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THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY

Periodic efforts to break the near stalemate among the Italian political parties have focused on the attempts of Pietro Nenni and other Italian Socialists to move the party away from its earlier alignment with the Communists to positive support for the governing Christian Democrats. Successive postwar elections have brought the Communist vote close to a quarter of the electorate, while that of the four center parties now amounts to little over half. The Socialists currently poll nearly 15 percent of the popular vote; if the party switched its support to the Christian Democrats and carried most of its electoral following with it, the result would be the restoration of some real flexibility in parliamentary government.

The Socialist party has played a key role in Italian politics since the late 19th century. The Communists split with the party in 1921, and Nenni successfully resisted reunification with them in 1934 but concluded a unity-of-action pact. This pact was reaffirmed in 1944 but formally abrogated by the Socialists in 1956.

Moves toward Socialist - Christian Democratic cooperation have been under way for over half a dozen years but still face formidable obstacles. There are, of course, policy differences between the two parties, and strongly placed groups in each are working to prevent any understanding. Severance of the surviving ties with the Communists, moreover, would present operating difficulties for the Socialist party; Socialists are still allied with the Communists in some 2,000 of Italy's nearly 8,000 local governments, as well as in a number of sizable consumer cooperatives, and these relationships are frequently important for financing the Socialist party organization.

The association of Socialists and Communists in the CGIL, Italy's largest labor confederation, is a greater problem. Socialist officials in the CGIL wield no real power, and many of them have long resented Communist domination of the organization. With company unions and unorganized workers increasing in number, however, trade unionism as such is at present on the defensive in Italy, and the division of the major non-Communist unions into two confederations provides no attractive alternative to the CGIL for the Socialists.

Socialist labor leaders fear that the chief result of any split in the CGIL at this time would be a net loss in labor's industrial bargaining power and its ability to bring pressure on the government. Socialist political leaders fear that such a break would also lose the party votes unless counterbalanced by pro-labor moves on the part of the government.

Nenni, who is now 70 and generally conceded to be one of the country's shrewdest politicians, apparently had decided as early as 1951 that continued association with the Communists would never restore his party to leadership of the Italian left or put him back into the cabinet. He also seems to have become progressively disenchanted with Soviet Communism.

Following the death of Stalin, Nenni began to extricate his party from its ties with the Italian Communists and later to move toward association with the Christian Democrats. This delicate operation was received with skepticism by the Christian Democrats--first as to Nenni's sincerity and later as to his ability to carry his party with him. The move has been actively opposed not only by the Communists but also by right-wing

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forces both inside and outside the Christian Democratic party--partly because of its effect on the balance of power in Italy.

Current Socialist Problems

Nenni's basic problem is to demonstrate to the Christian Democrats his party's good faith and to get from them--in return for parliamentary support--a quid pro quo substantial enough to persuade the bulk of his following that it would be profitable to leave the Communists. Many party stalwarts are acutely aware of what has happened to Giuseppe Saragat's Democratic Socialist party since it formed an alliance with the Christian Democrats in 1947.

Saragat took more than half the Socialist deputies with him when he split with Nenni over continued cooperation with the Communists in 1947. Now, however, he controls less than a fifth as many as Nenni's party--partly because Nenni held on to the party name and most of the party machinery, and partly because Saragat proved unable to push through reform measures as a minister in the Christian Democrat - dominated government.

Much of Saragat's labor following--except for a few white-collar workers--went back to Nenni soon after the break, and others followed later. Since official Socialist reunification negotiations collapsed in 1956, five of Saragat's deputies and several of his party's provincial federations have gone over to Nenni, and it appears that reunification is taking place at the grass roots.

In the 1960 provincial elections the Saragat Socialists scored some slight gains. The collapse of the Monarchist

DISTRIBUTION OF VOTE IN ITALIAN ELECTIONS
(PERCENT OF TOTAL VOTE)

	1948		1953		1956		1958		1960	
	PARLIAMENTARY		PARLIAMENTARY		PROVINCIAL		PARLIAMENTARY		PROVINCIAL	
Christian Democrats	48.5	40.0	38.9	42.3	40.3	42.3	40.3	42.3	40.3	
Democratic Socialists	7.1	4.5	7.5	4.7	5.7	4.7	5.7	4.7	5.7	
Liberals	2.8***	3.0	4.2	3.4	4.0	3.4	4.0	3.4	4.0	
Republicans	2.5	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	
Total Center	60.9	49.1	51.9	51.8	51.3	51.8	51.8	51.8	51.3	
Communists		22.6		23.1	24.5		23.1		24.5	
Nenni Socialists		12.7	35.2*	14.7	14.4		14.7		14.4	
Total Left	31.0	35.3	35.2	37.8	38.9		37.8		38.9	
Neo-Fascists	2.0	5.8		4.6	5.9		4.6		5.9	
Monarchists	2.8***	6.9	10.9**	4.7	2.9		4.7		2.9	
Total Right	4.8	12.7	10.9	9.3	8.8		9.3		8.8	
Others	6.1	2.9	2.0	1.1	1.0		1.1		1.0	

*Communists and Nenni Socialists ran together.
**Neo-Fascists and Monarchists ran together.
***Liberals and Monarchists ran together.

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party may throw some former Monarchist deputies Saragat's way, but at the cost of alienating certain Democratic Socialist voters, at least in the north. In any case, Saragat's party is regarded by Italian Socialist party leaders as an example of the consequences of a move too far, too soon, to the right.

At present Nenni must cope with several factions within the party. His efforts to make the party completely independent are strongly opposed by a left-wing group led by Tullio Vecchietti and including many pro-Communists. Nenni is supported on most issues by a group led by Riccardo Lombardi, while a small faction under Lelio Basso tries to play a balance-of-power role. Nenni controls most of the party organization, but the left-wing faction obtains funds from Communist sources and is usually better financed than he is.

Nenni's own position now is somewhat strengthened by the Socialists' participation with the Christian Democrats in the governments of certain large cities, including Milan, Genoa, and Florence. This development, which came about early this year as a result of the local elections last November, should in time help the party's finances as well as its prestige.

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ITALY
DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS ON KEY CITY COUNCILS
FOLLOWING LOCAL ELECTIONS OF 6 NOVEMBER 1960

	CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS	DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS	LIBERALS	REPUBLICANS	COMMUNISTS	NENNI SOCIALISTS	NEO-FASCISTS	MONARCHISTS	OTHERS
Rome (80 seats)	28	3	3	1	19	11	12	3	--
Milan (80 seats)	25	8	6	--	17	17	5	2	--
Turin (80 seats)	27	8	6	1	20	12	2	2	2***
Genoa (80 seats)	27	6	3	1	22	17	4	--	--
Venice (60 seats)	23	4	2	--	14	13	3	--	1*
Florence (60 seats)	22	4	3	--	20	8	3	--	--
Naples (80 seats)	21	1	1	--	19	5	3	30	--
Palermo (60 seats)	24	2	2	--	9	4	5	5	9**

* Independent

**Dissident Christian Democrats

***Local Autonomy party

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Nevertheless, at the time of the Socialist party congress, from 15 to 18 March, the full impact of these local alliances had not been felt by those doubting the policy of collaborating with the ruling party. At this congress Nenni, who is usually a master of ambiguity, took an unusually direct and vigorous line against collaboration with the Communists. He obtained approval of the idea of Socialist parliamentary support for a "center-left government with a concrete program," but with only 55 percent of the congress behind him.

Nenni therefore must move carefully because of his slim majority and the continued strength of the left wing--which now has six representatives among the 21 members on the new party directorate. As Italy's "Mr. Socialism," Nenni appreciates that his faction must hang on to the Italian Socialist party and that any split must be initiated by the left wing. In view of the rough treatment given him during the congress, Nenni probably wants to see the most extreme of his opponents leave the party, although some of these would try to stay and make as much trouble as possible.

That the Socialist voters generally approve Nenni's gradual moves to the right is sug-

gested by the over-all increase in the Socialist vote from 1953 to 1960. Estimates as to how much of the party's electorate is behind Nenni range from 55 to 75 percent. It is clear, however, that this support is in the long run conditional on obtaining from a Christian Democratic government some of the reform measures his party advocates.

Sub-leaders in the party would probably want a few political plums such as jobs in the government holding company IRI or in the Fund for Development of the South, as well as inclusion of Socialist representatives in government missions abroad. Some of these concessions would, for varied reasons, arouse opposition in the Christian Democratic party.

Relations With Christian Democrats

Nenni faces a major problem in gaining the cooperation of the Christian Democrats. In most domestic policies the Socialist position is close to that of the Christian Democrats' majority left wing, led by Premier Fanfani and party secretary Moro, the principal advocates of cooperation. Like this group, the Socialists urge controls on securities and exchange, as well as agricultural reform, nationalization of nuclear energy, and the tightening up of the Italian tax system.

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To the Socialists the most important Christian Democratic platform planks would probably be: nationalization of energy --beginning with atomic energy --which was included in the program of the 1958 Fanfani government; establishment of geographic regions as provided by the constitution; and a school bill involving greater separation of church and state.

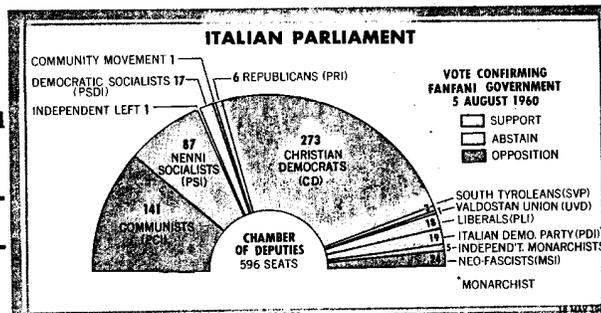
To narrow the wide area of disagreement between the two parties on school reform, Nenni has in recent months been toning down the Socialists' traditional anticlerical position. At least in local and regional politics, moreover, familiar considerations of mutual self-interest can evidently go far to overcome ideological differences--as is seen in the capital of Rieti Province, near Rome, where left-wing Socialists and right-wing Christian Democrats are collaborating in this small city government.

It is in this field of domestic reform, however, that Fanfani's progressive program is most susceptible to the veto of the influential Christian Democratic right-wing minority, supported by the conservative Liberal party, on whose votes the government's thin majority depends. It was in order to rid himself of this built-in veto--which has resulted in inaction on many legislative reforms and hence feeds the Communist popular vote--that Fanfani in April 1960 sought to form a center-left government dependent on the Socialists' large parliamentary vote. This effort was blocked by the right-wing Christian Democrats. In the vote of confidence given Fanfani's minority government the following August, the Socialists abstained--for the first time in 13 years on a ballot of this nature--rather than join

the Communists in opposition.

In the sphere of foreign policy, the Nenni Socialists --like Saragat's Democratic Socialists earlier--originally opposed NATO but now accept it as a fact of life. In 1956, Italy's ratification of the European Common Market treaties was actively opposed by the Communists, while the Socialists merely abstained. On a number of more recent questions, ranging from the May 1960 summit conference to last month's military insurrection in Algeria, the Socialist position has differed sharply from the Communist. At the same time, the party maintains an official position of neutrality between the US and USSR--although at the March congress Nenni publicly attacked the subordination of Italian Communism to Soviet foreign policy, and he has stated privately that it would be a tragedy for Italy to lose its Western orientation.

The position of the Roman Catholic Church has been a strong factor in blocking cooperation between the Christian Democrats and Nenni. Now the church itself appears somewhat more flexible toward local collaboration. Even Genoa's die-hard Cardinal Siri seems to have accepted the Socialist - Christian Democratic government in his city as preferable to the alternative--a Socialist-



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Communist administration. It is not clear, however, whether the Vatican would try to block collaboration at the national level by withdrawing support from the Christian Democrats with the idea of backing a new, right-wing, Catholic party.

Outlook

Powerful forces on both left and right see their positions threatened by Socialist - Christian Democratic collaboration, and the area of maneuver open to Nenni and Moro in their efforts to bring it about is at present limited. Both the rightist and the Communist opponents of such an alliance evidently hope to keep the situation frozen till the 1963 national elections. Knowing that Nenni's tactics require legislative issues on which his party following will be willing to give the government parliamentary support, rightists both inside and outside the Christian Democratic party will probably try various expedients to keep such legislation bottled up in committee.

There is, on the other hand, considerable dissatis-

faction among left-center elements--Democratic Socialists, Republicans, and right-wing Christian Democrats--with Premier Fanfani's present minority government. It is little more than a holding operation pledged to resign if any of the four divergent center parties withdraws its parliamentary support. The successes achieved to date by the policy of Socialist - Christian Democratic alliances in city governments are encouraging further such moves in local or provincial administrations --particularly the regional government of Sicily--where political stalemate has long persisted.

If, as seems likely, the government lasts until fall, pressures may then build up for a new try at an avowedly reformist national government of the left-center relying on external support in parliament from Socialist party deputies. The likelihood of such an attempt may be determined by the outcome of current negotiations for new governments in Sicily, Rome, Venice, and the province of Milan. (~~SECRET~~)

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