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# The Soviet Bloc's Answer to

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## European Integration:

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### Catholic Anti-Germanism and

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#### the Polish Project of a

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##### 'Catholic-Socialist'

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###### International

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#### Abstract

*This article explores an attempt by one Polish organisation – known until 1952 by the name of its weekly journal *Dziś i Jutro*, thereafter as PAX – to assemble a 'Catholic-socialist' international in the decade following the Second World War. This transnational project was predicated on co-operation across the Iron Curtain by Catholic thinkers and activists opposed to the rearmament and incorporation of (West) Germany into an integrated European community. The project's author Wojciech Kętrzyński deployed a discourse of protecting the 'human person' based on the prioritisation of global peace. Polish encounters with francophone Catholic activists from across Western Europe – especially with the French journal *Esprit* – bred serious intellectual engagement across the Iron Curtain at the level of Catholic philosophy and theology. Paradoxically, however, these activists accepted that the dignity of the human person would be best served by transnational anti-Germanism, at the price of complicity with – or outright participation in – Stalinism. The self-styled Catholic-socialist project thus failed, yet, surprisingly, it failed neither immediately nor completely. It thus reveals that possibilities existed throughout the cold war – even at the height of Soviet-bloc Stalinism – for intellectual, cultural and political exchanges and partnerships across the Iron Curtain.*

In the decade following the Second World War, as Europe disintegrated into two partitions separated by the Iron Curtain, there was a veritable explosion of transnational political 'internationals' – including federalist, socialist, Christian

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Democratic and Communist varieties – positing as a core objective the regional or continental integration of post-war Europe. Some glorified an agenda of post-war reconciliation; others emphasised the need for collective defence against a new or resurgent enemy. Most drew on interwar antecedents, from the Secrétariat International des Partis Démocratiques d'Inspiration Chrétienne, to the Labour and Socialist International, to the Comintern. Some involved interstate, intergovernmental action – others, simply political debate across national borders.<sup>1</sup> One of these projects achieved such prominence that the very term 'European integration' has become synonymous with the institutions whose creation it drove: the European Coal and Steel Community; Euratom and subsequently the European Economic Community, European Community and European Union.<sup>2</sup>

Joseph Stalin had liquidated the Comintern in 1943 as a show of good faith to his wartime allies, yet his 1947 launching of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) to co-ordinate regional policy at the level of the emerging Soviet bloc seemed to confirm Winston Churchill's publicly expressed fears regarding the division of Europe by an iron curtain.<sup>3</sup> It was at the first Cominform meeting that Stalin's top lieutenant A. A. Zhdanov announced what subsequently became known as the 'two-camps doctrine': that the USA was leading an 'imperialist and anti-democratic camp', opposed by a Soviet-led 'anti-imperialist and democratic camp'.<sup>4</sup> As Philippe Chenaux has underscored, the Christian Democrats of Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands and a handful of other countries established the Nouvelles Équipes Internationales (NEI) – derided by their detractors as a 'Christian Cominform' – precisely out of an awareness of the need to co-ordinate continental policy in the face of Soviet expansionism.<sup>5</sup> Within five years, the former interwar Labour and Socialist International, too, would reconstitute itself under the heading of the Socialist International, with the aim of co-ordinating the Social Democratic and non-revolutionary socialist parties of Western Europe.<sup>6</sup>

While historians have thus far emphasised the agency of Moscow, Paris and Rome in processes of European disintegration and integration alike, the unchallenged

<sup>1</sup> Peter Van Kemseke, *Towards an Era of Development: The Globalisation of Socialism and Christian Democracy, 1945–1965* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Wolfram Kaiser, 'Creating Core Europe: The Rise of the Party Network', in *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 191–252. See also, e.g. Roberto Papini, *The Christian Democrat International*, tr. Robert Royal (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997). On the intergovernmental, interstate story of European integration, see, e.g. Alan S. Milward, *European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Anna Di Biagio, 'The Establishment of the Cominform', in Giuliano Procacci et al., eds, *The Cominform: Minutes of the Three Conferences 1947/1948/1949* (Milan: Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, 1994), 11–34.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939–1953* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006), 318.

<sup>5</sup> Philippe Chenaux, *Une Europe Vaticane? Entre le Plan Marshall et les Traités de Rome* (Brussels: Ciaco, 1990), esp. 139–50.

<sup>6</sup> Gerd-Rainer Horn, *European Socialists Respond to Fascism: Ideology, Activism and Contingency in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). On the post-war period, see Peter Van Kemseke, 'Made in London: The Postwar Socialist International', in *Towards an Era of Development*, 17–21.

assumption is that the countries of the emerging Soviet bloc lacked any agency in these processes. This is a mistake. It is true that a combination of civil wars, *coups d'état*, material privation and travel restrictions for ordinary citizens marked the order of the day in East Central Europe in the mid to late 1940s, which made it difficult for any constituency to emerge with sufficient resources or access to join in the transnational conversation about Europe as a political idea.<sup>7</sup> Yet these constraints did not deprive the citizens of the emerging Soviet bloc of all transnational political agency<sup>8</sup> – even after the establishment of Stalinist regimes in their countries. One need only recall a few of the East-Central European cultural luminaries celebrated internationally even at the height of Stalinism who passed back and forth regularly between Poland and the West – including both later dissidents, like the philosopher Leszek Kołakowski, and eternal Party loyalists like the poet and novelist Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz – to understand that contacts of intellectual and political consequence could and did take place across the Iron Curtain even at the height of Stalinism.<sup>9</sup> The fact that those two writers travelled with Party and state approval should not erase their individual agency, nor does it mean that every Eastern European travelling abroad under Stalinism did and said nothing that would depart from a pre-approved plan. These contacts remained effective precisely because they retained an element of spontaneity, *pace* the ‘totalitarian’ omniscience traditionally ascribed to Stalinist state power.<sup>10</sup>

‘Agency’ in this context meant navigating the straits between political conformism and political opposition in reference to the declared policy of the post-war Communist establishment. While in practice this entire range of action amounted to ‘collaboration’ with Soviet-backed regimes, reducing the agency of philo-Soviet and philo-Communist actors to ‘collaboration’ makes it difficult to uncover the deeper roots of subsequent dissident activism by some of these actors, or of the domestic political leverage that transnational activism could bring to concessioned groups – like *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX – functioning on the margins of the narrowly defined political establishment. Self-conscious moral compromise by political actors of the time may or may not deserve contemporary historians’ ire, but one cannot ignore the tangible consequences of such compromise, which in some activists – most notably, Tadeusz

<sup>7</sup> Norman Naimark and Leonid Gibianskii, eds, *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, 1944–1949* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> On the political agency of transnational actors, see e.g. Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 216–17; Clive Barnett, ‘Political Agency between Urban and Transnational Spaces’, in Bice Maignushca and Raffaele Marchetti, eds, *Contemporary Political Agency: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), 31–51.

<sup>9</sup> Respectively – Wiesław Choduba, ed., *Bene merenti civitas Radomiensis: Leszkowi Kołakowskiemu w 80 rocznicę urodzin* (Radom: Radomskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 2007); Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, *Dzienniki*, 3 vols (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 2007–11).

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g. Idesbald Goddeeris, *Spioneren voor het communisme: Belgische prominenten en Poolse geheim agenten* (Leuven: LannooCampus, 2013).

Mazowiecki, who in 1989 became Poland's first non-Communist prime minister since the Second World War – ultimately inspired a turn to dissidence.<sup>11</sup>

This article tells a previously unknown story: of one Polish organisation's attempt to build its own international, predicated on intellectual and political co-operation across the Iron Curtain while at the same time modelled on both Communist internationalism, which it was intended to complement, and on the Western European Christian Democrats' international network, the NEI, with which it was to compete. This organisation – heavily invested and implicated in the implementation of Polish Stalinism – was nonetheless avowedly Catholic. Founded by Bolesław Piasecki, the infamous interwar fascist, and known until 1952 by the name of its weekly journal, *Dziś i Jutro* (*Today and Tomorrow*), and thereafter as PAX, this philo-Stalinist movement had the privilege of being Poland's sole politically engaged Catholic organisation, not merely to survive, but indeed to flourish throughout the entire post-war decade.<sup>12</sup> Its project of a 'Catholic-socialist international' reflected both an attempt on the part of its leadership to safeguard the movement's unique status in Poland and to expand the influence that it had already begun to establish in Western Europe. Its goal, as articulated in an internal circular written in 1950, was to connect – at a minimum – Polish, French and Italian organisations, to be followed by regional integration with East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

The 'socialist' dimension of this international was never fully defined, yet it is the very elasticity of that notion that allowed all participants in the project to reach an immediate consensus on the single ideology that most closely linked them: anti-Germanism. The 'Catholic-socialist international' was therefore to be neither strictly Marxist – open, as it was, to a range of Catholic organisations rejecting Marxism's secularising tendencies – nor Communist, in the sense that it did not presuppose co-ordination with existing Western European Communist organisations like the Parti Communiste Français or the Partito Comunista Italiano. Rather, it deployed a discourse of protecting the 'human person' shared by Catholic activists on both sides of the Iron Curtain, arguing that achieving these personalist aims required the preservation of global peace. This, in turn, putatively required the prevention at all costs of (West) Germany's rearmament and incorporation into an integrated European community in the wake of the Second World War. To the extent that the 'Catholic-socialist international' achieved any success, it was as a result of the

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g. Maria Hirszowicz, *Pałapki zaangażowania: Intelktualiści w służbie komunizmu* (Warsaw: Scholar, 2001). On Mazowiecki, see Piotr H. Kosicki, 'After 1989: The Life and Death of the Catholic Third Way', *Times Literary Supplement*, 13 Dec. 2013, 13–15.

<sup>12</sup> Mikołaj Stanisław Kunicki has written an exhaustive biography of Bolesław Piasecki, whose post-war turn to Catholic philo-communism led him to found *Dziś i Jutro*. Kunicki does not, however, use the wealth of the *Dziś i Jutro* foreign correspondence files preserved in the archives of *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX's successor organisation, *Civitas Christiana*. It is in those files that one finds the design for the Catholic-socialist international, alongside six years' worth of extensive – principally French-language – correspondence documenting the Polish activists' efforts at assembling the international: Mikołaj Stanisław Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red: Nationalism, Catholicism and Communism in Twentieth-Century Poland—The Politics of Bolesław Piasecki, 1915–1979* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012).

anti-Germanism – at once Catholic and francophone – that glued this ‘international’ together.

This article will focus in depth on the genesis, logic and design of the international, combining methods drawn from the fields of intellectual and international history. The study of this international captures a virtually unexamined historical moment of transnational cultural exchange and political co-operation across the Iron Curtain at the height of Soviet-bloc Stalinism. In its campaign for a Catholic-socialist international, *Dziś i Jutro* benefited from a credit of confidence among self-styled ‘progressive Catholic’ circles in Western Europe accumulated through a combination of introductions facilitated by Polish exiles, encounters at congresses of the Communist-initiated world peace movement and contacts made on an ad hoc basis since 1945.<sup>13</sup> Although *Dziś i Jutro* acquired a wide range of francophone Western European ‘Catholic-socialist’ partners – from the peace movement Pax Christi to the personalist writers of the journals *Esprit* and *La Quinzaine* – this article will use as its case study the Poles’ contact with one particular milieu, *Esprit*, which was both their first international interlocutor and their most committed partner throughout the years of Stalinism.

Encounters and contacts such as those with *Esprit* bred serious intellectual engagement across the Iron Curtain at the level of Catholic philosophy and theology, albeit conscripted into the service of Stalinism. This was, however, no mere exercise in cynicism or opportunism. Rather, the Western European interlocutors attracted by *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX genuinely believed that the universalistic goal of safeguarding the dignity of the human person would be best served by transnational anti-Germanism, rather than opposition to Stalinism. The Polish Communist establishment maintained an active interest in these Catholic contacts, but they took place neither at the behest nor even with the full comprehension of the Communists. Indeed, even in the face of an emerging Stalinist order in Poland, the attempt to construct an ‘international’ represented an initiative of the Catholic laity.

Piasecki’s high-ranking wartime and post-war subordinate, Wojciech Kętrzyński, became *Dziś i Jutro*’s decisive voice on Catholic social teaching and philosophy. Kętrzyński had spent the Second World War as a nationalist guerrilla fighter, only to turn in the war’s aftermath to a syncretic blend of Catholicism and socialism. While many of his colleagues treated this exercise purely instrumentally, Kętrzyński refashioned himself into a serious theorist of what he called ‘Catholic socialism’, attuned to long-standing debates on Catholic social teaching among leading European Catholic thinkers, many of whom he met and befriended as a leader of *Dziś i Jutro*. Kętrzyński’s proposal for the international underscored the project’s supposed religious bona fides as well as its aspirations to pierce the Iron Curtain by embracing

<sup>13</sup> See Gerd-Rainer Horn and Emmanuel Gerard, eds, *Left Catholicism 1943–1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001); also, Piotr H. Kosicki, ‘Between Catechism and Revolution: Poland, France and the Story of Catholicism and Socialism in Europe, 1878–1958’, PhD thesis, Princeton University, 2011, esp. 239–424.

goals defined at the third and final Cominform meeting by the Italian Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti.

In his attempt to take up Togliatti's 1949 call for Catholic–Communist collaboration on causes common to both sides – most notably, social justice and world peace – Kętrzyński was ultimately unsuccessful. Yet *Dziś i Jutro*'s project nonetheless heralded the achievement of a transnational Catholic–socialist politics involving leading Polish, French and Belgian Catholic thinkers and activists striving for European co-operation on Communist terms. All of this played out at the height of Stalinism, yet Kętrzyński and his Western European counterparts saw their endeavour as Catholic in nature and motivation. Moreover, its consequences would long outlast the Stalinist era: on the one hand, they would leave *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX with devoted followers in francophone Western Europe; on the other hand, for those who would abandon *Dziś i Jutro* after the international's failure, their familiarity with Poland and their personal relationships with former PAX activists would form the bedrock of later support for the Solidarity trade union network founded among others by former PAX figures like Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

### Whence Polish 'Catholic Socialism'?

With the formation of new state structures after Poland's liberation by the Red Army, supervision of churches and religiously affiliated associations fell initially to the Ministry of Public Administration. The minister Władysław Wolski created a Department of Religious Affairs to handle the logistics of administering confessional policy, while his office handled political decisions in direct consultation with the Central Committee of, first, the Polish Workers' Party (PPR, Polska Partia Robotnicza) and, later, its successor, the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR, Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza). In April 1950, the Polish parliament would eliminate this ministry and turn the Department of Religious Affairs into an autonomous administrative unit answering directly to the prime minister. From that point onward, the Polish state security apparatus took over most of Wolski's portfolio.<sup>14</sup>

Given how rapidly the new Soviet-backed establishment was replacing the hierarchy's interwar privileges with an apparatus designed more to keep the institutional Church in check than work with it, it is unsurprising that the most prominent Polish bishops of the mid 1940s – notably, Cardinal-Primate August Hlond and the Archbishop of Cracow, Adam Stefan Sapieha – looked to proven lay activists from the interwar and war years to represent the hierarchy's interests in Polish public life. The one group that initially catered to both the new regime and the ecclesiastical hierarchy in early post-war Poland was also the one group that played up its roots in interwar fascism as a strength, rather than a weakness. Arrested in 1944 as the leader

<sup>14</sup> See Bartłomiej Noszczak, *Polityka państwa wobec Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w Polsce w okresie internowania prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego 1953–1956* (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2008), 21–58.

of a guerrilla faction known as the Confederation of the Nation, Bolesław Piasecki hatched a plan while in NKVD custody to re-enter Polish public life in the war's aftermath by carving out his own domain: writers and politicians bound together by a self-described 'social-Catholic journal' that Piasecki ultimately grew into a financial micro-empire.

Following a series of conversations between the imprisoned Piasecki and NKVD general Ivan Serov, the PPR first secretary Władysław Gomułka summoned Piasecki for a face-to-face meeting on 4 July 1945.<sup>15</sup> Although Piasecki made Gomułka uneasy,<sup>16</sup> the PPR leader invited him back for a second meeting two weeks later, with instructions to prepare a political programme in the interim. Following their second meeting, Gomułka approved Piasecki's project to start a Catholic lay association anchored in a periodical.

The political programme that Piasecki submitted to Gomułka subsequently became the basis for the front-page headline article 'Zagadnienia istotne' (Essential Questions), with which Piasecki launched the first issue of *Dziś i Jutro* on 25 November 1945. After committing to making Poland a 'bridging, not a dividing, factor between the world of the East and the West' and to campaigning on behalf of Polish-Soviet friendship, Piasecki concentrated on the area of greatest personal and institutional interest to him: Catholic-socialist partnership. Piasecki declared,

Ideological elements of the governing camp harbour fear that allowing for the identification of idealistic milieux and subsequently a movement can result in the regeneration of reactionary elements on Polish soil. In contrast, the Christian-idealist milieux lack faith in the good will of Marxist leaders, in their loyal commitment to involve them in the construction of Polish reality. We believe that this mutual lack of trust must be overcome. We want to make this happen by a) sharing with Marxists in the principal task of reconstruction and transformation of the Polish state; and b) sharing with Marxists our ideologically pure and loyal struggle for the fullest development of the Polish idea in the service of humanity. Mutual relations between Marxists and idealists can only enrich both sides.<sup>17</sup>

In an attempt to appeal to Gomułka by adopting Marxist terminology, Piasecki used the term 'idealists' to refer to all religious people, a group in which he included himself. The operative terms in Piasecki's proposal were 'sharing', 'co-operation' and 'mutual', with the clear suggestion that Piasecki expected to build a partnership that would break down the wall between the two. As Mikołaj Kunicki has put it, 'What distinguished Piasecki from opposition politicians was his approach to the Communists . . . Piasecki aimed at establishing himself within the PPR-dominated system. He did not command a fully fledged political party, but this limitation also spared him the worries that beset opposition leaders. Parties could be crushed and eliminated, but Catholics were there to stay'.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 79–82.

<sup>16</sup> Władysław Gomułka, *Pamiętniki*, ed. Andrzej Werblan (Warsaw: BGW, 1994), II, 516–17.

<sup>17</sup> Bolesław Piasecki, 'Ogólne zasady światopoglądowe', July 1945, repr. in Andrzej Micewski, *Współrzędzić czy nie kłamać? Pax i Znak w Polsce 1945–1976* (Paris: Libella, 1978), 26–7.

<sup>18</sup> Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 86.



Though not entirely certain what to make of the ideologically realigned assemblage of former national-chauvinists and fascists, Primate Hlond initially offered them his token support, even contributing US\$500 to help get their journal off the ground.<sup>19</sup> This newly constituted group chose as the subtitle for its journal the phrase *katolicki tygodnik społeczny* (social-Catholic weekly). Driven to cater at once to Catholicism and to Marxist socialism, having appeared to de-centre their nationalism in favour of the pursuit of social justice, and benefiting from the initial support of hierarchy and establishment alike, this milieu seemed poised to become post-war Poland's principal export to European Catholic activism.

In the first year of their weekly paper's operation, the *Dziś i Jutro* staff received a government concession to run a private bus company serving the Warsaw area. Their commercial ventures soon multiplied, growing to encompass two trading companies, Inco and Veritas; a private high school; a daily newspaper and the only publishing house in Poland with a concession to print the Bible in large quantities. From the outset, then, *Dziś i Jutro* both maintained a close working relationship with the emerging Communist establishment and pursued its own autonomous agenda – partly financial, partly ideological. In so doing, they drew on major currents in European Catholic thought, such as the return to the writings of Thomas Aquinas ushered in by Pope Leo XIII in the *fin-de-siècle* and the birth of a Dominican theology of labour in Belgium and France in the 1930s.<sup>20</sup> Catholic natural law was to serve as a point of departure for activism at the intersection of Catholicism and Marxist socialism.

The interwar anti-Semitism and national-chauvinism of the movement's old guard gave way with the close of the Second World War to analogous sentiments directed against Germany. After the war ended, Germany remained an object of fear and loathing for Poles who had just survived a brutal occupation. Moreover, new fears developed that international efforts to reconstruct, rearm and reintegrate Germany into the European state system might turn it once again into a revanchist power. The decision approved by the Allied leaders at the 1945 Potsdam Conference to shift Poland's borders to the west had granted Silesia and Pomerania – immediately reimagined as 'Recovered' Territories – to Poland, in exchange for land taken by the USSR from the east of Poland. Two years of ethnic cleansing followed, targeting Germans from these territories in order to make room for eastern Polish deportees.<sup>21</sup> The entirety of post-war Poland's elites – bishops and Communists, writers and guerrilla fighters – accepted the new territory, and this consensus bred also a shared fear that Poland would be the first target of any German revanchism.

In light of the Holy See's decision to side with German bishops refusing to relinquish their diocesan jurisdiction over the Territories – in 1948, Pius XII addressed

<sup>19</sup> Mikołaj Rostworowski, *Słowo o PAX-ie* (Warsaw: Pax, 1968), 24–5.

<sup>20</sup> Jürgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle théologie – new theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g. Hugo Service, 'Reinterpreting the Expulsion of Germans from Poland, 1945–9', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 47, 3 (2012), 528–50.



a long letter to the German bishops declaring full support for their claims<sup>22</sup> – *Dziś i Jutro* found a new national-chauvinist focus. Though this focus certainly detracted from their declared agenda of social-Catholic activism, it dovetailed perfectly with the Polish *raison d'état* of defending the Recovered Territories at all costs. Indeed, even the Polish Episcopate refused to accept Pius XII's judgment with respect to Germany.<sup>23</sup>

At a glance, it might seem difficult to offer an unequivocal definition of the philosophy and theology of the *Dziś i Jutro* group. Ultimately, Piasecki's organisation would be derailed in 1955 by a Holy Office condemnation of both its flagship weekly and a collection of Piasecki's own essays gathered under the title of *Zagadnienia istotne* (*Essential Questions*) – the same title as his front-page article in *Dziś i Jutro*'s first issue. In that volume, Piasecki argued, for example, that 'ontologically' God-loving Marxists – if true to their own ideology – were better poised to achieve salvation than 'intentionally' God-loving – yet sinful – Christians. Declared heretical for the exalted status accorded to socialists – Marxists, in particular – Piasecki's volume nonetheless drew extensively on some of the most pastorally progressive writings of his day, which a decade later would shape the reforms instituted by the Catholic Church through the Second Vatican Council. Piasecki's theological world-view thus included, for example, a clear and present justification of the Polish claim to the 'Recovered Territories', embedded in a veritable political theology of the global struggle for peace: 'For the camp of peace, the matter of thought and work of the masses of the faithful is a question not of tactical significance, but of strategy in the struggle against the bellicose plans of imperialism. Catholicism has a decisive position here, for its attitude has a determining influence on all Christianity, and Christianity in turn profoundly shapes humanity as a whole'.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the strong hand with which Piasecki guided his movement, *Dziś i Jutro* played host to a range of ideologies and advocacies, yet all shared two central tenets, both couched in Catholic philosophy and theology: activism at the intersection of Catholicism and socialism, and anti-Germanism. In the service of both aims, the movement's various thinkers rewrote six decades' worth of Catholic social doctrine dating back to Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, insisting that only the partnership of Catholics and state socialists could fulfil the aims of the Church's social teaching. Like Piasecki's 1954 collection, articles published in *Dziś i Jutro* between 1945 and 1955 consistently presented a Catholic imperative for an anti-German Polish foreign policy predicated on a logical slippery slope: rapprochement with Germany (after 1949, specifically with West Germany) would lead to German rearmament, which would destroy world peace, which would render social justice impossible.

<sup>22</sup> The letter appeared later that same year in Polish translation as an anti-German, anti-Vatican propaganda piece: Pius XII, *Papież Pius XII do biskupów niemieckich: Pełny tekst listu z dnia 1 marca 1948* (Katowice: Odra, 1948).

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g. Gregor Thum, 'The Patriotic Reorganisation of the Church', in *Uprooted: How Breslau Became Wrocław During the Century of Expulsions*, tr. Tom Lampert and Allison Brown (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 43–52.

<sup>24</sup> Bolesław Piasecki, *Zagadnienia istotne: Artykuły z lat 1945–1954* (Warsaw: Pax, 1954), 33.

### Catholics, Communists and World Peace

With the launching of a Communist-backed international peace campaign, Catholic activists behind the emerging Iron Curtain got into the action as well, seeking to define the terms of their engagement in the new political order. The Congress of Intellectuals in Defence of Peace that took place on 25–8 August 1948 in Wrocław (formerly Breslau) – the largest city in Poland’s ‘Recovered Territories’ – was only the beginning of a tightly-packed series of peace campaign events. Together, these contributed to an explosion in the number of *Dziś i Jutro*’s personal and institutional contacts in Western Europe.<sup>25</sup>

Polish Catholic activists were not privy to the backroom Cominform machinations that decided the terms on which would be formed, first, the International Liaison Committee of Intellectuals for Peace and, then, the Partisans of Peace.<sup>26</sup> Christened thus in Paris in April 1949, the Partisans of Peace adopted a mission statement directed principally against the new North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and summarised succinctly by its chair, Nobel laureate Frédéric Joliot-Curie: ‘We are not here to ask for peace, but to impose it’.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, it was the Paris congress’s closing resolution, which called for a complete ban on atomic weapons, that set up the greatest success of the Communist-led peace movement: the Stockholm Appeal.<sup>28</sup> In the Polish context, the Stockholm Appeal would become the glue holding together *Dziś i Jutro*’s own international initiative, which the Polish Catholics undertook soon after the Appeal’s announcement on 15 March 1950. Drafted by eminent Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg and accepted by acclamation by the assembled Permanent Committee of the Partisans of Peace, the Appeal demanded ‘the absolute prohibition of the atomic weapon’, stipulating that ‘the government which first would use the atomic weapon against any country whatsoever would commit a crime against humanity and should be treated as a war criminal’.<sup>29</sup>

The Stockholm Appeal shrewdly targeted religious, as well as political, constituencies. As Joliot-Curie wrote in June 1950, ‘We have come to a problem

<sup>25</sup> The Wrocław congress as such has received only summary treatment: Dominique Desanti, *Les Staliniens (1944–1956): Une expérience politique* (Paris: Fayard, 1975), 107; Lawrence S. Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement through 1953* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993), 175–7; Marci Shore, *Caviar and Ashes: A Warsaw Generation’s Life and Death in Marxism, 1918–1968* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006), 270–73; Tony Judt, *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944–1956* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1992), 224. See also Eryk Krasucki, *Międzynarodowy komunista: Jerzy Borejsza biografia polityczna* (Warsaw: PWN, 2009), 156–61.

<sup>26</sup> Wittner, *One World or None*, 177–80; Weston Ullrich, ‘Preventing “Peace”: The British Government and the Second World Peace Congress’, *Cold War History* (iFirst 2010), DOI:10.1080/14682741003686123, 5.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Wittner, *One World or None*, 178.

<sup>28</sup> See Yvon Tranvouez, ‘1950: L’Appel de Stockholm et la naissance du progressisme chrétien’, in *Catholiques d’abord: Approches du mouvement catholique en France (XIXe–XXe siècle)* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1988), 132–71; Wittner, *One World or None*, 182–4.

<sup>29</sup> Repr. in Frédéric Joliot-Curie, ‘A Proposal toward the Elimination of the Atomic Danger’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, June 1950, 166–7, at 166.

which involves all humanity, the American citizen as well as the English, the French or the Russian citizen, whatever his political or religious opinions may be'.<sup>30</sup> Problematic as the appeal was for Pope Pius XII, it is not the case that 'the Catholic church, for the most part, dodged the issue of the Bomb'.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, Yvon Tranvouez was right to call 1950 'the year of the birth of Christian progressivism' precisely because of certain European Catholic circles' enthusiastic responses to the Stockholm Appeal.<sup>32</sup> In particular, self-described 'progressive Catholics'<sup>33</sup> – whom the Poles of *Dziś i Jutro* called 'Catholic socialists' – chose not to remain on the sidelines of the global peace campaign, instead wholeheartedly taking on the task of developing principled justifications anchored in Catholic social teaching.

The degree to which the Stockholm Appeal succeeded in drawing Christian support away from the American camp to back a key Soviet-camp initiative frightened Pius XII. In 1950, the pope publicly condemned 'pacifist efforts or propaganda originating from those who deny all belief in God' as 'always very dubious'.<sup>34</sup> While thus casting aspersions on Communist-inspired peace activism, Pius XII unwittingly left the door ajar for progressive Catholicism, which, far from denying belief in God, in fact insisted that global peace activism necessarily followed from the social teaching promoted by the Vatican.

In Paris, the Union des Chrétiens Progressistes (UCP), a small advocacy group founded in 1948 by the prominent progressive Catholic author and Algerian independence activist André Mandouze, had flagged when he relocated to Algiers and subsequently devoted all his time to anti-colonial activism.<sup>35</sup> In 1950, inspired by the Stockholm Appeal campaign, its most engaged members formed the core of a new progressive Catholic bi-weekly called *La Quinzaine (Fortnight)*.<sup>36</sup> Also invigorated by the Appeal was a French network of theological study circles whose members described themselves as the Jeunesse de l'Église. Its roots lay in two prominent French Catholic projects challenging Vatican orthodoxy on the Church's mission: the dissident Dominican theology of the seminary at Le Saulchoir, whose key exponents Marie-Dominique Chenu and Yves Congar campaigned for pastoral renewal and a return to patristic sources, and the pioneering Mission de France, a seminary established in occupied France to train French priests for missionary work amidst the French urban proletariat. Given that these were groups considered by the Vatican to

<sup>30</sup> Joliot-Curie, 'A Proposal toward the Elimination of the Atomic Danger', 167.

<sup>31</sup> Wittner, *One World or None*, 193.

<sup>32</sup> Tranvouez, '1950'. See also René d'Ouinice, 'Les Catholiques et l'Appel de Stockholm', *Études*, Jul.–Aug. 1950, 106–20.

<sup>33</sup> André Mandouze, 'Prendre la main tendue', in *Les Chrétiens et la politique* (Paris: Temps Présent, 1948), 39–78, at 51. Mandouze argued that Europe needed a communitarian revolution to reverse capitalist attacks on the dignity of the human person and therefore Mandouze's progressive Catholicism was predicated on the 'recognition that no revolution is possible without the Communists but that the Communists cannot do it alone'. Mandouze, 'Prendre la main tendue', 62. Italics in the original.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Wittner, *One World or None*, 189.

<sup>35</sup> See, e.g. André Mandouze, *Mémoires d'outre-siècle: D'une résistance à l'autre* (Paris: Viviane Hamy, 1998), I, esp. 185.

<sup>36</sup> Yvon Tranvouez, 'Guerre froide et progressisme chrétien: *La Quinzaine* (1950–1953)', *Vingtième Siècle: Revue d'histoire* 13 (1987), 83–94, at 83.

be teetering on the edge of open heresy, the Jeunesse de l'Église itself remained in a precarious position.<sup>37</sup>

Separately, France sported both Dominican- and Jesuit-run think tanks of laymen and priests working together to develop a Catholic theory of political economy responsive to the dilemmas of decolonisation. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Dominicans' *Économie et Humanisme* and the Jesuits' *Action Populaire* had already begun to shift their focus towards the Global South. These were organisations born of the late interwar turn in Western European Catholic thought towards what Samuel Moyn has described as a Catholic 'new rights-talk' rooted in the notion of the 'human person'.<sup>38</sup> Convinced that a precondition to safeguarding the dignity of every person was an empirically informed theological valuing of human labour, avant-garde Catholic thinkers among clergy and laity alike throughout the 1940s and 1950s did pioneering work at the crossroads of anthropology and theology – as Gerd-Rainer Horn has amply documented.<sup>39</sup>

This work focused not only on Europe's industrial proletariat – for example, through the 'worker-priest' movement popularised in France, Belgium and the Netherlands in the final years of the Second World War – but also on subject populations in the French and British overseas empires. Personalism therefore overlapped substantially with an emerging Catholic *tiers-mondialisme*.<sup>40</sup> The Jesuit think tank was also closely connected to Pax Christi, a Catholic peace movement originally founded to promote Franco-German reconciliation that subsequently grew into one of Europe's most prominent peace-advocacy organisations.<sup>41</sup> Pax Christi would become one of *Dziś i Jutro*'s most committed partners in the attempted construction of the Catholic-socialist international, hosting *Dziś i Jutro* leaders in France in 1951–2 and sending some of its top activists on a lecture tour of Poland in 1953.<sup>42</sup>

All of these organisations were already interested in the situation of Polish Catholics by the time the Partisans of Peace initiated the Stockholm Appeal, which came

<sup>37</sup> On the Dominicans and the Mission de France, see Gerd-Rainer Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave (1924–1959)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); François Leprieur, *Quand Rome condamne: Dominicains et prêtres ouvriers* (Paris: Plon/Cerf, 1989). On the Jeunesse de l'Église, see Thierry Keck, *Jeunesse de l'Église: 1936–1955: Aux sources de la crise progressiste en France* (Paris: Karthala, 2004).

<sup>38</sup> Samuel Moyn, 'Personalism, Community and the Origins of Human Rights', in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, ed., *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 85–106.

<sup>39</sup> Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*.

<sup>40</sup> See Denis Pelletier, *Économie et Humanisme: De l'utopie communautaire au combat pour le tiers-monde, 1941–1966* (Paris: Cerf, 1996). On Action Populaire, Étienne Fouilloux, 'L'Action populaire au temps de la reconstruction, 1946–1958', *Chrétiens et sociétés: XVIe–XXIe siècles*, 11 (2004).

<sup>41</sup> François Mabile, *Les Catholiques et la paix au temps de la guerre froide: Le Mouvement catholique international pour la paix Pax Christi* (Paris: Harmattan, 2004).

<sup>42</sup> Kosicki, 'Between Catechism and Revolution', 402–11, 442–70. For published evidence of Pax Christi's close ties with *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX, see Robert Bosc, 'Catholiques de Pologne', *Revue de l'Action populaire*, Jul.–Aug. (1953), 606–13; Jacques Mignon, 'Des Catholiques français et polonais se rencontrent', *L'Actualité religieuse dans le monde*, 1 Aug. 1953, 33–4.

the same year as an April 1950 Polish agreement between Church and State that briefly promised to safeguard the ecclesiastical hierarchy's place in Poland's socialist 'revolution'. In France, it was the Jesuit Fr Robert Bosc – the Jesuits' point person for the Soviet bloc and Pax Christi's future emissary to Poland – who sang the praises of what would prove to be an entirely toothless accord.<sup>43</sup> The French progressive Catholic renaissance came at a time when the Stockholm Appeal seemed poised to convince some Catholics that maybe the Soviet camp did, after all, have a valuable role to play in what the Catholic Church saw as its exclusive terrain: the promotion of peace and justice. It is thus perhaps no surprise that Pius XII was already throwing up his hands in frustration by mid 1950. Wladimir d'Ormesson, French ambassador to the Holy See, witnessed in May of that year what he considered a deeply disconcerting conversation at the Vatican between Pius XII and Cardinal Pierre-Marie Gerlier of Lyon. With Gerlier complaining to the pontiff at length about the rising tide of 'reckless and dangerous' progressive currents among French Catholics, 'Pius XII responded, smiling, "How many condemnations would you have me issue?"'<sup>44</sup>

### The Legacy of Emmanuel Mounier

Little more than a year after Emmanuel Mounier – French icon of avant-garde Catholic personalism since the early 1930s – spent three weeks in Poland in May 1946, Wojciech Kętrzyński, the future initiator of *Dziś i Jutro's* project of a Catholic-socialist international, came to Paris at Mounier's invitation. In May 1947, Kętrzyński enjoyed several days in the Parisian editorial offices of Mounier's monthly journal *Esprit*, establishing a personal rapport with his staff – most notably, the editorial secretary, Jean-Marie Domenach.<sup>45</sup> Kętrzyński also took advantage of his perfect spoken French to introduce himself – sometimes on Mounier's recommendation, sometimes on his own – all over Paris, and in Lyon and Brussels as well: to the Dominican 'new theologians' at Le Saulchoir, to the UCP and many others.

What drew Kętrzyński to these groups was a combination of factors that can be grouped together under the broad heading of their willingness to take state socialism seriously while remaining – at least according to their own self-conceptions – on firmly Catholic ground. For Saulchoir's Father Congar, as for the Union's Marcel Moiroud and other francophone Catholic thinkers whom Kętrzyński sought out

<sup>43</sup> Robert Bosc, 'L'Accord du 14 avril 1950 entre le gouvernement et l'Épiscopat polonais', *Études*, Sept. (1950), 258–62. On the limited shelf life of the Accord, see, e.g. Jan Żaryn, *Kościół a władza w Polsce (1945–1950)* (Warsaw: DiG, 1997), 311.

<sup>44</sup> Wladimir d'Ormesson, Report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 9 May 1950, quoted in Yvon Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes: La Crise du progressisme chrétien, 1950–1955* (Paris: Cerf, 2000), 46.

<sup>45</sup> The visit took place in mid May 1947. See Dominik Horodyński to Emmanuel Mounier, 16 Jan. 1947, ESP2.C1-02.06, Institut Mémoires de l'Édition Contemporaine (Institute of Documentation of Contemporary Publishing, IMEC), Saint-Germain-la-Blanche-Herbe; Konstanty Łubieński to Emmanuel Mounier, 13 Mar. 1947, IMEC ESP2.C1-02.06; Jean-Marie Domenach to Konstanty Łubieński, 18 Mar. 1947, IMEC ESP2.C1-02.06.

in Western Europe, a principled Catholic response to the material privation of the working classes in an industrialised Europe required more than the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. Indeed, at a minimum, it required close and careful examination of state socialist answers to the social question – from full employment guarantees, through collectivisation of agriculture and nationalisation of industry – which could provide Catholics with valuable lessons for their own activist efforts, insofar as Catholics might then incorporate what had worked for state socialism. Some of the progressive Catholics wanted to go even further: to reach out and connect with socialists, indeed, to develop syncretic blends of Catholicism and state socialism that would combine the best of both worlds.

As he observed this range of reactions in France to his visit and to the agenda of his movement back in Poland, the wheels in Kętrzyński's mind began turning. Seeking to meet his Western European counterparts on ground familiar to them, he read voraciously and quoted liberally from Mounier's writings. It helped immensely that the French thinker had been genuinely impressed by *Dziś i Jutro* during his 1946 visit to Warsaw, and for the rest of his life he remained consistently supportive of their efforts.<sup>46</sup> As Kętrzyński would remind Mounier's successors at *Esprit* following the latter's death in March 1950, Mounier had introduced him to them in 1947 as 'his most intimate of collaborators' in Poland.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, in Kętrzyński's case, principle and political interest converged in such a way that he seemed to develop both a genuine affinity for Mounier's thought and a shrewd understanding of its potential political utility for linking his Polish movement with a range of groups scattered across Western Europe.

Indeed, this was not just about Kętrzyński. Even a quick glance at the personal correspondence between the staffs of *Dziś i Jutro* and *Esprit* reveals that these people liked each other and respected each other not only as brothers in arms, but indeed as friends. One must not forget this very real human element when reflecting on the reasons for *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX's success in the international arena, which was substantial enough to occasion in France two sets of attacks in print on the Polish Catholic socialists. The first came in 1956 from Maria Winowska – an interwar Polish Thomist who, having spent the war in France active in the Resistance, made a career after the war of writing hagiographies of modern saints and martyrs, as well as serving as Polish primate Stefan Wyszyński's unofficial personal representative in France. Winowska, writing under the penname 'Claude Naurois', published a book entitled *Dieu contre Dieu*, in which she accused a range of French Catholic activists – in particular, from *La Quinzaine* and Pax Christi – of having been 'indoctrinated

<sup>46</sup> Emmanuel Mounier, Diary, 29 May 1946, IMEC MNR2.D5-06.01; also Piotr H. Kosicki, 'L'Avènement des intellectuels catholiques: Le Mensuel *Więź* et les conséquences polonaises du personnalisme mounierien', *Vingtième Siècle: Revue d'histoire* 102 (2009), 31–48, at 35–41.

<sup>47</sup> Kętrzyński to Domenach, 29 Mar. 1950, *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX Foreign Correspondence File, V/87, Archiwum Katolickiego Stowarzyszenia 'Civitas Christiana' (Archives of the 'Civitas Christiana' Catholic Association, AKSCC).

and brainwashed' by Piasecki.<sup>48</sup> Though both substantive and amply documented, Winowska's book went largely unnoticed because its publication in the autumn of 1956 coincided exactly with the 'Polish October' and the failed Hungarian Revolution.<sup>49</sup> Yet, as late as 1957 and 1960, Polish Catholic Intelligentsia Club activists visiting Paris would note the discrimination that they experienced at the hands of, among others, Pax Christi, because they were Polish Catholics representing a movement other than PAX.<sup>50</sup> Just a few years later, in the middle of the Second Vatican Council, came the coup de grace against PAX's influence in France. In response to PAX's attempts to use intermediaries to influence Wyszyński, the French Episcopate ensured the publication in the pages of France's highest-circulation Catholic journals, *La Croix* and *France Catholique*, unambiguously worded condemnations of PAX.<sup>51</sup>

At the heart of this lasting political loyalty lay genuine interpersonal affection, on which Kętrzyński and his colleagues built institutional ties, then finally a common intellectual and political programme of Catholic socialism predicated above all on a philo-Soviet geopolitics of peace. In 1950, the half-dozen or so Poles who dealt most extensively with Western Europe felt genuinely crushed by Mounier's death. Their emotional response is clear in the coverage devoted by the *Dziś i Jutro* weekly to the French thinker, amounting to almost an entire special issue.<sup>52</sup> Mounier's death, moreover, bound them ever more profoundly to his successors at *Esprit*, who reciprocated the bond in no uncertain terms. On hearing of Mounier's death over Polish radio on his return from Stockholm in 1950, Kętrzyński immediately sat down to draft two letters, one to *Esprit's* new managing editor Jean-Marie Domenach and one on behalf of the entire *Dziś i Jutro* movement to the entire *Esprit* staff. In the latter letter, he wrote,

It is incumbent upon us all, among Christian activists for the right of Christendom to participate in the making of history, to prevent the abysses of misunderstanding from opening among the working masses who, by the socialist road, seek the path to liberty – and Christian thought, which points them in this pursuit to the path that leads to God. Such was, according to our own understanding of the phenomenal body of work of Emmanuel Mounier, the message that, in defiance of the everyday difficulties and contradictions of our era, he attempted to bring to fruition for *Esprit* and for the personalist movement. We wish for our brothers, the staff of *Esprit*, that they will continue

<sup>48</sup> Claude Nauross [Maria Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu? Drame des catholiques progressistes dans une Église du silence* (Paris: Saint-Paul, 1956), 99–113. For background, Daria Mazur, *Realizm socpaxowski* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, 2013), I, 7, 30–2, 266.

<sup>49</sup> Paweł Machcewicz, *Rebellious Satellite: Poland, 1956*, tr. Maya Latynski (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press/Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2009); Charles Gati, *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press/Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006).

<sup>50</sup> Jerzy Zawieyski, Diary entry for 13 May 1957, Jerzy Zawieyski Diaries, Biblioteka Narodowa akc. 9292/4; also Janusz Zabłocki, diary entry for 9 Oct. 1960, in *Dzienniki 1956–1965* (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2008), 280.

<sup>51</sup> Jean-Marie Mayeur, '“L’Affaire Pax” en France', in Jean Offredo, ed., *Le Cardinal de fer: Stefan Wyszyński* (Malakoff, Paris: Cana, 2003), 127–36.

<sup>52</sup> The obituary is in a special issue published in May: 'Emanuel Mounier', *Dziś i Jutro*, 9–16 Apr. 1950.



to carry out this message. We will participate in this effort in all solidarity as companions in work and combat.<sup>53</sup>

Kętrzyński pledged the balance of *Dziś i Jutro*'s credit with *Esprit* – 4,200 unclaimed francs for article reprints and permissions – to Mounier's widow and children, left suddenly without income.<sup>54</sup>

### A Catholic-Socialist, Anti-German Political Theology

Following the 19 January 1947 elections to the Polish parliament, *Dziś i Jutro* had three MPs. In an assembly of over 400 MPs co-ordinated by the iron fist of first the PPR and then the PZPR, the practical capacity of these MPs to get anything done was non-existent. Nonetheless, the mere existence of these MPs as official state functionaries who were also prominent Catholic activists carried symbolic weight in their movement's international dealings.<sup>55</sup> *Dziś i Jutro*'s approach to Catholic social and political activism in Poland threaded a delicate balance between the national and the international, between *raison d'état* and broader conversations about the human race.

Even after state institutions began clearly and publicly – not just through censorship – to manipulate the structure and content of the Catholic press in Poland, *Dziś i Jutro* in fact expanded its usage of the term 'social-Catholic' to identify its press, parliamentary group and ideology.<sup>56</sup> The goal was to try to play both sides of the field: to go all-in with the new 'socialist revolution' and, simultaneously, to present this choice as the one and only doctrinally viable option for Catholics. In so doing, the *Dziś i Jutro* activists were standing *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* on their heads, while earnestly maintaining that only they, as organised Catholic activists actually living under conditions of revolutionary socialism, understood the correct way to apply those encyclicals. As Kętrzyński put it in *Dziś i Jutro* in June 1948, 'The encyclicals were written for Catholics living in liberal-capitalist orders, illuminating the correct path of reforming those orders, not falling into the opposite extreme'.

Meanwhile, revolutionary socialism supposedly demanded a revised interpretation of those encyclicals in order to preserve the 'objective' progress made by socialism relative to the 'liberal-capitalist' order – by which Kętrzyński meant first and foremost the industrialising societies of mid nineteenth- to mid twentieth-century Western Europe.<sup>57</sup> Kętrzyński continued, 'In our specific conditions, we demand that Catholics immediately undertake this work, taking as their point of departure the current social forms as they have emerged. For we see in them, aside from

<sup>53</sup> *Dziś i Jutro* Staff [Kętrzyński] to *Esprit* Staff, 28 Mar. 1950, AKSCC V/87.

<sup>54</sup> Kętrzyński to Domenach, 5 Aug. 1950, AKSCC V/87.

<sup>55</sup> Micewski, *Współrzędzić czy nie kłamać?*, 29.

<sup>56</sup> See Janusz Zabłocki, *Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji 1947–1970* (Lublin: Ośrodek Studiów Polonijnych i Społecznych PZKS, 1999), 14.

<sup>57</sup> Kętrzyński would probably have recognised as 'liberal-capitalist' the industrialising world described in Paul Misner's excellent history of the origins of social Catholicism: Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialisation to the First World War* (New York: Crossroad, 1991).

errors to be corrected, also values whose preservation is just as much the proper task of Catholics'. The task, as Kętrzyński saw it, was the 'Christianisation of existing forces' – in other words, to allow revolutionary socialism to establish itself, and then to repurpose its projects of collectivisation, nationalisation and social-welfare guarantees towards the goals outlined by Catholic social teaching.<sup>58</sup> This attempt by *Dziś i Jutro* to arrogate to itself the right to interpret Catholic doctrine set it on a collision course with Poland's bishops, to say nothing of the Vatican.

Every plank of the ideological platform advanced by *Dziś i Jutro* came packaged as a 'Catholic' policy, almost as though the movement were presenting itself simply as the 'progressive' version of the Polish Christian Democratic Party that had been co-opted by the Communists and dismantled in the war's immediate aftermath, its leadership consigned to either exile or prison. To the extent that Christian Democracy came up in the pages of *Dziś i Jutro*, however, it was as an outmoded scheme for which 'Catholic socialism' represented an enlightened, more modern successor. Kętrzyński described himself and his colleagues in 1948 as 'we, the young', invested in the future and prepared 'to undertake a methodical examination of the most burning issues framing the reality of the everyday life of Catholic society in Poland'.<sup>59</sup> There was one overriding message for Kętrzyński's Polish Catholic reader in the age of self-proclaimed socialist revolution: *carpe diem!*

More than just advertising themselves as the Catholic political option in the 'People's' Poland, the *Dziś i Jutro* group tackled specific questions of policy, explicitly stating that the answers that it was offering to questions broached by the PZPR followed from a progressive, personalist Christian doctrine. These declarations do in fact attest to keen study of French Catholic thought, acknowledging the priority of work as the sole path to valuing the dignity of the human person.

For example, in late 1948 the group weighed in on agricultural collectivisation, one of the newly merged PZPR's top priorities following the ousting of Władysław Gomułka.<sup>60</sup> Taking a page from Mounier's *Révolution personaliste et communautaire*, Andrzej Krasieński – scion of a long-prominent Polish aristocratic family that included the nineteenth-century Romantic poet Zygmunt Krasieński – suggested that the state had an ethical imperative to aggregate individual farmers into collectives. Krasieński claimed that the 'fate of the individual and the family in the world to come', seen through 'the personalist world-view that we declare', necessarily implied 'co-operative forms of organising agriculture'.<sup>61</sup>

The clearest statement of a Catholic political agenda pertained not to theories of social organisation, however, but to the legacy of wartime ethno-national hatreds. In a piece designed to lay out his movement's priorities for 1948, Kętrzyński made anti-Germanism a priority of *raison d'état* for Catholics and state socialists alike: 'The defining task of our generation is the complete binding of the Recovered Territories

<sup>58</sup> Wojciech Kętrzyński, 'Konsekwencje encyklik społecznych', *Dziś i Jutro*, 6 Jun. 1948.

<sup>59</sup> Wojciech Kętrzyński, 'Rzeczywistość', *Dziś i Jutro*, 18 Apr. 1948.

<sup>60</sup> Andrzej Paczkowski, *The Spring Will Be Ours: Poland and the Poles from Occupation to Freedom*, tr. Jane Cave (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 207–15.

<sup>61</sup> Andrzej Krasieński, 'Przebudowa wsi', *Dziś i Jutro*, 12 Dec. 1948.

to Poland, their assimilation into our economic, national and political whole. And, what is most important and most difficult – to convince the entire world that these Territories need not and indeed must not be taken away from Poland’ – a ‘Christian’ goal.<sup>62</sup>

Paradoxically, it was this consensus agenda of writing Germany out of the history of the ‘Recovered Territories’ that helped to assemble *Dziś i Jutro*’s international ‘Catholic-socialist’ coalition. As Mikołaj Kunicki has argued in his analysis of Piasecki, ‘The same ardent nationalism that characterised the Polish church before the war facilitated the transformation of a former fascist leader into a Catholic activist’.<sup>63</sup> Realistically, the movement’s ability to shape domestic policy was quite limited. In the international arena, however, the movement could make a name for itself that would then reflect well also on the People’s Poland, first and foremost by capitalising on and expanding contacts among Western European lay activists.

The model for the ‘work and combat’ to which Kętrzyński exhorted the *Esprit* staff following Mounier’s passing was the socialist revolution that he claimed to be witnessing in Stalinist Poland. The Catholics’ role in this effort was to centre on transnational co-operation towards a goal that Kętrzyński’s colleague Konstanty Łubieński had articulated most pointedly in 1948: ‘Catholicism and the socialist movement constitute two forces, which, co-ordinated, will lead humanity to a great future, will create a new “golden era”, while, if turned against one another, will lead to a catastrophe such as history has not yet seen’.<sup>64</sup>

One could easily dismiss Kętrzyński, Krasieński and Łubieński as ‘useful idiots’, their projects a political fantasy out of touch with the lives of the millions of Catholics around them who were finding the process of adaptation to Poland’s new socio-political order much more difficult than they were. And yet, while the men of *Dziś i Jutro* certainly lived a privileged life, they were neither blind nor averse to the violence of ‘socialist revolution’, just as many – Kętrzyński first and foremost – had actively planned and carried out brutal killings during the Second World War in the Confederation of the Nation, Piasecki’s guerrilla organisation.<sup>65</sup> In Kętrzyński’s mind, Catholic natural law could be understood as justifying this violence as a step towards ultimate social justice. This was precisely the purpose of his statement that, in the socio-political order of post-war Poland, the ‘liberal-capitalist’ world for which earlier anti-socialist and anti-Communist papal encyclicals had been written no longer prevailed. Even as post-war Poland slid from its ‘gentle’ revolutionary phase into Stalinism, Kętrzyński did not retreat into an ivory tower, instead arguing that Catholic natural law could explain and justify the course of events.

<sup>62</sup> Wojciech Kętrzyński, ‘Idzie rok 1948’, *Dziś i Jutro*, 1 Feb. 1948.

<sup>63</sup> Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 86.

<sup>64</sup> Konstanty Łubieński, ‘List otwarty do Pana Juliusza Łady (Na marginesie notatki w *The Tablet*)’, *Dziś i Jutro*, 5 Dec. 1948.

<sup>65</sup> See Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 52–76; Zofia Kobylańska, *Konfederacja Narodu w Warszawie* (Warsaw: Pax, 1999).

### The Catholics and the Cominform

The fact that Kętrzyński had met with a few dozen Catholic activists face to face in 1946 and 1947 did not, of course, mean that Western Europeans would accept the theses that he and his colleagues published in 1948, amounting to a Catholic defence of Poland's Stalinisation. Yet the notion that the Second World War had moved Europe – on both sides of the Iron Curtain – beyond the 'liberal-capitalist' framework of *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* was music to the ears of progressive French and Belgian Catholics, who shared with their Polish counterparts a distrust of Germany and the United States.<sup>66</sup> As a geopolitical actor, the Holy See, too, aroused the suspicions of these Western Europeans, sympathetic as they understood it to have been towards fascism in the interwar and war years, then to the emerging American cold war camp.<sup>67</sup> The groundwork was already in place at the crossroads of geopolitics and ideology for Catholic anti-liberal dialogue and partnership across the Iron Curtain.

It was in 1948, following the Wrocław peace congress, that *Dziś i Jutro's* options multiplied for making of its international contacts something more than courtesy visits and exchanges of pamphlets and journals. Appointed in 1949 as one of the official Polish delegates to sessions of the Wrocław congress's successor movement, the Partisans of Peace, Wojciech Kętrzyński became a leading Catholic peace activist functioning in a transnational, predominantly Communist network. Moreover, with the movement's decision in advance of its 1949 Paris congress to call for the formation of national peace committees in all participating countries, Kętrzyński became a key player in the Polski Komitet Obróńców Pokoju (PKOP, Polish Committee of the Defenders of Peace).<sup>68</sup>

Wojciech Kętrzyński, as *Dziś i Jutro's* designated 'foreign affairs' specialist, attended the Partisans of Peace congress in Paris – one of 2,000 delegates from 72 countries – while a parallel congress took place in Prague, assembling those who had been refused French visas.<sup>69</sup> Kętrzyński was able to brag in Paris then and again one year later in Stockholm without any voice to the contrary about the great achievements of the PKOP.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>66</sup> These are the broadly defined milieux reconstructed in Horn and Gerard, eds, *Left Catholicism 1943–1955*.

<sup>67</sup> Hubert Wolf, *Pope and Devil: The Vatican's Archives and the Third Reich*, tr. Kenneth Kronenberg (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 2010); Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: the Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943–1950* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

<sup>68</sup> Jacek Żurek, *Ruch 'Księżych Patriotów' w województwie katowickim w latach 1949–1956* (Warsaw-Katowice: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2009), esp. 232–45. On *Dziś i Jutro/PAX's* crossover with PKOP, see Żurek, *Ruch 'Księżych Patriotów'*, 147–72.

<sup>69</sup> Kętrzyński, 'Światła i cienie nad Wielkim Miastem', *Dziś i Jutro*, 9 Oct. 1949; Kętrzyński, 'Republiki przemijają', *Dziś i Jutro*, 23 Oct. 1949; Kętrzyński, "'Życie łatwe'", *Dziś i Jutro*, 13 Nov. 1949; Kętrzyński, 'Na politycznym wachlarzu', *Dziś i Jutro*, 20 Nov. 1949; Wittner, *One World or None*, 177–80.

<sup>70</sup> Kętrzyński, 'Zagadnienie szwedzkie', *Dziś i Jutro*, 23 Apr. 1950.

The kind of argumentation that Kętrzyński presented on behalf of Catholic-socialist co-operation in the PKOP gained even more weight – indeed, making the Poles seem the world leaders of Catholic-socialist co-operation – after the third conference of the Cominform, which took place on 16–19 November 1949. Palmiro Togliatti, the iconic head of the Partito Comunista Italiano, gave a speech at this conference that, doubtless, haunted Pius XII and deepened his sensitivity the following year to the Stockholm Appeal and its attendant support from progressive Catholics. The title of Togliatti's speech – 'Working-Class Unity and the Tasks of the Communist and Workers' Parties' – foreshadowed nothing particularly noteworthy. The speech's content, however, was a veritable reinvention of his French Communist counterpart Maurice Thorez's so-called *main tendue* to French Catholic workers, declared in 1936–7.<sup>71</sup>

Arguing that only the Soviet Union was pursuing a 'consistent policy of peace', Togliatti condemned the Marshall Plan and its contributions to Western European political integration: 'When they talk of "uniting" Europe the agents of American imperialism are really trying to disrupt co-operation between the peoples of Europe, to set up a barrier between them in order to isolate the Soviet Union and the people's democracies'.<sup>72</sup> Noting the growing importance of 'Catholic trade unions' and 'Catholic parties' across Western Europe, Togliatti lamented that Western Europe's 'Catholic parties are the principal bourgeois parties and direct the state'.<sup>73</sup> With Western European Christian Democracy and its pro-European integration stance in mind, Togliatti took the ultimate step: distinguishing between the institutional Church and Catholics as members of that Church, and appealing to Catholics as lay activists rather than to the Church as a whole. This was a prescient rhetorical strategy, calling for the Catholic laity to step up and claim their role in their faith:

In all the Catholic organisations, however, there is a profound contradiction between the policy of the leading circles of the Church, who are allies of imperialism and reaction and enemies of social progress, and the working masses, even the most backward, who want peace and defence of their vital interests. This explains why it is that, despite the repressive measures taken by the church authorities, nevertheless left-wing, progressive trends constantly appear in the Catholic movement, which instinctively seek co-operation and unity with the non-Catholic workers' movement.<sup>74</sup>

The clear message of Togliatti's appeal was for Catholic laymen to ignore their reactionary, imperialism-allied pontiff, Pius XII, and to embrace 'left-wing,

<sup>71</sup> See Thorez, Radio Address on Radio Paris, 17 Apr. 1936, quoted in Thorez, *Communistes et catholiques: La main tendue*. . . (Paris: Éditions du comité populaire de propagande, 1937), 11.

<sup>72</sup> Palmiro Togliatti, 'Comrade Togliatti's Report: Working-Class Unity and the Tasks of the Communist and Workers' Parties', 17 Nov. 1949, in Procacci et al., eds, *The Cominform*, 783–803, at 789.

<sup>73</sup> Togliatti, 'Comrade Togliatti's Report', 797.

<sup>74</sup> Togliatti, 'Comrade Togliatti's Report', 797. The key treatises of which one can find traces in Togliatti's arguments about the role of the laity – and the working masses in particular – in governing their own worldly commitments include Jacques Maritain, *Humanisme Intégral: Problèmes temporels et spirituels d'une nouvelle chrétienté* (Paris: F. Aubier, 1936); Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Spiritualité du travail* (Liège: La Pensée catholique, 1947).

progressive trends'.<sup>75</sup> The pope had, in fact, campaigned heavily on behalf of Christian Democracy: in the case of the 1948 Italian parliamentary elections, the pontiff literally turned Catholic Action into a grass-roots electoral organisation for the Democrazia Cristiana Italiana.<sup>76</sup> That said, the principal object of Togliatti's ire – though unspecified in his speech – was the decree issued by the Holy Office on 1 July 1949 condemning to excommunication any Catholic 'faithful professing materialist and anti-Christian doctrine as Communists and, above all, those who defend or propagate such doctrine'.<sup>77</sup>

What Togliatti proposed seemed, rather than co-optation, to centre on partnership in the service of the most exalted among temporal causes, most convincing in its presentation because tempered with a dose of humility: 'Bringing a large section of the Catholic workers and working people into the united front for the defence of peace, freedom and the living standards of the working people is one of the pre-conditions for rendering this defence effective'.<sup>78</sup> A small, but important, group of Western European Catholics bought into this message – one of the most notable being Jean-Marie Domenach, who was soon to succeed Emmanuel Mounier at the helm of *Esprit*. The mobilising power of the Stockholm Appeal campaign, launched less than four months after the Third Cominform congress, only magnified the reach of Togliatti's new and improved, cold war-proof *main tendue*.<sup>79</sup>

### A Polish-led Catholic-Socialist International

For *Dziś i Jutro*, Togliatti's speech inspired a document pitched by Kętrzyński to the movement's leadership.<sup>80</sup> This document was nothing less than a blueprint for a 'Catholic-socialist international' dedicated to the pursuit of global peace through transnational co-operation at the European level. Beginning with a half-page excerpt from Togliatti's speech, the document framed its proposed initiative as a response to the Italian leader's call, albeit adapted to Poland's unique status as the most firmly Catholic country in the Soviet bloc:

In fulfilment of the goals set out by Togliatti, it is clear that Poles, Marxists and Catholics alike, have a role to play as bringers of a change in the Catholic political attitudes of the masses of Western

<sup>75</sup> See also Roger Garaudy, *L'Église, le communisme et les chrétiens* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1949), esp. 366.

<sup>76</sup> Robert A. Ventresca, 'When Politics Reaches the Altar: Catholic Action Gets Out the Vote', in *From Fascism to Democracy: Culture and Politics in the Italian Election of 1948* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 177–97.

<sup>77</sup> Decree of the Holy Office of the Roman Catholic Church, 1 July 1949, reproduced in Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes*, 42.

<sup>78</sup> Togliatti, 'Comrade Togliatti's Report', 797.

<sup>79</sup> For broader Polish Catholic support of the Stockholm Appeal, see 'Pokój i wojna', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 30 Apr. 1950; Jan Piwowarczyk, 'Duch pokoju', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 21–28 May 1950.

<sup>80</sup> 'Notatka w sprawie możliwej roli Katolików polskich na terenie Europy Zachodniej', 1950, AKSCC V/87. While the document sports neither Kętrzyński's name nor his initials, all available evidence points to his authorship.

Europe: Poland is, after all, the first larger country with a predominantly Catholic population to become consistently engaged in laying the foundations of socialism.

Praising the *Dziś i Jutro* movement without identifying it by name, the document observed that, since ‘there have emerged in these years in Poland essentially Catholic organisations clearly founded on acceptance of the new order’ – read: *Dziś i Jutro* – ‘These considerations make Poles uniquely responsible to the Catholics of the Western world’.

There followed a declaration of the purpose of the new ‘international’: ‘Within this state of affairs emerges a design for the creation of an international movement of Catholic socialists’. Next came the designation of an appropriate set of core nodes for the new transnational network: countries whose self-styled progressive Catholics were deemed most likely to form durable partnerships with the Poles. To constitute the new international’s geographical core, Kętrzyński chose Poland, France and Italy. The *Dziś i Jutro* leadership would soon replace Italy, which would prove harder to penetrate than anticipated, with Belgium. Indeed, beginning with France, the blueprint enumerated specific organisations with which the Polish activists should begin, given the greatest likelihood of achieving the crucial first bilateral commitments: ‘the progressives [Union des Chrétiens Progressistes], Mission de Paris, Jeunesse de l’Église, L’Esprit, Témoignage Chrétien, Mouvement Populaire des Français, L’Économie et Humanisme’. Despite the intellectual or pastoral, rather than political, nature of most of these organisations, the document classified the new international’s activities as belonging above all to the ‘political realm, with the reservation that ideological elements will also constitute a consolidating factor’.

For the initial stages of the international’s construction, the blueprint recommended secrecy, avoidance of ‘too ostentatious contact with Catholic groups openly condemned by the Vatican’ and initial incorporation only of organisations with ‘significant reach’. Nonetheless, the blueprint made clear the proposed international’s ultimate goals: ‘1) A campaign within the Catholic camp against reactionary elements; 2) Direct action against capitalism; 3) Co-operation with the socialist camp’. Over the course of its functioning, the Catholic-socialist international was to seek ‘to reach, in the end, all progressive-Christian elements’.

This was, quite simply, a revolutionary proposal. Taking one page from the Cominform and another from its sworn opponent, Western European Christian Democracy, the *Dziś i Jutro* leadership adopted a design aiming at nothing less than an institutional foundation for its alternative, anti-Marshall Plan vision of European partnerships across the Iron Curtain. It was thus a logical consequence at once of the Wrocław congress, Togliatti’s speech and what the *Dziś i Jutro* activists styled in their public writings as attempts to ‘Christianise’ socialism from within.

For the Poles, the term ‘Catholic socialism’ thus superseded the French-derived terms ‘progressive Catholicism’ and ‘progressive Christianity’, underscoring as it did a literal intermixing of Catholic and socialist elements and binding them with each other in one entity. It was nonetheless in recognition of the debt owed to French Catholic thought and activism that the *Dziś i Jutro* blueprint advised going first after



long-term partnerships in France. It is important to emphasise, however, that Franco-Polish Catholic relations were neither the full extent nor the ultimate goal of the proposed Catholic-socialist international: rather, that goal was an active network of peace-advocating Catholic organisations, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, of people who would see in Catholic social teaching a principled rationale for the geopolitics of the Soviet bloc.

Inspired though this proposal was by Togliatti's Cominform statement, no available documentation suggests that the Polish United Workers' Party leadership either initiated or steered it. While the Polish security apparatus closely monitored contacts established and maintained by individual members of Bolesław Piasecki's movement in the course of their travels abroad, consultation with Party officials proceeded through back channels to which Piasecki alone was privy. Indeed, the movement's leader not only knew of, but frequently mediated in these contacts. The tasks assigned by Poland's security apparatus to *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX's two principal 'foreign agents' – Dominik Horodyński and Konstanty Łubieński – concerned the Polish émigré communities in London and Paris, though both also reported extensively on their 'Catholic-socialist' contacts.<sup>81</sup> Mikołaj Kunicki has convincingly demonstrated that Piasecki frequently succeeded in influencing or carving out spaces of action for his movement by falling back on excellent personal relationships with key figures in the post-war state apparatus, especially the Public Administration minister Władysław Wolski, who retained close ties to the NKVD, and Col. Julia Brystygier, the redoubtable *éminence grise* of the secret police, who personally handled, among others, Horodyński and Łubieński. As Kunicki puts it, 'Piasecki was quick to learn how informal one could be with these people and how much profit this familiarity could bring. Consider the case of Ryszard Reiff, who had escaped from a Soviet camp and secretly returned to Warsaw: Piasecki resolved the matter over a bottle of cognac that he and Reiff shared with Wolski'.<sup>82</sup>

It is unsurprising that, to the extent that Party officials were aware of *Dziś i Jutro*'s international project, this awareness yielded no public statements or affiliation with state policy. Applicability behind the Iron Curtain remained unclear for the Holy Office's threat of excommunication pronounced on 1 July 1949 against Catholics overtly working with or on behalf of Communists, but the Holy See and the episcopates of Western Europe alike became highly attuned to Western European Catholic contacts with Communist parties, particularly in the battleground states of France and Italy, where Communists represented a major electoral force.

Togliatti's appeal for co-operation with Catholics was thus an exhortation to find new methods of Catholic-Marxist collaboration that might circumvent the letter of Holy Office policy and Kętrzyński's proposal fitted this bill perfectly. This was to be an evolutionary, not a revolutionary, attack on capitalism and liberal democracy. The

<sup>81</sup> Horodyński and Łubieński's security files can be found in the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, AIPN): AIPN BU 00169/91/2 and AIPN BU 0648/118/1. See esp. Łubieński, 'Ogólne sprawozdanie z pobytu w Paryżu w okresie od 1.XI do 14.XI.52', AIPN BU 0648/118/1, 147–54.

<sup>82</sup> Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 93.

goal was thus not to frontload contacts and joint initiatives with Western European Catholic organisations with grand advocacies of nationalisation, expropriation or class warfare. Quite the opposite – the goal was to build confidence and familiarity between organised movements of Catholics on either side of the Iron Curtain. With that groundwork in place, *Dziś i Jutro* might then propel forward French, Belgian and Italian Catholic conversations in a key that would harmonise with its own publications back in Poland. Extensive fieldwork in France and fortuitous contacts in Belgium turned both of those countries into promising centres of transnational Catholic-socialist co-operation.<sup>83</sup>

Assembling the various nodes of this international required a differentiated, systematic approach on the part of the *Dziś i Jutro* activists. The first step involved deepening and consolidating existing contacts. The Poles' anchor was *Esprit*, whose founder had, after all, provided a key source of inspiration for *Dziś i Jutro*'s own Catholic-socialist ideology. Kętrzyński, Krasieński, Łubieński and Horodyński then built on this ideology with contacts made between 1947 and 1950. Mounier's death in March 1950, little more than a week after the Stockholm Appeal's announcement, only deepened the ties between *Dziś i Jutro* and *Esprit*.

The second step of the planned international's construction was pegged to the Partisans of Peace movement. The Stockholm Appeal preceded by only a few months the movement's Second World Peace Congress, which, through a combination of sabotage and happenstance, fell at the last possible minute to Warsaw to host. *Dziś i Jutro* then took full advantage of the opportunity to integrate into its expanding network the various Catholic activists in attendance.<sup>84</sup> The congress, from 16 to 22 November 1950, gave *Dziś i Jutro* the opportunity to host an unprecedented conference of Catholic-socialist peace activists on the territory of the 'People's Poland'.<sup>85</sup> Given how hastily the congress was prepared, the *Dziś i Jutro* meeting, which took place on the congress's second day, amounted to a spontaneously arranged celebration coinciding with *Dziś i Jutro*'s fifth anniversary. With Piasecki hosting the celebratory dinner and Kętrzyński running the substantive meeting that preceded it, the goal of the gathering – clear from Kętrzyński's typed report for Piasecki – was to push the project of a Catholic-socialist international as aggressively as possible on selected activists from Western Europe.<sup>86</sup>

For this reason, though he played host to a total of 80 Catholic participants from around the world, Kętrzyński in his notes virtually ignored the delegations

<sup>83</sup> On Belgian progressive Catholicism, see Jean-Louis Jadoulle, *Chrétiens modernes? L'Engagement des intellectuels catholiques 'progressistes' belges de 1945 à 1958* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia Bruylant/Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2003); also the Aug.-Sept. 1953 special issue of the journal *Routes de la Paix*, esp. Constantin [Konstanty] Łubieński, 'Un catholique polonais nous donne ses impressions', *Routes de la Paix* 17–18 (1953), 36–7.

<sup>84</sup> Philip Deery, 'The Dove Flies East: Whitehall, Warsaw and the 1950 World Peace Congress', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 48, 4 (2002), 449–68; Ullrich, 'Preventing "Peace"', 7.

<sup>85</sup> *Second World Peace Congress, Warsaw, November 16–22, 1950, VOKS Bulletin Supplement*, 66 (1951) (Warsaw, 1951).

<sup>86</sup> 'Notatka sprawozdawcza ze spotkania katolików, biorących udział w II Kongresie Pokoju', Nov. 1950, AKSCC V/87.

from Canada, Korea, Madagascar and Vietnam. Instead, he focused his attention almost exclusively on Catholic activists hailing from Belgium, France and Italy, who were not only an object of Polish interest, but indeed were themselves fascinated by Communist Poland. As Kętrzyński put it, the delegates from these countries in particular 'demonstrated a deeper interest in the ideological situation of Catholics in Poland, particularly Catholics concentrated in or around our milieu'.

### *Esprit* and Anti-Germanism

When Wojciech Kętrzyński had written to Emmanuel Mounier's successor at *Esprit* in the wake of the latter's passing, the sorrow that he expressed appeared genuine. Mounier's ideas were central to Kętrzyński's choice of words and arguments in his pursuit of international partners for *Dziś i Jutro*. Indeed, he had so assimilated Mounier's writings through hours spent poring over them that he had succeeded in introducing into the Polish movement to which he belonged a personalist political theology that – like Carl Schmitt's anti-Weimar decisionism<sup>87</sup> – he believed justified the brutality and violence of Poland's newly Stalinist regime.

Tony Judt has famously indicted Mounier for his embrace of the Stalinisation of much of Central and Eastern Europe, arguing that it was 'the moral price he was driven to pay in order to sustain his faith in the intrinsic value of revolutionary action'.<sup>88</sup> Yet if Mounier's support for the PZPR evidenced a genuine moral dilemma, the behaviour of his successor at *Esprit* betrayed no such conflict, according to Judt, whose analysis thus does not capture Domenach as it does Mounier. Jean-Marie Domenach – who in 1950 received a promotion to *rédacteur-en-chef*, or managing editor, of *Esprit*, alongside the Swiss philosopher Albert Béguin's elevation to *directeur de la revue*, or executive editor – swallowed *Dziś i Jutro*'s arguments hook, line and sinker. His reply to Kętrzyński's condolence note following Mounier's passing made it immediately clear that *Dziś i Jutro* could count on him for close, lasting co-operation. Thanking Kętrzyński and his fellow *Dziś i Jutro* personnel for their condolences, which have 'truly touched our hearts', Domenach added, 'I hope that you will want to maintain with me the amicable contact that you have shared with Emmanuel Mounier'.<sup>89</sup>

Indeed, the emotional bond that Domenach and Kętrzyński developed almost overnight combined with certain qualities of Domenach's personality to produce an overtly political alliance without Kętrzyński ever needing to make a concerted pitch to the new *rédacteur-en-chef*. Here, Domenach and Kętrzyński's shared experience as active young members of the anti-Nazi resistance in their respective countries helped to bring them almost immediately onto the same page. Though Kętrzyński was six

<sup>87</sup> John P. McCormick, *Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism: Against Politics as Technology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 213.

<sup>88</sup> Judt, *Past Imperfect*, 41.

<sup>89</sup> Domenach to Kętrzyński, 10 Apr. 1950, AKSCC V/88.

years older, they shared the same core generational event: the Second World War.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, they shared similar experiences of loss and Christian martyrdom at German hands: for Domenach, his best friend Gilbert Dru, killed while active in the Lyon-based resistance movement, *Témoignage Chrétien*; for Kętrzyński, Włodzimierz Pietrzak, the young Warsaw Uprising martyr of the future *Dziś i Jutro* milieu. These two young personalists died only weeks apart at the hands of the same enemy, albeit at opposite ends of Europe.

Unlike Mounier, then, who had managed to position *Esprit* on the cutting edge of current events while nonetheless keeping everyone guessing as to his exact agenda and partisan affiliation, Domenach left nothing hidden. Though he was the junior editor to Béguin, his anti-Germanism quickly set the tone for *Esprit's* new political agenda and brought the French journal into the welcoming embrace of the *Dziś i Jutro* movement. An opponent of both European integration and the remilitarisation of Western Europe, Domenach wrote to Kętrzyński as early as his fifth month as an *Esprit* editor, 'We are entering a difficult period, and the rearmament will aggravate France's situation even further. We are going to regroup our forces in order to fight against fanaticism and the spirit of war, but in spite of the confidence that we have, there are days when the future seems deeply ominous'.<sup>91</sup>

Three months later, Domenach could only nod his head in agreement with the anti-colonialist agenda espoused by Kętrzyński in a rant against Western European Christians, who, the Polish activist argued, had capitulated to the lies of (West) German-sympathising Christian Democrats. Namely, 'out of fear, evidently, of suffering and chaos that await them on the path towards a better tomorrow', even the most pious of 'Catholic opinion in the West' warmly embraced '“an established, yet odious, order”'. Meanwhile, Kętrzyński argued, Western Europeans needed to summon up courage as Christians morally obliged to struggle for social justice in the temporal realm.

The courage that Western Europeans needed, the Polish activist argued, was to accept the violence of revolution as a way-station *en route* to a much better tomorrow than the present chaos of colonialism and cold war could ever allow one to imagine. Kętrzyński thus insisted that France must follow Poland's path of '“revolutionary, tragic disorder”' from which could only spring forth the framework for a new, better order – in other words, the path of revolutionary socialism.<sup>92</sup> Clearly influenced by his Polish colleague, Domenach lobbied Béguin to organise a public event at which *Esprit's* extensive network of French supporters might meet with Kętrzyński and Łubieński. This public event came to fruition in the early autumn of 1951.<sup>93</sup>

In addition to facilitating continued expansion of *Dziś i Jutro's* contacts among francophone Catholic activists, the *Esprit–Dziś i Jutro* axis of partnership yielded

<sup>90</sup> On 'generational events', see, e.g. Lewis S. Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations: The Character and Significance of Student Movements* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 25–26; on Poland's 'wartime generation', see Paweł Rodak, *Wizje kultury pokolenia wojennego* (Wrocław: Funna, 2000).

<sup>91</sup> Domenach to Kętrzyński, 30 Aug. 1950, AKSCC V/88.

<sup>92</sup> Kętrzyński to Domenach, 5 Dec. 1950, AKSCC V/87.

<sup>93</sup> Béguin to Łubieński, 17 Aug. 1951, AKSCC V/90.

tangible policy-related consequences bearing directly on the global peace campaign. This was the heart of their shared, East–West ‘Catholic–socialist’ advocacy. Namely, while the Stockholm Appeal partisans were converging on Warsaw in November 1950, Domenach was helping to launch a Comité Français pour la Solution Pacifique du Problème Allemand (French Committee for the Peaceful Solution of the German Problem).<sup>94</sup> In 1952, Domenach signed on as co-chair – with Michel Bruguiier, a Parisian appellate court prosecutor – for an international conference sponsored by this committee and its German partners in a neutral location, for which Odense, Denmark was selected. Invited in March 1952 to join the conference executive committee, Kętrzyński, however, could not attend its meeting in West Germany for lack of a visa.<sup>95</sup> In the end, the conference was something of a disaster: held only three months after its executive committee first met, its leadership dropped the ball on co-ordination with the Danish government, which ended up refusing visas to almost all invitees from Austria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Poland.

The fact that the East German delegation was limited to two lesser figures was particularly bad news for a conference designed to convince Germans above all to enter into collective socio-political action against Europe’s remilitarisation. In October 1950, this had become a concrete political prospect, following the public presentation by French prime minister René Pleven of plans for a ‘European defence community’.<sup>96</sup> Intended as a rapid-fire follow-up to the economic integration announced in the Schuman Plan of June 1950, the Pleven Plan raised over half of Europe up in arms on the premise that the creation of NATO had endangered the world sufficiently. The point was that the West German government, only five years after Hitler’s fall, could not be trusted with a share in governance over Western Europe’s military arsenal.

As the working document produced by the Odense Conference declared, the goal was not to strip Germany of its rights, but to ‘impede the renaissance of militarism in Germany’ by means of a collective ‘neutralisation’ of the region. The declaration suggested that a definitive disarmament of Germany should lead to the (voluntary) ‘disarmament of Germany’s neighbours’, which, in turn, could result in ‘general simultaneous, progressive and controlled disarmament’ of the entire world.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>94</sup> The West German progressive-Christian *Frankfurter Hefte* journal editor Walter Dirks had nudged Domenach towards his activism. See Dirks to Domenach, 14 Apr. 1950, quoted in Martin Strickmann, ‘Französische Intellektuelle als deutsch-französische Mittlerfiguren 1944–1950’, in Patricia Oster and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, eds, *Am Wendepunkt: Deutschland und Frankreich um 1945: Zur Dynamik eines ‘transnationalen’ kulturellen Feldes / Dynamiques d’un champ culturel ‘transnational’: L’Allemagne et la France vers 1945* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2008), 17–49, at 42.

<sup>95</sup> Domenach and Bruguiier to [Kętrzyński], 10 Mar. 1952, AKSCC V/92.

<sup>96</sup> On the Pleven Plan, see Michael Sutton, *France and the Construction of Europe, 1944–2007: The Geopolitical Imperative* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 64–68.

<sup>97</sup> ‘Document de Travail élaboré à l’occasion de la Conférence d’Odense en vue de la recherche d’une solution pacifique du problème allemand’, 15 Jun. 1952, AKSCC V/92. For a published (rev.) version of the document, see ‘Avertissement adopté à la Conférence d’Odense sur la solution du problème allemand’, *Routes de la Paix*, Jul. (1952), 10–11.

These goals were entirely unrealistic, going fundamentally against the grain of cold war *Realpolitik*, yet their spirit was attractive at least as a statement of principle for peace activists behind the Iron Curtain. The one Pole who had made it to Odense was Rev. Eugeniusz Dąbrowski, a biblical theologian closely tied to *Dziś i Jutro*, whose retranslation of the New Testament, reprinted by the PAX publishing house, sold out in 50,000 copies almost overnight.<sup>98</sup> Though *Dziś i Jutro* activists could never get away with proposing Polish, let alone Soviet disarmament, Dąbrowski and Kętrzyński together took the document back to the PKOP.

One particular plank in the declaration, calling the reunification of a demilitarised Germany a ‘legitimate exigency of the German people acquired in the course of history’, gained the approval of the Polish establishment figures in the committee, led by long-time Communist Ostap Dłuski. Dłuski invited Dominik Horodyński from PAX – the *Dziś i Jutro* movement’s new name from April 1952 – to co-chair a Polish Committee for the Peaceful Solution of the German Problem, beginning in the summer of 1953. It was for the purposes of launching this committee that Domenach would make his first trip to Poland, in January 1954.<sup>99</sup> Paradoxically, Domenach would thus be setting up the perverse political legacy of *Dziś i Jutro* and *Esprit*’s joint Catholic-socialist collaboration: anti-German, anti-European Catholic activism at a time when the institutional Catholic Church was under heavy attack in Poland.

### Defending a Compromised Catholic Socialism

Between 1951 and 1953, just as the Catholic-socialist ‘international’ was developing a presence in European public life, the institutional Church in Poland suffered through the arrests of three bishops (including the nation’s primate, Stefan, Cardinal Wyszyński) and the show trials of Bishop Kaczmarek of Kielce and of the Cracow Archdiocese’s top priest-administrators, assistants of the late Cardinal Sapieha.<sup>100</sup> Not only did PAX fail to speak out against these repressions, but indeed it attempted to pressure Wyszyński, among others, into accepting everything the PZPR asked of him. Furthermore, after Kaczmarek’s sentencing and again after Wyszyński’s ‘suspension’ as primate, PAX ran its own propaganda campaign of ‘indignation’ and ‘sadness’ targeting the hierarchy, rather than defending it.<sup>101</sup>

In the interest of ramping up its appeal to the Catholic-socialist partners whom Kętrzyński and Łubieński had been courting since long before the show trials began, the *Dziś i Jutro* editors produced an eight-page, all-French-language edition

<sup>98</sup> On Dąbrowski, see Piotr Nitecki, *Książdz Eugeniusz Dąbrowski, apostoł pisma świętego: 1901–1970* (Warsaw: ODiSS, 1982).

<sup>99</sup> Horodyński to Domenach, 20 Jul. 1953, IMEC ESP2.C1-02.06; Horodyński and Dłuski to Domenach, 26 Sept. 1953, IMEC ESP2.C1-02.06.

<sup>100</sup> On Kaczmarek’s arrest and show trial, see Jan Śledzianowski, *Książdz Czesław Kaczmarek – biskup kielecki 1895–1963* (Kielce: Kuria Diecezjalna, 1991), 225–305.

<sup>101</sup> ‘Doniosły zwrot’, *Dziś i Jutro*, 4 Oct. 1953. On Wyszyński’s arrest and *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX’s response to the event, see Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 98–102.

(*Aujourd'hui et demain*) for Christmas 1953, highlighting the articles of greatest interest from the entire year. Similar issues would follow in 1954 and 1955. Kętrzyński supervised the selection of mailing recipients for these issues, creating a specifically targeted list of current or potential partner groups. Among the highlighted articles was a text by Horodyński entitled 'We place our trust in France', focused on the debates over the European Defence Community. In fact, almost every text included in the French-language edition touched in some way on the question of peace and Germany's neutralisation.<sup>102</sup>

This focus begged for a greater engagement on the part of Jean-Marie Domenach in his capacity as co-chair of the committee for a 'peaceful solution of the German problem'. In mid 1953, Poland produced its own committee of the same name, inspired by Domenach's group and led by PAX's Dominik Horodyński and the PZPR's Ostap Dłuski, who brought Domenach to Poland at the end of January 1954 as their committee's honoured guest. Domenach spent just over a week in Poland, visiting Cracow and Lublin in addition to Warsaw, acquiring what he described as a better understanding of the Poles' 'traditions and hopes for the future'.<sup>103</sup> In these he found a perfect synergy with his own.

A mere three months later, PAX bestowed upon Domenach its annual prize for overall achievement by a Catholic activist, named after Włodzimierz Pietrzak, the young personalist-poet of the Confederation of the Nation who had perished in the Warsaw Uprising. PAX's Andrzej Krasieński showed great tact in his announcement of the prize to Domenach, consulting him first on whether or not the *Esprit* editor would even permit the Poles to advertise the decision:

The decision of the Jury was unanimous, but in taking it the Jury deemed it necessary, first, to consult your opinion regarding publicity for the Prize. In particular, the jury wanted to spare you possible attacks on the part of conservative Catholic milieux in France and avoid inflaming the growing campaign against the so-called 'progressive-Catholic international'.<sup>104</sup>

Worthy of attention is Krasieński's effort to distance PAX from its four-year international campaign by placing the phrase 'progressive-Catholic international' in scare-quotes. Subsequent correspondence shows that this was Krasieński's way of gauging Domenach's general attitude towards PAX. Despite the many deeply personal conversations that he had shared with Domenach in January–February 1954, Krasieński recognised that the issue of Wyszyński's arrest still hung heavily in the air and thus Krasieński preferred to tread carefully.

This care, however, proved entirely unnecessary. Although Domenach did not, in the end, announce his receipt of the Pietrzak Award in the pages of *Esprit*, he invested considerable time, thought and passion into planning the substance and logistics of his second voyage to Poland in 1954 to receive the award. The connection between

<sup>102</sup> Dominik Horodyński, 'Nous faisons confiance à la France', *Aujourd'hui et demain (Dziś i Jutro)*, 25 Dec. 1953.

<sup>103</sup> Domenach to Horodyński and Dłuski, 5 Jan. 1954, IMEC ESP2.C2-03.02; Domenach to Horodyński and Dłuski, 11 Feb. 1954, IMEC ESP2.C2-03.02. The quotation is drawn from the latter.

<sup>104</sup> Krasieński to Domenach, 29 May 1954, AKSCC V/95.



Pietrzak and his own 'martyred' *Témoignage Chrétien* friend Gilbert Dru was not lost on Domenach. Indeed, it only convinced him further of the need to commit ideologically to the Poles in their shared international cause: anti-Germanism in the service of world peace.

Domenach's sympathy for PAX's agenda followed not only from personal affinity for Kętrzyński, Krasieński and others in the movement, but also from his perception of a symmetry in Polish-German and Franco-German relations. This was no marginal concern in France: not only the French Communist Party, but also the socialists of the the French Section of the Workers' International (Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière, SFIO) and a wide cross-section of French society feared for Alsace, Lorraine and other territories that might come into play in the event of German *ressentiment*. Common coal and steel market or no, French memory of the defeat of 1940 – and even of France's humiliation at Prussian hands in 1870 – remained fresh.

As he accepted the Pietrzak Award in Warsaw, Domenach declared, 'If countless Christian activists – both Catholics and Protestants – have decided to struggle, together with peace fighters, against the remilitarisation of Germany, they have done so above all for moral reasons: the example of Munich has taught us all that a nation that betrays its friends prepares its own demise.'<sup>105</sup> Both the private correspondence and public statements exchanged between Domenach and his Polish counterparts thus underscore the existence of a genuine sense of solidarity on both sides. As Domenach wrote, 'our Polish friends' cause is in solidarity with our own'.<sup>106</sup>

The core of this solidarity was a joint political project pursued as a self-styled Christian alternative to European integration, indeed, a project of global peace beginning with the effacement of any possibility of German rearmament. The PAX laudation for Domenach (read aloud by Kętrzyński at the award ceremony) thus began as follows:

To Mr Jean-Marie Domenach – for his selfless activism in defence of peace, for his struggle against the ratification of the accord from Bonn and Paris dividing Europe into mutually antagonistic blocs, for his contribution to the work of peaceful reconciliation of all European nations. The jury takes this opportunity to underscore the significance of the participation of French Catholic milieux in our shared fight for a peaceful solution to the German question, a participation valued particularly by the Polish nation, which is bound to the French nation by unbreakable bonds of friendship and common national interests. The jury wishes also to single out in its decision both the personal contribution of Jean-Marie Domenach and the contribution of the *Esprit* journal that he edits to the general European movement for the defence of civilisation, encompassing, regardless of differences of world-view, all people of good faith.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Jean-Marie Domenach, Speech on the occasion of the conferral of the Włodzimierz Pietrzak Prize, *Dziś i Jutro*, 1 Aug. 1954.

<sup>106</sup> Domenach to Stanisław Michalski, 2 Jul. 1954, IMEC ESP2.C2-03.02.

<sup>107</sup> KOMUNIKAT, 'Wręczenie Nagrody Pietrzaka', *Dziś i Jutro*, 13 Jun. 1954; repr. in Zygmunt Lichniak, ed., *Księga o nagrodzie imienia Włodzimierza Pietrzaka (1948–1972)* (Warsaw: PAX, 1978), 91. See also Wojciech Kętrzyński, 'Jean-Marie Domenach', *Dziś i Jutro*, 18 Jul. 1954; 'Jean-Marie Domenach laureatem nagrody im. Wł. Pietrzaka', *Dziś i Jutro*, 1 Aug. 1954; Domenach, Speech on the occasion of the conferral of the Włodzimierz Pietrzak Prize.

The symmetry between the language used by the Polish Catholic socialists and that used by Domenach, not only to congratulate each other, but indeed to reinforce each other's political convictions on grounds of religious principle, is striking. For both, geopolitics and Christian faith were inextricably intertwined as motivations for organised lay activism. In his acceptance speech, Domenach declared,

You Poles are our friends, as you have suffered more than we at the hands of German barbarity. I declare this in the name of all of my colleagues: when we became involved in the fight against German remilitarisation and against a 'false' Europe, we were thinking above all of you . . . When we are asked to mobilise Christian Europe 'against Bolshevism', we reply 'no', for we remain loyal to the cause for which we are fighting and loyal to the friends with whom we fight. We do not forget that this supposed 'Christian Europe' has betrayed itself, creating conflict and awakening hatred between nations and races. This Europe has already died, buried under the ruins of the Ghetto, under the millions of corpses at Auschwitz. This Europe was not Christian.

What Domenach counterposed to the (Western) European integration project was, rather, a 'Europe reaching back to the traditions of all struggle against exploitation, and particularly the most recent struggles for liberation from fascist occupation, a Europe of the past but also of the future, which, in a mutually assured peace, will seek the path to the reconciliation of nations, cultures and peoples'.<sup>108</sup>

At every stage, the enterprise that brought Domenach to Poland in the summer of 1954 seemed genuine. Ideological affinity, a shared policy agenda and personal relationships combined to make the Polish bond with *Esprit*, already strong after Mounier's visit in 1946, more intimate and more committed than ever. This – less than a year after Kaczmarek's sentencing and Wyszynski's arrest, discussion of which appears nowhere in any of the papers or statements involving Domenach and his friends from PAX. The shared anti-German programme was no mere rhetorical strategy, but a serious policy advocacy. Domenach, Kętrzyński and their friends could not have anticipated the contingent geopolitical consequences of Nikita Khrushchev's ascent to power in the USSR, most notably Khrushchev's public reception of the West German chancellor Konrad Adenauer in Moscow in September 1955.<sup>109</sup> Even thereafter, both milieux kept alive a transnational political memory of Germany as aggressor that continued to shape Franco-German-Polish relations into the 1960s.

This was a bond with *Esprit*, not just with Domenach personally. The *Esprit* executive editor Albert Béguin; long-time *Esprit* contributor and Mounier confidant Jean Lacroix; Henri Bédarida, the president of the Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français and the renowned Catholic sociologist Henri Bartoli made a one-week trip to Poland in April 1955 – five months before Konrad Adenauer's visit to Moscow. In the course of their Polish sojourn, they gave lectures in Cracow, Lublin, Warsaw and Wrocław, with PAX shepherding them around as foreign dignitaries.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, all were so impressed with their time in Poland and their treatment at the hands of

<sup>108</sup> Domenach, Speech on the occasion of the conferral of the Włodzimierz Pietrzak Prize.

<sup>109</sup> N. S. Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004–2007), III, 55–64.

<sup>110</sup> See Jean Lacroix, 'Sens nowoczesnego ateizmu', *Dziś i Jutro*, 8 May 1955; Henri Bartoli, 'O cywilizację pracy', *Dziś i Jutro*, 28 Aug. 1955.

their hosts that they pledged to return seven months later for the tenth-anniversary celebration of *Dziś i Jutro*.<sup>111</sup> This – despite the obvious propagandistic significance accorded to their visit by the PAX leadership, evident from just a few sentences of its announcement in the pages of *Dziś i Jutro*: ‘The visit of the French Catholic intellectuals came at a time when the entire Polish nation was signing the Vienna [Peace] Appeal. The fact of the mass signings by Polish society made an enormous impression on our guests, who appreciate in full the significance of the struggle for peace. Professor Lacroix voiced this appreciation in his farewell address, in which he emphasised Poland’s great role in the work of maintaining peace’.<sup>112</sup>

This passage suggests the height of success for Kętrzyński’s project: prominent French Catholic activists visiting the ‘People’s Poland’ and returning home to spread the gospel of Catholic socialism, thereby adding credence and clout to PAX’s own efforts, national and international alike. And yet, a mere two months after the Polish sojourn of Béguin, Lacroix and their colleagues, the Catholic-socialist international – by now in its fifth year – was in crisis. In the interim, the Holy Office had condemned the *Dziś i Jutro* flagship weekly, alongside a collection of Piasecki’s essays published in late 1954 under the title *Zagadnienia istotne*. Piasecki had overplayed his hand, circulating copies of his manuscript in translation around Western Europe and seeking a publisher in Italy. Outraged at some of Piasecki’s claims – for example, that Marxists might be better Christians than Christians themselves – the prominent Fribourg-based Dominican scholar I. M. Bocheński helped to engineer the manuscript’s condemnation.<sup>113</sup>

### Conclusions

The self-styled Catholic-socialist project thus failed. Yet what is surprising is that it failed neither immediately nor completely. Launched in part to satisfy the ego of *Dziś i Jutro*’s larger-than-life founder, Bolesław Piasecki, it thus ultimately fell prey to that hubris.<sup>114</sup> One of the core tenets laid out in Kętrzyński’s 1950 blueprint for the ‘international’ had been public avoidance of overtly pro-Communist tendencies, and another had involved reliance on Western European Catholic partners to establish and publicise the bona fides of *Dziś i Jutro* (later PAX). By 1955, however, Piasecki had broken these rules, seeking a wide Western European audience for his own Catholic-Marxist theology in the Holy Office’s backyard. It is thus not the seemingly fantastic quality of the international’s aspirations that ultimately led to its failure, nor PAX’s

<sup>111</sup> See, e.g. Henri Bartoli’s discussion of logistics for his visit: Bartoli to Wanda Urstein, 22 Sept. 1955, AKSCC V/98.

<sup>112</sup> [Untitled front-cover note], *Dziś i Jutro*, 8 May 1955. The Vienna Appeal was issued by the World Council of Peace on 17–19 Jan. 1955.

<sup>113</sup> On the condemnation, see Peter Raina, *Piasecki na indeksie watykańskim: Geneza sprawy* (Warsaw: von Borowiecky, 2002); Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red*, 102–5.

<sup>114</sup> Antoni Dudek and Grzegorz Pytel have suggested this also explains Piasecki’s abortive project of co-operation with the East German Christians: Antoni Dudek and Grzegorz Pytel, *Bolesław Piasecki: Próba biografii politycznej* (London: Aneks, 1990), 212–14.

complicity in the prosecution of high officers of the Catholic Church in Poland, but rather strategic blunders driven by the ego of the movement's founder, who had not been involved in carrying out Kętrzyński's original blueprint.

Never achieving any political structures like the *Nouvelles Équipes Internationales* or the Cominform, *Dziś i Jutro's* Catholic-socialist international nonetheless succeeded in producing a real transnational network of Catholic activists who went beyond intellectualisation of the Gospels, focusing above all on the pursuit of global peace. Anti-war – and thus quintessentially anti-American and anti-German – the various nodes of the network assembled by Kętrzyński and Łubieński coalesced into a support network. Its members helped PAX through the international media firestorm that followed Primate Wyszyński's arrest, just as PAX offered its sympathies and its support in the wake of Holy Office condemnations of some of its own partners: the UCP, the *Jeunesse de l'Église* and *La Quinzaine*.

The story of the Catholic-socialist international reveals conditions permitting transnational intellectual, cultural and political agency and initiative on the part of Soviet-bloc actors – even at the height of Soviet-bloc Stalinism. This agency did not extend to oppositional politics, but it afforded a concessioned group such as PAX the opportunity both to build up its own domestic position and to win the loyalty of prominent – non-Communist – international actors who accepted PAX's justification of Soviet-bloc geopolitics. Not just Moscow, Paris and Rome, but also the emerging Soviet bloc itself exercised agency in the processes of European disintegration and integration alike in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In the case of *Dziś i Jutro/PAX*, although the Polish Communist party-state authorised its activities, it neither fully understood nor controlled them, nor could it control the reactions of the Poles' Western European interlocutors. One can therefore speak of autonomous transnational agency – tightly constrained, for sure, but effective nonetheless – among these Catholic activists, even at the height of Stalinism.

The Catholic sector of Poland's emerging Stalinist order proved itself to be deeply influenced by and – in certain respects – to be even more influential for its counterparts in Western Europe. Strong as the Poles' bonds were with Mounier and Domenach, this was not just a matter of *Esprit*: *Dziś i Jutro/PAX* brought together partner organisations from across the francophone worlds of Catholic publishing, peace activism and even the Dominican and Jesuit Orders. For Western Europeans, developing a syncretic blend of Catholicism and socialism afforded an opportunity above all to voice organised Catholic discontent with the cold war into which they felt that their post-war governments, in partnership with the United States, had undemocratically driven them. Paradoxically, the heads of these governments were mostly Christian Democratic politicians claiming, as the Polish Catholic socialists did, to be following a Christian path in public life. In joining forces with *Dziś i Jutro*, then, Western Europe's progressive Catholics were, above all, lodging a protest against the geopolitical agenda of Christian Democratic parties in the ascendant in their own countries.

In particular, they opposed the project of (Western) European integration that the Christian Democrats of France, Italy and West Germany had initiated. Taking

a page from their Western European opponents, *Dziś i Jutro* activists conceptualised and attempted to structure their contacts across the Iron Curtain by means of a self-described ‘Catholic-socialist international’. Paradoxically, then, the transnational co-operation of Catholic socialists would by design necessitate opposition across the Iron Curtain to both the Vatican’s geopolitics and the emerging juridical structures of an integrated Europe.

For much of the first post-war decade, then, it seemed to both young Catholic activists in Poland and a wide range of francophone Catholic activists in Western Europe that *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX offered the makings of a bona fide ‘third way’ between atheist communism and unchecked free-market liberalism. To be clear, this was not a third way between state socialism and liberalism; *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX not only privileged state socialism over liberalism, but indeed argued that ‘socialism’ in its manifold forms was the last missing piece of the puzzle of Catholic social teaching. According to Kętrzyński and his colleagues, opposition to (West) Germany’s reintegration into the European state system was one of the priorities of this pursuit of Catholic social justice. By accepting this premise, supporters of the *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX movement on both sides of the Iron Curtain committed themselves to the proclaimed *raison d’état* of post-war Poland’s new Communist regime. Even as this regime became Stalinised and began arresting and – in some cases – torturing and trying Poland’s bishops, participation in the ‘Catholic-socialist’ international meant that it was more important to keep a steadfast line on Germany than to oppose the political crimes of Poland’s Stalinist regime. The depth of this commitment explains why loyalty to PAX among at least some of its francophone partners survived not only Primate Wyszyński’s arrest and *Dziś i Jutro*’s condemnation by the Holy Office, but also de-Stalinisation, Maria Winowska’s 1956 French-language anti-PAX exposé and even the first years of Vatican II.

PAX survived as a movement, but only by shutting down the *Dziś i Jutro* weekly and losing virtually all the *bien-pensant* Catholic socialists who had provided the organisation with international cachet. When all was said and done, the principal casualty was *Dziś i Jutro*’s role at the centre of East–West transnational Catholic co-operation, not the co-operation itself. De-Stalinisation in 1956 brought a new set of transnationally minded Polish Catholic journals and organisations – some brand-new, others reactivated after years of forced inactivity. This post-‘thaw’ network of Polish Catholic activists inherited the vast majority of PAX’s international contacts, growing them into an even more extensive network, reaching beyond Europe’s borders to the former colonies of the Global South.<sup>115</sup> As maintained by Poland’s post-1956 Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs and the journals *Więź* (Bond) and *Tygodnik Powszechny* (Universal Weekly), this network would become the backbone of international Catholic support for Poland’s independent Solidarity trade union movement following its creation in

<sup>115</sup> See, e.g. Ludwik Dembiński, ‘The General Secretary “who came in from the cold”’, in Michela Trisconi, ed., *Mémoires engagées / Memorias comprometidas / Memories of committed persons* (Fribourg: Pax Romana ICMICA/MIIC, 1997), 89–98.

1980.<sup>116</sup> The most prominent defector from PAX was Jean-Marie Domenach, who in 1958 switched his allegiance to Poland's new self-styled 'Catholic-socialist' journal *Więź* – co-founded by future Polish prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki – when his friend Andrzej Krasieński joined the new journal's staff after leaving PAX.<sup>117</sup> Rev. Karol Wojtyła, the future John Paul II, was both an important member of this network and, as he ascended through the ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, its most prominent patron.

Above and beyond the particular case of Polish Catholic activists' transnational engagement lies the wider story of the conditions that throughout the cold war – even at the height of Soviet-bloc Stalinism – allowed for intellectual, cultural and political exchanges and partnerships across the Iron Curtain. In many cases – such as that of PAX – their significance is best understood longitudinally, in terms of both the successes and the failures of a given project. In PAX's case, that it was ultimately generative of support for Solidarity. With a number of noteworthy exceptions,<sup>118</sup> this rich field of transnational debate and activism remains unexplored by historians, yet, in any number of domains, a litany of individuals and organisations merit study in light of their activism across Iron Curtain. The Soviet bloc's most promising cases just from Poland might include Leszek Kołakowski in philosophy, Krzysztof Zanussi in film, Michał Kalecki in economics and Zbigniew Herbert in literature. The project of a Catholic-socialist international, then, was one among many instances demonstrating the extent to which the Iron Curtain, rather than forcing Central and Eastern Europeans into the role of a voiceless subaltern, in virtue of politically repressive consequences pushed them to innovate new forms of transnational activism.

<sup>116</sup> Kosicki, 'L'Avènement des intellectuels catholiques', 40–7.

<sup>117</sup> The importance for Domenach of his personal relationships with Krasieński and Kętrzyński is clear in his correspondence from the time justifying his realignment – and his realignment of *Esprit* – with *Więź*: Domenach to Krasieński, 7 Jan. 1957, IMEC ESP2.C3-02.06; Domenach to Tadeusz Mazowiecki, 21 Mar. 1958, IMEC ESP2.C3-02.06.

<sup>118</sup> Intrepid recent work includes, Riikka Nisonen-Trnka, 'The Prague Spring of Science: Czechoslovak Natural Scientists Reconsidering the Iron Curtain', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60, 10 (2008), 1749–1766; Patryk Pleskot, *Intelektualni sąsiedzi: Kontakty historyków polskich ze środowiskiem Annales 1945–1989* (Warsaw: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2010); Friederike Kind-Kovács and Jessie Labov, eds, *Samizdat, Tamizdat and Beyond: Transnational Media During and After Socialism* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013); Pia Koivunen, 'Overcoming Cold War Boundaries at the World Youth Festivals', in Sari Autio-Sarason and Katalin Miklóssy, eds, *Reassessing Cold War Europe* (London: Routledge, 2011), 175–92.

**La Réponse du bloc soviétique à  
l'intégration européenne:  
L'Antigermanisme catholique et le  
projet polonais d'une Internationale  
'catholique-socialiste'**

Cet article explore la tentative par une organisation polonaise – connue jusqu'en 1952 sous le nom de son hebdomadaire, *Dziś i Jutro*, puis sous celui de PAX – de mobiliser une Internationale 'catholique-socialiste' au cours de la décennie qui a suivi la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Ce projet transnational était fondé sur la coopération entre penseurs et activistes catholiques des deux côtés du rideau de fer opposés au réarmement et à l'incorporation de l'Allemagne (de l'Ouest) dans une communauté européenne intégrée. L'instigateur de ce projet, Wojciech Kętrzyński, a déployé un discours de protection de la 'personne humaine' fondé sur le rôle prioritaire de la paix dans le monde. Les rencontres polonaises avec des activistes catholiques francophones de toute l'Europe de l'Ouest, spécialement avec ceux de la revue française *Esprit*, ont ainsi donné lieu à d'importants échanges intellectuels entre interlocuteurs de part et d'autre du rideau de fer concernant la philosophie et la théologie catholique. Paradoxalement, ces activistes admettaient cependant qu'un antigermanisme transnational était à préconiser pour la dignité de la personne humaine, même si le prix à payer était la complicité avec le stalinisme, ou même la participation au stalinisme. Le projet soi-disant catholique-socialiste fut donc un échec, mais, chose surprenante, ce ne fut ni un échec immédiat, ni un échec total; il montre que tout au long de la Guerre froide – et même au plus fort du stalinisme du bloc soviétique – subsistaient des possibilités d'échanges intellectuels, culturels et politiques et de partenariats par-delà le rideau de fer.

**Die Antwort des Ostblocks auf die  
europäische Integration: Katholischer  
Anti-Germanismus und das  
polnische Projekt einer  
'katholisch-sozialistischen'  
Internationale**

Dieser Beitrag erforscht den Versuch einer polnischen Organisation – die bis 1952 unter dem Namen ihrer Wochenzeitschrift *Dziś i Jutro* und anschließend als PAX bekannt war – im ersten Jahrzehnt nach Kriegsende eine 'katholisch-sozialistische' Internationale aufzubauen. Das transnationale Projekt gründete sich auf eine Zusammenarbeit von katholischen Denkern und Aktivisten beiderseits des Eisernen Vorhangs, die die Wiederaufrüstung und Einbindung (West-) Deutschlands in eine integrierte europäische Gemeinschaft ablehnten. Der Begründer des Projekts, Wojciech Kętrzyński, beschwor den Schutz der 'menschlichen Person' gestützt auf die Vorrangigkeit des Weltfriedens. Begegnungen zwischen den Polen und frankophonen katholischen Aktivisten aus Westeuropa – insbesondere mit der französischen Zeitschrift *Esprit* – nährten beiderseits des Eisernen Vorhangs eine ernsthafte intellektuelle Auseinandersetzung auf der Ebene katholischer Philosophie und Theologie. Paradoxiertweise gingen diese Aktivisten davon aus, dass der Würde der menschlichen Person am besten durch einen transnationalen Anti-Germanismus gedient sei. Dafür nahmen sie eine Komplizenschaft mit dem stalinistischen Regime oder gar eine direkte Beteiligung in Kauf. Das selbststilisierte katholisch-sozialistische Projekt scheiterte daher, doch überraschenderweise weder vollkommen noch sofort. Jedenfalls zeigt es, dass während des Kalten Krieges – selbst auf dem Höhepunkt des Stalinismus im Ostblock – Gelegenheiten zu intellektuellem, kulturellem und politischem Austausch und zu Partnerschaften über den Eisernen Vorhang hinweg bestanden.