

government posts recently handed to the *montagnards*, Ky for the moment had damped the smoldering discontent. His ultimate aim: to use the breathing space to bring all the *montagnards* back into the front line against the Viet Cong.

## SINGAPORE

### A Modest Proposal

As head of the world's newest sovereign power, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew last week dispatched his foreign minister, Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, on the nonaligned nations' diplomatic equivalent of the American Express Co.'s basic budget tour: the United Nations (to plead for admission), London, Moscow, and a modest selection of Eastern European and Afro-Asian capitals.

In case anyone still wondered what policies Rajaratnam would be promoting, after Lee's triple-barreled anti-U.S. blast last month (TIME, Sept. 10), the Prime Minister also called in a couple of Western newsmen and described anew the catastrophe that would result if the U.S. ever took over from the British out his way. This time he had a truly sensational alternative to propose. If Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman ever called on U.S. forces to replace the British in neighboring Malaysia, said Lee, "I'm telling the Tunku that I would consider offering Singapore as a base to the Russians—and I believe they should take it."

A Russian takeover of the huge British base at Singapore would not only produce "a stalemate" on the Malayan peninsula, as Lee observed, but also block the strategic Strait of Malacca and disrupt the entire balance of power in the Southeast Pacific. The idea was

all the more surprising because a) Britain has no intention of leaving anytime soon, b) the U.S. has its hands full in Viet Nam, and c) the Soviet Union is so monumentally uninterested in Lee's problems that it has not even troubled to recognize the infant nation in the six weeks since it was forced to secede from Malaysia. As for Malaysia—well, said the Tunku angrily, "Lee is talking through his hat. He has not got a head."

## NORWAY

### An End to Labor

"Champagne!" cried joyous guests in Oslo's Continental Hotel. Staid brokers on the stock exchange floor whooped happily. At last the socialist Labor Party was out of power after 30 years of nearly continuous rule. Out with Labor went tall, spare Einar Gerhardsen, 68, the Grand Old Man of Norwegian socialism and the country's Premier for as long as almost anybody could remember.

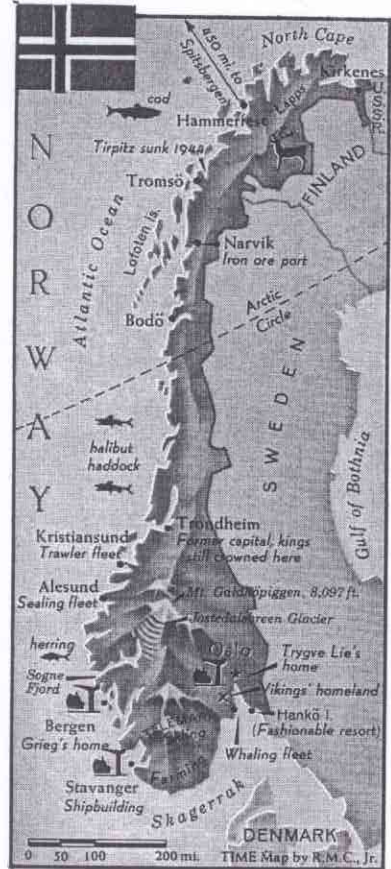
Defeat came at the hands of a Conservative, Liberal, Christian and Center Party coalition that had been trying for years to unseat Labor, to no avail. In 1961 it came tantalizingly close, winning a 74-74 tie in the Storting (Parliament), but Gerhardsen hung on to a razor's-edge majority with the help of two votes from the leftist Socialist Peoples Party. Two years ago he made a leftward gamble for fresh support: he promised four weeks' vacation for all workers and an old-age pension that, many believed, would put impossible strains on the budget.

The New Folks. During the campaign, the antisocialists pointed out that inflation has inched up 10% in the past two years, while the cost of housing, food and transportation has doubled since 1950. They took Labor to task for high taxes and an industrial-planning bureaucracy whose red-tape inefficiency has caused a series of scandals—the latest breaking just before the election.

This time, the coalition took a certain style to the hustings. While Labor campaigned in the sedate old manner, the Liberal Party latched onto the vigorous techniques of Halfdan Hegtun, 41, a candidate who rolled up his sleeves to plunge into crowds of astonished voters in supermarkets, on country roadsides, even college campuses. There were even some slogans—the Norwegian version of "time for a change"—to catch the imagination of the 200,000 young, first-time voters who were not at all sure that what had been good enough for their fathers was good enough for them.

The Old Folks. When the votes were in, enough antisocialists had registered their protests to give the coalition a ten-seat majority and firm control of the Storting for the next four years. But though Gerhardsen was out, Labor was not crushed: with 68 of 150 seats, it is still the biggest single party.

What Norway's old people wanted



PLEDGING LOYALTY  
Heads or tails.

to know was whether the new regime meant the ax for the traditional welfare program. No fear. The suddenly successful coalition promised to lower taxes by slashing huge food and housing subsidies and to curb inflation, probably, as a starter, by boosting the low lending rates of the state-owned banks. But it did not dare to suggest dismantling the structure of basic welfare benefits. As a matter of fact, listening to Liberal Leader Bent Roiseland, 63, the likely choice for Premier, one wondered why he ever bothered to run as an antisocialist. "The new coalition," said he, "does not intend to launch a revolution. We will listen to the opposition, and I am sure they must have some good advice after their long experience."

## FRANCE

### Divided They Stand

Antoine Pinay has shaved off the little mustache and discarded the round hat with upturned brim that were once his trademarks as Premier of the Fourth Republic. But his popularity with Frenchmen remains second only to that of De Gaulle himself. Last week a delegation representing three center parties of France presented itself in Pinay's handsome apartment overlooking the Bois de Boulogne in Paris to put a ques-