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NSC BRIEFING

9 June 1954

FRENCH ASSEMBLY AND GOVERNMENT PROSPECTS

- I. National Assembly now in midst of Indo-china debate:
 - A. Bidault's report on Geneva due Wednesday 9 June.
 - B. Hostile interpellations on Indo-china policy by Socialists, Gaullists may follow.
 - C. Government may well not complete reply by 10 June.
 - D. Laniel demand for confidence vote is possible thereafter.
 - E. However, required 24-hour delay would postpone actual vote until Friday, 11 June at earliest: vote more likely delayed until next week.

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II. Pre-debate outlook most crucial in life Fourth Republic.

A. Laniel opposition in Assembly stiffer.

1. Increasing impatience over lack progress at Geneva:
2. Anti-EDC forces (center, right) hope use Indochina to overthrow government because fear two pro-EDC developments.
3. Laniel's brother, Rene (a senator) reported involved "questionable" financial deals--has hurt Premier's prestige.

B. Despite this Laniel may be able to hold on:

1. Will point to positive steps taken in Indochina, dispatch of top general, Ely.

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2. Coalition parties unwilling accept onus for crisis while Geneva still offers hope.
 3. Opposition still unable to agree on a successor to Laniel.
- C. New factor, however, is politicians' view that new elections good idea.
1. Forming new government in present Assembly might take as long as new elections: they remember 5-week crisis spring 1953. Only takes 6-7 weeks form new Assembly.
 2. Success of pro-EDC candidates in recent by-elections indicates that new Assembly would be more pro-EDC.
 3. Since less than 18 months from last cabinet downfall by majority vote, constitution now

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permits dissolution of Assembly
if cabinet overthrown by 314.

4. In event such vote, Premier
must have cabinet approval
and that of Pres. of Assembly (Le Trocquer)
for Assembly dissolution and
call for new election.
5. Constitution requires President
then to decree dissolution.
Le Trocquer (Pro EDC Socialist)
~~Unlikely that~~ would exercise
personal influence against
Laniel whose views are close
to his own.
6. Assembly could also dissolve
self.

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EDC ~~///~~ AS EXPECTED COMMITTEE OF
FRENCH ASSEMBLY
VOTED TO REPORT EDC UNFAVORABLY

24 - 18

Comment: This done despite personal appeal
of BIDAULT

Disregarding overrwhelming pro- EDC
vote of Socialist Convention,
6 Socialists under Moch voted
against and only 3 for.

The name of the President of the French Assembly is ANDRE LE TROQUER. He is a Socialist. Mildly pro EDC. Vigorous anti-Communist. Active in resistance during World War II. Has been in politics since 1919. Defended LEON BLUM at trial at Riom under Vichy government. Has held various government posts during World War II. Was Vice-President of Assembly from 1946 to 1953.