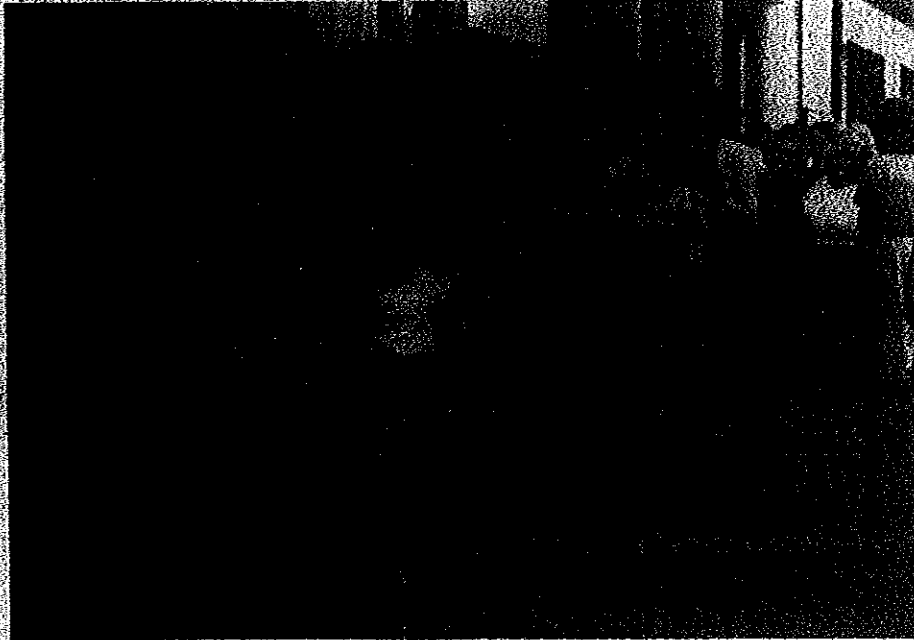


who had died in Peking in 1953. Nozaka lost no time in cutting Shida down to size. "There has been ultra-leftist adventurism," he cried, and prescribed a policy of nonviolence and a popular front with the Socialists. Suddenly Shida disappeared. For nearly nine months nothing more was heard of him.

Then, two weeks ago, the party formally expelled Shida for "indulging in individualism," adding cryptically: "He abandoned his entrusted mission." Last week the Communist magazine *Shinso* (Truth) claimed to have discovered the "real facts" about Shida. According to *Shinso*, all the time Shida had supposedly



BREAD QUEUE IN PARIS
"Let 'em eat biscotte!"

SCOOP

been performing dark deeds of underground violence, he had really been spending the party's money "merrymaking with geisha girls," in the disguise of "Mr. P., a company owner." Shida had bought himself expensive clothes, donned black-rimmed glasses, grown a big mustache. Sometimes for three nights running he would drink four to six quarts of sake at a Tokyo geisha house called the Big Bamboo. He lavished so much money on his favorite geisha and attendant guests that the owner was able to add a brand-new two-story annex. Wrote *Shinso's* reporter: "I looked around at the rich artistic material used in building the annex, and when I reflected it all had been paid for with the money of poor working people, I felt a cold fury pass down my spine."

If the story was true, Shida had disappeared in order to escape that cold fury. But was it the truth? Comrades loyal to Shida suggested discreetly that the whole thing was a fabrication designed to discredit him politically. If so, it was unlikely that he was still alive. Either way, it was another reminder that Stalins, little or big, are finding it tough all over.

FRANCE

The Battle of Bread

'Tis a long day, a day without bread.
—French Proverb

Though gourmets the world over relish it, no one can get quite as passionate about French bread as the French. For them, the long, crusty loaf called a *baguette* is not only a gustatory delight and a dietary necessity but a supercharged political commodity as well. On the dark day in 1789 when a mob of hungry women marched twelve miles through the mud to Versailles to haul King Louis XVI off

The bakers were unimpressed by any such general considerations, and last week, all over France, they banged down their shutters and went on strike. The government retaliated vigorously. In some provincial towns the strike caved in under government threats to draft bakers into the army. In Paris gendarmes "requisitioned" nearly one-third of the city's 4,200 bakeries, ordering the owners to fire up their ovens or face a year in jail and a \$3,500 fine.

Despite these measures millions of Frenchmen found themselves without *baguettes*. In desperation some turned to their grocery stores, distastefully buying packages of *biscotte*, square slices of Zwieback. Others resorted to stronger action. In Paris irate customers heaved bricks through bakeshop windows. In the town of Caunterets in the Pyrenees Mayor Charles Fourtine, despondent over the insults hurled at him by angry citizens who felt that it was up to him to keep the town adequately supplied with bread, climbed a power pylon and killed himself by grasping a 100,000-volt high-tension wire.

Cool Bakers, Hot Ovens. With their backs to their cash registers, most of the embattled bakers at first stood fast under the combined assaults of the government, their customers and the press. A day after the beginning of the Paris strike, the president of the Bakers Syndicate called a meeting of his colleagues and proposed that they all turn out a small amount of bread for distribution by the police. From the audience a baker shouted back, "Let 'em eat *biscotte*." By week's end, however, the bakers cooled down and their ovens began heating up again. Calling off the strike in Paris, the Bakers Syndicate explained: "We think that the Parisian population, which perhaps can endure a temporary annoyance, should not suffer a persistent lack of bread."

to his doom, their war cry was "Bread! Bread!" and their fury was fed by Marie Antoinette's fateful "Let them eat cake." Last week, to the dismay of Socialist Premier Guy Mollet and his government, the same angry cry for bread reverberated through France.

The trouble began months ago when France's 63,000 neighborhood bakers decided that the 45 francs (about 14¢) the government allowed them to charge for a pound of bread did not give them enough profit. The bakers asked for an increase of one franc a pound in the ceiling price. The best they could get out of the government was a compromise offer to lower flour taxes and thereby increase the profit margin by about half a franc per pound.

From Creep to Sprint. The Mollet government had compelling reasons for its refusal to increase the price of bread. One of France's gravest problems is the creeping inflation which in the last year has increased the housewife's food bills by 30%. A rise in the price of bread, the government feared, would be just the "psychological spark required to set off a universal demand for wage increases that would change creeping inflation into a wild sprint.

INDIA

The Battle of the Book

The bitterest communal riots since the 1947 partition convulsed much of India last week and spread across the border to Pakistan. At least 23 Hindus and Moslems were dead, another 500 injured. The riots ripped the delicate fabric of peaceful Hindu-Moslem relations and dealt a cruel blow to Prime Minister Nehru's belief that in nine years of the "secular" state the ancient religious animosities of his people had been "healed and forgotten."

The trouble was caused, oddly enough, by an obscure book published in the U.S. 14 years ago. One day last month a rabble-rousing Moslem editor named Ishaq Almi from Kanpur in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, chanced to find on a newsstand a cheap Indian reprint of *Living Biographies of Religious Leaders* by Henry and Dana Lee Thomas. Inside Almi found a foreword by Uttar Pradesh's Governor Kanialal M. Munshi, director of the Bombay firm which published the book in India, praising it as "worthwhile read-