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FRENCH POLITICAL SITUATION AND INDOCHINA

faces Indochina debate on

I. Laniel government ~~starts~~ 1 June.

A. National Assembly in recess ~~is~~ this week ~~on~~

~~Tuesday~~

II. After 1 June Laniel's position increasingly precarious because of:

A. Splits inside the coalition.

1. Hostile motion about Indochina on 20 May from Pierre Andre, member of Laniel's own group (Independents) and leader of parliamentary organization against EDC.
2. One report of dissatisfaction with Bidault on part of his own Popular Republican Party.
3. Continued willingness of Gaullists and Radical Socialists to make political hay out of government's difficulties.

B. Press more caustic:

1. Rightist Aurore on 24 May called on president Coty to replace Laniel.

C. Additional factors when Assembly reconvenes on 1 June:

1. Anti-EDC forces in cabinet may choose this occasion to resign because:

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- a. Socialist Congress on 29-30 May expected to call for disciplined vote on EDC.
 - b. Popular Republican Congress on 29-30 May likely to bring into question party's continued participation in government if stalling on EDC continues.
 - c. Official announcement of French-German agreement on Saar expected after Socialist Congress. *Gaue lists to interpellate.*
2. New parliamentary interpellations regarding Indochina policy already presented on:
- a. Wisdom of excluding Great Britain from American-French military talks.
 - b. Reinforcement question.

III. Nevertheless, so long as Geneva still seems to hold hope of Indochina settlement, deputies will hesitate to create government crisis.

- A. In 13 May vote of confidence enough deputies switched at last minute to give Laniel his 289-287 victory.

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