in which the Socialists were no longer represented. At the same time the Socialists were in the opposition in Belgium and Western Germany as well and limited to little influence upon the Italian and Swiss governments. Austria, Great Britain, and Scandinavia were the only countries in which the Socialists are strongly represented in their governments. Roughly speaking then, Europe is divided into three zones according to the degree of power of democratic socialism: Eastern Europe—bordered on the West by a line running from Trieste to Lübeck—where the democratic Socialist parties have been absorbed by the Communist parties; Northwestern Europe—Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark)—under predominant Socialist influence; and the rest of Continental Europe where the the Socialists are a more or less powerful opposition group. Spain and Portugal in the South and Greece and Turkey in the Southeast are left outside of the scope of our study owing to the peculiar and non-democratic structure of these countries.

A measure of the relative strength of the Socialist parties in Europe may be obtained from the most recent election results. For this purpose, it is perhaps most convenient to divide, wherever possible, the parties into three groups: the Socialists, the Communists and their associates, the Center and the Right combined together under the term "Right." The following table gives the over-all picture in the main countries:

* The author acknowledges with thanks the assistance of the Social Science Research Council and the Fulbright Administration.

TABLE I
RELATIVE ELECTORAL STRENGTH OF THE
SOCIALIST PARTIES
VOTES AT THE LAST ELECTION (up to June 4, 1950)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Socialist</i>	<i>Communist</i>	<i>Right</i>
Austria*	38.6%	5.0%	55.9%
Belgium	34.4	4.8	59.8
Denmark	41.7	7.5	50.8
Finland	26.2	19.9	53.9
France (without overseas vote)	18.1	28.7	53.2
Germany			
Federal Republic	29.2	5.7	65.0
Berlin†	64.5	—	35.5
Great Britain	46.4	0.3	52.5
Italy	7.1	30.7	62.2
Netherlands	25.7	9.0	64.2
Norway	46.3	5.8	47.9
Sweden	46.1	6.3	47.6
Switzerland	26.2	5.2	68.6

* Since splinter groups are mostly disregarded, the percentages do not always total up to 100.

† The figures refer only to the Western-held sectors of Berlin. The Communists (SED) abstained from voting. Total vote was 86.4% of the registered voters.

A similar picture emerges from Table II, which deals with the representation of Socialists and Communists in the parliaments of their countries.

If we disregard Berlin, the twelve countries can be arranged according to the relative electoral strength of the Socialists, as in Table III.

In none of the countries do the Socialists control half of the votes. In four of them—Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark—they poll more than forty per cent of the votes and owing mainly to the dispersion of the votes combined in the table under the label “Right” the Socialists control the government. In five countries—Austria, Germany, Belgium, Finland, and Switzerland—the Socialists hold more than a quarter of the votes. In two others—France and Italy—their share in the total vote drops below one-fifth. The stronghold of democratic Socialism is thus Northwestern Europe with Great Britain as the center. If we disregard Eastern Europe

TABLE II
SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST REPRESENTATION IN
PARLIAMENT

<i>Country</i>	<i>No. of Socialists</i>	<i>Socialist % of Total</i>	<i>Rank of Party</i>	<i>No. of Communists</i>	<i>Communist % of Total</i>	<i>Rank of Party</i>
Austria	67	40.6%	2	5	3.0%	4
Belgium	77	36.3	2	7	3.3	4
Denmark	57	38.5	1	9	6.1	5
Finland	54	27.0	2	38	19.0	3
France	103	16.6	3	186	30.0	1
Germany	131	32.7	2	15	3.7	6
Great Britain	315	50.4	1	0	0	—
Italy	33*	5.7	3	182†	31.7	2
Netherlands	27	27.0	2	8	8.0	5
Norway	85	56.7	1	0	0	—
Sweden	112	48.7	1	8	3.5	5
Switzerland	48	24.7	2	7	3.6	6

* Right-Wing Socialists

† Popular Front—CP plus Left-Wing Socialists (Nenni).

TABLE III
RANKING OF SOCIALIST PARTIES ACCORDING TO
ELECTORAL STRENGTH

1. Great Britain
2. Norway
3. Sweden
4. Denmark
5. Austria
6. Belgium
7. Germany
8. Finland
9. Switzerland
10. Netherlands
11. France
12. Italy

and the dictatorial countries of the Southwest and the Southeast, the weakest links in the Socialist chain are France and Italy.

A useful hint as to one of the main factors in influencing Socialist strength and weakness may be obtained from Table IV, which shows the relationship between the electoral strength of Socialists and Communists.

TABLE IV
RELATIVE ELECTORAL STRENGTH OF
SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS

Great Britain	more than 100*
Norway	8
Sweden	7
Denmark	6
Austria	8
Belgium	7.5
Germany	5
Finland	1.3
Switzerland	5
Netherlands	2.9
France	0.63
Italy	0.23

* The Socialist vote is more than 100 times greater than the Communist vote.

The countries have been intentionally arranged in the same sequence as in Table III to show that there is a large degree of correlation between Socialist strength and Communist weakness, Communist strength and Socialist weakness. Thus, in all of the countries in which democratic socialism is outstandingly strong, the Communists are a small minority. The dark spots on the map of democratic socialism are those in which Communism is strongest. Socialist strength is in inverse proportion to Communist power. The outcome of the competition between Socialists and Communists is thus one of the decisive factors for the progress of democratic socialism. Indeed an analysis of the occupational structure of the different countries seems to indicate that victory in this competition gives the Socialists not only the bulk of the working-class votes, but also an opportunity to win a part of the middle-class votes.

II

Electoral strength is, however, only one indication of Socialist influence. A good deal of the power of democratic socialism consists in Socialist control of trade-unions and other working-class organizations such as the consumers' co-operatives (particularly strong in Great Britain and Scandinavia), mutual insurance organizations (the "Mutualites" in Belgium and France), and a host of other working-class associations. Of all these the trade-unions are in our context by far the most important.

The European trade-union movement has traditionally strong political ties. In a number of countries, such as France or Italy, the trade-union movement is divided into two or more separate organizations, each co-operating in varying degrees of intimacy with a particular party. In other countries, for which Austria and Germany are examples, the unions are unified, but in most of them political currents are in existence as more or less well organized groups with a rough system of proportional representation in the controlling body. A special case is Great Britain, where the unified unions are collectively affiliated with a political party, the British Labour Party. In the first and third groups of countries, Socialist influence over the trade-union movement can be fairly clearly ascertained in terms of union membership, either in relation to unions of a different political affiliation, or in absolute numbers. For the second group, certain hints may be obtained from the composition of the governing bodies of the trade-union center.

Table V indicates the reported and estimated membership of the trade-unions affiliated with national centers in a number of European countries. Not all unions are thus affiliated, but most of them are, and the unaffiliated ones are typically independent of political influence. Wherever available, I have, however, added the membership figures of unaffiliated unions. In a number of cases I have supplemented the officially claimed membership figures with estimates of the real membership. These estimates are based on reports of United States observers and on my own studies in the countries concerned. The estimates should be taken as approximations rather than objectively verified figures.

TABLE V
MEMBERSHIP OF TRADE-UNION CENTERS IN A NUMBER
OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

<i>Country</i>	<i>Real Membership (est.)</i>	<i>Claimed Membership</i>
Austria		
OSTERREICHISCHER GEWERKSCHAFTS		
BUND (Austrian Trade-Union Federation)*		1,278,686
Belgium		
FGTB (Federation Generale des Travailleurs de Belgique)—Socialist	550,000	600,000
CSCB (Confederation des Syndicats Chretiens de Belgique)—Catholic	500,000	550,000
LIBERAL UNIONS (Confederation Generale des Syndicate Liberaux de Belgique)—Liberal	30,000	30,000
COMMUNIST (Scattered unions)	10,000	
	<i>Total</i>	1,090,000
Denmark		
DANISH TRADE UNION FEDERATION		650,000
INDEPENDENT UNION (Telephone, brewery workers)		20,000
	<i>Total</i>	670,000
Finland		
GENERAL FEDERATION OF LABOR		312,000
France		
C.G.T. (Confederation Générale du Travail)—Communist-led	2,350,000	6,000,000
CFTC (Confederation Française des Travailleurs Chretiens)—Catholic	400,000	1,000,000
CGT-FO (Confederation Générale des Travailleurs-Force Ouvriere)—Social Reform	340,000	1,000,000
CGC (Confederation Générale des Cadres)— Independent	120,000	140,000
Various other unions (autonomous, independent, anarchist)	125,000	275,000
	<i>Total</i>	8,415,000

* The Austrian and German Trade-Union Federations group the Catholic, Socialist, and Communist trade-unionists.

WORLD POLITICS
TABLE V (Continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Real Membership (est.)</i>	<i>Claimed Membership</i>
Germany		
GEWERKSCHAFTSBUND*		4,961,986
Iceland		
ICELANDIC FEDERATION OF LABOR: Known as the ALTHYDUSAMBAND (Soc.)		23,636
Italy		
CGIL (Confederazione Generale del Lavoro)—C.P. controlled	1,300,000	3,000,000
LCGIL (Libera Confederazione Generale dei Lavoratori Italiani)— Social Reform, incl. Cath.	900,000	1,250,000
FIL (Federazione Italiana del Lavoro)— Socialists. Amalgamation with LCGIL in principle accepted†	100,000	500,000
<i>Total</i>	2,300,000	4,750,000
Ireland		
IRISH TRADE UNION CONGRESS Affiliated to British TUC		250,000
Unaffiliated		250,000
Netherlands		
NETHERLANDS TRADE-UNION (NVV)— Socialist	373,000	373,000
CATHOLIC WORKERS LEAGUE (KAB)	268,000	268,000
NETHERLANDS CHRISTIAN TRADE-UNION (NOV)—Protestant	147,500	147,500
COMMUNIST TRADE-UNIONS	50,000	100,000
<i>Total</i>	838,500	888,500
Norway		
NORWEGIAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (Soc.)		460,853

* The Austrian and German Trade-Union Federations group the Catholic, Socialist, and Communist trade-unionists.

† A part of the FIL rejects the amalgamation and is engaged in getting up its own national center, thus maintaining the threefold split of the Italian trade-union movement. This corresponds to the division of Italian Socialism into pro-Communist Nenni group, Right-Wing Saragat group, and the Center under Romita and Silone.

TABLE V (Continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Real Membership (est.)</i>	<i>Claimed Membership</i>
Sweden		
LANDSORGANISATIONEN I SVERIGE (Soc.)		1,228,581
Switzerland		
SWISS FEDERATION OF TRADE-UNIONS (Soc.)		376,895
Others (Cath., Prot., Liberal, Independent)		179,000
United Kingdom		
BRITISH TRADES-UNION CONGRESS		9,301,000

A comparison between this Table and Tables I through IV shows a rather striking correspondence between the power of Socialist-led trade-unions and the strength of the Socialist parties. The heart of Socialist strength, Northwestern Europe, is also the territory of strong unified Socialist-led trade-unionism. In Germany and Austria, Socialists predominate in the governing bodies of the trade-unions. The presidents and a large majority of the governing bodies are Socialists. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the Socialists in both countries are rather strong. At the other end of the scale we find France and Italy with relatively weak and unstable trade-unions in which the Communists predominate. Accordingly, the Socialist parties are weak and divided. Belgium and the Netherlands, with their divided trade-union movements and with the Socialist-led organization hardly representing half of the organized workers, stand in between. It should be added, however, that the membership figures quoted are by themselves not always a fully reliable measure of the relative influence of the different unions over the working class. Thus, the Socialist-led unions in Belgium, though barely one-half of the combined union membership of that country, obtained almost three-quarters of the votes in the recent shop steward (*conseils d'entreprises*) elections.

The conclusion seems to be that a powerful democratic Socialist movement must be based upon an equally strong trade-

union movement under Socialist control. The democratic Socialists must be working-class parties in order to be strong. A strategy aiming at substituting middle-class elements for the working-class basis seems, in the light of our figures, futile.

III

The end of the Second World War was accompanied in Europe by an upsurge of Socialism. Naziism and Fascism had been considered by most of the Europeans as the last resistance of capitalism to the advancing wave of the Socialists. The fact that in most Nazi-occupied countries big business circles had been the core of the "collaborationists" and "Quislings" seemed to confirm this,¹ just as the fact that Socialists and trade-unionists and—after June, 1941—Communists had been in the forefront of the resistance movements.

The election victory of the British Labour Party in 1945, together with the advent of governments of Socialist and Communist inspiration in France and Italy, seemed the inevitable confirmation of the breakdown of the old order. A series of nationalization measures in France and Great Britain followed implementing the Socialist character of the new regimes. The First World War, it was said, had brought the establishment of an anti-capitalistic regime in Russia; the Second World War would bring about the victory of Socialism in the rest of Europe.

Within the short space of five years, democratic socialism in Europe has been forced into the position of what is, on the general European level, a minority party. With the exception of Great Britain, none of the major countries of Europe is under Socialist control. France, Italy, and Western Germany are governed by parties devoted to the principles of capitalism. In Eastern Europe a number of strong Socialist parties have been submerged by the rising tide of Communism. Democratic socialism has thus been twice defeated: by Communism in the East, by liberal capitalism in the West—Great Britain and Scandinavia perhaps excepted.

¹ Indeed the mere administration of a sizable enterprise in a German-held country would inevitably create a suspicion of "collaboration" since raw material supplies, etc. could not be obtained without the approval of the occupation forces.

The defeat in the East had obvious reasons. The presence of powerful Red Army forces more or less openly supporting the local Communist leadership and intervening in local affairs put the Socialists under a handicap which they were unable to overcome. Anti-Communist leaders of the Socialist parties were either prevented from returning home from a Nazi-imposed exile or forced to flee under the threat of imprisonment. Moscow-sponsored leaders were put into office. What followed was a process of almost monotonous regularity in one Eastern country after another. In the provisional governments set up in the wake of the advancing Red Armies the Communists succeeded in getting hold of the Ministry of Interior, controlling the police, and of the Ministry of Information administering the means of mass communication. As a next step, the Socialists were "induced" to accept united-front agreements with the Communists which limited the Socialists' freedom of action without seriously interfering with that of the Communist partners to the agreement. Then the Communists made the proposal of presenting common lists of candidates at elections to be held for a Constituent Assembly. Recalcitrant Socialists were put under heavy pressure. Where they nevertheless held out and succeeded in obtaining majority support within the Socialist Party—as in Czechoslovakia—the Communists mobilized the streets and the Communist-controlled police to oust the anti-Communist leaders of the rival party. The joint lists were established. After the elections the Communists proposed the merger of the two parties, normally with the active support of the deputies who owed their election indistinctly to combined Socialist-Communist votes. The "invitation" was followed by a purge of the few remaining "unconvinced" Socialists and the gradual ouster of the persons suspected of divided loyalties from positions of top responsibility. What finally emerged was a mass party with Socialist followers but uniformly reliable pro-Moscow leadership. By 1948 this process was practically completed in Eastern Europe.

Somewhat more complicated is the chain of events which led to the Socialist defeat in Western Europe. Quite clearly the Socialist-inspired regimes suffered in popularity by the fact that they administered the poverty in the wake of the war. They

imposed wage-stops and sought to distribute fair shares of what was inevitably an insufficient supply of consumers' goods. The main tools of their administration were rationing, price controls, exchange controls, and restriction of the freedom of unions. This led to two equally disastrous consequences. The different controls were administered with greatly varying success. In Great Britain with its rather easily controllable foreign trade, the high sense of civic responsibility of the population, and fairly satisfactory rations, the results were not unfavorable. On the Continent, however, the administration was on the whole unreliable. Corruption was widespread. Violation of laws had been a patriotic duty under the Nazi occupation. Once learned, the lesson of disobedience was not easily forgotten. In Germany and Austria the black market was closely connected with the occupation armies which were above the law. The peasants successfully resisted the city-sponsored control measures. The rations were so small that the use of the black market was a matter of life or death for a large part of the population. When the control system was finally removed, the population felt rightly or wrongly that it was freed from an intolerable burden of government regulation and government-sponsored corruption. But the ouster of the control system—introduced by the Socialists and passionately defended by them—required the defeat of the Socialists. Deprived of their "fair shares," hoping to obtain the necessities of life by the workings of the "free market," the population turned against the Socialists.

Many of the Socialists realized that rationing and price controls were emergency measures imposed by the circumstances and had nothing to do with the Socialist program or principles. Some understood that at best these controls would work if based upon radical anti-inflationary measures of a fiscal nature which they found impossible to carry out against the combined resistance of the Communists and of large parts of the Right. But failing to develop acceptable alternative policies, the Socialists began to be identified, by the population and occasionally by themselves, with the system of quantitative controls and restrictions of consumers' freedom. To many Europeans Socialism began to mean rationing, price controls, limitation on travel abroad, etc. The result was the resurrection of economic liberalism which has reached its most grotesque form

in the "free market economy" of Western Germany—a combination of extreme luxury and misery which few American right-wing Republicans would wish to sponsor. But it must be added that the immense authority which the United States enjoys in Western Europe, and which the Marshall Plan has merely emphasized, has also operated to the disadvantage of the Socialists. Whether intended or not, the example of America has come to the support of laissez-faire liberalism in Western Europe.

IV

There is a certain aura of the inevitability of fate that hangs over the postwar decline of democratic socialism in Europe. The overwhelming power of Communism in the East and the responsibility for the administration of scarcity in the West seem sufficient and in a certain sense unavoidable causes for the crisis of Socialism. But a profounder analysis would trace the origin of this crisis much farther back in the evolution of the Socialist movement in Europe.

It may be useful to begin this discussion with a comparison of Socialist (and Communist) strength during the interwar period and at present. The basis are the figures for the elections preceding 1931 and July 1950.

TABLE VI
SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST ELECTORAL STRENGTH
1931 AND 1950
(in per cent of the Total Vote)

COUNTRY	BEFORE 1931		PRESENT	
	<i>S.P.</i>	<i>C.P.</i>	<i>S.P.</i>	<i>C.P.</i>
Great Britain	36.9	0.2	46.4	0.3
Sweden	37.0	—	46.1	6.3
Denmark	41.8	0.2	40.0	6.8
Belgium	34.2	1.8	34.4	4.8
Netherlands	23.8	2.1	29.8	9.0
Switzerland	27.5	1.8	26.2	5.2
France	18.0	9.5	18.1	28.7
Finland	34.2	—	26.2	19.9
Austria	41.1	0.6	38.6	5.0
Germany	24.6	13.0	29.2*	5.7
Norway	31.4	1.7	45.8	5.8

* Without Berlin and the Eastern Zone.

The table shows significant increases of the Socialist vote in England, Norway, Sweden, and Germany. For Germany the comparison is not very meaningful since the prewar result refers to all of Germany, the postwar results to the Western zones only. A significant decrease occurred in Finland. The astonishing fact is that six of the countries investigated—leaving out Germany—show hardly any change in the Socialist share of the total vote. In Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, France, and Austria the variation of the Socialist voting strength is insignificant. War, Nazi-occupation, liberation, reorganization of party and unions—one of the greatest turmoils in history—have swept over these countries with no result so far as the Socialist voting strength is concerned.

Of the four countries in which appreciable changes occurred, excluding Germany as a special case, three—England, Norway, and Sweden—show substantial Socialist increases at the expense of Center and Right-Wing parties. Finland shows Socialist losses to the Communists.

On the whole this is a picture of amazing stability with a slight upward trend since the gains outweigh the losses. The electoral strength of the Socialist parties as a whole can, therefore, be described as extremely stable. This does not exclude ups and downs in different countries, but the general position of the Socialist movement within the framework of Western European politics seems firmly established and unlikely to undergo fundamental changes in the near future.

This statement holds true in both directions. If it is unlikely that Western European Socialism will be substantially weakened—apart from temporary ups and downs—it is also evident that Socialism has shown little offensive power since the inter-war period. Indeed, the end of the First World War marks the end of the period of irresistible advance of the Socialist movement. It is stable in both the good and the bad sense. It is not a passing phenomenon, but it is also no longer a movement driven forward by powerful dynamism.

This result contrasts with the almost continuous forward march of the Socialist movement during the last quarter of the nineteenth century up to the First World War. Since 1914 the Socialist movement has lost a good deal of its impetus and has

shown signs of a doubt in itself quite different from the absolute certainty in its own victory which it demonstrated at the turn of the century. While it would go far beyond the limits of an essay to try to analyze this evolution in its details, the outline can be drawn.

The origin of the crisis might be found in two great discussions: one between Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky, the other the break of the Socialists and the Bolsheviks under Lenin.² Out of these debates three main currents of Socialist thought emerged. Bernstein and his followers were labeled "Reformists." Kautsky was the leader of the "Radicals" or "Centrists," to use Lenin's term. The extreme Left consisted of a number of small groups, among them one led by Rosa Luxemburg, all of which were, however, in due course submerged by the Bolsheviks. Although the discussions had their centers in Germany and Russia, they soon spread to the entire Continental labor movement and the consequent divisions were splits extending over most of the Socialist parties.

Bernstein based his criticism of traditional Socialism upon the strength and vitality of capitalism and the undeniable advance of the labor movement within the framework of that social order. He pointed out that by its progress labor was gradually transforming the capitalistic society and predicted that by this method of gradual reform and in co-operation with democratic middle-class parties, European labor would win democracy, and, at the end of a long evolutionary process, establish socialism.

This was undoubtedly a fair and accurate description of the actual practice of most of the Socialist parties. They had developed into large mass organizations whose main objective was the winning of elections and the use of parliamentary methods to achieve their immediate ends, most of which were determined by the needs of the trade-unions. But Bernstein's analysis, while true, contradicted the tradition of revolutionary socialism in which the movement had grown to its maturity.

² An attempt could be made to trace these discussions back to the rapid economic advance since the middle of the 'nineties to which business cycle theory refers as the upward branch of a "long cycle" (*Kondratieff*), as well as to the growth of the socialist movement. Both combined to open great possibilities of social reform. This, however, would go far beyond the limits of this essay.

The language of the party and its propaganda were still based upon the assumption of a great violent clash between the forces of the proletariat and those of the bourgeoisie. There is little reason to doubt that the revolutionary language held out a good deal of appeal to these workers for whom the slow progress of the movement had little significance and, vice versa, that many workers supported the movement because of its concern with the everyday worries of the laboring man rather than because of the hoped-for millennium. From the point of view of propaganda then, the combination of revolutionary language and Reformist action was successful. But when the events following the First World War placed the Socialists before the need of action, the contradiction between philosophy and activity, program and reality emerged to paralyze the movement and divide it.

Quite clearly, the new situation required new methods. Democracy was achieved and in many countries of Europe the democratic socialist movement held key positions. The road seemed open, in large parts of Europe, for bold Socialist reforms. But the tradition of Marxian orthodoxy limited the freedom of thought and action of the Socialist parties, and the competition of the Communists powerfully strengthened the strangle hold of the tradition upon the Socialist movement.³

The Socialist-Communist issue appeared first in the apparently modest form of a division over the best methods of organizing the labor movement under the conditions of Czarist oppression. But as a result of the Bolshevik victory in Russia and the organization of the Communist International, the original issue was enlarged far beyond its original significance. The Communists absorbed all the groups of the extreme Left who had so far rejected not only Reformism as futile, but also the philosophy of the Radicals whom the Leftists accused of a sterile fear of action. The universal application of the method by which Lenin had conquered power in Russia—this was the program with which the Communists rallied the extreme Left.

During the interwar period the Continental Socialist movement was thus divided three ways: the Reformists, a Center

³ See Adolf Sturmthal, *The Tragedy of European Labor 1918-1939*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1943.

group (sometimes referred to as the "Marxian Center"), and the extreme or Communist Left. For a while (1919-23) each of these currents was organized on an international scale: the Reformists in the so-called "Second International" which was reconstituted after the end of World War I; the Communists in the Third or "Communist International"; and the Marxian Center in the "Viennese International" better known by its significant nickname, the International "Two-and-a-half." Although in 1923 the latter merged with the Second International to form the Labor and Socialist International (L.S.I.), the ideas of the Marxian Center continued to live within the larger organization. The thinking of the Marxian Center—as expressed by such men as Otto Bauer, Léon Blum, Friedrich Adler—deeply affected the labor movement of Western Europe during the interwar period. This latter group has disappeared in the postwar turmoil. The elimination of the Marxian Center as an influential part of the European labor movement is the most important ideological fact of the European labor movement since the end of the Second World War.

This development has affected Socialist thinking in these main respects: with regard to the Socialist-Communist split, the concept of a Socialist economy, the significance of democracy and civil liberties, the ethical and humanitarian foundations of Socialism, and the role of Socialism in the world struggle for peace.

The main objective of the International Two-and-a-half had been to reunite the two branches of the working-class movement, namely the Second and the Third Internationals. At the instance of the Marxian Center, the L.S.I. stated in its statutes that "it appeals to the Socialists of all countries to give support to its efforts by making all endeavors to bring about a united front against capitalism and imperialism both in their own countries and in the international working class organizations." Otto Bauer wrote of the need of achieving a "Socialism of Synthesis" which would combine all that is valuable in Reformism with the will to power of the Communists. Reformism, in his view, was too much concerned with the Socialist tasks of the present moment, disregarding those of the future. Communism placed too much emphasis upon fu-

ture needs at the expense of the immediate defense of working-class interests. Only when reunited could the two wings of the labor movement adequately perform their immediate tasks as well as prepare those of the future.

Ideas such as these emerged again at the end of the Second World War, having been revitalized by the wartime alliance of the Soviet Union and the Western democracies. But the advance of the system of "Popular Democracy" with the support of the Red Army, Russian pressure upon the satellites, the Tito revolt, and the coup in Czechoslovakia combined to bring about a complete change. Communism appears no longer merely as a wing of the international working-class movement—with which an understanding might be desirable and possible—but rather as the instrument of a foreign power aiming at subjugation instead of alliances and collaboration. Moscow does not seek friends, but subjects. Now Communism is regarded as a system not merely of social change but also of national oppression. By resisting Communism the Socialists are conscious of defending not only democracy but also national independence.

The absorption of the Socialist parties in Eastern Europe by the Communists, the expulsion of the pro-Communist Socialists in Italy from the community of European Socialism, and the expulsion of pro-Communist members of Parliament by the British Labour Party mark the successive steps by which the Socialist movement abandoned the idea of ultimate Socialist-Communist unity. The split has been accepted as permanent, or rather an idea of a battle to the end has replaced the former language for a peaceful merger.

This has been accompanied to a certain extent by a searching and critical re-examination of the very concept of a Socialist society. In its sharpened hostility toward any form of totalitarianism, the Socialist movement has come to look with increasing skepticism at the concept of a fully planned and fully nationalized economy. Such an economic system patterned after that of the Soviet Union, would, it is feared, inevitably form the social basis of a totalitarian dictatorship. Instead, the Western European Socialists describe their objective—at least for the next historical period—more and more

in terms of a mixed economy in which a nationalized sector co-exists with a sector reserved for private enterprise, and in which the market plays an important part. Socialism, in one word, tends to become "liberal Socialism." While the Marxian Center never tired of pointing out that the Socialist-Communist disagreement was over tactics and not over final objectives, the postwar Socialists are coming closer and closer to a clear assertion that the division concerns the final aims as well as the methods of the two movements.

This growing realization of the gulf separating Socialists and Communists is furthered by the enhanced emphasis which the Western Socialists are placing upon democracy and civil liberties. Not that Socialists at any time failed to realize that their ultimate aim was a society of democracy and fully developed civil liberties. But a number of Socialist parties—particularly the French and Austrian—had at times expressed the view that a temporary dictatorship of the proletariat would become inevitable since the bourgeoisie would not give in without unconstitutional resistance to a Socialist majority engaged in constructing the bases of a new society. Such unconstitutional resistance on the part of the bourgeoisie, the Linz program (1926) of the Austrian Socialists for instance pointed out, would compel the Socialist majority to resort to dictatorial methods for a period of transition. The experience of Nazi oppression, but probably even more the struggle against the establishment of a Communist dictatorship, has changed the Socialist attitude to one of unconditional allegiance to democracy and civil liberties. This does not necessarily imply that no Socialist party would ever be willing to associate itself with emergency measures in time of war or civil war, which might temporarily suspend civil liberties or democratic rights. What is implied in that change is rather a shift in emphasis, so far as the education of the party members is concerned, to an unconditional belief in the value of democratic methods.

This shift has been accompanied by a rapid, perhaps not very profound but nevertheless significant re-examination of Marxian theory. Differing in this respect from British Labour, Continental Social Democracy has been deeply imbued with the spirit of Marxism. Contrary to what many United States

newspapers do, the Continental Socialists have never identified Marxism and Communism, but rather have disputed the Communists' claim to the true descendancy from Marx and Engels. They have described *themselves* rather than the Communists as the true disciples of Marx. Indeed, fear of Communist vituperation often compelled Socialists to profess publicly a belief in Marxian theories which in private they did not hesitate to criticize. The postwar years have produced the first open signs of a change of attitude. Leaders of the German Social Democratic Party, once a stronghold of real or professed belief in Marxism, have publicly admitted that the Party has opened its doors to Marxians and non-Marxians alike. Although the intellectual productivity of the Socialist movement since the end of the war has not been very great in volume, what there has been has indicated a readiness to revise and re-evaluate accepted notions, which contrasts strongly with the prewar dogmatism of the movement. There is in particular great emphasis on "voluntarism" as opposed to the "inevitability" of the prewar version of Marxism, on human choice among alternative courses of action, and consequently on moral and humanitarian values. Indeed, one of the significant intellectual developments is the search of the Socialist movement for its ethical, humanitarian, and often religious sources. The stronger the opposition to the Communist belief that the end justifies the means, the greater is the emphasis on the moral value of Western civilization. In one case, Holland, the Socialist Party has merged with Christian-Social and other church-related groups to form a new party, the "Party of Labor," in order to mark clearly the transformation from Marxian "inevitability" to Christian and ethical beliefs.⁴

The main political implication of this development resides in the fact that the Socialist leaders in their great majority feel that democratic socialism is opposed with equal vigor to communist totalitarianism as well as to capitalistic democracy. While democratic socialism opposes capitalism mainly on economic grounds, it struggles against Communism primarily for ethical reasons. The "Third Force" idea is to a large extent

⁴ See in particular, Léon Blum, *For all Mankind*, tr. by W. Pickles, New York, Viking Press, 1946; and Paul Sering, *Jenseits des Kapitalismus*, Vienna, 1948.

a rationalization of this state of mind. The fact that this slogan was maintained far into the era of the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact—thus into a period of outright alliance between democratic socialism and democratic capitalism—indicates how greatly the need was felt for a symbol of this new position of democratic socialism in the world.

The ideological development of democratic socialism has profoundly affected the conditions surrounding the Socialist-Communist struggle for the control of the labor movement in Western Europe. For these Socialist leaders who have completed their transformation are no longer hampered in their opposition to Communism by the traditional Marxian idea of Class-Solidarity which so often in the past prevented them from using against Communism all the weapons at the Socialists' disposal. In the new view, democratic socialism has in common with Communism its opposition to the private ownership of the means of production and distribution; but it shares with democratic capitalism its faith in democracy and civil liberties. Democratic socialism can thus feel free to struggle with all its might against both opponents; it may conclude agreements with one against the other: not merely with the Communist brethren against the capitalist class enemy, but also with capitalistic democrats against the Communists. Since the events after the war have shown that the danger to democracy coming from the Communists and the Soviet Union is the most immediate, the Socialists have found it wiser to co-operate with democratic middle-class parties than with the Communists, if co-operation is necessary.

This represents a tremendous change, vitally affecting the entire course of the Socialist movement. It is therefore not surprising that it is as yet neither complete nor fully understood.

That it is not complete should be readily understandable in the light of both past and recent history. For a definite separation from Communism is a break with the entire evolution of the Socialist movement and its basic creed of class-consciousness and the solidarity of the working class. Moreover, it contradicts the most recent experience of the workers of most countries of the Continent—the community of thought and action of the “underground” under the Nazi occupation.

The evolution of this new concept of the role of democratic socialism, has, therefore, gone farthest in these countries in which either this last experience was least vital or more recent dramatic events have counteracted the memory of the wartime struggle. Thus Northwestern Europe, on the one hand, and Germany and Austria, on the other hand, are the areas in Europe in which this evolution seems to have gone farthest, while France and Italy are in a somewhat different situation.

Moreover, since this change is of extremely recent date, it has, of course, not affected equally all parts of the labor movement. It is obvious that whatever the leaders may feel or think, large numbers of workers within the Socialist parties or in the unions under their influence are not yet prepared to abandon long-held and cherished beliefs.

V

The stages of this evolution are indicated in the development of the international organizations with which the democratic Socialists of Europe and the workers under their leadership are affiliated.

In the course of the war the Communists had succeeded in loosening the ties connecting the surviving organizations of the International Federation of Trade Unions which had never admitted the unions of the U.S.S.R. In its stead a new organization was set up in February 1945, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), in which Communists and their allies held most of the key positions. The WFTU succeeded in uniting most of the trade-unions of the world including the CIO. Alone of all major labor organizations the AFL held out against it.

The founding of the WFTU corresponded, on the political scene, to Socialist-Communist co-operation and indeed its lifetime coincided with the stage of Socialist-Communist coalition in a number of continental countries such as France and Italy. This co-operation was, to a large extent, the continuation of joint "underground" action under the Nazi occupation or in the struggle against Italian Fascism, which, in turn, reflected the wartime alliance of the Soviet Union with the United

States and Great Britain. Being a function of the foreign policy of the Great Powers, Socialist-Communist collaboration was doomed, once the relations among the Great Powers changed. In the course of 1946, the breakup of the alliance made rapid progress. When, in July 1947, the Soviet Union decided to oppose the Marshall Plan, the consequent tension between the West and the East paralyzed the WFTU and finally led to an open break.

The unions of the West left the WFTU and established in December 1949 the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions with headquarters in Brussels. The political International of the democratic Socialist movement had a different evolution. The prewar "Labor and Socialist International" (L.S.I.), with which most of the Socialist parties of the world were affiliated, had shown few signs of life even before the outbreak of the war. Since 1933 a number of Socialist parties which were represented in the governments of their countries felt that an obvious cleavage existed between the policy of collective resistance to German aggression advocated by the International and the strategy of neutrality by which their own country hoped to escape the coming Armageddon. Under the circumstances, they preferred that the International remain silent on the great issues and act as a liaison and information center rather than as an agency of political leadership.

When in December 1944, during the Congress of the British Labour Party, the contacts among a number of the reborn Socialist parties were resumed, the issue of what the "International" should be, arose again. A "Socialist Conference of the United Nations," held in London in March 1945, appointed a committee to prepare a new organization which came into being at a subsequent conference of nineteen Socialist parties held in May 1946, in Clacton-on-Sea. The decision provided for a modest information and liaison office to be established in London, which would organize, from time to time, international Socialist conferences. Five meetings have been held so far: Zurich (June 1947); Antwerp (November-December 1947); Vienna (June 1948); and Baarn, Holland (May 1949). Another conference was held in Copenhagen in 1950.

Three main problems confronted the conferences: the relationship with the Socialists of former enemy countries, particularly Germany; the issue of the reconstruction of a full-fledged "International"; and the relations to the Socialists of Eastern Europe and Italy. The general Socialist-Communist issue was debated in connection with the last problem.

After World War I, the issue of whether and when to readmit to the International the Socialists of the ex-enemy countries, particularly the German Social Democrats, was one of the most delicate questions. Having supported the main lines of the policy of the Imperial Government, the Social Democrats were guilty, in the eyes of their Western colleagues, of having violated the principles of Socialist internationalism. No such accusation could be levelled at the German Social Democrats after World War II, but nevertheless their admission presented a number of difficulties, raised particularly by the Socialists of Eastern Europe. Following the policy which Moscow wishes the Socialists to adopt toward Germany, the Polish and Czech Socialists defended the—fundamentally un-Marxian—theory of the collective German guilt and at the conference in Zurich submitted the German Social Democratic leader, Dr. Kurt Schumacher, to a searching examination. Nevertheless at that conference a majority of the Socialist parties voted for the admission of the German Social Democrats, but since a two-thirds majority was necessary the actual admission was postponed until the conference in Antwerp. The admission of the Austrian Socialists presented no major difficulties.

The Antwerp Conference also decided to transform the somewhat haphazard organization into a more permanent one. It provided for the maintenance of a somewhat expanded office in London under a permanent administrative committee, regular international conferences, and a Committee elected by the Conference to act in its behalf. The Committee has been given the name of COMISCO (Committee of the International Socialist Conferences). Thirty-three Socialist parties—twenty-four with full status—are affiliated: all of Western Europe (in Italy both the Saragat Party, P.S.L.I., and the Romita-Silone group "Unita Socialista" are, for the time be-

ing, admitted); Brazil, India, Japan, and the Canadian Co-operative Commonwealth Federation; the two international Jewish groups, Poale Zion and Bund; and a representation of the Socialist parties in exile of Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Nine parties, among them the Socialist Party of the United States and the parties in exile, are admitted as observers.

Although this organization is somewhat more solid than that set up at the end of the war, it is still a far cry from being an "International" in the traditional meaning of the term, namely, an organization which could impose its discipline upon its members and develop a consistent policy toward major international issues. The establishment of such an organization has been repeatedly advocated by the French and Belgian Socialists, but has been rejected by the British and the Scandinavian parties which fear the renewal of the prewar situation with its divergencies between the policy of the International and that of the countries for whose government the different Socialist parties are responsible.

At an early stage the difference between Eastern and Western parties manifested themselves within the European Socialist movement. While those of the West began to assert their independence from the Communists, the Socialists of Eastern Europe were compelled to move ever closer to their Communist allies. The forced merger of the Social Democrats in Eastern Germany with the Communist Party and the absorption of the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian Socialists into the Communist parties of their countries greatly embittered the relations. Even before, the Socialists of East and West were unable to agree on a uniform policy toward the Marshall Plan. At a COMISCO meeting in London on March 20, 1948—following the Communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia—a solemn warning was addressed to the Polish and Italian Socialist parties "which are at present following the same path to absorption." After the merger in Poland had been achieved, the Italian Socialists under Pietro Nenni were expelled from COMISCO. In their stead, the Socialist group (P.S.L.I.) under Giuseppe Saragat and later the Romita group were accepted. With that step a sharp line was drawn between Socialists and Communists.

This decision also marked the high point of the period during which some Socialists advocated the establishment of a "Third Force" between the U.S.S.R. and United States. After the "honeymoon" of Socialist-Communist co-operation was over, roughly in 1946-47, the "Third Force" slogan acquired a good deal of popularity. It was applied first to French domestic policies, when Ramadier formed a government of Socialists, M.R.P., and Radicals, free of Communists on one hand and De Gaullists on the other. Léon Blum coined for this coalition the term "Third Force," an alternative to Communism and Fascism. Soon this slogan came to be transferred to the world stage. A united Western Europe led by democratic Socialists would form a third power center in the world, independent from the Soviet Union and the United States.

To become a reality, the Third Force idea would have required Socialist leadership in Western Europe, and a fairly equal degree of independence of Western Europe from Washington and Moscow. Neither of these conditions has been fulfilled. As we have seen, the Socialist defeat in France, Nenni's alliance with the Communists in Italy, and the establishment of the Adenauer government in Western Germany have reduced the main sphere of influence of democratic socialism to a part of Western Europe. Moreover, Western Europe was dependent upon American economic assistance for its reconstruction, and finally, on United States military aid to balance the powerful pressure from the East. When in the wake of the Czech coup d'état, the Socialists of Western Europe welcomed the Atlantic pact, they ranged themselves—whatever their reservations might have been—on the side of the United States in resistance to the Soviet Union and its bloc. Obviously, this implied the end of the Third Force idea—at least for the time being. But its demise has been far from universally acknowledged. Undoubtedly a number of European Socialists are somewhat uncomfortable in their alliance with the United States against the Soviet Union even though it is a defensive alliance. They prefer to maintain an illusion rather than face facts.

The Third Force slogan has further been strengthened by the support of those who identified it with neutrality between

the power blocs rather than mere independence from them. Indeed, the very ambiguity of the slogan has served to popularize it. It needed the Franco-British disagreement on the Schuman proposal to make clear the fundamental divergencies among the democratic Socialists on international policy.

It is probably too soon to forecast what the outcome of the internal discussions on foreign policy will be which are now under way in the circles of European socialism. But perhaps it is worth pointing out that the first outlines of a new bold idea are emerging which would bring European democratic socialism into close co-operation with progressive groups in the United States. The tremendous interest of American trade-unionism in European developments and the intensity of American co-operation in the new trade-union international seem to open new perspectives. Whether this possibility will be realized and what its implications would be for the ideology of European socialism, it is too early to say.