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RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

STAT

ON THE GAME OF POLITICS IN FRANCE

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INTRODUCTION

In the pages to follow I shall attempt to describe some major patterns of parliamentary strategy and tactics which obtained during the second phase of the Fourth Republic, from the general election of June 17, 1951, to the breakdown of constitutional order on May 14, 1958. (The study was completed in February, the introduction written in late May.)

I propose to deal only with those parliamentary groups, cliques, and individuals who essentially accepted the French constitutional status quo. This excludes not only the Communists but also the "extreme right," which was, as it happened, very weak during most of the period. While I did not study these two extremes, I felt almost certain that their styles in politics were significantly different from those of the so-called "national" groups. This belief made it reasonable to limit my field of investigation to the national groups. Moreover, during most of the period the extremes entered but little into "the game," so that the "nationals" did not find many occasions to apply to them the patterns of calculation and behavior to be discussed.

The materials for this study have been derived from a variety of sources: the proceedings of the National Assembly and of the Council of the Republic; news and analyses appearing in the French press; personal observations of meetings of parliament; interviews with parliamentarians and journalists; memoirs of political and military leaders; and collaboration in research with colleagues close to parliament. Occasionally I have drawn on data from periods preceding June 1951, when they seemed to furnish the best illustrations of persisting practices.

* * *

While many of the illustrations of "rules of the game" given below concern domestic politics, the analysis to be presented is, I believe, relevant to the fuller understanding of French foreign policy. Contemporary France appears to furnish an instance of what probably is a very frequent situation: certain ways of calculating and acting are evolved, tested, and reinforced in domestic politics, but then extended to foreign affairs, often with unexpected consequences. One tends to assume that reactions abroad are similar to those with

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which one has become so familiar at home. Accordingly, members of the French political class frequently act in the field of foreign affairs as if their foreign counterparts were so like themselves that the issue at stake could be treated as a domestic one. In the process of arriving at a national decision on a problem of foreign policy, politicians often apply the procedures customarily used to deal with domestic partners and antagonists, with little perception of the repercussions this may have abroad.

A situation in foreign policy must have become very acute indeed for its requirements to modify the rules of the game. In the matter of the rearmament of West Germany, for instance, it would be difficult to understand French behavior between August 1950 and December 1954 without taking into account the customary style of parliamentary politics in Paris. Not only did the French first seem to accept, then reject, EDC, but they rejected the Paris Agreements (December 24), in spite of their acceptance of a detailed blueprint, the London Agreement, on the preceding October 12. This behavior produced a situation so threatening that external realities finally had to be taken into account: within a week the Assembly reversed itself. Less than two months later the completion of the process of ratification had come to appear so inevitable that some of the diehards of December 24 became tacit supporters of WEU. It seems characteristic of French foreign policy that things have to come to such a pass before reality can be accepted. This peculiarity may be partly explained by certain patterns of behavior which are largely evolved in domestic politics. These patterns are discussed below (see Chapter 1).

As long as foreign problems obtrude themselves less sharply than domestic, the ordinary "rules of the game" are likely to be quite influential in determining French conduct in international affairs. A well-developed capacity for avoiding their responsibility seems to affect the politicians when they are faced with major national misfortunes (pp. 36-40). The device of passing the buck is used even in circumstances which might seem unpropitious for this universal technique (pp. 40-41). Such propensities among the politicians are likely to affect the feelings, and hence the conduct, of French policy makers in moments of international crisis. The latter are apt to suspect that their colleagues are out to unload all responsibility upon them (pp. 48-51), and to make intense efforts to repay them in kind (pp. 52-53). The practice of agreeing to make certain concessions to a domestic opponent, but adding conditions which

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one believes to be unacceptable, is applied to foreign affairs (pp. 61-63). In moments of domestic or foreign crisis, cabinet members are disposed to relinquish their positions, while parliamentarians are tempted to give up some of their normal functions to the government (pp. 66-75).

In both domestic and foreign affairs one often observes a tendency to draw back at the last moment from completing an enterprise (pp. 77-78) and to scuttle a measure deliberately at a very late stage of its career (pp. 78-80). Related to this behavior is a maneuver called "the lifting of a mortgage" (pp. 85-92) whose major consequences may be rather unexpected to those who use the device (pp. 94-97).

Decisions in foreign policy are affected by a belief in the expediency of "waiting" (pp. 99-110) and in the need to proceed by stages (pp. 110-113), and by an apprehension that the premature announcement of a "solution" may be fatal to its chances of adoption (pp. 114-116). The conviction that a "valid" solution can be conceived only "in the heat of the decisive moment" also extends beyond domestic issues (p. 116). In foreign affairs especially, faith in the effects of passing time may reflect a hope that sooner or later force majeure will provide an automatic solution (pp. 116-118), or, alternatively, the confidence that ingenuity will find a solution if enough time is available (p. 118).

The practice of equivocation as a means of making possible temporary alliances in parliament is applied to problems of foreign policy (pp. 140-142), and to international dealings (pp. 143-144). There is a tendency to treat foreign policy decisions like parliamentary resolutions, where each component of the majority must be accorded some verbal concession (pp. 146-149).

The disposition to take major action in domestic politics only when catastrophe appears the imminent consequence of a continued refusal to act is carried over into the field of foreign affairs (pp. 154-156). Only the immediate future tends to be taken into account (pp. 157-158).

* * *

Many of the patterns of behavior to be presented below are, no doubt, found outside France. It is the way these patterns combine which is peculiar to France. Even where French practice

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corresponds to the universal game of politics, certain French peculiarities are observed.

The recourse to imprecise statements (p. 138), for example, is a common enough political device, but in contemporary France it is thrown into relief because, for one reason, it conflicts with a rather strong aspiration to "precision." Hence a political device usually accepted in other countries is somewhat shocking to Frenchmen.

French politicians, like those in other countries, may justify important political failures on the ground that a great deal was learned in the course of them. In the case of France, however, such behavior is intimately related to some of the customary parliamentary maneuvers discussed in Chapter 3.

* * *

Before entering into an analysis of the patterns of parliamentary maneuvering in the period 1951-1958, it may be useful to sketch the framework of "parliamentary arithmetic" (the distribution of strength among the various groups) within which it occurred.

The elections of 1951 produced a "hexagonal" chamber in In approximate numbers, there were among the 630 deputies:

Communists	100
Socialists	105
Radicals and near-by small groups	115
Christian-Democrats	90
Moderates	100
Gaullists	120

Both the Communists and the Gaullists then refused to enter into alliances acceptable to other groups, or were refused entry by them, so that all the four other groupings had to combine if a majority was to be secured. Any three would have furnished too narrow a base.

Thus the parliament began with a continuation of the previous formula: a coalition of Socialists, Radicals, Christian-Democrats, and Moderates. The governments so formed were those headed by René Pleven and Edgar Faure, which lasted from the summer of 1951 to the winter of 1952. During this period, however, a differently constituted majority began to emerge,

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when a law granting subsidies to Catholic schools was passed by the Gaullists, Moderates, and Christian-Democrats, supplemented by a fraction of the Radicals. Certain Gaullists and Moderates had designed this measure as a tool to disintegrate the Fourth Force, and it did so.

The Socialists withdrew into opposition. Had the Gaullists remained monolithic, the Assembly would have become ungovernable, and, as some hoped and predicted, a way to power would have opened for the General. In the spring of 1952, however, the Gaullists began to break up and, before the end of this parliament in the fall of 1955, about half of them had joined other groups, mostly the Moderates. The remainder, deprived of the prospect of power on their own, "entered the system," i.e., supported governments and participated in them, while the General renounced them. By 1955 the picture thus was, approximately:

Communists	100
Socialists	105
Radicals, etc.	115
Christian-Democrats	90
Moderates	150
Ex-Gaullists	70

As early as 1952, however, it had become possible to form governments without the support of the Socialists. The first of these, that of Antoine Pinay, was voted in by mistake in the winter of 1952. It had not yet been perceived that a new majority had come into existence (cf. p. 61). The Pinay government enjoyed the support of the emerging "dissident Gaullists" (now Moderates) without their furnishing any ministers.

In the next government (René Mayer, from winter to spring of 1953) the "dissident Gaullists" participated, while the "ex-Gaullists" (as the orthodox Gaullists were called after the General had renounced them) gave their support, from which they, too, advanced to full membership in the subsequent combination (Joseph Laniel, from the early summer of 1953 to the late spring of 1954). This was the "true" formula of the legislature, the one which produced the greatest stability. The majority's complement of 425 votes could withstand substantial defections on particular occasions, and also attrition through time, without endangering the government, at least after its first months. This majority was re-established in the last government of the parliament (Edgar Faure, from the winter of 1955 through the rest of the year). But between Laniel and

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Faure there had been a peculiar interlude, that of Pierre Mendès-France.

The fall of Pinay in the winter of 1952 and that of Mayer in the spring of 1953 had not been connected with major issues of policy. But that of Laniel (June 1954) occurred about a month after the fall of Dien-Bien-Phu and about a month before what was in fact the "abandonment" of Indochina by France. While it may be argued that Laniel and Bidault, had they remained in office, would have followed a policy similar to that of the new Premier, Mendès-France, it remains a fact that the latter pursued his own course with a changed majority. Taking his stand as a reformer, he could draw on the support of the Socialists. While the Christian-Democrats went into opposition, large fractions of the Radicals and "ex-Gaullists," as well as a smaller fraction of the Moderates, allowed Mendès-France to survive while the abolition of the status quo in Tunisia began and EDC gave way to WEU. By that time the job assigned to Mendès-France as liquidator of over-ripe issues was done, and the majority of Laniel reasserted itself early in 1955, after "seven months and seventeen days." In the spring, with this majority, Edgar Faure managed to accelerate the withdrawal from Tunisia and, in the summer and fall, to initiate and complete the retreat from Morocco by drawing on the temporary support of the Socialists. Faced with the growing strength of the rebellion in Algeria, he attempted a consolidation of his majority through new elections, and failed.

The election of January 2, 1956, produced the following approximate party representation:

Communists	150
Socialists	100
Mendésites	15
Radicals of various factions and related groups	90
Christian-Democrats	75
Moderates	110
ex-Gaullists	20
Extreme Right	35

The groups which had formed the majority of Laniel and Faure now controlled but 295 out of 595 votes, and were thus no longer effective as a coalition. It was not feasible to add the Mendésists or the Extreme Right (mainly Poujadists) to such a combination. There was thus only one practicable majority

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in this Third Assembly of the Fourth Republic, the same with which the first one had ended, stretching from the Socialists to the Moderates. In the first two governments formed under this formula, that of Guy Mollet, from the winter of 1956 to the spring of 1957, and that of Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, from the spring to the fall of that year, the Socialists and Radicals participated in a government which the Christian-Democrats and Moderates merely supported, and which the latter in the end overthrew. In the next government, that of Félix Gaillard, from the fall of 1957 to the spring of 1958, the same formula produced the majority, but all its constituent groups participated. When sufficient Moderates deserted the government to overthrow it, the new government of Pierre Pflimlin, beginning May 14, 1958, included representatives of all the supporting parties except the Socialists, who joined a little later. By then, however, the Fourth Republic had in effect broken down.

This is the context within which were used the tactics now to be analyzed.

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Chapter 1

FACTIONS AND DOCTRINES

In contrast to a widely held view, "doctrines" do not play a major role in French politics (pp. 9-13). What often gives the impression of "doctrine" is a set of more or less emotion-laden phrases peculiar to a given party (pp. 13-14). Conflicts of an "ideological" nature are apt to involve simple answers (often irrelevant to action) to simple questions (pp. 14-15) During the period analyzed, interest in constitutional matters was limited (pp. 15-16), while here as elsewhere the attention of politicians was largely absorbed by efforts to defend and improve the position of special economic interests (p. 16) Historical memories play a minor role in the attitudes toward current problems (pp. 17-20). The conflict between "Right" and "Left" has declined in intensity (pp. 20-25); this has involved a sharp reduction in the role played by the opposition between "clericals" and "anti-clericals" (pp. 28-32). In the political class the feeling has gained strength that the policy to be followed in any given situation is commanded by "facts" rather than by doctrine (pp. 25-28). During the period analyzed, the most intensely fought issues split both the Right and the Left (pp. 32-33).

* * *

In France, one often hears, politics is "intellectual," "theoretical," "abstract," "ideological," even "idealist." According to the most important contemporary commentator on parliamentary activities (Jacques Fauvet), "ideological quarrels" occupy "an eminent place" in politics. They invade everything:

> We always start by conferring on our most trite discussions the dignity of philosophic disputations.[1]

For,

> The French people prefer pure ideas in all circumstances.[2]

In the preface to the book which contains these assertions -- the only recent essay on French politics by an observer close to the political class--the author announces that he is "liberating himself for awhile from the constraints of day-to-day events," and proposes to regard the "landscape" which he is usually viewing at

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short range "from a greater distance."[3] In so doing he seems to have turned his eyes toward an imaginary world where "sordid" facts have been replaced by "pure" ideas which may appear outdated, but do not lack dignity.

A few weeks after the elections of January 2, 1956, the staff of a satirical weekly (Le Canard Enchaîné) gathered around a recording apparatus in order to discuss, in more or less serious fashion, the new political star, Pierre Poujade. One of them (Robert Treno) said:

> What worries me is not Poujade's program but his lack of program. One knows from experience where this leads.... He doesn't have any doctrine, he doesn't have any program, isn't that curious?

But this was bound to provoke a reply:

> You are talking about doctrines and ideology. And M. Pinay, does he have a doctrine? And M. Legendre, does he have a doctrine? And Coste-Floret, does he have a doctrine? Schuman, does he have a doctrine? And Laniel? Please tell me about Laniel's ideology! (Henri Jeanson)[4]

It is, in fact, not easy to find doctrines in French politics though politicians frequently talk about them; less frequently by the way, than they are often believed to do, and less emphatically than they used to do in the Third Republic.

Let us consider from this point of view the main groupings in French politics (always with the exception of the Communists and of the extreme Right).

The initials usually employed to designate the Socialists, "SFIO," stand for "French Section of the Workers International"; but one wonders how many among those specialized in politics are in any way aware of the antiquated ideological words behind the familiar abbreviation. Though the Socialists are particularly inclined to talk about their "doctrine," the commentator cited before, who stresses the role of "ideology" when he makes overall statements, admits that the Socialist Party "has no doctrine anymore."[5] Still, it is "one of the rare political organizations which still possess a certain modest number of economic and social conceptions of their own."[6] These "conceptions" include a favorable

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attitude toward the maintenance and extension of governmental activities in economic affairs, and an advocacy of what are regarded as the interests of lower-income groups, whether salaried or not. On the other hand, words such as "socialism," "nationalization," or any other terms referring with an air of specificity to a radical transformation of the present order are, on the scale of national politics, not too frequently employed by the Socialists. Demanding that all nuclear fuels be owned by Euratom, a Socialist speaker in the Assembly, a former Premier, added:

> If we regard this measure as desirable, it is not, ladies and gentlemen, please believe me, because of any sectarian ideology hostile to private property.[7]

When a Socialist Premier wants to "fall leftward," he may suddenly come out with vague demands for workers' participation in the conduct of business so that the Moderates may cry "Sovietization"! Nobody will have known that the Socialists were particularly intent on this reform, and few will wonder about the disappearance of the demand once it has served its function. Suppose that Le Monde, the newspaper most widely and thoroughly read by the political class in Paris, wanted to describe in detail the program of the Socialists: many of its readers, though specialized in politics, would feel that they were being led into rather unknown territory, though they would also be sure that there were no major surprises in store for them.

If teachers are part of the "intelligentsia," the Socialists represent that stratum to a higher degree than other parties; but among the intellectuals who are socialist militants, functionaries, parliamentarians, exceedingly few are known on non-political grounds, or as contributors to "doctrine." "The doctrinal effort which the appearance of the Communists ought to have imposed on the other parties, and particularly on the Socialists," observes Jacques Fauvet, "was not made until shortly before the war."[8] I should rather say that it was not made at all, as far as the Socialists are concerned, despite a few essays by Léon Blum and one by Jules Moch. If that book appeared to be followed by some difficulties for Moch in the party, this was not because of any excessive deviations from Marxism which it may have contained, but rather because the author envisaged a raising of retirement ages, a suggestion unwelcome to public employees forming a decisive part of the Socialist clientele. It would, indeed, be difficult to indicate the relations between the alleged Socialist

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doctrine and Marxism, which Socialist leaders have not renounced but which they claim as their own quite rarely and in very brief affirmations. The few persons who are held by party members to be "theoreticians" because they write in the party's monthly are quite unknown outside of the limited circles of its readers, and so is the monthly itself.

When somebody talks about "the doctrine of the Radicals," others immediately think of the philosopher Alain. On the other hand, one often hears the following anecdote retold: having written a book called Elements of a Radical Doctrine, Alain had it placed before the seat of every Radical minister at the table of the Council of Ministers. One of the recipients, upon looking at the book, remarked: If a Radical doctrine really existed, would we not be the first to know it? "To my mind," declared an important Radical (Edgar Faure), "Radicalism is a method for solving problems rather than a set of solutions."[9] (He went on to suggest that the facts outside of parliament and the distribution of party strength within it imposed about the same "method" on every reasonable man.) "The Radicals conceive of themselves as Socialists," alleged Jacques Fauvet.[10] But if the full name of the party is "Republican Radical and Radical Socialist Party," the words "Socialist" and "Socialism" are almost never applied by Radicals to themselves on the level of national politics; they almost never claim allegiance to any doctrine called "Socialist."

Lately an effort has been made, in the group around Pierre Mendès-France, to create a new Radical doctrine. But this is indicative of the break-up of the old Radical Party into various fragments, rather than of its continued vigor. Among the eighteen members of the directing committee of the periodical which attempts this creation of a new doctrine (Cahiers de la République), there are at least two Socialists, two "Left Catholics" and one Left Gaullist.

The Christian Democrats, too, used to have a periodical supposedly oriented on doctrine (Terre Humaine), edited by a man viewed as the "theoretician" of the party (Etienne Borne); but it ceased publication for lack of readers. Jacques Fauvet admits that "the principle of unity" of this "movement" is "emotional rather than intellectual": "being faithful to a tradition,"[11] that of the anti-conservative trend in French Catholicism between the 1830's and the Second World War. "If one had to indicate the aims of the Christian Democrats ten years after the foundation of their party," another journalist

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remarks, "all one could do would be to name a few chapter headings of a program which was never developed."[12] It is known, for instance, that the Christian Democrats do not like "capitalism." But as to the vague formulae about the "new institutions" through which the "reign of money" is to be replaced by "a more human order of things," only the authors of doctrinal reports prepared for national party congresses would be able to repeat their texts even approximately.

Even those who believe that "doctrine" plays a dominant role in French politics agree that there is little of it among the Moderates, where one is usually content with rejecting Socialist errors, without however seriously attacking the social-economic _status quo_ on behalf of less government interference.

In his famous speech in Bayeux in 1946, de Gaulle furnished the organizations, which were to profess allegiance to him, the bases of a political doctrine by sketching a "presidential" constitution for France. In addition, there was the idea of an "association between capital and labor" as well as "federalist" words concerning the French Union. But during the years when Gaullist or ex-Gaullist movements were of importance in French politics (1947-1955), doctrine was shrinking rather than expanding. The major postulates of Gaullist ideology only rarely appeared in parliamentary speeches or in actual proposed legislation. It became unusual to hear a Gaullist leader say in the Assembly:

> We continue to strive for a presidential regime.[13]

On the whole, Gaullist speakers came to limit themselves to the affirmation that existing institutions were in need of radical revision; and that the salvation of France depended on the General's return to power. The only Gaullist periodical which had a somewhat doctrinal air ceased publication in 1953. At the same time the Gaullist criticism of the "regime" ceased to be peculiar to that group, and became what was widely felt to be a set of commonly accepted and predictably inoperative truisms.

Though there is little "doctrine" in French politics, what does, of course, exist for each major political tendency, and _what often gives the impression of "doctrine," is a set of somewhat special and more or less emotion-laden phrases_. (These are at present more important on the local level and in elections than in parliamentary politics. The decline of party vocabularies

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in Paris may foreshadow a similar development in the provinces.) "Every major political tendency has its pantheon and its vocabulary."[14] This is true, as I said, though less so for the Moderates than for the other parties: There seem to be no commonly accepted heroes of the Moderates after Henry IV. Often, by the way, the words to which adherents of a party are attached and which differentiate them best from partisans of other movements are not those by which the party would characterize itself; an instance would be the use of the adjectives "human" and "new" by the Christian Democrats. Also, the pantheons of the various tendencies are sometimes a bit strange. "Neither Montalembert... nor LaTour du Pin...deserves to figure in the genealogy of the Christian Democrats,"[15] remarked, correctly, Jacques Fauvet in speaking about two prominent French Catholics of the nineteenth century. If they are nevertheless claimed by the Christian Democrats, this is not by virtue of the efforts made by ingenious "theoreticians" who have interpreted them in the desired sense, but rather because one knows them little, cares less, and because their names appear mostly at ceremonial occasions when words are not taken too literally.

In a frequently encountered view of French politics the many complicated doctrines to which the various tendencies are allegedly attached enter recurrently into passionate and protracted combat; and inside each doctrine, it is claimed, anguishing struggles between its various components occur. At the occasion of "political conflicts," Jacques Fauvet affirmed, "ideological controversy is endlessly cultivated."[16]

> Whenever debate lasts for some time, it becomes for the Christian Democrat a conflict between justice and liberty, for the Radical a choice between the individual and the state, for the Socialist one between reform and revolution.[17]

I do not know of any evidence in the period of the Fourth Republic which would support this observation. To take one case, among the Socialists, the traditional conflict between "Reformists" and "Marxists" has almost entirely disappeared since the time when Daniel Mayer was replaced, after the liberation, by Guy Mollet, who presented himself as being more to the "Left." In 1958, Mayer belongs to the "minority" within the party; but so does André Philip (who got himself expelled because he went farther than Mayer), who has been one of the most outspoken "Reformists" and who has never broken with his past. Also, the Socialist "minority," divided from the majority largely on the

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war in Algeria, is near to the Radical Mendès-France, who has never pretended to be any kind of Socialist.

"In any one of the recurring great ideological conflicts," affirmed Jacques Fauvet, "every party, every individual exhausts itself or himself in the search for an unattainable synthesis."[18] I do not see this either. Take the "ideological" debate on the operations of 1956-1958 in Algeria and on the future of that territory. Whatever the factual or moral worth of the conflicting positions, they were exceedingly simple and lacking in any doctrinal foundations. Has "torture" been applied in Algeria? Has it been applied systematically? If it has been applied, can this be justified by the necessities of a "war against subversion" and by the "atrocities" committed by the "rebels"? Is it legitimate to speak about "torture" in public? What are its consequences for the course and outcome of the war? What are the effects of revealing its use? These were some of the questions around which the debate turned (to take only the problem of the "special procedures" which may have been applied in Algeria). Just as one perceives here complication of thought, there was no "search for an unattainable synthesis": those who participated in these discussions tended rather to answer the questions which I mentioned with a definite yes or no.

* * *

French politics, one often hears, is characterized by the "primacy of the political,"[19] and by lack of interest in the economic.

"The most popular play in politics," notes an eminent observer, "that which is always being played before a full house, is the debate on the constitution." "Just as in 1848," one discusses "the advantages of unicameralism and bicameralism, the powers of the Assembly as against those of the executive"; one continues to propose "modifications" of the electoral law.[20] It is astonishing to this commentator "that there are still plain citizens who follow with passion the exchanges of oratory concerning Article 9 or Article 17 of a constitution which has been changed fifteen times in the course of one hundred and seventy years."[21] But the number of such simple souls, though unknown, is, I believe, quite small. The last manipulation bearing on "Article 9 or Article 17," prior to that of early 1958, occurred in 1953 and 1954. Among the events which interested the political class at that time and also managed, in various degrees, to arouse attention in the country, were: a long ministerial crisis in the

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spring of 1953; sudden and large strikes of government employees during the summer; the election of a President of the Republic toward the end of the year; the conflict between the government and Marshal Juin; the fall of Dien Bien Phu; the replacement of Laniel by Mendès-France as premier in the spring of 1954; the end of the war in Indochina; a new policy toward Tunisia, and the rejection of EDC during the summer; the approach toward another formula for the rearmament of Western Germany in the fall. In the middle of all this a fairly small number of parliamentarians specialized in constitutional questions had a "little reform" of the constitution voted by the Assembly, without any oratorical jousts, and with only a few members present. The country did not take notice. When, early in 1958, the government for the first time proposed a major revision of the constitution, the country did not abandon its indifference, and politicians were only mildly interested because one believed that nothing much would actually happen: the revision might not be adopted; if passed, it would not make much difference.

As to the alleged lack of interest in economics, it is indeed possible that the political class is less concerned than is the case in certain other democracies with important measures intended to influence the size of the national income and its distribution. But even if this could be established, it would still be erroneous to affirm that this differential is linked to the "idealism" by virtue of which, according to an observer, "the French chambers were passionately discussing the question of crucifixes in courts of justice at a time when, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain and Germany were concerned with their economic future."[22] In an already remote past the rarity of parliamentary discussions of great economic problems expressed a hostile attitude toward the interference of the state into the economy. For a long time now the lack of concern with large economic issues has been accompanied by parliamentary absorption in a vast number of narrowly circumscribed economic questions, most of which appear small to everybody except the limited category of those whose special interests are at stake. It has often been noted that parliament adopted the attitude of "I don't want to know anything about it" with regard to the various "Monnet plans," but that it is indefatigably concerned with, for instance, "the war prisoners' gratuity": four hundred francs (approximately ninety cents) for one month of captivity. A deputy could, without sounding absurd, affirm that the Assembly had "devoted more time to the famous gratuity than it had to the Atlantic Pact, the common market, or Algeria."[23]

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The alleged domination of French political life by "doctrine" is supposedly complicated by what an observer calls "the historical nature of our discussions."[24]

Nothing, it is held, changes. According to an observer,

> The constitutional debate has lasted from 1792 on. One never tires of it. It is never necessary to get a new director for this play. The old dialogue is still effective.[25]

I have already indicated that in the Fourth Republic the constitutional debate is conducted only from time to time and in the midst of general indifference. In addition, the constitutional debate bears only on certain arrangements within the framework of the existing regime, a framework which nobody of any importance proposes to change. As to the matters on which it seems appropriate to advocate innovations, they are mainly those which supposedly bear on the stability of governments: provisions concerning motions of confidence on censure and the right to dissolve parliament. Within this restricted sphere one is sometimes far removed from traditional alignments: early in 1958, a "Center" or "Left Center" group (the Christian Democrats) advocated a reform of the constitution to which a group of the "Right Center" or "Right" (the Moderates) objected. (The use of the words I have put into quotation marks fluctuates as these words have become less important. Cf. pp. 20-25.) The objection was that the reform would make the executive too independent of the legislative, while traditionally the Right is supposed to be in favor of such an independence, and the Left inclined toward "government by the Assembly." All this seems very far from 1792.

References to History are supposed to be very frequent in the rhetoric of the day. Speaking of the conflict around EDC, Jacques Fauvet observed that:

> One is still for or against Munich. The partisans and the enemies of EDC have classed themselves in this fashion. They have treated each other as men of Munich, though nobody was ever able to find out whether the anti-Munich people were those who rejected the EDC so as not to recreate the military threat of Germany, or those who, in accepting EDC, refused to capitulate to the Soviet menace.[26]

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However, a detailed analysis of the rhetoric on EDC would show, I believe, that the image of "Munich" was referred to quite infrequently and that its emotional charge was unimportant. "The dead," affirmed the same author, "are always dragged into our quarrels." "When the communists," he observed correctly, "want to embarrass the Socialists, they bring out against them a quotation by Jean Jaurès," who is indeed one of the most alive figures of the recent past; and "the Radicals never fail to invoke Clemenceau,"[27] an affirmation which I do not believe to be equally correct. In parliament the Radicals almost never mention Clemenceau, just as little as they do their other "ancestor," Camille Pelletan. Nor would it be very convenient to do otherwise, given the protracted conflicts between Clemenceau and the Radical Party and his famous words directed against it, as when he spoke about the "deaf-mutes of the seraglio" conspiring to "strangle" him. Above all, the feelings which still remain attached to the name of Clemenceau, and the desire to look backward, apart from rare ceremonial occasions, appear insufficiently strong to justify a frequent utilization of this or any other figure of the past. (As to Clemenceau, a close inspection of references to him would, I believe, also find that he is used just as much or more by the Right than by the Left: he is now mainly associated with 1917, a year of the Right in which he brought treason charges against Radicals.) As long as Edouard Herriot was alive, he was indeed abundantly cited and venerated at the congresses of his party. But at the first Radical Congress after his death, in the fall of 1957, his image, his words, his name were already virtually absent.

The past often vanishes quickly. (It should, however, be kept in mind that the dimming of the past seems to be a general trend in the West, and one which has probably gone to greater lengths elsewhere than in France.) Take the Resistance. "Every year," noted a journalist less than thirteen years after the liberation, "but more and more discreetly sad anniversaries are being celebrated here and there: the death of Jean Moulin, that of Pierre Brossolette.... A speech, a bunch of flowers in front of a marble slab...arouse vague memories of a remote epoch to which some still remain attached."[28] There may have been deliberate exaggeration in this; but this would not detract from the significance of the statement.

"It is characteristic of Frenchmen," we are assured by an analyst, "to think of politics in terms of history."[29] Thus, in the debate on EDC the future, supposedly, was quickly lost sight of:

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> One rapidly proceeded to the realms of philosophy and history. The EDC was, according to its enemies, supposed to resuscitate the Holy Roman and Germanic Empire.... M. Jean Monnet would be a new Charlemagne .... A lot of historic bric-a-brac was exhibited. The Count of Paris [the pretender to the throne -- N.L.] wrote that France had never been in such peril since the time of the Treaty of Troyes.[30]

But here again, I believe, closer inspection would show the slight importance of these glimpses into the past in comparison with the great visions which the enemies of EDC had. They claimed that that institution would have meant the "death of France." The ways in which that "death" would occur were indicated with only very few digressions into history. Only certain anti-clerical circles and small groups of Catholics that are of "Gallican" persuasion or particularly hostile to the Christian Democrats evoke the past more frequently.

Current decisions, we are told, tend to be based on historical analogy. Thus the "anti-Munich reflex" supposedly played a capital role on the occasion of the Suez expedition in the fall of 1956. The argument that "if one capitulates to force today, one only saves peace to lose it more surely" gained political importance, according to Jacques Fauvet, only by virtue of the historical precedents which could be cited. This affirmation appears gratuitous: the conflict with Egypt in 1956 was the first occasion since the war when a use of French force, without that of the United States, appeared neither impossible (as it had in the case of possible conflicts with the Soviet Union) nor unquestionable (as in the French domain outside of continental France). Thus there was a real analogy with the situation of the years preceding the war. One may be reminded of a past experience when the present one is remarkably similar and yet have no inveterate inclination toward harking back.

Many, we are told by an observer, aspire to make past regimes come to life again:

> With us dead regimes possess the property of surviving in many souls, and even in parties.... In France one's real allegiance goes to a regime of the past.

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Thus,

> ...the Orléans monarchy still lives on.... Two masses are read on the anniversary of the execution of Louis XVI. Two newspapers speak in the name of Charles Maurras.[31]

But what seems significant to me is precisely that royalism has disappeared from the list of significant political forces. Before the war, L'Action Française was to be reckoned with on the Left Bank in Paris, and to a lesser extent throughout France by virtue of its daily newspaper. Its successor, Aspects de la France, is an obscure sect. While the pretender has become a major figure in Parisian society, not a single parliamentarian would admit to being anything but "republican." Instead of a multiplication of gestures of revolt in favor of dead regimes, a pervasive conformism appears to prevail. Recently, when a deputy of the extreme Right was speaking in the Assembly, the Left exclaimed, reviving the cry of the years of the popular front:

> Fascism will not pass!

The extreme Right responded:

> Fascism will not pass!

On the rare occasions when the term is still used, everybody is somebody else's "Fascist."

* * *

According to a widespread myth, France is divided against herself to a peculiarly high degree under the sway of doctrine and history. The weight of the past and the attachment to ideas are supposed to be in large part responsible for the fact that there is always an opposition not only to the government in power but to the existing regime itself. It may be noted, however, that, apart from the Communists, the opposition, "aiming to overthrow the regime by force if need be,"[32] hardly ever enjoyed sufficient strength during the Fourth Republic to envisage even the approaches to such revolutionary actions, the exception being the period from the fall of 1947 to the end of 1948 -- somewhat more than twelve months in the course of somewhat more than twelve years.

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There is, one affirms, a fundamental split between the Right and the Left. Nobody could deny the importance of this division, but neither should it be exaggerated.

It is exaggerated when one accepts the myth of a frankly anti-democratic Right:

> The Right desires passionately a reform of the constitution.... The Right feels that any constitution based on "the stupid law of numbers" ought to be abrogated.[33]

But whatever the unexpressed desires of the men of the Right may be, nobody can publicly question "the stupid law of numbers" in the Fourth Republic without thereby condemning himself to political insignificance.

To the myth of a passionate Right corresponds that of a Left sufficiently ardent to induce politicians who really do not harbor Left sentiments to use its sacred vocabulary. One always cites instances of this practice from the period between 1879 and 1914; and one forgets to add that this phenomenon has since then very much declined. Jacques Fauvet recalled that "men of the Right sitting at the Center" of the Chamber called themselves during the Third Republic "Republicans of the Left," or were members of the "Radical Left," and that their successors in the Fourth Republic might belong to the "Concentration of Left Republicans."[34] But by now the use of Left vocabulary has become even more superficial than it already was at the time when Raymond Poincaré, a "Republican of the Left," could proclaim that he was separated from the Right by "the whole extent of the religious question." Today, the president of the Concentration of Left Republicans, Edgar Faure, can easily admit to a journalist that "the ideas of 'the Left' and of 'the Right' can be considered as, in part, outdated. I see myself, and have doubtlessly always seen myself, as a man of the Center," who "remains a member" of "what one continues to call in traditional fashion the 'Left.'"[35]

(The weakening of traditional verbal Leftism indicated by these words is not contradicted by the diffusion of the term "social" in the name of parliamentary groups and parties which do not belong to the Left; for it does not seem that "social" is at present a word with a Left connotation.)

While the Right disguises itself less and less as the Left, the Left presents itself less and less as such: another sign of

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the decline of this division. Because everybody is "republican" the Socialists, when they returned to "participation" in the government in 1956, were looking for a somewhat less widely applied word to designate partners acceptable to them. For a time they tried "democrats." But they had to abandon this attempt; for all parliamentary groups, with the exception of the communists and of the Poujadists, were "condemned" to "live together" in order to constitute a majority; and none wanted to be anything but "democrats."

In the new atmosphere a Radical, a Secretary of State, and an aspirant to the presidency of the republic (André Cornu) could eliminate an esthetically offensive statue of Gambetta from the court of the Louvre without creating any upset. Pierre Poujade, on the other hand, "invokes in his speeches Jeanne d'Arc as well as 'our Robespierre.'"[36] This despite the fact that Robespierre has until now been excluded, with a few other Jacobins and members of the extreme Left of the period, from the benefit of the good feelings which have developed toward all participants in the Great Revolution, from Charlotte Corday to Danton, from the Chouans to the Jacobins. However, in the spring of 1957 a proposal was made in the Assembly inviting the government to celebrate officially the 200th birthday of Robespierre. Among the signatories of this proposal one finds not only, as one would indeed expect, a Socialist, a Left Radical, and a Radical of the Right (Edgar Faure), but also a Christian Democrat (Maurice Schumann) and, astonishingly, the very incarnation of the Right, Antoine Pinay. According to one journalist, personal motives are now necessary if somebody wants to resist everybody's tendency to approve everything: M. de Baudry d'Asson, a deputy from the Vendée, belonging to the Moderates, protested in the corridors of the Assembly against Pinay's concession:

> This is an insult to the memory of my guillotined ancestors.[37]

The incident (Antoine Pinay finally withdrew his signature) permits one to appreciate the extent to which the revolution, which was still so alive a hundred years after its occurrence, has receded into history as its 175th birthday approaches. In the Third Republic every major political tendency had its master historian of the revolution, from Taine to Mathiez. No more so. Unsettled questions have somehow been left in suspense. Mathiez, for instance, wanted to prove that Danton was mainly a scoundrel. The charge appeared to be serious, but it has not led to any definite grouping of defenders and detractors of that personage.

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The issue has petered out. The interest both of historians and of the general public in the revolution has sharply decreased: during the entire course of the Fourth Republic there has not been a single work on the revolution which has evoked great academic or general interest. (I am, here again, not talking about the communist domain, where a central directive seems to impose a higher level of attention to the revolution. It is, of course, significant that such a directive is being maintained; but it is equally significant that the revolution seems to be in the process of being forgotten in the less organized sectors of the Left.) On the French stage, anti-revolutionary sentiments predominate on the rare occasions when the revolution is evoked. But even then history mainly serves as a vehicle for expressing themes which are beyond time (Bernanos' Dialogue of the Carmelite Sisters) or which refer to the present (Anouilh's Poor Bitos).

* * *

In parliament the apparent cordiality of relations between the Right and the Left often goes beyond mere politeness. After all, one is condemned to live together. Parliamentary "arithmetic" associates everybody with almost everybody else in the formation of this or that majority. A Premier, when asking the Assembly to terminate its existence (Edgar Faure in the fall of 1955), could insist that personally he had no complaint against it: only thirteen of its members had never voted for him.

In the name of the Moderates a deputy addressed himself to a Socialist Premier in the following terms:

> You lack neither courage nor good sense nor honesty. This is more than is required for leading the country to a better future.[38]

Speaking of an attitude which he believed to be founded in a preference for "France going it alone," a preference often attributed to the Royalist Charles Maurras, a Socialist leader declared:

> To be sure, the old doctrine of Maurras is not without grandeur.[39]

-- an admission which contrasts with the violent tone which had almost invariably been adopted by the Socialists in the past toward the Royalist enemies of the Great Revolution.

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On the occasion of a debate on Morocco, a Socialist who is sometimes still said to belong to a "Left" wing of the party (Edouard Depreux) was repeatedly interrupted by a Moderate belonging to the right wing of his group (Jean Legendre). When the speaker threatened the disturber with a parliamentary penalty, the Socialist reacted in this way:

> I beg you not to do this.... If our opinions diverge, we are all profoundly moved by the abominable Franco-Moroccan drama.[40]

When, in parliament today, an opinion approved by someone on this side of the chamber is expressed by somebody else at the other end, this will not always prevent the first person expressing his full accord with the other. Thus, for instance, on one occasion the Assembly listened to a general (Adolphe Aumeran), who had the reputation of being a "fossil," conclude a violent polemic against the EDC in a fashion which according to prevailing usage would be called "nationalist" (a term which has now become negative with everybody except a fringe on the extreme Right). There was applause, "on some benches of the Right" and "on the extreme Right," but also a "Very good!" from a Socialist, Max Lejeune.[41] This Socialist was, to be sure, viewed as somewhat special in his party: he began his parliamentary career on its left wing and finished it on its extreme right wing. (Such marked shifts of individual position, which were frequent in the Third Republic, are now less customary.) Still, Lejeune always expressed his "nationalist" sentiments, and yet he acceded to high positions in Algeria and in the Sahara. On another occasion, another "reactionary" general (Joseph de Monsabert) stated his agreement with a prominent Socialist, a former governor-general of Algeria (Marcel-Edmond Naegelen). When the general proceeded to affirm that "the correct policy in North Africa is to lean on former Moslem soldiers whom we must make into a privileged group," the Socialist, in his turn, exclaimed: "Very good!"[42] But it was this very same Socialist who, half a year before, was the candidate of the Left (the Communists included) at the election of the President of the Republic; it was around his name that there arose, at certain moments of that election, what some observers called a popular-front atmosphere. And it was of him that another Moderate whom the Left regarded as the representative of heavy industry in parliament (Pierre André) could say:

> We all know the magnificent work which M. Naegelen has accomplished in Algeria.[43]

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Yet another general, a right-wing Gaullist (Pierre Koenig) attributed to the Socialist Robert Lacoste "a conception of a powerful France which is very close to mine,"[44] without thereby creating any difficulty for the man of the Left in his own party. A certain community of views of all the "national" parties between the Communists and the extreme Right was equally implied when a Socialist (Edouard Depreux) spoke of those "whom M. Pinay once excellently called the aggressive extreme Right."[45]

At the fair of Lyons in 1952, Edouard Herriot, mayor of the city and "demi-god" of the Fourth Republic, posed for photographers between Cardinal Gerlier, the Archbishop of Lyons, and the Count of Paris, pretender to the throne of France. In the summer of 1957, on the occasion of the marriage of the "Dauphin" at Dreux, numerous parliamentarians attended.

> M. Edgar Faure is present. A joke is attributed to him, which he surely did not make, just as little as the Count of Paris pronounced the words with which he is credited. Here is the story. So many parliamentarians were present that the prince exclaimed with a smile: -- Well, gentlemen, why don't we use this occasion for a small Council of Ministers? -- Oh, no, Monseigneur, answered M. Edgar Faure, not in this heat.[46]

The mayor of Dreux was a Radical of the Left, Maurice Viollette. Uniting the royal couple, he declared:

> A Frenchman should be able to greet the tricolor without insulting the fleurs-de-lys.[46]

* * *

The weakening of the conflict between the Right and the Left is accompanied by the rise of the feeling that the policy to be followed in any given situation is commanded by "facts" rather than by doctrine; that facts usually admit only small differences between the policies which reasonable men might advocate.

"Most of the speeches made by Premiers," an observer noted, "tend to prove that anybody else in their place would have acted just as they did."[47] And a minister (Edgar Faure) observed,

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"That the coalition, on which the government is at present based, should be enlarged," by adding the Socialists to all the other "national" groups already participating in it, "is an opinion which I am expressing all the more gladly as I have always indicated to our Socialist friends that only their own refusal keeps them away from power."

> But whatever the composition of the majority,... it could not pursue other aims, in the economic sphere, than those which we have set ourselves. I should even like to affirm that no majority could use other means than those which we are using.[48]

The same politician, when violently attacked in an election campaign, protested "that he has not been able to discover 'the smallest difference of doctrine' between him and his enemies."[49] "It has been said," he noted with approval when he was Premier, "that all previous governments have pursued an identical policy." This is true: "We ought to become aware of this." But what about the preceding government, that of Pierre Mendès-France, "which seemed in so many ways to depart" from the line of the other governments? Even that cabinet, he maintained, "pursued the same policy as the others," just as "my government pursues the same policy as that of Mendès-France."[50] A Socialist leader -- seeking the premiership at a moment when his party had not participated in governments for more than three years -- expressed this theme in a less trenchant form:

> If the continuity of governmental activity does not always express itself in the conflict of our ideas, it remains an important fact of the political life of the nation.[51]

Answering a near-communist (Pierre Cot), a Premier (Félix Gaillard) recalled how narrow the margins are within which one chooses when in power:

> As a "good student of the School of Political Science," as you have called me, I greet you as the great rhetorician who has been reasoning in the abstract for so many years...where one does not have to deal with the human and material reality of a country. Under these conditions it is easy to choose....

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> You choose...to abandon Algeria. I don't. That choice is impossible.
>
> You cannot choose either to have the French economy stagnate.
>
> You cannot choose either to sacrifice youth and the future. There are many things which you cannot sacrifice. It is for this reason that to govern this country is difficult, and it is for this reason that governing it proceeds by decisions which are being made every day. As things are, one does what is possible.
>
> One does not proceed by major choices but by small settlements which have to be made every day. One subtracts a little from what one wanted to do. One asks the overseas territories to slow up their plans a bit, as continental France has been doing; one asks the nation to deprive itself a bit.... One is manipulating not intellectual data but real margins, and that is where the difficulty lies.[52]

The "difficulty" -- apart from that of being an "umpire" between conflicting demands (see Chapter 5, pp. 145-146) -- is that of making the right "wager" rather than that of applying true doctrine. Thus, a man of the Right, opposing in the fall of 1955 the policy of Edgar Faure toward Morocco, a policy approved by the Left, explained:

> I affirm that if Mohammed Ben Youssef returns to France, he will, after some time, inevitably also return to the throne of Morocco. You do not believe that this will be the case, and we believe that it will. This is the wager.... ...as I said a moment ago, it is a matter of a wager. There are those who believe that the present policy is correct; they are sincere. I ask them to believe that we are equally sincere when we tell them that we don't think it is.[53]

Another Moderate deputy emphasized the same theme, by virtue of which the earlier abyss between the Right and the Left was being replaced by simple divergences between forecasts concerning a future which it was, in any case, impossible to predict with certainty:

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> As M. Barrachin said a moment ago, it is not surprising that we are divided on difficult and anguishing subjects. Future events will decide between us, events which are unknown to all of us.[54]

* * *

The abatement in the conflict between the Left and the Right implies a reduction in the antagonism between what used to be called the clerical and the anti-clerical parties.

The Left has, in fact, accepted the numerous changes which have made the separation between church and state less "rigid." Jacques Fauvet recalls:

> Intransigent partisans of a meticulous separation between church and state feel that it has been, unnoticeably, undone. In 1956 a deputy called for full observance of the law of 1905 establishing that separation. This parliamentarian, a Socialist, pointed out that representatives of the government have been participating in ceremonies of beatification; that members of the clergy and deans of schools of Catholic theology have been given official recognition on public occasions; that priests are receiving compensation in their quality as guardians of churches which are public buildings: 16,000 francs per year. Finally, subsidies to Catholic schools are considered a direct violation of the principle of separation.[55]

But apart from the last point, the few deputies who get excited about such "clerical offensives" or "the capitulation of the government before the priests" appear by now archaic, like the few remaining Marxists outside the communist camp. According to the conventional phrases of the present, the noun "anti-clericalism" calls for the adjective "outdated", just as much as does the noun "nationalism." Only provincials of the "French desert" of the southwest are still supposed to be engaging in that sport of 1900, "eating priests" -- just as the dream of a return to a state religion is supposed to be entertained only in other backward areas, for instance in the west. According to Jacques Fauvet, "the problem of Catholic schools...could be managed in concrete fashion," if it were left "on the municipal or regional level," while it becomes "insoluble" once it has

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been transferred to the national level.[56] Actually, the opposite is the case: while in some areas the conflict between clericals and anti-clericals has maintained some of its earlier intensity, it is precisely on the national level that it has abated.

Each camp is afraid of exploiting temporary advantages: might it not thereby provoke a later disastrous counter-offensive of the other side which would have been unduly exacerbated? Thus, the slight parliamentary majority in favor of Catholic schools which resulted from the elections of 1951 did not go beyond granting a quite limited subsidy to these schools in the so-called Barangé Law of 1951; and the equally slight majority hostile to Catholic schools which resulted from the elections of 1956 has refrained from abrogating that law. In the campaigns preceding both these general elections, the problem of state subsidies to Catholic schools -- the only major problem in the relations between church and state which does not yet appear settled -- played but a minor role, by virtue of mutual restraint. In order to survive, governments tend to proclaim their neutrality when this question comes up before parliament (René Pleven in 1951; Guy Mollet in 1956).

The tacit agreement to preserve the status quo is accompanied by a rather strict taboo: in national politics one must avoid publicly pronouncing words which might make the quarrel flare up again. Affirming that "the problem of Catholic schools" becomes "philosophic" when it appears in parliament, Jacques Fauvet maintains:

> When that matter comes up, the deputies soon begin to discuss the existence of God.[57]

But it has become impossible in parliament even to name Him, whether one be for or against. Fifty years ago a leader (René Viviani), justifying the creation of a Ministry of Labor, exclaimed:

> We have been devoting ourselves, all of us together,...to an enterprise hostile to religion. We have torn faith out of the human conscience. When a human being living in misery bent his knees, fatigued by the burdens of the day, we have helped him to stand erect again, and we have told him that behind the clouds there are only chimeras. All together, in a magnificent gesture, we

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> have extinguished the lights in heaven; they shall never be lighted again.[58]

The chamber voted, 340 against 128, that the speech of the Minister of Labor be printed and posted on walls throughout the country. Today a parliamentarian using such language would be regarded as mad. Militant atheism has greatly declined, and the expression of whatever there remains of it is ruled out in parliament -- just as religious believers in the Assembly are very discreet about their faith. It is extremely rare for them to mention the name of their religion; the Christian Democrats call themselves the Popular Republican Movement and very rarely use words referring to religion. The battles of oratory of half a century ago have been replaced by tiny incidents. When some Christian Democrats in the Assembly recalled "Munich" to Edouard Daladier, he answered rudely, "Stop croaking," the raven being a popular image of a priest. Depicting the future reduction of the country's current deficit in power by virtue of nuclear energy, a Moderate (André Mutter) recalled that a Socialist (Félix Gouin) had said that this new source of energy was arriving "providentially." The Catholic Moderate added:

> If a member of another group had used this adverb, it might have appeared suspect. Coming from M. Gouin, it is perfectly apt (Laughter).[59]

These are the kinds of asides in which the former war between clericalism and anti-clericalism survives. When an observer of high reputation maintains that

> ...it is always possible to stage another performance of Faust in the Opera, and another debate on clericalism in the Palais Bourbon...[60]

he is expressing a belief which, for all the frequency of its occurrence, is quite far from incontrovertible facts.

During the first half of the century the importance of the conflict between clericals and anti-clericals was expressed in the fact that insistence on a strict separation between church and state seemed to be central to the position of the most powerful party of that period, the Radical Party. In 1951, a minority of the Radicals in parliament voted in favor of subsidies to Catholic schools, thereby contributing to the most important victory of the "clericals" since the beginning of the century. The vote of the Radical minority, however, did not lead to any

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major conflict within the party. While it has been rent by various divisions in the course of the present decade and, for the first time in its history, beset by major splits, the existence of a minority which in 1951 had voted with the "clericals" on the "school" issue played no role in this action. In these circumstances it is difficult to perceive, as many nevertheless do, a continued attachment of the Radicals to their tradition of insisting on a separation between church and state.[61] A Radical who had voted for the Barangé Law was subsequently Minister of Education throughout several governments (André Marie). Another Radical who occupied this post later (René Billères) is supposed to be a practicing Catholic. Near the beginning of the century this rumor, or this fact, would have been of political importance: today it is not. It was only in 1955 that the party forbade its members to belong to the Association for the Freedom of Teaching, the most important clerical pressure group in the fight for subsidies to Catholic schools. Why did the Radicals outlaw membership in an organization to which, according to the usual notions, no Radical could be expected to belong? Simply because the vice president of this organization was a prominent Radical (Bernard Lafay) who participated, for instance, in a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in which France was dedicated to the local saint.

The general election of 1956 seemed to have furnished a slight majority in favor of the abrogation of the law of 1951 granting subsidies to Catholic schools. But February 17, 1956, the Assembly refused, 288 against 279, to set a date for a discussion and vote on the proposal to abrogate that law. Among the 288 deputies who, in fact, thus voted for the maintenance of the law, there were nineteen Radicals, and among them not only individuals belonging to the right wing of the party but also several deputies close to Mendès-France. One week later the Assembly repeated its stand, this time with 301 against 276 votes, and the Radicals played the same role on this occasion. Toward the end of the year, the Assembly reaffirmed its stand, 291 against 282. Among the 291 who, this time, decisively perpetuated the granting of subsidies to Catholic schools, there were 26 Radicals, and among them again various deputies devoted to Mendès-France. If all those Radical deputies who followed Mendès, say, on Algeria, had been determined to have the Barangé Law abrogated, it would have been. Thus, the victory obtained by the clericals in 1951 was consolidated in 1956 by Radicals belonging to the left wing of the party, particularly those who, on January 2, 1956, had been elected in the metropolitan area of Paris by voters who had previously favored Gaullists or Christian

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Democrats, and by young voters of the "Christian Left." In these conditions it is fair to say that the "classical" division between Right and Left has ceased to exist.

* * *

But when "a period of intense conflict" arrives, does one not then encounter again, in the words of an observer, "the Left and the Right facing each other, ready for battle, excluding all compromise"?[62] This does not seem to be the case either.

The division of the political class of 1939 among those who "resisted" the Germans, those who took up a "wait-and-see" attitude, and those who "collaborated" split both the Right and the Left: members of both these pre-war halves of the political class were found in substantial numbers within each of the new groupings. A parliamentarian (Paul-Boncour) recalled the 10th of July, 1940, in Vichy when he was one of the eighty who refused to vote the end of the Third Republic:

> Upon meeting others taking up the same position, one was amazed to find oneself together, as so many among us had fought in opposed camps. Numerous parliamentarians among those who voted together on this occasion told me: "If I had only known!"[63]

The EDC treaty was rejected because numerous Socialists, Radicals, and Moderates voted against it, so that three among the five large noncommunist groupings were sharply divided on that issue. As to the problems of North Africa since 1954, each group had its "liberals" as well as those who were in favor of a "strong" policy. Among the Moderates, where the latter prevailed, there was Antoine Pinay, who granted independence to Morocco and was supposed to have been for a long time in favor of greater concessions to the Algerian Nationalists than the governments since 1956 were willing to grant. Among the ex-Gaullists, Jacques Soustelle was in favor of "firmness"; but many attributed to the silent General de Gaulle a willingness to envisage rather loose forms of association between metropolitan France and her domain overseas. Among the Christian Democrats, Georges Bidault was close to the majority of the Moderates, but Robert Schuman was said to envisage "liberal" solutions. As to the Radicals, Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, Félix Gaillard, and André Morice were responsible for a policy on Algeria which was violently combatted by Pierre Mendès-France,

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and discreetly disapproved by Edgar Faure. The Radicals in power collaborated on Algeria with the Socialists Robert Lacoste, Guy Mollet, Max Lejeune, who were in turn opposed by their comrades Gaston Defferre, Edouard Depreux, Daniel Mayer. Thus, many members of the Right felt close to Lacoste, while on the Left many counted on a man of the Center such as Edgar Faure, and even on the very incarnation of the Right, Antoine Pinay.

* * *

"Within one month," Jacques Fauvet recalls, "a Radical leader was overthrown by another Radical and replaced by a third one."[64] Early in February 1955, René Mayer's conduct was decisive in having Pierre Mendès-France overthrown, to be replaced, toward the end of the month, by Edgar Faure. Mayer, whose constituency was the Department of Constantine, seems to have feared that Mendès-France would initiate an unduly "liberal" policy in Algeria. A convinced "European," he may have held Mendès responsible for the rejection of the EDC. His rather unsatisfactory four months as Premier early in 1953 may have disposed him against the so much more brilliant and noisy record which Mendès made for himself in the same position; and his hostility may have been increased by the frequent allusions of Mendès to the unsatisfactory performance of his predecessors. As to Edgar Faure, it was difficult, in the winter of 1955, to indicate the differences between his general orientation and that of Mendès, in whose government he had played a leading role, first as Minister of Finance and then as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ten months later the conflict between these two men was to be a major factor in French politics: but even then it had not become much clearer what their actual differences were, as to policies recommended or executed. In the meantime, Edgar Faure, as Premier, had continued the economic policy for which he had already been responsible under Mendès. He had not changed the country's foreign policy. He had pursued Mendès's new line toward Tunisia, granting it "internal autonomy." He had "opened the Moroccan file" and arrived at a solution of unsurpassed "liberalism," namely the independence of Morocco -- an outcome which everybody would have refused at the beginning of the year had it at all appeared as a practical possibility. In Algeria there resided a governor general whose designation by Mendès-France had been a major factor in his downfall, Jacques Soustelle, who was then regarded by those attached to the status quo as a dangerous innovator. But Mendès presented himself to France as a reformer, while Faure gave the impression of pursuing day-to-day compromises which were supposed to render possible the continuation of the rapid economic advance started in 1953.

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Thus a seeming opposition in ways of pursuing political activity corresponded more to a conflict between personal destinies than to any marked difference in actual behavior in power.

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Chapter 2

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RESPONSIBILITY

Members of the political class often attempt to diminish their responsibility by claiming a presumption of innocence (p.35); by affirming that reality and the government are too complex to allow the imputation of definite responsibilities to definite persons (p. 36); by avoiding the very question of responsibility (pp. 36-40); by passing the buck (pp. 40-41); by arranging for a diffusion of responsibility (pp. 41-48); by avoiding being put into positions of committing actions, which might burden them with responsibility (pp. 48-51) however strong the need for such actions may be on other grounds; by arranging for others to act in their place (pp. 52-59); or, if they have to act themselves, to do so as little as possible (p. 60); by provoking others to commit an overt break or refusal through the device of attaching impossible conditions to ostensible agreement (pp. 61-65); by appropriately timing their alternations between being in and out of power (pp. 66-73); by keeping themselves ignorant of actions of subordinates (pp. 73-74); by tacitly or explicitly delegating their powers at awkward moments (pp. 74-75).

* * *

The Minister of Foreign Affairs (Yvon Delbos) had to inform the Council of Ministers of numerous developments unfavorable to France; it was in the winter of 1937. Wanting to break "the depressed silence" which followed his words, the Minister assured the President of the Republic and his colleagues "with forced good humor" that he would have preferred giving them "less distressing information." At that moment the President (Albert Lebrun) gave him a friendly slap on the shoulder and claimed with "affectionate sympathy": "But, of course, my dear Minister, everybody knows that this isn't your fault!"[1] The words of the President of the Republic illustrate the myth of its own egoism so largely accepted in the political class: Why should Yvon Delbos have been distressed by the perils of the situation if they did not endanger his personal position? But also, and this is what interests us here, it appears that <u>if things in the important domain with which I am charged go quite badly, there is no presumption that I am in any way responsible: I am held to be innocent until a proof to the contrary is furnished</u>.

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Such a proof seems singularly difficult to establish. Often it appears impossible to locate those responsible; such is, to those who know politics from the inside, the jumble of jurisdictions and activities. Only the ignorant public will easily and summarily attribute responsibilities. "Please recall the last electoral campaign," an eminent parliamentarian (Pierre-Henri Teitgen) asked his colleagues. "Whichever your party, you were then vehemently reproached with attitudes which you had not adopted or which you had combatted, with decisions which you had disapproved."[2] This Professor of Law wanted to illustrate the consequences of existing institutions which should be reformed. But beyond this, the errors of the public in imputing responsibilities seem natural to the political class: only specialists can judge.

* * *

On its part, that class uses but little the device of attributing responsibility to persons or agencies on lower levels of the apparatus of the state. On the other hand there is an important tendency to avoid, in various ways, the very question of responsibility.

It repeatedly happens that politicians of the first rank view the past in which they have been operating as if they had been nothing but particularly well-informed observers. On June 16, 1940, Sir Edward Spears, Winston Churchill's representative in Bordeaux, met Paul Reynaud who had just resigned from the Premiership, and listened to his account of the beginning of the last ministerial crisis of the Third Republic.

> He was going through a necessary formality, a producer giving an account of the last disastrous performance of a play to its backers. The curtain had been rung down, it was over, he must think of his own plans. The occasion was one which no longer concerned him, and the details did not greatly matter. He was at pains to underline his detachment.[3]
>
> Weygand, with a look of absolute exasperation, lifted his hand, turned his head toward Reynaud and said with a voice like a saw on steel: "This war is sheer madness, we have gone to war with a 1918 army against a German army of

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> 1939. It is sheer madness. What sort of Air Force have we got? Four hundred fighters and thirty bombers capable of flying by day, and that for the whole of our front; our tanks are inadequate and insufficient, ridiculously few in numbers." He went on in this strain, finally declaring that not only were the practical means of waging war totally lacking, but the whole strategic theory on which our plans had been made was mistaken.[4]

Not until 1956 did General Weygand publish the volume of his memoirs in which he attempted to prove that these judgments merely repeated views which he had formulated as long as ten years before the collapse when he occupied high positions in the French armed forces. But apparently many of those to whom Weygand talked in 1940 did not know this. To them his attitude appeared as based on a forgetting of his own responsibilities which seemed both "normal" and shocking. This was also the reaction of General de Gaulle, who listened to a similar statement by Weygand two weeks later:

> The Commander-in-chief, who had been chief of the General Staff between 1930 and 1935, set forth the reasons for the defeat of the armies commanded by him in the sober, though aggressive, tone of somebody who complains about a state of affairs for which he is not responsible.[5]

These words seem applicable to an attitude taken by another leader in another issue at another point in history. In the spring of 1953 Robert Schuman, who had left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a few months previously after having occupied that office for several years, analyzed in a public statement the relations between France and her two protectorates:

> It is said that France has no policy in North Africa (Morocco and Tunisia). That is true in the sense that she has not yet chosen between several possible policies....
>
> The two Residents General form the highest level of the hierarchy....Their field of initiative is vast...and they have tended to

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enlarge upon it, particularly in those cases where their own views coincide with those of the local French population....The technique of the fait accompli is the great and incessant temptation which the Residents General meritoriously resist, to the extent to which they do not succumb to it. The relation between the government and the Residents General is to some extent reproduced by that between the Residents General and certain among their services (police, information, etc.)...which are not effectively controlled by them.

Above the Residents General the Minister of Foreign Affairs is responsible for their acts which are supposed to conform to his own views. This is one of those fictions on which democracy is based....This fiction does not take account of the fact that, first of all, the government exercises but limited influence on events in North Africa and on the men who represent France there, and controls them only to a limited extent. In addition... the determination of policy is entrusted to the government, that is, to a collegial body within which the advice of the responsible Minister does not necessarily prevail. He may, of course, resign....But can he easily take it upon himself to provoke such an upset? ...In addition, democracy implies that the decisions of the executive be the result of divergent opinions.

I have gained the conviction that no important reform in the relations between France on the one hand and Morocco and Tunisia on the other will be possible unless everybody returns to the exact notions of responsibility and hierarchic subordination.

There should be no further delay in developing a policy towards Tunisia and Morocco....We must propose a comprehensive program....

For such a policy courage is needed as much as clearsightedness, benevolence as much as firmness. Our worst enemy...is routine....[6]

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The article created a sensation in the political class. Nothing was said in it that those who were well informed did not already know. But what outsider would have suspected that the person who talked in this way had been for years responsible for the sad state of affairs which he was describing so calmly? "Since the former Minister of Foreign Affairs has left the Quai d'Orsay," wrote a journalist who was expressing a wide-spread opinion, "he writes and he speaks as if he had not been for three years the absolute master of our diplomacy." As Robert Schuman was viewed as a politician with particularly high moral standards, this journalist interpreted his conduct as falling under the great law of the discrepancy between the pretensions and the conduct of authority. "This pious man makes his mea culpa on the breast of others."[7] In fact, an examination of Schuman's statement reveals no allegation of new developments which had intervened since his departure from the Ministry, and which might have permitted him to differentiate between what should have been done before 1953 and what was to be done henceforth. But if this is so, what if one were to apply to the author himself "exact notions of responsibility?" Was it only after the end of his tenure as Minister of Foreign Affairs that "the establishment of an adequate policy" began to be a matter which "brooks no delay?"

Two and a half years later, the Premier, Edgar Faure, described to the National Assembly the aggravation of the tension between high French officials in Morocco and the government. This politician, who habitually speaks in a tone of studied moderation, expressed his indignation about misconduct which had become almost normal:

> It is high time that all this stop! Such resignations, taken back and then offered again, must occur no more!...No resignations of high civil servants anymore, let us have obedience! I do not know whether the government over which I preside in these difficult circumstances will last. But I can say that I have finally understood what I had sometimes only guessed. There must be an end to conduct which leads to the disintegration of the state. It is the government which governs, and if this government remains, it will govern![8]

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At the moment at which he talked in this vein the Premier could look back on seven months of office, which is more than the average life of a government.

In the fall of 1953, after the surprising strikes of the summer, various parties represented in the government thought it wise to distantiate themselves from it without, however, withdrawing their support. A journalist observed:

> All these groups expressed themselves as if they did not belong to the majority and as if they were not represented in the government, which, however, most of them have been for the last seven years.[9]

That politicians treat as non-existent the responsibilities which they have incurred in the past is, no doubt, a reaction which may be observed anywhere. What is perhaps distinctive of contemporary France is that this reaction appears both as "normal" and horrifying to members of the political class themselves. This conduct is one of the many aspects of that permanent scandal, the behavior of those in power, not only according to a sentiment widespread in the country, but also to a feeling important within their own ranks. The incidents which I have quoted thus often seem not so much to illustrate the point that anything may happen, but rather to render starkly visible the very nature of the political animal: If he speaks so easily of the past as if he had had no share in determining what happened, is it not because he possesses (and must possess to survive and to rise) a remarkable capacity for disengagement from past responsibilities? And is that capacity not one of the many signs of his basic egoism?

* * *

If I do not avoid the very question of responsibility, I may as a politician still attempt to reduce my own. Of course, I may say, I have been connected with such and such a policy which now appears in a dubious light; but it was above all the policy of certain of my colleagues. (If they apply the same device, there arises the classical situation in which everybody places responsibility on someone else.)

In 1952, at the time of the signing of the treaty instituting a European Defense Community, two men appeared to be the protagonists of the "European" tendency: Robert Schuman,

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Minister of Foreign Affairs, and René Pleven, Minister of National Defense. Towards the end of the year the government fell. "Parliamentary arithmetic" indicated an extension of the majority to include the "anti-European" Gaullists. Their "entrance" into the majority, which was accomplished after two weeks of crisis through the new government of René Mayer, was prepared by the semblance of an effort at forming a government made by the Gaullist Jacques Soustelle. Received by him, Robert Schuman supposedly let it be understood that it was not he who had been chiefly responsible for the EDC treaty, but rather René Pleven. Whether Schuman said this or not, the story -- and this alone is important here -- gained currency in the political class.

A few days after the fall of Dien Bien Phu, a deputy described the reactions of those ministers who seemed in various ways especially implicated in this defeat:

> One had the impression that the Ministers placed the responsibility on each other and diffused their several versions of who was responsible through their attachés in the corridors of the Assembly.[10]

A picturesque manifestation of the limits of ministerial solidarity. A year and a half later, during the electoral campaign of December, 1955, a candidate "is being reproached at a meeting for having been a member of the government at the moment of Dien Bien Phu." He answered: "I was Minister of War and not Minister for the Associated States of Indochina."[11]

Given the way in which jurisdiction over operations in Indochina was divided in Paris, this argument does not lack validity. But on the level of feelings it is not entirely convincing, not even in the political class: it is often easy to perceive a determination to "pass the buck" at any cost even behind quite good excuses, if they are not one's own.

* * *

What is much more persuasive there is to say: to be sure, I am responsible. But so are you; so is almost everybody -- an insistence on the diffusion of responsibility which is a special form of "buck-passing."

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As the life of a government is so short (which makes one sometimes overlook the fact that the average presence of a Minister in a given Ministry lasts noticeably longer), it is very often possible to affirm that the life of a certain policy extended over several governments; why, then, pick on any one of them? The actions which it took may have been rendered inevitable by those of its predecessors; and it may have done nothing more than maintain an already established "groove."

The possibility of having recourse to such arguments constitutes one of the many advantages of governmental instability, advantages which are, of course, rarely mentioned, but which contribute to perpetuating this instability despite its universal condemnation in public statements, and in the face of the intermittent onslaughts of reformers.

Thus, to take a minor instance, a parliamentarian can conclude a speech with these words:

> I have shown that all organizations for the unification of Europe have been permitted to be inactive for years. Thus I have no particular criticism to address to the present government....[12]

As my critics are not always so reasonable, I may have to remind them of how many share a certain responsibility. Thus a Premier made the following request of the Assembly: "Do not ask one particular government to present the balance sheet of the entire tenure of this Assembly!"

He explained:

> Every government finds itself bound; even those among us who have strongly criticized... certain tendencies of the preceding governments. We are so much enmeshed, by the very force of things, in the continuity of French politics that they are unceasingly obliged to orient themselves on what had been done before. It is impossible to judge governments as short-lived as the current ones.[13]

Those whom I cannot claim as accomplices, as it were, because they have preceded me in power, are often implicated by the stands they have taken. A few weeks after the agony of

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Dien Bien Phu, and in the middle of that of his own government, Joseph Laniel ascended the rostrum. "Before examining the way in which the government...has conducted the war in Indochina or tried to make peace," he wanted to issue a reminder:

> I should like to recall that four candidates for the Premiership have at the occasion of the last crisis taken a stand on Indochina before I did. Three among them, Messrs. Reynaud, Bidault and André Marie, agreed to enter my Ministry in which they are associated with all important decisions. As to the fourth, M. Mendès-France...he did not on that occasion enumerate aims which were different from those stated by the three personalities whom I have just named.[14]

In the winter of 1956 a former Minister of Foreign Affairs (Georges Bidault) pointed out to the Secretary of State charged with Moroccan affairs (Alain Savary) that the official formula describing the new relations between Paris and Rabat, "independence in interdependence," "means nothing in French." But the Secretary of State could answer with ease that the Mollet government "was not the father of this expression," -- which had in fact been created by Antoine Pinay and Edgar Faure in the course of the preceding autumn -- and that "his only task was to attempt to give the formula a content," implying that the previous government had imagined an empty, and for that reason dangerous, slogan. A year later the successor of the Minister whom I have just quoted (Maurice Faure), attacked in similar fashion, responded with greater explicitness:

> It would not be appropriate for me to describe the conditions under which...Morocco and Tunisia passed from being protectorates to the status of independent states. It is even less appropriate for me...to allocate responsibilities which -- I think we might agree on that -- are rather evenly distributed among all the non-communist groups in this assembly.[15]

This polite way of talking is viewed as more skillful, and more damaging, than the rudeness of an innovator. Addressing himself to the Premier, Pierre Mendès-France, a speaker said about the relations between France and another state (Libya): "Now you must obtain the price for the concessions which France has granted, for you are the successor of yesterday's government."[16] To which the Premier responded

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with: "Unfortunately!" He was to be overthrown the same day, and knew it; his frequent charges against his predecessors had significantly contributed to his fall.

For it is imprudent to give in to the inclination which pushes those in power to "draw up the balance sheet" of those who came before them. Sooner, rather than later, one will need their support in a world in which the various sectors of the political class are almost all "condemned to live together." It is thus of first importance to avoid antagonizing anyone. In addition, the sharing of responsibilities by so many gives those who are attacked excellent possibilities for replying effectively. They can answer with a tu quoque, or even point out that the imprudent censor has, in fact, implicated himself, too. "Since the war," a parliamentarian recalled "we have lost Indochina, the French establishments in India, the Fezzan, Tunisia, the Saar, and Morocco. In addition, a revolutionary war is now being conducted against us in Algeria." He added:

> Who is responsible? Nobody. If you pronounce one name, the one you have designated protests immediately and cites in his turn the names of two or three of his predecessors.[17]

In the course of the acid debate which followed the rejection of EDC by the Assembly, Pierre Mendès-France permitted himself to say this:

> I believe, in contrast to M. Antoine Pinay, in contrast to the other governments which have followed him....

A provocation to which an enemy (Robert Bichet) replied:

> Fortunately France has got you!

This induced the Premier to intensify the attack against his predecessors:

> I have never believed ...that it was so lucky for France to have me, but I have often felt that it was very unlucky for her to have certain others.

But, perhaps, Mendès had gone a bit too far at this point; for it now became possible to remind him that he had

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not been as strictly separated from those in power as he wanted to make out:

> As you have always voted for the candidates to the Premiership, you too are responsible.[18]

When Mendès-France as Premier spoke of the responsibilities for the unfortunate outcome of the war in Indochina, Georges Bidault could answer:

> I have heard it said...that the policy pursued at present succeeds eight years of errors. This, I must say, involves many governments and many ministers. Among them are perhaps some who are members of the present government....[19]

A candidate for the premiership (Guy Mollet), when attacked (by the Moderates), declared:

> You have spoken of the increase in public expenditures....The only increase for which I asked when I was Premier concerns old age pensions. In this case, by the way, the expenditures, though not the corresponding revenue, were voted by almost all members of this Assembly. This, I repeat, is the only increase in expenditure for which I can be held responsible. The other increases which have occurred are due in equal measure to all parties. This is a common responsibility.... You have no right to unload this responsibility on one group rather than on another. In this Assembly all of us share in it.[20]

Those who ask me to draw up the balance sheet of my predecessors when I am in power want to lead me into a trap or, in the best case, hardly care whether I will be politically damaged or not. Only toward the end of his long ministry did Guy Mollet dare to affirm that the preceding governments "had not come to grips with the fundamental causes of our economic disequilibrium," a circumstance which "has rendered a solution of the problem so much more difficult."[21] It is prudent to abstain even from such words, weak as they sound to those who accept the myth of a parliament in continuous uproar. The cautious premier will conduct himself rather more like Joseph Laniel when Pierre Mendès-France credited him with the insight that preceding governments had committed an error which he,

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Laniel, was now going to rectify. Laniel did not fall into this trap but corrected his opponent: "I have just paid homage to all my predecessors," content to hear the innovator reply: "This is precisely one of my charges against you."[22] It is just at the moment when I abandon a policy of my predecessors that it will be politically useful to allege that I in some way continue it. It is particularly when I cannot avoid giving an unfavorable account of the state of affairs in a certain domain that it is appropriate to add:

> I am not incriminating anybody, I am not here to incriminate anybody.[23]

One needs, in general, strong incentives to make one abandon this prudence. When the Pinay government, which was held to be the first popular government of the Fourth Republic, after that of General de Gaulle, fell towards the end of 1952, the Moderates charged the Christian Democrats (M.R.P.) with having "assassinated" it. Perturbed by the possible impact of this charge on those among their supporters who were close to the Moderates, many Christian Democrats demanded during the first half of 1953, that the "true balance sheet" of the Pinay government be made public. Nothing happened, even after the creation, in the early summer of 1953, of a government headed by a rival of Pinay, Joseph Laniel, who took care not to reappoint those ministers of the preceding government who were viewed as close to his competitor for the leadership of the Moderates. But Laniel did not go farther than that. The blows which one publicly inflicts on others must be within the bounds of certain conventions; most of the conflicts between the various sectors of the political class are, as far as public pronouncements in parliament are concerned, strictly limited wars (always excepting conflicts with the communists and the extreme right).

When the truce is broken and charges, hitherto restrained, pour forth from all sides, the several parties concerned, all regretting this unleashing of aggression, attribute to each other the provocation which caused the breakdown.

After the fall of the Mollet government in the spring of 1957, the Moderates, not content with the accomplished "assassination," continued to attack the financial policy of the fallen cabinet. At this point a socialist deputy (Marcel David) recalled certain unfavorable aspects of the financial policy adopted by the Pinay government of 1952. The former Premier protested:

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> I strongly regret, Monsieur David, that you have opened a debate on these points and these figures.

But another socialist (Charles Lussy) retorted:

> We did not start all this. You have M. Courant to thank for this. (The Moderate whose speech preceded the intervention of Marcel David --NL.)

Marcel David intervened again:

> Monsieur Pinay, let me tell you that neither I nor any other member of the socialist group intended to speak in this debate. If others had imitated our reserve...we would have been silent.[24]

And silence set in again.

* * *

To supplement this handling of the past, the politician tries to ensure that he will be in appropriate company when he proceeds to a "delicate" action -- an elementary maneuver which is hardly distinctive of French politics, but also a concern which perhaps is especially acute in France. One of the worst things which might happen to me is to find myself alone in taking a stand which might arouse antagonism. It is, of course, precisely my most dangerous rivals and enemies whom I must induce to become my "sureties." If they refuse to do so, I should not venture out myself. In the words of an observer:

> When sacrifices are demanded of an assembly... every political group turns towards its most dangerous electoral neighbor and declares: "With him yes, without him no."[25]

According to a journalist of the extreme right, a future premier (Félix Gaillard) declared on the eve of an important vote (that concerning the ratification of the Paris agreements establishing WEU):

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> If the ratification is voted by some 250, I do not want to be among them. But if the majority attains 380, I shall be one of them.[26]

The story appeared plausible enough, or well enough invented, to gain some currency in the political class.

I may even abandon the pretense of determining my position by the sole merit of the measure to be evaluated or the man to be judged. On November 12, 1957, the finance committee of the Assembly voted on the question whether it should take as a basis of its discussion the financial proposals of the government:

> M. Boisdé (Moderate) was the first to announce his vote: against. M. de Tinguy (Christian Democrat) declared himself in favor, but added: "I reserve the right of rectifying my vote," wanting in this fashion to indicate that he would renounce voting for the proposal of the government if the Moderates...were to refuse their votes. M. Courant (Moderate) announced in his turn: "The same vote as M. de Tinguy." But as M. Guy Petit (Moderate) voted against, the Christian Democrats changed their vote to abstention; the Moderates who had voted in favor then did the same...and M. David (Socialist) declared that in these circumstances his friends, while desiring to vote in favor, did not wish to be the only ones to support the government and would also abstain....

Thus the proposal of the government seemed doomed to fail when

> M. Courant asked for a suspension of the meeting. A few minutes later the Moderates...announced that they would vote in favor of taking the proposals of the government into consideration. A vote was taken again, and this time it was favorable: 30 against 14.[27]

* * *

I may also simply refuse to commit an act which some, with suspicious zeal, urge me to undertake and which might burden me with a noxious responsibility -- one of the many occasions

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when wisdom commands inaction. I can then be proud of the control which I have been capable of exercising over the naive and crude inclination to act unnecessarily.

I may assume a similar attitude when no external demand has been made on me. In the spring of 1954 Marshal Juin was in overt conflict with the government, some of whose principal members were at the same time being physically attacked by elements of the extreme right at the occasion of a ceremony near the Arc de Triomphe. The rumor that the Marshal had been connected with these disorders was denied by his staff officer in the following way:

> The Marshal is satisfied not to have attended these demonstrations. He has no desire to be associated with them, and does not wish to assume any responsibility in this matter.[28]

A major device is to affirm that the action to which I am invited is one which it is not incumbent upon me to perform, or even one which is outside my competence and jurisdiction -- the action-parallel to "buck-passing" for responsibility in past activities (p.).

A historian (Marc Bloch) remembers an episode of his life as an officer in an army headquarters during the "phony war." He was attempting "to obtain a common action of the second and fourth bureaux" in an important matter. Before failing in this he did succeed in arranging for a telephone conversation between the officers representing, respectively, these two bureaux:

> Each one passed the buck to the other. After a few minutes the Second Bureau ended the conversation with a dry: "This does not concern me." I was reminded of the way in which property owners quarrel about a wall in which they both share. There was only one interest of which nobody seemed to think, that of the French army.[29]

Again a situation which could reasonably be considered universal. But Marc Bloch, I would guess, felt he was talking about contemporary France and not about human beings in general; on the basis of my direct contacts with members of the political class in Paris, 1953 to 1957, I would surmise

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that an important fraction among them would view the story told by Marc Bloch as a parable illustrating a grave problem of contemporary French politics.

In this context I should like to recall the famous "squabble"[30] which took place, June 15, 1940, in Bordeaux, between the Premier, Paul Reynaud, and the Commander-in-chief, General Weygand. Reynaud proposed that Weygand follow the example of the commander-in-chief of the Dutch forces who had issued an order to cease fire when further resistance became impossible. Though the Premier offered to give the commander-in-chief a written order requesting him to bring about "a capitulation of the land army,"[31] Weygand refused. He argued (1) that the French army would be dishonored if it acted in this fashion (he spoke of "dishonor," "infamy," "the shame to our flag,")[32] while the French government would incur no such stigma if it concluded an armistice; (2) that, in any case, it was incumbent upon the government, and not upon the commander-in-chief, to assure the cessation of hostilities: "the cessation of hostilities," Weygand said according to his memoirs, "was in the domain of the general conduct of the war which is the government's job. Let the government assume all its responsibilities."[32]

Having presented this ad hoc doctrine, the general expressed his personal reactions to the request which had been made to him:

> Did they take me to be a child? Had they made me come from Beyrouth in order to throw me into this trap?[32]

This was a "shameful maneuver" with the aim of making him assume the responsibilities of others:

> For too long a time had I been informed of affairs to ignore the real responsibilities behind the defeat. As the President of the Republic...tried to impose silence on me, I recalled to him that in 1933, when I commanded the army, I had had recourse to him against certain measures taken by the government against my advice....The President of the Republic answered me that these had been questions of little importance. I told him that, on the contrary, grave matters had been involved.[32]

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At this point the two doctrines on which Weygand had, to start with, based his great refusal, that of the dishonor of any military capitulation and that of the government's sole jurisdiction in the matter of the cessation of hostilities, seemed to have been well forgotten. There remained, in a fashion both surprising and "normal," a purely personal question: If Weygand had in the past committed a sufficient number of errors or other failings, it would, according to his final position, be just to inflict on him the punishment of signing the document of capitulation. If Weygand, in 1933, had not opposed but approved "the dismissal of five thousand officers" and "the refusal of several hundred millions of armament credit,"[32] Reynaud's request would apparently have been much less shocking. Thus the struggle between the various individuals in command, each one trying to unload the maximum of responsibility on the other, does not cease in moments of gravest peril; it is in this sense, I believe, that the incident of June 15, 1940 may appear significant to the contemporary political class.

To the dismay evoked in me by someone who tries to burden me with responsibility corresponds the pleasure with which I learn that such is not his design.

On November 29, 1955, an absolute majority of deputies voted against the government, a fact which in the circumstances rendered a dissolution of the Assembly possible. As no such event had occurred before in the Fourth Republic, and as "dissolution" recalled the exercise of his authority by President MacMahon on May 16, 1877, the unjustified impression had spread that the present constitution, too, gave the President of the Republic powers in this regard. President Coty himself was said to share this idea; but in contrast to Marshal MacMahon he was supposedly little inclined to make use of this imaginary prerogative. In the Council of Ministers in which the matter was to be decided, a partisan of the dissolution, a Minister who is a Professor of Law could assuage M. Coty's disquiet:

> M. Pierre-Henri Teitgen spoke as a jurist.... He tried to establish that the chief of state would have no political or moral responsibility in the decision to be taken. Everybody agreed to the great satisfaction of the President.[33]

* * *

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If I desire that a certain decision be taken, it does not follow that I will support it openly and with all my strength. To engage myself fully might involve disadvantages which it may not be necessary to assume. Might it not be possible for others to replace me? What if I could induce them to act in my place so that I myself could choose another conduct less burdened with cost and risk? This is a particularly attractive calculation; beliefs that it is being applied abound. A prominent journalist alleges:

> Faced with the breakdown of June, 1940, the French leaders split into two hostile groups. There were the partisans of a cessation of hostilities who did not dare to ask for it, and the irreducible opponents of an armistice who arranged for it to be signed by Marshal Pétain.[34]

At the moment of the Assembly's vote on the Paris Agreements establishing WEU, a majority of deputies felt that they should be ratified. But a majority also predicted that they would be. Hence, the treaty was first rejected, as numerous deputies believed that they could abstain or vote against, without modifying the predicted result, everyone counting on others to take the burden of ratification upon themselves. "I admit that I miscalculated," a leader (Maurice Schumann, a Christian Democrat) is supposed to have said after the surprising announcement of the ratification having been rejected. "I believed that voting discipline among the Socialists (who were supposed to vote for the treaty -- NL) would be more effective."[35]

The prevalence of the belief that the treaty would be ratified, at the moment of the vote, December 24, 1954, had been preceded, in the course of the month of November, by the impression that the passage of time was rapidly reducing support for the treaty. At that moment those who wanted the treaty to pass, but did not want to vote for it themselves, tried, it was said, to have the treaty come before the Assembly as quickly as possible, that is at a moment at which it would not yet have become necessary for them, too, to vote for it.

It was in this atmosphere that a teacher recalled Kant's categorical imperative which, he believed, was particularly valid in parliament:

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> Everyone of us has the duty to ask himself what would happen if all his colleagues voted or abstained in the way he proposed to do.[36]

Three years later a parliamentarian, surveying his colleagues' reactions before an imminent vote of confidence on the special powers in economic and financial matters demanded by the government, could still observe this:

> And there are those who believe that, as a majority is in any case assured, they can personally afford the luxury of being smart and leave to others the burden of voting for measures which might be unpopular.[37]

On the other hand, I may also act in favor of a certain decision while foreseeing that it is not going to be taken, as it should not be taken according to my real sentiment: Let others "kill" it for me!

At the time of the strikes of August, 1953, the communists and socialists demanded the immediate convocation of the Assembly which was obligatory if a third of the deputies (which would have amounted to 209) were to ask for it. Everything depended on the left radicals. The rumor spread that their leader (Jean Baylet) and one of the members of the group (Adrien Laplace) had sent the speaker of the Assembly requests for its convocation "on condition that this act were not to depend on their two votes."[38] To be sure, according to a journalist close to these deputies this rumor was slanderous:

> Messrs. Baylet and Laplace addressed to M. Herriot a telegram and a letter asking for the convocation of the Assembly. They heard that the bureau of the speaker of the Assembly affirmed having received a new letter from them according to which their original letter should be annulled if there were only 207 such demands, their own excluded. They denied...this singular invention.[39]

The invention was, to be sure, singular; it seems to express the attraction felt for an action shorn of the consequences it is supposed to have.

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More rarely one finds, in contrast, a special interest taken in an action credited with decisive consequences. On October 18, 1955, the government of Edgar Faure, which seemed in danger, obtained, to everybody's surprise, a quite comfortable margin of "confidence." The reason was a sudden turn in the government's favor of the group of Moderates known as ARS, or as "dissident Gaullists":

> During the entire day parliamentary forecasts remained quite uncertain as to whether the government would survive or not. Paradoxically, this fact favored a change of attitude on the part of a group which had up to that moment been rather hostile to the government, the ARS. Assuming that the "margin" in the vote would be extremely narrow and probably even negative, this group came to believe that the occasion might be propitious to demonstrate that the survival of the government depended on their votes. Together with considerations of a higher order, this calculation led the group to reverse its position and to vote, in its majority, in favor of M. Edgar Faure.[40]

I may also vote for a measure to which I am really opposed, but which is favored by some on whom I depend, if I foresee that later developments will render it inoperative, even though it will have been passed by parliament. This seems to have been the calculation of a certain number of parliamentarians in the matter of the common market, as one of the opponents of this institution (Pierre Mendès-France) pointed out, perhaps with some exaggeration:

> Those who are going to vote for the common market do not hide -- in private conversations, of course -- that once we have entered it, our first concern will be to ask the new international organization for an authorization to do all the things the common market forbids its members to do. These parliamentarians stress...that there are certain clauses in the treaty whose purpose it is to permit that. They say...that in this fashion everything will be conveniently settled and that there is therefore no disadvantage in ratifying the treaty instituting the common market. For

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> while they believe that if the treaty were to be applied it would be very dangerous, they also foresee...that it will not be really applied.[41]

In a similar vein, in November, 1957, Moderates who had made the framework law for Algeria fail earlier that fall, became resigned to voting for it. According to a journalist,

> They accept with resignation a proposal for a statute of which many believe that it will never become applicable.[42]

* * *

To return to the occasions on which one presents oneself as not at all being definitely against a certain decision, while counting on others to foil it, this calculation plays a particularly great role in the "investitures" of a candidate for the Premiership. Though deputies are strongly inclined to frustrate the efforts of a candidate for power and to "massacre" the one who exercises that power, their feelings about these great acts of parliamentary life are far from serene. Ordinarily the act of "assassinating" a candidate for power or a power holder, though quite normal, seems in some way also immoral, and dangerous to the one who considers committing it, particularly when he is seated in the center of the Assembly. First of all, in public everybody deplores the instability of governments, and the length of crises. (This is frequently an attitude which is not consciously hypocritical. It is rather that institutions which others refuse to modify, and the offensive maneuvers of other groups, cliques, individuals leave me no choice but to engage in a course of action which entails instability.) Hence it is wise not to appear too clearly responsible for the "death" of a government. Second, there is a widespread belief, among the members of the political class, in a "rule of the game" which, at the next distribution of ministries, punishes those groups and individuals who have "marked" themselves as "assassins." In one variant of this belief a leader of such a group will be the first one to be asked by the President of the Republic to resolve the crisis; that is, he will be asked too soon and will fail. In another variant, the "assassins" will be overtly debarred from enjoying the fruits of their crime. Thus, after the resignation of Antoine Pinay, Georges Bidault tried to form a government and failed. It was widely believed that the Moderates were punishing in this fashion the group (the

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Christian Democrats) viewed as responsible for the end of the Pinay government, this despite the fact that Bidault had scrupulously abstained from personally acting in any way against that government when it entered the last phase of its existence (an abstention which was also widely interpreted as having been an effort to escape the debarment by which this leader felt himself menaced).

Often one tends, in fact, to treat as slanderous any affirmation according to which one played a special role in the "death" of a government. Whenever possible one will even deny that there had been any "murder" at all. About Antoine Pinay who resigned before a vote was cast which he had reason to believe would turn out unfavorably for him, the "theoretician" of the Christian Democrats (Etienne Borne) maintained that "this was a case of suicide dressed up as murder by the victim and his friends."[43]

When one is about to commit what is clearly "assassination," one feels rather ill at ease. At the occasion of the vote of confidence by which the Mollet government was overthrown, the Moderates maintained their decision to vote against, despite the Radicals' intention to abstain, an intention commanded by the wish to make the Moderates "face their responsibilities":

> The Right...was a bit upset by the "courage" which it was forced to show....There were cries of "Mendès," as if they wanted to require of the Radicals an explanation of their vote. But it was in vain.[44]

Such a situation is so unpleasant that it can easily lead to a retreat at the last moment. Thus, early in February, 1952, the attitude of the Moderates who were threatening the first government of Edgar Faure was apparently softened by an intervention of the Premier who presented the following view of the situation to them: The Radicals would vote solidly for the government; if the Moderates were to vote against it, they would clearly be responsible for the crisis; in these circumstances the Radicals would not admit a Moderate as a successor of the Radical Premier thus overthrown. The Moderates gave in (for the moment).

What shall I do if I am against a certain government and yet do not want to contribute directly to its undoing? I shall attempt to act through others.

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First of all, I must not neglect the possibility that others are, for reasons of their own, ready to vote against the government in numbers sufficient to spare me the necessity of joining them in this. When the government appears "condemned," it is appropriate for me to support it: It costs me so little and will permit me to ask those in whose favor I appear to act to do me a favor at a later moment when I will be in need of it.

This maneuver is hardly distinctive of the Radicals, though they are often said to be particularly inclined toward it, and especially skillful in executing it. When Pierre Mendès-France was a candidate for the premiership in the spring of 1953, an important fraction of the socialist deputies was hostile to him, but nevertheless voted for him, predicting correctly his defeat. When, a few weeks later, Antoine Pinay attempted to form a government, the ex-Gaullists, bitterly opposed to him, "contented themselves with expressing hesitation rather than formulating a categorical no. For on the thirty-third day of the crisis they thought it to be more 'politic' to leave, once more, to the Christian Democrats the role of 'killers' of the candidate for the Premiership."[45]

In their turn the Christian Democrats tended to revolt against the role, or the image, of simpletons whom one can manipulate to perform disagreeable chores, or on whose imprudent acts one can rely. They tried their hand at the maneuver which others had applied at their expense. When the parliamentary position of the Laniel government declined in the spring of 1954, one of their leaders (Maurice Schumann) stressed after a conversation with the Premier:

> Everything goes very well between the Christian Democrats and M. Laniel. In any case there is no point in counting on the Christian Democrats to provoke a crisis.[46]

During the following winter, the Christian Democrats voted -- as the Radicals, too, of course -- eagerly in favor of a socialist candidate for the premiership (Christian Pineau) though the socialists had reacted unfavorably to one of their own (Pierre Pflimlin): in voting for the socialist candidate they could present themselves as a part of the Left, and at the same time they knew that nothing would come of it.

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Reformers do not always disdain this maneuver. At the Congress of the Radicals in the spring of 1957, Pierre Mendès-France declared himself clearly against the Mollet government, but did not ask the Radical ministers to leave it. According to a widespread interpretation,

> Pierre Mendès-France calculated...that it would be tactically unskillful to make oneself responsible for the downfall of a government which others might execute. He is convinced that the Right is going to overthrow the government,[47]

and so it did.

As with so many other maneuvers, this may require a great deal of patience. From the very beginning of the Pinay government, the left wing of the Radicals apparently aimed at its overthrow, but decided to wait for the Christian Democrats to develop a sufficient inclination to "murder" the Moderate leader. Spring, summer and autumn passed, and finally this calculation came true. Though furious about the reputation they thus acquired, the Christian Democrats were ready to play the same role at the occasion of the subsequent efforts of Antoine Pinay in June, 1953, and in February, 1955. A few days after the fall of Pierre Mendès-France the Radicals had to take a stand on Pinay whom the President of the Republic had asked to consider whether he might agree to be designated as a candidate for the premiership. According to a journalist,

> Sensing that an opposition against Pinay might develop elsewhere, the Radicals did not care to take a stand against him. They followed in this an established tradition.[48]

One waits, and finally, when the situation has "matured" one "pushes one's neighbor to perpetrate the crime."

One of the principal means of inciting him is to "intoxicate" him about the distribution of votes in my own group. If I can induce in another group an exaggerated estimate of the number of votes for the government in my own, I may decide that other group to vote against the government or to abstain, while still believing that the government will survive or, in another situation, because the other group is determined that it shall "die." For instance, at the occasion of the vote of

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confidence of March 28, 1957,

> The Premier and his friends were greatly irritated by the attitude of the Poujadists. The whole day rumors had been spread according to which the Poujadists might abstain rather than vote against the government. Finally, these 47 deputies did all cast their ballots against Mollet. But the Premier had grounds to believe that this maneuver aimed at inducing a good part of the Moderates to vote against the government by making them believe that their votes would be compensated by the abstentions of the Poujadists and thus not endanger the cabinet. However, the Moderates, better informed than the Premier about the real intentions of the Poujadists, did not fall into the trap.[49]

* * *

If the game called "murderers wanted" is mainly played in a spirit of who-will-deceive-whom, the feeling of parliamentary camaraderie may also appear in it. My group and another may tacitly agree that it is easier for us to "kill" their candidate, or somebody close to them, and vice versa. "On the twentieth day of the crisis," observed a journalist, "there is less interest in discussing the merits and demerits of men and programs," than in looking for "one or more murderers":

> It is know to everybody in parliament that many Radicals, while voting for M. Mendès-France, counted on the Moderates to foil his attempt, and that certain Moderates expect that the Radicals will render them a similar service with regard to M. Bidault.[50]

Apart from such exchanges of services between equals, there are the chores which the rank and file of a clan must perform for the leader who does not want to expose himself, but rather adopts the maxim: do what I tell you and not what I do myself. During the long agony of the Laniel government in the spring of 1954 René Mayer publicly expressed himself in its favor and voted for it, but also, it was widely believed, asked the coming younger men depending on him (Bourgès-Maunoury, Gaillard, Maurice Faure) to take the opposite stand.

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All too often, however, the estimated contribution of others to an indispensable "assassination" appears insufficient. If my group, my clan or even myself, then, have to contribute directly to the desired result, let this contribution at least be limited to what is strictly necessary! In the parliamentary myth the exemplary event in this connection is the Assembly's refusal to invest Georges Bidault, in the spring of 1953, by according him 313 votes where 314 (the absolute majority of deputies) were required. Similarly, in the autumn of 1955 the return to a system of electing the Assembly by one-member districts and two ballots -- a system held to be popular at the time -- was refused with an economical majority of 5 votes. This was widely held not to be accidental as many Radicals and Socialists supposedly voted for this electoral law only after calculations had shown that it would not pass.

As was already mentioned, economy of effort in such a situation requires that my group obtain intelligence about the distribution of votes in other groups and then adjust its own conduct in consequence. A group which sees itself as the target of such espionage will defend itself by dissimulation and deception, methods which are of course also used offensively. A major vote then becomes a complicated campaign, particularly when the procedure of voting makes it possible to utilize intelligence which flows in during the course of the voting itself.

Around such practices there develop extreme beliefs, whose relations to reality are often obscure. Thus, a newspaper has dared to publish the following story which enjoyed some currency in the political class: The leader of a group, the Gaullist Jacques Chaban-Delmas, charged with protecting the secret of how his group was going to vote at an important occasion, betrayed this secret to a redoubtable enemy (the Radical Léon Martinaud-Déplat); for this politician, then Minister of the Interior, had the Gaullist leader at his mercy: Chaban-Delmas was Mayor of Bordeaux; his position there was menaced; in centralized France his survival depended on the good will of the Minister of the Interior.

* * *

The calculations discussed do not always work out; far from it. During the hours before the Assembly refused to invest Paul Reynaud in the spring of 1953 an observer finds that:

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> The groups count on each other to accomplish the murder. Hence one may ask oneself whether a surprise victory is not in the making comparable to that from which M. Pinay has benefited.[51]

This did not happen. Still, an event as important as the coming to power of Antoine Pinay seems to have been due to errors in calculations of the kind just considered. In the account of a journalist:

> The investiture of M. Pinay seemed excluded: the eleven Gaullist votes in his favor which were predicted would not permit him to obtain the absolute majority of all deputies. Given this prediction, the Radicals decided to vote unanimously for M. Pinay; they thought that this gesture would be without consequence and yet courteous....This vote was supposed to oblige the Moderates morally to vote in their turn in favor of a future Radical candidate for the Premiership. Even M. Mendès-France thus voted for M. Pinay. The same calculation was made among the Christian Democrats. The UDSR (a small group near to the Radicals - NL) decided to vote for the candidate in order to encourage defections from the official Gaullist line which was hostile to him. But at that point a deputy speaking for the Socialists took a clear-cut stand against Pinay, and this intervention sufficed to detach sixteen more Gaullists from the official position of their group. The other groups did not notice this capital event. Thus, M. Pinay received 324 votes,[52]

11 more than he needed.

* * *

<u>As one often finds it advantageous to vote for what one believes will be rejected, one likes to propose what one foresees will be refused</u>.

<u>One agrees to an offer, but qualifies the agreement by conditions which one knows to be unacceptable</u>. It will then be the other who, one hopes, will bear the responsibility for the failure of negotiations. If this maneuver (close to that

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of the so-called lifting of the mortgage which will be analyzed in Chapter 3) is frequently employed in the relations between groups in parliament, it may also be used on great occasions in foreign policy. Towards the middle of June, 1940, the Premier, Paul Reynaud, recognized that the army was incapable of continuing to pursue the war in continental France. He addressed himself to the President of the United States and demanded of him an intervention which would amount to America's immediate entrance into the war against Germany. In this case, he implied, the battle of France could go on. This was, however, a condition which he knew to be impossible of realization. One year later the German government proposed that Vichy become a co-belligerent of the Reich, offering in exchange unspecified "political and economic concessions." General Weygand, hostile to such a change of policy, suggested that Vichy ask for the following "concessions" as a compensation for co-belligerence: a German obligation to respect in the future treaty of peace the territorial integrity of France in Europe and overseas; the liberation of the French prisoners of war; the cessation of the tribute demanded by the German authorities in France under the guise of compensations for the cost of occupation; the abolition of the line of demarcation between occupied and unoccupied France. According to one version of the events,

> this maneuver gives Pétain the means of refusing military collaboration with Germany without taking himself the initiative of interrupting negotiations.[53]

Towards the end of 1941 the same technique was once more applied with regard to the same German demands:

> December 22, 1941 the French government delivers its answer to the German Embassy. Always the same tactics: the French government admits the principle of collaboration, but makes its realization dependent on concessions which one knows to be unacceptable to the Germans, and which amount to the abrogation of the Armistice for North Africa.[54]

Again, when the Allies invaded North Africa:

> The Germans propose to put the German Air Force at our disposal in order to repel the assailants. Laval appears to leave the

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> decision to Darlan. It would be showing a poor knowledge of the Admiral to believe that his answer to such a demand might be a clear "yes" or "no." While he does not refuse, his consent is tantamount to a refusal: he accepts the participation of the German Air Force in the fight against the invaders on condition that the Germans act from their Sicilian and Sardinian bases. That is, he is willing to authorize the German Air Force to use its habitual fields! These are, by the way, at such a distance from the new front that they are practically useless.[55]

In the course of the twenty-seven months which separated the signature of the EDC Treaty by the government from its rejection by the Assembly, many "preliminary conditions" and "protocols" to the treaty were suggested in Paris; some were proposed by the government and accepted by the other signatories of the Treaty, or by Great Britain and the United States. Among those who insisted on the necessity of such amplifications or modifications of the treaty were numerous hidden opponents of EDC who foresaw that such demands would be refused. The rejection of the treaty was, in fact, preceded by the refusal, on the part of its other signatories, to accept those modifications which the Mendès-France government proposed at the Brussels Conference; and the speech of the Premier, when EDC was debated at the Assembly, consisted largely in an analysis of these refusals.

There are several variants to this maneuver. I can, for instance, <u>attempt to detach the other from his position by pretending to insist on an extreme variant of it</u>. When it seemed, in the fall of 1955, that a serious parliamentary battle would develop around the proposal to return to electing deputies in one-member districts and by two ballots, the opponents of this system intended, it seems, to form the semblance of a coalition between themselves and its extreme proponents so as to render the system unacceptable to its Moderate partisans.

Or <u>I may render my acceptance of a certain measure dependent on conditions which are formulated with sufficient ambiguity to permit me to call any concessions which might be made to me insufficient</u>. <u>If my conditions are, on the</u>

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other hand, rather well defined, I can choose them so that it is within my power to prevent their realization. After the fall of Pierre Mendès-France in the winter of 1955, Pierre Pflimlin (Christian Democrat) tried to form a government, offering the Radicals four ministries. René Mayer, a Radical leader hostile to a Pflimlin government, made the Radicals pose the following condition for their entry into a cabinet headed by the Christian Democrat: two of the four Radical ministers should have belonged to the government just overthrown (which, by the way, had been overthrown largely due to the activities of the same René Mayer). Pflimlin could address himself to those individuals satisfying this condition who were devoted to Mendès; in this case it was exceedingly improbable that they would accept his offer as the fall of Mendès-France appeared to them, at the time, as a national tragedy. Or Pflimlin could approach those members of the preceding government who, while Radicals, were by no means closely connected with Mendès. But all these were apparently induced by Mayer not to accept any bids from Pflimlin. Thus, the Christian Democrat encountered what first seemed a mysterious streak of refusals, and finally abandoned his attempt to form a government.

When a maneuver of the type which has just been described is used against a person or group, the victim may attempt to defend himself by unmasking the nature of the operation. In the debate on the ratification of the Paris Agreements, a parliamentarian called a proposed amendment "one of those unrealizable conditions which are tantamount to a hidden refusal."[56] Discussing a "preliminary condition" suggested for the entry of France into the common market, a deputy spoke of it as "an indirect and elegant fashion to prevent the signing of the common market treaty."[57] And a Premier declared: "Some preliminary conditions are nothing but disguised refusals."[58]

But the same leader was, needless to say, willing to adopt this technique in a crisis precipitated by his own downfall when it was a matter of "torpedoing" an undesirable candidate for the Premiership (Pierre Pflimlin) and of assuring the success of his own candidate (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury). When Pflimlin tried to form a government, the Socialists presented him with a set of demands which they knew to be unacceptable. Their paper wrote:

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> The Socialists have indicated the minimum conditions for their entrance into a coalition government. They have done this not in order to create an alibi for themselves, but in order to remain faithful to the obligations which they have assumed before the entire French people....[59]

A few days later it became evident that the operation aimed, precisely, at creating an alibi: once the withdrawal of Pflimlin had been obtained, the Socialists granted their participation to Bourgès-Maunoury without obtaining his consent to any special conditions. The socialist minority, opposed to participation, objected that "the catalog of demands, which had been established for M. Pflimlin but which was valid for any candidate for the premiership, had not even been presented to M. Bourgès-Maunoury." True, answered Guy Mollet, but "M. Bourgès-Maunoury has in the past demonstrated his solidarity with a government directed by a Socialist (Guy Mollet himself -- NL)...; this is an adequate guarantee."[60] Naturally, little was heard from then on about the greater part of the Socialist demands. Having fulfilled their purpose, they could disappear.

* * *

Let us assume that one aims at preserving an established condition which everybody condemns in public, but to which nevertheless many are attached; for instance, an electoral law which has acquired a bad reputation. To defend it overtly would be disadvantageous. But as it is already in existence, one can perpetuate it without ever mentioning it, namely by rejecting all the other proposed systems of voting. This happened in the fall of 1955, in the conflict between "the system of voting by one-member districts and in two ballots, a system which deputies feel obliged to favor but do not really like, and the electoral law of 1951, a law for which one does not vote but which one likes very well."[61] A deputy asked:

> Are we really going to vote the electoral law of 1951 though nobody among us dares to say clearly that he favors it?[62]

Only thus could the desired result be attained, as a journalist explains:

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> It is generally said that if voting in the Assembly were secret, the maintenance of the electoral law of 1951 would be voted....Not a single deputy has until now had the courage to defend it publicly at the rostrum....Hence the only way of maintaining the system is to continue it tacitly.[63]

* * *

Besides the techniques apt to protect me against the responsibilities which I am in danger of assuming in the present, there are the maneuvers by which I try to forestall future dangers of this sort.

The principle of sharing responsibility as widely as possible suggests various precautions. When a government is formed, a group must be careful not to be in sole command of a sector of activity which is likely to present "delicate" problems during the months to come (a tendency which may, however, be overcompensated by the opposed desire of a group to possess domains in which its own influence predominates). If this condition is fulfilled and if things then go badly, the group can always say: If policy had depended only on us, things would have turned out otherwise. This maneuver may, of course, also be applied by an individual. In the election campaign of 1951 the Secretary of State for the budget (Edgar Faure) is supposed to have defended himself thus before his voters: Unfortunately, I am not alone: there is the Minister of Finance; I cannot do all that I wish to do. In his constituency the Minister of Finance (Maurice Petsche) allegedly said: Unfortunately, I am not alone; there is the Secretary of State for the budget; I can not do all that I wish to do.

* * *

The instability of governments permits a politician to consider whether he cannot arrange the timing of his presence in, and absence from, the government in such a fashion as to minimize his apparent responsibility for untoward events. It is commonly believed within the political class that such calculations play a considerable role.

One must know how to abandon a post so as not to be saddled with it when difficulties occur for which one might be held responsible. Such an act of individual prophylaxis appears

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"normal" while a concern for substantive problems of policy which have not yet become acute often appears inappropriate (cf. Chapter 6, p. 153). When Queen Elizabeth visited Paris in 1957, the British government supposedly insisted that the service charged with protocol be directed by a British official. The chief of protocol in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- as a story runs -- went to his Minister to protest, but was told this:

> You are quite wrong to complain: mistakes will surely be made and you won't have anything to do with them.[64]

An important journalist who has the reputation of being a moral rigorist has said this of Paul Reynaud without provoking a scandal:

> M. Paul Reynaud...conducted his short war of 1940 according to all the rules of the art of politics. He organized his military campaign as if it were an electoral one, and was unceasingly concerned to have another name attached to defeat than his own. A postillion whose force was insufficient for the national coach in distress, he was fortunate, or farsighted enough, to jump off just at the moment when the wagon was about to overturn.[65]

From the very first years of the Fourth Republic on, Paul Reynaud became again one of the most respected parliamentarians charged with high posts in the Assembly and in the government.

The coming difficulties before which I steal away may, of course, appear to others, or even to myself, as consequences of my own policy. They may be the payment for immediate benefits from which I drew advantage when in power. At least my enemies will easily say so: the Socialists alleged this about the Pinay government of 1952, and the Moderates about the Mollet government of 1956-1957. The one and the other were supposed to have foreseen the critical situation which would be facing their successors, who might, as we now know, not even find it easy to "draw up the balance sheet," of those who had preceded them.

Knowing how to steal away from responsibility at a critical moment includes the art of not attempting this in too "brutal"

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a fashion, which might foil the attempt altogether. In the crisis opened by the fall of the government headed by the Socialist Guy Mollet, a Radical (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury) tried to form a new government after the failure of a Moderate (Antoine Pinay), a Christian Democrat (Pierre Pflimlin) and a member of a small group close to the Radicals (René Pleven). Still, a tendency in the socialist party was opposed to the Radical, too, while at the same time no majority seemed possible without the Socialists' participation. But Guy Mollet insisted that the failure of the Radical would lead precisely to what was to be prevented in the first place, namely his own return to the premiership. "If the Party rejected Bourgès," he reasoned, "it would expose itself to the grave risk of being obliged to furnish the premier again."[66] "If you say no to Bourgès, too," he recalled to the socialist leaders, "you surely prepare the return of a government directed by us, precisely the solution you do not want."[67]

As the pleasure of obtaining a parcel of power is intense, relief in abandoning it, when it becomes a trap after having been a privilege, is also strong. This agreeable feeling of personal escape offers some compensation for the distress which the nation's difficulties might induce in one. Sir Edward Spears, the liaison between the British and the French Premiers, encountered Paul Reynaud on the day of his resignation in June, 1940:

> Reynaud's appearance and demeanor were so different from what I expected that amazement changed my mood....It was as if, walking into a room to condole a widower, one was confronted by a bridegroom....If he was not gay, gayety rippled under the surface of his manner; if he was not exactly detached, he spoke as an expert giving evidence at a trial. It was obvious that he was immensely relieved, but at some pains not to show it.[68]

The same day, recalls General de Gaulle:

> I went to see M. Paul Reynaud. I found him without any illusions as to what the coming to power of Marshal Pétain would entail and, on the other hand, as if relieved of an intolerable burden.[69]

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Almost every relinquishment of power comes to be viewed as a maneuver aimed at escaping responsibility. Hence a complication of my conduct may be indicated. I may, for instance, announce that I would want to renounce power for such and such reasons, but that I renounce that act of renunciation itself, because I foresee that it would be interpreted as an escape from responsibility. Thus, May 15, 1957, the Premier (Guy Mollet) offered the resignation of his government to the President of the Republic; "accedes to the request" of the President to withdraw it; and explains that he is withdrawing his offer "first of all for reasons of domestic politics. You know the difficulties which have arisen between the Radical Party and the government. On the other hand, my decision to resign came at a moment at which the fiscal measures which we are proposing to parliament encounter difficulties. Hence, our resignation today might have appeared, to some, as an escape from responsibility. It is for this reason that we want to remain in office."[70]

Naturally, the tendency towards disagreeable interpretations in this context is not eliminated by such maneuvers. Thus, the conduct just described, adopted by a Premier who knew his downfall near (in fact, he had only a few days to "live") was much interpreted as a "device" of uncertain efficacy. A journalist speculated:

> The solemnity which M. Guy Mollet conferred on his resignation and on his declaration will lead his opponents to believe that he wanted to impress the Assembly. His step is as likely to be harmful to him as it is to be useful.[71]

Attributing to me the design of escaping from the difficulties created by my own activities (or which might easily be alleged to have this origin), my opponents will attempt to prevent my departure, so that I may myself become the "receiver" of my "bankruptcy."

December 20, 1954, the Assembly was discussing Indochina for the first time since it had approved the Geneva agreements during the preceding summer. The Christian Democrats attacked Mendès who replied and, in so doing, stressed more than had been his habit, their responsibility in the conduct of the war which had come to such a bad end. At that point a Christian Democrat (Alfred Coste-Floret) exclaimed: "So you really want to be overthrown today?"[72] This is what he alluded to. The

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same day the debate on the ratification of the Paris Agreements establishing WEU was to begin. After having undertaken the rather agreeable job of having EDC rejected, Pierre Mendès-France had now to pay for this, in the view of the Christian Democrats, by urging parliament to pass another framework of Western German rearmament which, in contrast to EDC, would re-establish a "Wehrmacht." Was it not natural on his part to want to escape from that responsibility? This the Christian Democrats were not to permit him. Voting against the government on Indochina would, in their forecast, lead to its downfall; but it was imperative that it survive in order to assume the consequences of its sins. Thus, a leader of the Christian Democrats (Pierre Henri-Teitgen) declared:

> We are not going to permit an adjournment of the debate on the Paris Agreements....It is for this very reason that we shall abstain in the vote on Indochina, but we declare that this abstention is, in our mind, equivalent to a vote of lack of confidence.[73]

(In fact, if voting "for" in a "vote of confidence" is so often far from expressing a sentiment of trust in the government, it is appropriate that abstention may express lack of confidence; cf. Chapter 5, p. 127.) It is the Christian Democrats' determination to foil his design of "suicide" which the Premier was supposedly trying to break down by his "provocations."

By virtue of a similar calculation there are always parliamentarians who, while declaring themselves hostile to the government, oppose the intention of others among its enemies to "kill" it right away; they recommend that, while "convicted," it be given a "stay of execution" so that the nefarious character of its actions may become incontrovertibly clear.

In the winter of 1952 the first Faure government fell over its proposal to increase taxes (after 40 days the life of a government of 40 ministers was cut short by its request for 40 billion francs, it was often said, the consequences of all this having been to make the Premier lose 4 kilos). During the subsequent spring and summer the popularity of Edgar Faure's successor, Antoine Pinay, was connected with the fulfillment of his promise to avoid an increase in taxes. Hence, a journalist noted:

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> As long as the Premier is going to avoid a request for an increase in taxes nobody will want to be his successor. Even those most hostile to the present government and who view it as having failed, will conspire not to hinder it visibly, so that M. Antoine Pinay may not be able to charge anybody but his own friends for his final failure.[74]

For these "friends" were expected to refuse the reductions in expenditures by which alone an increase in taxes could be avoided.

Three years later, a determined opponent of the policy adopted by the second government of Edgar Faure in Morocco explained why he was going to vote for the government in a vote of confidence on that very policy:

> It would be exceedingly naive to leave it to others to finish this harvest in your place, and thus to burden them with responsibilities which are strictly yours....Hence, I shall not be among those who, voting against you today, will enable you to escape the storm.[75]

In the spring of 1957 certain Moderates overthrew the Mollet government against the advice of eminent members of their own group, according to whom one should have deferred the "kill" until the grave damage caused by the economic policy of that government would have become more visible:

> M. Paul Reynaud declared himself...in favor of a stay of sentence which would permit the Moderates to return to the charge later with greater efficacy and to confront the men in power with an incontrovertible record of failure. The government would very soon have to ask the Bank of France to proceed to inflationary measures; one should wait for this occasion. M. Pinay argued in the same sense.[76]

I may, of course, delay the moment at which I should like to succeed the present government regardless of whether the difficulties which I thus want to escape appear related to its actions or not. This is how a journalist described the parliamentary situation towards the end of the Pinay government:

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> Most parliamentarians are pessimistic about the future of the Pinay government. But those who expect to be members of the next combination try, of course, to assure its survival until after the vote of the budget with which they do not want to be encumbered.[77]

The next autumn another journalist declared:

> As long as strikes threaten, as long as the problem of salaries and prices is acute, the succession of Premier Laniel will be little coveted.[78]

If I already occupy a responsible position in moments of unusual difficulty, I must not forget that a promotion may be a "poisoned gift." A Premier (Guy Mollet) told, so it is alleged, a Secretary of State (André Dulin, charged with agriculture) of his intention to make him a minister, and saw his offer refused. The beneficiary of this promotion explained that it was his habit to recall the modesty of his position to farmers dissatisfied with his performance. According to a rumor published by Sir Edward Spears, General Weygand, called back from the Middle East by the Premier in the middle of May, 1940, to become Commander-in-chief of the French army, regretted immediately having accepted this order:

> On landing at Marseilles...on May 19, he exclaimed on reading a report of the situation and seeing a map of the German advance: "If I had known the situation was so bad, I would not have come."[79]

We may mention once more at this point that during his "squabble" with Reynaud and Lebrun, a month later, Weygand himself recalls having exclaimed, when asked to bring about a capitulation of the French land army:

> Did they take me for a child? Had they made me come from Beyrouth to throw me into this trap?[80]

In the belief of the political class, flight from power is as determined in certain situations as is, ordinarily, the rush towards power. In any case, when I am publicly charged with an undue interest in power, I can always affirm that the

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circumstances of the moment are sufficiently difficult to discourage the most avid. In the declaration he read as a candidate for the premiership in the winter of 1955, Edgar Faure spoke of that period as of a "moment when nobody will suspect one of wishing to be in power, as one has to settle the question of the Paris Agreements, that of the conventions with Tunisia, as the budget has to be voted and the question of wage levels is going to be raised."[81] A similar characterization could, of course, be given of most "moments" of the epoch, a fact which does not, on the whole, seem to have disgusted politicians with power.

* * *

Saddled with power in a difficult moment, I still have the resource of applying the device: "I do not want to know anything about it." According to a journalist, speaking about the last phase of the war of Indochina,

> the attitude of members of the government is frequently one of "I do not want to know it." This leads them to leave decisions concerning Indochina to a limited group of Ministers.[82]

A superior may firmly resolve to give his subordinates only a minimum of instructions, thus maximizing his freedom to "cover" them, or to disassociate himself from them. Speaking about the relations between the government and the Residents General in Tunis and Rabat, a journalist explained:

> Often governments let their high officials act freely, reserving for themselves the right to cover them if they succeed and to penalize them if they fail.[83]

In the formula attributed to a minister (François Mitterrand) who resigned in connection with a related issue (the deposition of the Sultan of Morocco in the summer of 1953, an act which apparently originated in Rabat),

> the usage is to let Governor Generals and Residents follow their inspiration in order to be able to ratify their successes and to disavow their failures.[84]

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During the war in Algeria a general commanding an operational zone in the south is said to have explained to an officer, a journalist in civilian life (Jean Jacques Servan-Schreiber), "a problem which is at the root of all others":

> In this region we are quite well informed about the rebel cadres....If I do not arrest them they continue their effective work....If I do arrest them, they are going to be released after awhile, as there are no precise charges against them, and they will return with the enhanced prestige of martyrs....The only reasonable solution would be to arrest them and have them killed. Only I won't do that without an order. In Algiers my superiors tell me that they don't want to know anything about this and that they will close their eyes....Well, Well! Sure enough: the dirty job is to be done by the military, and then...one is going to charge the army for having done it....These gentlemen will, in this fashion, keep their hands clean....I won't go for that!... Ten times I have asked the Government General for instructions: no answer....They don't want to know anything about it....[85]

In addition there is the device of explicit delegation: the special powers habitually accorded to the government by an Assembly supposed to be jealous of its prerogatives, "so that the government may do the disagreeable things, for parliament is there to do the others (laughter.)"[86]

The delegation may be tacit. The speakers of the two chambers (Edouard Herriot and Jules Jeanneney) did not convoke them in Bordeaux in the middle of June, 1940, though the number of parliamentarians then present in that city was most probably sufficient for a quorum. Nevertheless, or perhaps because of such conduct, Edouard Herriot became the "demi-god" of the political class during the first ten years of the Fourth Republic. No member of that class would ask him why he had not convoked the Chamber; and he himself never offered an explanation.

The device of delegating powers also works within the government. In the summer of 1955 the cabinet decided to raise the salaries of government employees by virtue of the special powers which parliament had granted it. But as

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various trade unions of public employees declared themselves dissatisfied with the raise, the government, in its turn, delegated to the Premier the power of negotiating with these organizations and of modifying, if need be, the decisions which the Council of Ministers had taken. Thus, the circle of those charged with responsibility was reduced to a minimum: the government by Assembly shows a tendency to abdicate in favor of a single chief -- even in conditions less dramatic than those of the summer of 1940.

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Chapter 3

DESIGNS FOR FAILURE

Members of the French political class tend to draw back at the last moment from completing an enterprise (pp. 77-78), and often apply the deliberate technique of making a measure, towards which they have been hostile from the beginning, fail only at a late stage of its career (pp. 78-80). Sometimes, members of the French political class appear to support fully an enterprise which seems to aim at a major modification of the status quo; but often such conduct turns out merely to be an attempt to discover the shape of things as they are (pp. 80-85). In a related maneuver members of the political class try to show up the defects of a certain "solution," which appears tempting as long as it remains just an idea, but which is expected to evoke negative reactions when it materializes to a certain degree (pp. 85-92). This technique, when applied to the world outside of parliament, may set in motion an unexpected and undesired train of events (pp. 94-97).

* * *

Justifying to the Assembly a proposal (of an electoral law) made by his group (the Socialists), a parliamentarian (Edouard Depreux) insisted:

> We are submitting this proposal seriously, with the intention that it be passed and put into operation.[1]

So prevalent is the assumption that one does not believe in the attainment of the ostensible goal of the operation in which one is engaged, or does not even desire its success.

* * *

According to a view which is widespread in the political class, politicians tend to draw back at the last moment from completing an enterprise. As this appears natural, they may overlook the bad feelings thus aroused in partners who naively believed in the seriousness of their intentions. In the winter of 1952 the Assembly expressed its agreement with the

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major points of what was to become the treaty instituting a European defense community, a treaty which was signed by the participating governments in the spring of that year. In the summer of 1954 the Assembly, however, refused to ratify that treaty. Similarly, on October 12, 1954, the Assembly approved the London Agreements which outlined precisely the Paris Agreements, signed later in the year, which instituted the Western European Union. However, on December 24 of that year the Assembly again refused to ratify these agreements (doing so, however, a week later). "As long as it is still on the level of generalities," says a political leader of a "great idea," "everybody is quite glad to approve it in principle. Then, when details come to the fore...criticisms multiply." It is thus typical of an "enterprise" that "there are many who want it in the wholesale stage and equally many who refuse it in the retail stage."[2]

Related to this is the deliberate technique of making a measure toward which I have been hostile from the very beginning fail only at a late stage of its career. If I advance rather far toward the end of a certain operation, I thereby acquire a "card" in relation to those who would like to dissuade me from taking the final step. The smaller that step appears to be, the more will they be willing to grant me in payment for my not taking it. Thus, on June 13, 1940, General de Gaulle went to see the Premier Paul Reynaud in order to ask him:

> Is it possible that you are entertaining the idea that France might demand an armistice?

Reynaud answered:

> Certainly not! ...But it is necessary to impress the British in order to get more military help from them![3]

According to the calculation of certain supporters, first of the EDC and then of WEU, these treaties should be ratified by the Assembly so as to provoke the offer of adequate

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concessions from Moscow and thereby assure the success of a negotiation at the summit. This, in turn, would permit the Senate to refuse the ratification of the one or the other framework for the rearmament of Western Germany, and in this way the Assembly, in its turn, would be enabled to take back its consent. To ratify an agreement is not felt to be equal to putting it into operation. Thus, in the debate on WEU, as a major opponent of the rearmament of Western Germany (Jules Moch) hinted:

> I shall now express fully what I have in mind. There are many in this Assembly, I am sure, who are in favor of ratification only on the condition that immediately after it the most energetic efforts be made on the highest level to avoid any dangerous sequels to the act of ratification,[4]

-- the "dangerous sequels" being the application of the measure one is about to vote for. In the words of a more extreme enemy of the remilitarization of Western Germany (Adolphe Aumeran):

> I read and hear every day the following argument: We have ahead of us two years before the German divisions will be ready. We thus dispose of sufficient time to act in such a fashion that the rearmament of Germany will not be necessary anymore. This is the hope of one part of our Assembly which is about to ratify the Paris Agreements, because it believes that, in the last instance, Germany will not be rearmed.[5]

A politician on the other side of the "European" barricade (Pierre-Henri Teitgen) confirmed the existence of those who

> ...declare that one should ratify only on condition of not translating the measures involved into reality.[6]

That which appears in such a context on first sight as an approach to a major transformation of reality is revealed as

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a simple counter either for the perpetuation of the status quo or for a change in a quite different direction.

In similar fashion, one may draw back near the end of an operation in order to provoke concessions on the part of those who wish it to succeed. Before the London Agreement prefiguring the WEU treaty was approved by the Assembly with a comfortable margin, the atmosphere had, one day (October 8, 1954), become worse. But this development appeared as favorable to certain parliamentarians who were in favor of WEU passing:

> Many deputies maintained that the vote of the London Agreement with a reduced majority would not necessarily be a bad thing. M. Mendès-France would then be able, when negotiating with our partners, to stress that serious obstacles remain to be overcome in the Assembly.[7]

Announcing to the Prime Minister the abstention of his group (the Christian Democrats) in the vote on the London Agreement, a political leader (Pierre Pflimlin) made this calculation public:

> Perhaps our abstention will, after all, be more useful to you than a favorable vote would be. It will fortify your position in the difficult negotiations which you are going to pursue, as it will permit you to prove to your interlocutors that there persist in the French Parliament feelings of disquiet which should be dissipated, and a potential favorable to the new arrangements on which it should be possible for you to draw.[8]

* * *

Not only is it often viewed as necessary that one approach a certain change in order to be able to avoid it, it may also appear indispensable to go rather far in an enterprise which seems to aim at a major modification of the

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status quo, merely in order to discover the shape of things as they are: an action which at first sight looks like an event in its own right is in reality nothing but a reconnaissance operation. At least, once the action has failed, it is possible to pretend that this was its true nature. For often it seems impracticable to evaluate the actual relationship of forces with the mere aid of observation and calculation; the reconnaissance operation which dons the mask of real action, which proceeds "in the heat" of events, is felt to be a much more powerful instrument of intelligence than the intellectual activity of collecting data and drawing inferences from them. When Georges Bidault tried to form a government after the resignation of Antoine Pinay towards the end of 1952, he explained his endeavor in a formula which became famous. Actually, he said, the cupboard, in which the treaty establishing EDC rested since it was signed seven months ago, was closed; one did not know whether that cupboard contained a living organism or a corpse; in order to find out, it was necessary to open it; that was all he wanted to do. Similarly, an action of the dimensions of the Suez expedition could be presented, after it had failed, as a reconnaissance operation; and by no means did this always appear as a clumsy excuse.

> "As to the government," a journalist noted a few weeks after the retreat of the French and the British, "it does not see how one could in good faith doubt the results of the action. The government claims for itself the merit ...of having opened the eyes of the entire world...to certain important facts of international politics which had been hidden before then."[9]

A prominent parliamentarian referred to this affirmation with at least an appearance of respect:

> Abscesses have been opened, veils have been torn apart, hypocrisies unmasked ....The presence of Soviet arms and Soviet agents in the Middle East can now no longer be denied by those who did not want to see them before.[10]

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A deputy who was skeptical about the value of the enterprise conceded that

> ...the expedition to Egypt has made it possible...to bring into full light what was being prepared in darkness. It justifies itself by having reached objectives at which it did not aim.[11]

On the parliamentary rostrum only one person dissented from the dogma of the "hot" pursuit of intelligence. Recalling that according to the official thesis "the Suez operation is nothing but an episode in the intelligence war," he asked,

> ...whether it would not have been possible to pay a smaller price for ascertaining the facts in question, an operation which would seem to be much more in the domain of intelligence services than in that of military action.[12]

In a similar vein the President of the Republic seems to have asked himself during the two ministerial crises of 1957 whether it might not be possible to ascertain the presence or the absence of certain majorities in the Assembly with smaller expenditures of time and energy than had become usual; whether one could not substitute the "cold" collection of evidence by the President himself, or by a person charged by him with a "mission of information," for the "hot" procedure in which one politician after the other is "consulted," then "sounded out" as to whether he would agree to try to form a government, then "designated" as a candidate for the premiership, and sometimes refused by the Assembly. (See table on p. 83.)

Might it not be possible to avoid these habitual detours of the ministerial crisis and rather determine immediately the person most likely to succeed? It was with this question in mind that the President of the Republic, after the fall of the Mollet government in the spring of 1957, entrusted a "mission of information" to a leader (René Pleven) who, at its end, affirmed that "the efforts of the last days have produced a certain number of positive elements for the determination of a program which might serve as a base for an agreement

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TABLE

Ministerial crises, summer of 1951 -- spring of 1958 R - resigned I - "invested"			length of crisis (days)	number of candidates who seriously considered an attempt to form a government, but gave up	number of candidates refused by the Assembly
Henri Queuille	R	10 July 1951			
René Pleven	I	8 August 1951	28	1	2
René Pleven	R	7 January 1952			
Edgar Faure	I	17 January 1952	9	0	0
Edgar Faure	R	29 February 1952			
Antoine Pinay	I	7 March 1952	6	1	0
Antoine Pinay	R	23 December 1952			
René Mayer	I	6 January 1953	13	2	0
René Mayer	R	21 May 1953			
Joseph Laniel	I	26 June 1953	35	1	4
Joseph Laniel	R	12 June 1954			
Pierre Mendès-France	I	17 June 1954	4	0	0
Pierre Mendès-France	R	6 February 1955			
Edgar Faure	I	23 February 1955	16	2	1
Edgar Faure	R	24 January 1956			
Guy Mollet	I	1 February 1956	7	0	0
Guy Mollet	R	21 May 1957			
Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury	I	12 June 1957	21	1	0
Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury	R	30 September 1957			
Félix Gaillard	I	5 November 1957	35	1	2
Félix Gaillard	R	16 April 1958			
Pierre Pflimlin	I	14 May 1958	27	2	0

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between the parties"[13] -- an agreement which, in this revolutionary conception, would precede the choice of a candidate for the premiership; a candidate who was designated after the agreement had been reached would be sure to be "invested." However, nothing came of this design because two groups (the Socialists and the Moderates) declared, faithful to traditions, that in order to be able to commit themselves they needed the appearance of an individual who had been "sounded out" as to whether he would want to be a candidate for the premiership, or even been "designated" as such. It thus became necessary to "sound out" a politician (Pierre Pflimlin), who was promptly prevented by one of the two groups who had insisted on such a person being chosen (the Socialists) from pursuing any farther his attempts to become Premier. At this point the crisis returned to its usual pattern.

A similar sequence of events had already occurred three years earlier, on the occasion of the first ministerial crisis during the tenure of President Coty. At the beginning of this crisis, a journalist observed:

> M. Coty would like to try another procedure than that utilized by M. Vincent Auriol. The strategy of M. Auriol was to have all the various possible mortgages lifted in turn by the Assembly itself. M. Coty would like to discuss the situation with the various groups, perhaps for as long as several days, before designating a candidate, hoping that the chosen one would then be sure to be invested. Concretely, each group would be asked to indicate how many votes it was ready to deliver in favor of the various possible candidates and to undertake definite obligations in this regard. Thus, M. Coty hopes to ascertain the individual who could be invested.[14]

However, several groups answered "that they could indicate their reactions only to a candidate who had accepted the request to ascertain

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whether he would be willing to be designated to form the new government."15

One of the reasons for this behavior lies in the difficulties a leader is likely to encounter when he ventures to predict the reactions of the members of his group to a certain candidate. If this prediction should become known to them -- and it seems peculiarly difficult to keep secrets in parliament -- this fact itself would be likely to make it erroneous, as the rank-and-file of a group would tend to react strongly against being made objects of estimates issued about them by their leaders. Instances of wrong predictions made by leaders about the behavior of their "troops" are not lacking. After the Assembly, in the fall of 1957, had refused to invest Antoine Pinay, he seems to have predicted and promised to Guy Mollet, in case he were to become a candidate for the premiership, a number of Moderate abstentions sufficient to get Mollet invested. Mollet presented himself, in consequence of this, and was severely rebuffed by the Assembly, as the Moderates voted against him almost unanimously, Pinay included. Those who refused to believe that Pinay had wanted to lead Mollet into a trap saw in this sequence of events a good illustration of how unforeseeable parliamentary actions are, and how necessary therefore those detours which only outsiders call useless. Those acquainted with parliament know that what is "impossible on paper" may "succeed in an actual meeting"; that what appears assured by calculations may fail at the moment of decision.

* * *

The technique which we have been considering consists in beginning an action not in order to complete it, but rather to reveal the hidden substance of the existing situation. A related maneuver is that in which one wants to show up the defects of a certain "solution" which appears tempting as long as it remains just an idea, but which, it is expected, will evoke negative reactions when it materializes to a certain degree. Then, in a great phrase, one will have "lifted the mortgage" of the policy in question; the road will have been "cleared" for pursuing another policy on behalf of which the operation was undertaken.

In a first variant of this maneuver one wants to show that there is no parliamentary majority for a certain policy,

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or a certain alliance, to which some aspire. Thus, in a fully developed ministerial crisis, such as that of the spring of 1953 or that of the autumn of 1957, the President of the Republic, it is widely believed within the political class, "consults" certain personages in order to show that they refuse the status of "considering whether to accept the designation of candidate to the premiership"; he induces others to accept that status so as to demonstrate that they will finally refuse the designation of candidates to the premiership; he bestows that designation so that the Assembly's refusal to invest the candidate may prove his personality or political formula to be, at that moment, unacceptable.

Those who work in favor of such an operation may openly admit that they count on the failure which constitutes the essence of the maneuver. When in 1957 two governments with socialist participation had been overthrown by the Moderates, the Socialists insisted that a Moderate candidate for the premiership present himself before the Assembly so that he might be shown to be unwelcome. While, as we shall see later, the Moderates in that situation wanted the failure of the Socialists in economic policy to be vividly shown, the Socialists wanted to impose upon the Moderates a conduct which would lead to the tangible proof of their political failure.

> "Both groups," a journalist noted, "want a public demonstration, not simply a tacit recognition, of the difficulties encountered by the other and of the other's impotence to arrive at a solution."[16]

But the promoters of an act of "lifting the mortgage" may also associate themselves publicly with the enterprise which they expect and desire to be condemned to failure. Thus, the Premier, Edgar Faure, undertook in the summer of 1955 a series of actions destined, he said, to avoid the return to the Moroccan throne of the Sultan Ben Youssef whom the French authorities had deposed two years before. However, both on the Right and on the Left one frequently attributed to him the design of wanting to demonstrate, by the very failure of his actions, that this return was inevitable.

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> "M. Edgar Faure," a journalist explained, "practices a curious method of government: he publicly affirms positions which he knows to be untenable, and he abandons them a few weeks later, when he has proved their absurdity to his satisfaction."[17]

Those who attempt a "lifting of the mortgage" may also take up both attitudes at the same time: they may affirm to some that they want to aid in a birth, and explain to others that they wish to provoke an abortion. Doing both of these things may be indispensable for creating a majority. The classical case occurred on June 16, 1940, when Camille Chautemps united a large majority of the Council of Ministers on his proposal to ask the German government for the conditions of an armistice. This majority comprised, on the one hand, those who desired a cessation of hostilities, whether they expected that the German armistice conditions would be acceptable, or whether they saw in contact with the Germans the beginning of an irreversible process which would lead to the end of the war. This group, however, was but a minority in the Council of Ministers. It was joined by those who considered the move suggested by Chautemps as the only means to assure the continuation of the war.

For this second group the "lifting of the mortgage" served, as it often happens, the purpose of continuing a policy already being pursued: to go in the direction of a change (to examine the German armistice conditions) would show how undesirable the change would be (how inadmissible these conditions were), and this in turn would reinforce the will to maintain the existing policy. It was in this vein that Camille Chautemps addressed himself to the Premier, Paul Reynaud, in a Council of Ministers meeting:

> You ask us to leave France....We do not refuse. But if the government is ready to follow you to North Africa, it is also necessary that it be covered with regard to public opinion. I am convinced that the German armistice conditions will be unacceptable, but it is necessary to demonstrate that. In order to do this, one must ask for them. When this

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> demonstration has been made, the French people will understand that there was no choice for the government but to leave France, and all your ministers will follow you to North Africa. Let us, therefore, ask the Germans about their conditions.[18]

When the Premier, adopting this calculation, explained it at length to an American diplomat (Anthony Drexel-Biddle), the American was at first "disconcerted by so much subtlety." Subsequently, "more and more surprised," he asked Paul Reynaud how he had found it possible to consent to an "initiative as dangerous as this one." The Premier repeated the reasoning of Chautemps, adding: "I only hope...that the German conditions will not be too moderate."[19] If this hope were fulfilled, Reynaud would have "demonstrated" by a "parliamentary fact," or its equivalent in an emergency, a vote in the Council of Ministers, that there was no majority for a cessation of hostilities on the only conditions offered. As according to the parliamentary custom, in the words of a journalist, "the continuation of the existing majority...is not possible unless the proof is furnished that there is no other,"[20] this maneuver should have ensured the continuation of the war, a policy to which one would have resigned oneself because it would have been shown that there was no other.

In the autumn of 1955 the Premier, Edgar Faure, wished to maintain the electoral law of 1951 for the general elections which he wanted held in the near future. In order to attain this aim, he fostered moves in favor of various other electoral laws, each of which was rejected by the Assembly as the debate proceeded.

The technique of "lifting the mortgage" may, however, also be applied to a situation in which one wants to demonstrate that the continuation of the existing state of affairs is impossible, rather than inevitable. It was with this aim in mind that the government, in the summer of 1955, imposed on the Sultan Ben Arafa, who had been put on the throne of Morocco two years before by the French authorities, the task of forming an administration in Rabat which would be sufficiently "representative"; a task in which he was expected to fail. But, it was then often said in the political class, the Premier felt that this "experiment" was indispensable for

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convincing certain ministers and parliamentarians that a new approach to the "dynastic" problem of Morocco could no longer be avoided.

If the maneuver of "lifting the mortgage" may be applied to favor "immobilism" at the expense of change, or change against perseverance, it may also be used by the proponents of one kind of change in their struggle against those of another. After the fall of Pierre Mendès-France in the winter of 1955, the Christian Democrats appeared, in a customary fashion, somewhat divided between "Right" and "Left" tendencies. At that point Antoine Pinay, widely viewed as the incarnation of the Right, tried to form a government. According to a journalist,

> The Christian Democrats are not opposed to M. Pinay....But the idea of passing without transition from Mendès to Pinay makes them uncomfortable; they would like an effort to be made first to form a government with the Socialists. If it could be proved that it is impossible to obtain the Socialists' participation or support...then the Christian Democrats would feel freer in relation to Pinay.[21]

It follows from the many uses of the technique here described that several and incompatible attempts to apply it will frequently be going on at the same time. Thus, in the fall of 1957, the Moderates and the Socialists insisted, respectively, on the "lifting of the mortgage" of a second Mollet government and that of a return to power of Pinay. As both leaders were, in turn, refused by the Assembly, the wishes of both groups were satisfied.

That it should seem so easy to prove the impossibility of this or that policy or personage -- the absence of a parliamentary majority in its or his favor -- is in part due to a belief already mentioned: <u>the relationship of the forces for and against a certain decision is often supposed to shift in a negative direction as the moment of decision approaches</u>. Then one passes from the "abstract" to the "concrete" -- for instance, from a vague idea, in 1950, of putting the military resources of Western Europe together to the numerous paragraphs of the Paris treaty of 1952. But as details multiply, so do reasons for discontent. A "principle" becomes more difficult

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to "swallow" when its diverse "consequences" are formulated in the language of laws and treaties. To return to the case of 1940 which has already been analyzed,

> "M. Paul Reynaud," explains General de Gaulle, "attempted to attain his aim [of keeping France in the war -- N.L.] by maneuvering. More particularly, he wanted the enemy's armistice conditions to be considered....No doubt he believed that even those who were in favor of an armistice would recoil when these conditions were brought to their attention."[22]

How attractive elections by one-member districts have become since proportional representation was put into effect! The best way of foiling attempts to return to the one-member district system is to allow, even to foster, its detailed consideration by the Assembly. At that point there arises, for instance, a problem which it is easy to avoid as long as the system of electing the Assembly via one-member districts has not yet descended from the heaven of general ideas to the earth of actual parliamentary work: the problem of "cutting up" the country into electoral districts. As an enemy of this system pointed out,

> ...the problem of "cutting up" is capital. A certain number of deputies will accept or reject the system according to the details of the division of the country into electoral districts which will be proposed.[23]

Thus, the Premier (Edgar Faure) could be credited in the fall of 1955 with the design of having the one-member district system rejected by pushing it along its parliamentary way, though that way appeared, to the uninitiated, as one leading to success, given the large number of parliamentarians who in public expressed themselves as favorable to the system. The consideration of details would cool the ardor of some who had been sincerely in its favor, and would give others, who had merely paid lip service to it, a pretext for changing their public attitude.

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When the moment of decision draws near and a measure encounters the difficulties created by the passage from the "abstract" to the "concrete," the parliamentarians come to examine their attitudes to the measure more closely, as these attitudes now appear fraught with more important consequences. It will often seem inexpedient -- "inelegant" -- not to appear favorable toward a proposal which is very far from realization. Those who want it to fail may then push it nearer to realization so that false supporters may be forced to declare their enmity.

* * *

In more extreme fashion one may want to damage a policy by truly aiding its realization or a person by aiding his coming to power. In the variant of the maneuver described up to now, one leads a person closer to power, or a measure nearer to its realization, in order to "kill" them the more effectively before the jump to office or enactment has been made. In the variant now to be considered, one wishes that an "experiment" may be pushed to its very end so that this end may be irrefutably shown to be quite bitter. For the largest number of partisans of a policy or of a person to turn away from it or from him in the most thorough and stable fashion, it is necessary to have seen the policy or the person at work; there should be no premature interference which would only furnish the culprit with an alibi. (This maneuver presupposes -- a point of which one is usually not quite aware -- that the damages which will flow from the execution of a certain policy, or the presence in power of a certain person, will not be irreversible.)

Having lost the premiership in the winter of 1955, Pierre Mendès-France appeared, in the following spring, to gain control over the Radical Party. At its Congress, Edouard Herriot, perpetual president, aided the victory of Mendès by submitting a "definitive" resignation and by favoring the new "directorate" dominated by Mendès. However, this conduct of Herriot's was often interpreted as expressing a profound hostility to the new leader: by "putting all responsibilities into the hands of Mendès" he supposedly wanted "to drive the situation to an extreme which would render it untenable."[24]

In the words of a deputy (André Bettencourt) addressing himself to a Premier (Guy Mollet), there are in parliament always those "who support you with the calculation that if

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there is going to be a bankruptcy it better be a crushing one so that there can be no doubt about who is responsible for it."[25] This is a formula which a politician may even apply to himself with some shift in nuances. For example, he may want to continue a policy which he knows to be inexpedient up to a moment when this fact will become visible to his followers. Thus, Léon Blum is supposed to have argued in a Council of Ministers at a time of inflation that

> ...the workers have not yet understood that a rise in nominal salaries is illusory; it is therefore necessary to continue with the inflation until they do.[26]

Such calculations are so often adopted -- or at least so often suspected -- that one is tempted to apply them to events in other countries and political systems. At the moment of the armed intervention of the Soviet Union in Hungary "one talks a great deal" in the corridors of the Assembly about the explanation offered by an intelligence service:

> The violent repression of the Hungarian Revolution is supposed to be the work of the moderate tendency in the Politburo which thereby wants to show up the excesses entailed by the policy of those who advocate a tough line.[27]

* * *

The victims of a maneuver of lifting the mortgage try to defend themselves in various fashions. They may refuse to comply -- for instance, by refusing to try to form a government in a ministerial crisis, explaining that if the moment is well chosen for their adversaries it is, by that same token, badly chosen for them; and adding that they would be perfectly willing to make an attempt if certain other mortgages were lifted first.

But the person or the group on whom one tries to impose an action which is supposed to turn out as a lifting of a mortgage may also seize the occasion, either because this seems to serve his own interest, though the operation in

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question is viewed as condemned to failure; or because it appears possible that it is not.

As to the first variant, in the crisis following the fall of Pierre Mendès-France, the attempt of a Socialist leader (Christian Pineau) to form a government appeared to numerous members of other groups as a useful lifting of a particular mortgage, that of "reversing the majority" by bringing the Socialists back into the government. But the Socialists were impressed by the impact which the speech of Mendès, when he had unsuccessfully tried to become Premier in the spring of 1953, had made in the country; and they saw in the operation a valuable occasion for propaganda while sharing the general belief that their candidate had no chance of becoming Premier.

In the second variant named above, a politician, whom others destined to try and to fail in a crisis, may conceive, and even execute, the design to succeed, or may succeed because of the operation of forces outside of his control. In the crisis produced during the winter of 1952 by the fall of René Pleven, Edgar Faure was asked to try to form a government merely, it was said, to prepare the way for Henri Queuille. But he resolved to succeed, and did. A month later one generally attributed to the President of the Republic the belief that only Pleven or Queuille could solve the crisis caused by the fall of Faure. But when Antoine Pinay was called, he, too, refused to heed this indication, went before the Assembly, and was invested in a fashion which has already been discussed (cf. Chapter 2, p. 61). The President of the Republic had wanted him to show that a majority excluding the Socialists but including certain Gaullists was impossible. In fact, he proved the existence of such a majority by the very fact of his investiture. Having been charged with the task of demonstrating that the Socialists were indispensable, he inaugurated a period of almost four years when it came to be taken for granted that one did not need them to form a majority.

In the fall of 1955, General Boyer de la Tour, Resident General in Rabat, refused, for some time, to execute the government's order that he obtain the departure of the Sultan Ben Arafa, though he was urged to obey by M. de Panafieu, a high civil servant attached to the Residence. According to a journalist, the solution came about in the following fashion

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(and once more the myth would be revealing even if the facts had been grossly distorted):

> One day, at the Rabat racetrack, Panafieu insisted again. As you are so smart, answered the Resident [who pretended that it would be impossible to dislodge the Sultan -- N.L.], do it yourself. I give you a free hand. The Resident had not changed his mind, this was but a maneuver. He did not believe that Panafieu would succeed. But he knew that it was necessary to produce an attempt.[28]

However, Panafieu succeeded.

* * *

If, to take an instance, a Socialist leader ascends the rostrum of the Assembly in the winter of 1955 as a candidate for the premiership and is refused, the relationship of forces in parliament or in the country is not substantially modified thereby; the slight changes which may occur are not necessarily to the disadvantage of the unsuccessful candidate and his party. As is the case with so many other recurring events in "the house without windows," which seem vastly important to parliamentarians at the moment at which they happen, a lifting of the mortgage within the Assembly has no great impact: it does not greatly affect the relationship of forces within parliament, nor does it much influence what goes on in the country or in the world. The players of the parliamentary game are excited by such events which often absorb them, leaving little energy for the consideration of more "real" problems. But they, too, must feel that such great occasions in parliament are lacking in import in a way which only increases the attractiveness of the game.

It is this belief which members of the political class, so centered on what goes on within the Palais Bourbon, seem to extend to the rest of the world when they use the maneuver of lifting the mortgage outside of their "house."

Often, as we have seen, lifting the mortgage is, within parliament, a means for assuring the continuation of the status quo. In the same vein, when Paul Reynaud accepted,

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on June 15, 1940, the proposal made by Camille Chautemps to ask the Germans for their armistice conditions, he aimed, as we have seen, at keeping France in the war; and when, after his resignation the next day, he advised the President of the Republic to choose Marshal Pétain as his successor, he aimed at returning to power in the near future:

> I recommended Marshal Pétain because, in a Council of Ministers, I had made him acknowledge that surrendering our fleet to Germany...would be an act of cowardice and a crime....I argued in this way: ...Germany is going to ask for the French fleet in the armistice. As Marshal Pétain cannot give it to her after the statement I made him make in the Council of Ministers, I am going to return to power....[29]

In words which recall even more strongly the parliamentary prototype of this calculation:

> ...I knew that Marshal Pétain was going to ask the Germans for their conditions. But asking the Germans what their conditions were and concluding the armistice were two quite different things. I hoped that the German conditions would be unacceptable. Then, President Lebrun would have called me back to power. The Pétain government would have been but an interlude. And we would have continued the war with redoubled ardor.[30]

When the Premier resigned, he was not the only one to entertain this forecast. He assured Sir Edward Spears that

> ...the President of the Republic had asked him to remain at hand...."The President thought he might resort to me once more."[31]

This is confirmed by an important witness (Yves Bouthillier):

> M. Lebrun wished that Reynaud remain in France. He had resolved to ask him back in case the German conditions were

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> unacceptable so that one would have to break off negotiations with the Germans and leave continental France.[32]

Such calculations implied that the distinction between "asking for the conditions of an armistice" and "concluding an armistice," so evident for parliamentarians, would be equally impressive to the country; that the first act of the "scenario" proposed by Chautemps would not, by its own impact, greatly reduce whatever possibilities still were available to resist the Germans.

In the summer of 1955 lifting the mortgage of Ben Arafa was destined, according to a widespread interpretation accepted by a prominent journalist, to "make M. Triboulet [an "Arafist" minister -- N.L.] understand that you cannot base a policy on fictions [the fiction of the authority of Ben Arafa -- N.L.]."[33] It was implied that this impact on a certain sector of parliament could be achieved without greatly enhancing the strength of the movement in favor of the deposed Sultan and without leading to a breakdown of the already insufficient support enjoyed by the new one. Both these consequences occurred. But this was difficult to foresee for inhabitants of the Palais Bourbon; for a failure of an attempt, say, of Guy Mollet to form a government, because of the enmity of the Moderates, does not always improve the chances of Antoine Pinay, nor does it usually reduce the strength of Guy Mollet himself. True enough, the French Resident General (Gilbert Grandval) had warned the government that the mechanisms operative in Moroccan affairs were rather different. In a letter to the President of the Republic of August 27, 1955, this high civil servant recalled a wire which he had sent the government on the 14th of that month:

> I stressed...that if we made it appear that we viewed the effort which we imposed on Ben Arafa [that of constituting a "representative government" -- N.L.] as doomed to fail..., a massive movement favoring the return of Ben Youssef was likely to occur...and that any intermediate formula was then apt to become inapplicable.[34]

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Two days later the Resident General asked the government whether it would not be possible to abandon a procedure which could only succeed in worsening an already very difficult situation and in rendering the return of the former Sultan inevitable. The Premier, Edgar Faure, did not accept this suggestion. Probably not only because, in his own difficult relations with parliament, he needed a "demonstration" of the classical type that Ben Arafa could not be maintained, but also because for men whose view of politics was determined by the practices of the Assembly it was difficult to realize that one of the "detours" employed within its precincts in routine fashion could, outside of them, unleash such major changes.

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Chapter 4

THE RESOURCES OF TIME

To the members of the French political class it appears almost always plausible, or even perspicacious, to judge that "the moment has not yet come" for doing a certain thing (pp. 99-105). In a ministerial crisis, for instance, the passage of time usually appears as the decisive factor which leads to its solution (pp. 105-108). Often each of several opposing blocs manages to convince itself that time works for it, which permits everybody to agree on delaying the contentious decision (p. 110). The French parliamentarian stresses that an important operation comprises several phases, none of which can be omitted or hurried (pp. 110-111) and some of which will stand in apparent contrast to the outcome sought (pp. 111-113). Those who urge one to proceed rapidly are often suspected of being covert enemies (pp. 113-114). If a "solution" were made public too early, it would be apt to fail (pp. 114-115). One even tends to avoid formulating in one's own mind one's own objectives too much in advance of the moment at which their realization begins to seem close (p. 116). The belief that time will furnish a solution to a difficult problem not infrequently seems to mask the desire to delay action until a situation of <u>force majeure</u> has been brought about (pp. 117-118). A determination to abstain from action on a certain issue is frequently necessary to render possible the birth and the survival of a government (pp. 118-119).

* * *

In the course of the debate on WEU in the Assembly the Premier (Pierre Mendès-France) answered Edouard Herriot, the "demi-god" who was objecting to the rearmament of Western Germany:

> <u>Président</u> Herriot said this afternoon that before taking such a decision we should grant ourselves a supplementary period of reflection.... It is, of course, tempting to retard the decision, to gain a few months....[1]

When another Premier (Edgar Faure) was defending an intermediate solution to Morocco's "dynastic problems," he

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justified himself with these words:

> The man who talks to you has devoted to the problem which occupies us many hours of work, of discussion, of reflection, of doubt, of anguish. Ah! how great was the temptation to wait![2]

When objections against the entrance of France into the common market were raised from various sides of the Assembly, a former Premier (Paul Reynaud) could attribute to the various opponents this "common thought": "To govern is to wait."[3]

According to a satirical weekly, the politician's anguishing dilemma is this:

> Do you believe that it is indispensable to wait, or merely desirable?[4]

In the myth of the political class, and probably also in its practice, acts by which a decision is deferred play a peculiarly important role in political operations. It appears almost always plausible, or even perspicacious, to judge that "the moment has not yet come" for doing a certain thing. Thus a headline of a newspaper announced, during a ministerial crisis:

> "The moment has not yet come for me," declares M. Pinay.[5]

It is precisely a thorough knowledge of a situation which, it is felt, tends to show that it is advisable to wait for the "opportune" moment -- a rule on which an important group of politicians in the eighties insisted so much that they came to be called "Opportunists."

When it does not seem possible to delay a painful or risky decision any further, the skill of a master politician may show itself in the discovery of a device which will allow yet one more delay.

The tendency to wait is so strong that it infiltrates into the very expression of the attitudes which oppose it. The Congress of the Radicals in the spring of 1957 addressed to the government a set of demands and asked that the Premier answer "without delay" in satisfactory fashion; otherwise the Radical ministers were to withdraw from the government. A few

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weeks later -- the government having given no answer to the Radicals and having been in the meantime overthrown by the Moderates -- a discussion took place between a Radical defending the preceding government to which he had belonged (Jean Filippi) and Pierre Mendès-France who attacked it. The Radical Congress, Filippi argued, "had desired to obtain an answer to its demands 'without delay'; this proves that the Congress had consented to wait." Mendès had to object: "Not at all; 'without delay' meant: immediately."[6]

One is determined to "put the factor of time on one's side"; one "believes in the benefits produced by time flowing along while we are immobile," in the words of a critic of the regime.[7] "He who gains time gains everything."

This attitude frequently coexists with a belief in a unique propitious moment in which decisive action should be taken. If this moment is not fully utilized, the enterprise one is pursuing is likely to fail. On the occasion of their recurring riots French students chant, "The hour is the hour, before the hour it isn't the hour, after the hour it isn't the hour, the hour is the hour." All the more is it necessary to examine whether "the hour" has arrived, but many reasons contribute to one answer: no, not yet.

* * *

"The hour" will not come prior to a certain event which has not yet occurred! In the fall of 1951, a senator said, "If I had to describe the attitude almost invariably adopted by our rulers ever since I have become a parliamentarian, I would say this:

> One has waited, one has not ceased waiting, one still waits! One waits for the discussion of the budget; one waits for the vacations, then for the end of the vacations; recently one waited for the electoral law, then for the departmental elections. What is one waiting for today? Again, for the return of parliament. Once it has begun its session, one will wait for the recess. Then one will wait for the renewal of the officers of the Assembly and of its committees, after which one will wait for the elections to the Senate....In the meantime one will have waited for the discussion of the budget, first for its beginning, then for its end.[8]

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In the course of the crisis following the resignation of Antoine Pinay, a journalist surmised that "there is no chance of the Socialists entering at present into the government, or even into its majority." As "an evolution is nevertheless beginning among them," that party might return to power "in the course of the legislature"; though in any case,"not before the municipal elections" of the spring, declared this observer in the middle of the winter.[9] Early in 1957, a journalist recalled, on the occasion of the end of the annual debate on Algeria in the U.N., the successive reasons which had been given for delaying the adoption of a "political solution" to the war in Algeria:

> After many other events -- the general elections of January 1956, the formation of a new government, the Socialist Congress in Lille, the Radical Congress, etc. -- the session of the U.N. served as a pretext....[10]

According to another variant of this same rule, one ought not to act before preliminary "studies" have been completed. But they never seem to come to an end. "One should stop serving that time-worn pretext: studies are going on, we will see later," exclaimed a former Governor General of Algeria (Maurice Viollette) talking about the "reforms" promised for this territory.

> Studies have been undertaken for months, for years, for decades. What a terrible pretext for laziness, for cowardice....[11]

But words similar to those which a candidate for the premiership (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury) applied to the reform of the budget -- "thorough studies will aim at working out a long-range plan"[12] -- continue to be used with reference to most important "problems."

How could one act decisively at the present moment when so many "elements of evaluation" are still lacking? How can one make a decision without knowing "the further development of events," without being able to say "how things will look?" The man who had been Minister of Foreign Affairs during the disastrous period of 1938-1940, Georges Bonnet, finally back in parliament, recommended the financing of the war in Algeria by a loan with the following words:

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> It has been said that this is an irresponsible policy. No, it is a policy of waiting...which is necessary at this time of the year when too many elements remain unknown for a definitive decision to be justified.[13]

Hence, the French parliamentarians wait to act in order to utilize the services of time, that great intelligence agent. Time may produce, for instance, "parliamentary facts" which they will add to my "files," as it were, on the decision in question. "You may have noticed," a journalist addressed himself to his readers in the fall of 1951, "that since the end of the parliamentary vacations the enemies of the government are withholding attacks against it." He added, "they wait, in order to find out which majority will finally be secreted by the chanber": will the majority of the so-called third and fourth force be reconstituted after its breakup over the law granting subsidies to Catholic schools?

> Two tests...will permit the opponents of the government to judge this matter and then to make a decision, first the debate on the gliding wage scale...and then the discussion of the budget.[14]

Similarly, deputies wishing to shorten the life of a government which had just been formed (by René Mayer) supposedly decided in the winter of 1953 to defer their attack until the spring for the following reason:

> One will then dispose of elements of evaluation which are lacking today. One will know, more especially, the fate of EDC. At that moment it will be easier to pose anew the problem of the majority.[15]

During the crisis caused by the fall of the Mollet government, the chief of the Radicals of the southwest (Jean Baylet) proposed to the appropriate Radical committee (the Comité Cadillac) the following classic motion:

> The Comité Cadillac decides to adjourn until it will have received further details about the development of the crisis.[16]

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Seventeen years earlier, in the fall of 1940, a politician of the Third Republic (Anatole DeMonzie) had noted in his diary:

> Pechuzal tells me this about the farmers of the Lot: "They can everything. One ought to can France and conserve her as long as one doesn't know how all this is going to end."[17]

The member of the French political class seems to say to himself: Acting as late as possible, I shall be the last to make a decision, which I can then determine on the basis of my knowledge of how everybody else has acted.

> I feel I have the right to know what the others are doing before laying down my own hand.[18]

This explanation of his conduct is supposed to have been given by a politician whose knowledge of the game must have been good since he obtained the presidency of the Republic (Vincent Auriol). The desire to be "the last to play" manifests itself frequently. When the Laniel government was in its agony,

> ...the debate on Indochina, which many had so often demanded, had to be deferred from yesterday afternoon until today because speakers were lacking. Everybody desired to speak last, and almost everyone insisted on speaking after the Foreign Minister.[19]

Similarly, at a meeting of the Cadillac Committee of the Radicals after the fall of the Mollet government, an important personage (Jean Baylet) opposed the Radicals who wanted to disclose their attitude toward the candidate who was then seeking the premiership:

> In any case, let us avoid precipitation and wait for the Socialists to take a stand first![20]

It is by acting in this way that the capacity to utilize others for one's own interests can be maximized.

* * *

No, my dear friend, this is not the moment to undertake the action you suggest: the situation has not yet sufficiently

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matured; give it some time to come to a head -- this is a typical reaction of experienced politicians to the eager layman. And this was the doctrine, both simple and mysterious, which was attributed, during the first decade of the Fourth Republic, to Henri Queuille and, during the period of Vichy, to Marshal Pétain. Toward the end of October 1942, Pierre Pucheu, still a young man, a graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure, who, after having been an executive in heavy industry, had become Minister of the Interior, submitted to the Marshal a plan for the re-entry of France into the war on the side of the Allies:

> He gave me to understand that I had been carried away by my youth and by the vivacity of my temperament: my proposals were essentially just, but they presupposed certain developments of the war which would materialize only during the next few years. It was necessary to let events mature.[21]

In a ministerial crisis the passage of time usually appears as the decisive factor which leads to its solution. If the public does not understand why crises take so long, the specialist knows that they would be insoluble if they did not. The crisis continues as long as groups, cliques, individuals confront each other with incompatible demands. How can they be made to give way? By time, and time operates in several ways. First, the game of crisis, which begins as an exciting holiday, gets to be fatiguing. Second, as attempts to resolve the crisis by various parliamentary combinations multiply with the prolongation of the crisis, the limits of what every party (or clique or individual) may be capable of attaining become more clearly visible and the interest in further experimentation is reduced. Third, the lengthening of the "vacations of power" evokes apprehensions of a "crisis of the regime." One begins to fear that the machinery of government might be out of order for good; and one imagines that the public may replace its vaguely contemptuous indifference toward the "circus" of parliament by active hostility against the "system." Also other difficulties, say, in the sphere of foreign or economic affairs come to be expected. Whether these are real fears or not, it is always acceptable to justify an abatement of one's demands by such considerations. In all these ways, in each of which time is of the essence, the positions taken up by the various contestants are finally moderated, and the crisis is resolved.

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Those who are experienced in crises foresee the operation of this mechanism when one is still in the darkest part of the "tunnel." After one week of crisis a journalist held that "it has not lasted long enough for imperious necessity to make the parliamentary groups disregard their positions of principle [sic]."[22] At the moment at which this estimate was made a politician reiterated a demand of his group which presented a major difficulty in solving the crisis:

> The Christian Democrats, affirms Paul Coste-Floret in the corridors of the Assembly, will participate only if the Socialists participate.

But he added:

> We will certainly not give in on this demand before the fourth candidature for the premiership![23]

As, in a popular type of French joke, the man from Marseilles, about to start a fight in a raging fury, expects that others will restrain him, the parliamentarian, in his phase of intransigence, reassures those around him that this phase will not last forever. At such a point of a crisis, a minister of a fallen government who was rather sure to be taken into the next one (Maurice Faure) explained:

> The crisis will end on the day my station-master in Cahors asks me: 'So there is really no way of resolving things?' That day the votes in favor of a candidate for the premiership will fall into the urns by themselves.[24]

At the beginning of the next crisis the refusal of the leader of a group (Guy Mollet) to attempt to form the new government made a journalist say:

> To say 'no' now does not exclude a later 'yes' under the pressure of grave events.[25]

But, as we have mentioned, the very prolongation of the crisis will provide a "grave event" if the world outside of the Palais Bourbon does not produce one of its own.

Before time has done its work one is fussy about candidates for the premiership, and the measures they propose. Suddenly,

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the feeling that the crisis must be brought to an end, never mind how, becomes dominant. In the words of a journalist,

> One enters into the fourth week of the crisis when...any outsider become a likely victor.[26]

After five weeks of crisis a parliamentarian, maintaining that "public opinion demands a government," affirmed:

> At the point which we have reached the Assembly is resigned to investing anybody (laughter and agitation).[27]

Such an "anybody" (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury) may look for the justification of his bid for power not only, or not even mainly, in the merits of the policies which he proposes, but also, and above all, in the necessity of bringing the crisis to an end:

> Monsieur le Président, Mesdames, Messieurs, I am presenting myself before you in a political situation which I know to be exceedingly difficult. But I am conscious of the dangers which a prolongation of the vacancy of government would entail.[28]

An opponent of the policies proposed by a candidate for the premiership may justify his decision to vote for him in a similar fashion. Thus a parliamentarian (Aimé Paquet) declared, in the name of his group (the Moderates):

> We do not want to prolong the vacancy of government any further. Though we have a thousand reasons to vote against this government or to abstain, we shall, for this reason alone, vote in its favor, so that France may have a government again.[29]

This is all the more so since to the various apprehensions already mentioned which the lengthening of a crisis arouses there is added, for each group, the fear that the other groups may succeed in making it appear responsible for the prolonged impossibility of forming a government. A parliamentarian (Robert Prigent) explained the agreement of his group (the Christian Democrats) to the formation of a government (that of Joseph Laniel) which did not quite correspond to its wishes:

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> It had become impossible for the Christian Democrats to continue what one would have called "a massacre."[30]

Four years later a government (that of Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury) could be formed after three weeks of crisis, because, in the words of a journalist, a group (the Moderates) was seized by "the fear of being held responsible for the prolongation of the crisis after having been responsible for its outbreak."[31]

* * *

Who is going to be the first to succumb to the pressure of time? At the beginning of a crisis one tends to believe that it will be the other. When the Mollet government fell, "numerous" Socialists counted on an "endless crisis" with "multiple candidatures" so as to reach "a satisfactory solution," and "we have heard leaders of the Christian Democrats reason in the same way."[32] "There are," remarked a parliamentarian, "races where the point is to be slow and which one must have the skill to win."[33]

Thus, the chances of the first personages whom the President of the Republic asks to form a government, once the crisis has broken out, are slight -- though they may take comfort in recalling spectacular exceptions such as Antoine Pinay and Pierre Mendès-France, who made their attempts right at the beginning of a crisis and succeeded.

In the precarious position of having been asked to form a government early in a crisis, the French parliamentarian can always try to put some time on his side by proceeding slowly. Thus, when René Pleven fell in the winter of 1952, Edgar Faure, "called too soon," to "resolve a crisis which was quite unripe," adopted, according to a journalist, a tactic which "consisted in not going before the Assembly too soon." Hence, "he does not intend to hasten the conclusion of his conversations."[34] A day later, "most of the groups reproach M. Edgar Faure with drawing things out...and with attempting to get the better of his adversaries by tiring them out."[35]

Or, the French parliamentarian may, if he is in a position to do so, suggest to the President of the Republic to call him a bit later. A journalist described the preliminaries to the President's calling on Georges Bidault in the long crisis of the spring of 1953 after Paul Reynaud and Pierre Mendès-France had failed:

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> The leader of the Christian Democrats...had already been approached by the President of the Republic last week, after the failure of M. Paul Reynaud. He had then asked that another phase be interposed before making his attempt to form the government.[36]

This was confirmed by another journalist, according to whom Georges Bidault, approached at the moment just mentioned, "felt that the situation was then not sufficiently ripe for him to try his luck seriously, and indicated that he would prefer a Radical to precede him."[37]

Such a refusal may apply not only to the initial phase of the crisis, but to the entire beginning period of a legislature. A leader (Henri Queuille) supposedly declined the offer to form the first government after the elections of June 1951, explaining to the President of the Republic:

> I am a physician, and above all a veterinarian. Hence, I leave it to others to take care of the infantile disease with which this Assembly of young dogs is presently going to be afflicted.... I am reserving myself for the fall.[38]

The belief that the pressure of time will make the enemy succumb before it gets the better of me is operative not only in parliament: An observer, recalling the "phony war," noted,

> After a few months all of France was persuaded that we would wear the enemy out, that they would be fed up with waiting well before ourselves.[39]

This belief in a superior national capacity to wait may be combined with the imputation to the opponent of a slowness that contrasts with the French rapidity of movement. Thus, a Premier (Edgar Faure), justifying his decision to do something about the "dynastic problem" in Morocco, noted that

> ...the only position which one can oppose to ours consists in saying: let us wait! In Morocco we are in the Orient, we will see later! Perhaps things will settle down, persons who now demand a great deal may become less exacting after some time.[40]

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For time is powerful. A politician, Paul Reynaud, aspired, at the age of 78, to enter the Académie Française, but knew that his election was being opposed by a member with whom he had been in conflict in the past, General Weygand, who was 90 years old. "I shall wait," proclaimed Reynaud.

Often each of several opposing blocs manages to convince itself that time works for it alone -- which permits everybody to agree on delaying the contested decision. This was for a long time the case in the matter of determining the date on which the Assembly would decide on the treaty instituting a European Defense Community. Between the spring of 1952, when the treaty was signed, and the summer of 1954, when its ratification was rejected, the choice of the date at which parliament would be called upon to decide the issue constituted one of the major problems of French politics. But it was also one on which disagreements were not nearly as profound as they were on the treaty itself. For, as a journalist pointed out in the spring of 1953 when a "European" (René Mayer) was Premier, among the opponents of the treaty "one counts on the passage of time, expecting that it will harden resistance to it. René Mayer adopts the same tactic, but in his case with the conviction that the weeks and the months will weaken hostility to the treaty and that ratification will have become ripe next fall." Thus, "one is led to ask" that capital question: "For whom is time working?"[41] To one's own advantage, seems to be the most convincing answer; facts to the contrary must be rather incontrovertible for that faith to be shattered. After almost three years of operations in Algeria an eminent parliamentarian (Maurice Schumann) affirmed:

> It seems that an Algerian consciousness [common to Europeans and Moslems -- N.L.] begins to form itself....All that it needs is time to develop and to express itself. In the last analysis, the struggle in Algeria is for time. This is so true that the aim of our enemies is to stir up the world against us so that we should be refused time....To last, to hold out, is our only trump card....[42]

* * *

Members of the political class seem to be convinced that an important operation, whether in politics or elsewhere, consists of several phases, that each of them requires a certain amount

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of time for its correct execution, and that none can be omitted, or hurried, without endangering the success of the enterprise. First of all, "the terrain" must be "cleared." This requires many complicated operations at the end of which one can say, in the words of the Premier (Edgar Faure) at the beginning of the second part of the Franco-Moroccan conference at Aix-les-Bains:

> The terrain is now cleared, and I begin to see the outlines of a solution.[43]

For a ministerial crisis to be resolved it is often necessary that several candidates for the premiership form a "relay"; and the effort of each of them may, in his mind, be divided into several phases. "Today," declared such a candidate (Pierre Pflimlin), "we are in the phase of political exploration; tomorrow the phase of information will begin."[44] He was going to fail; but one would, it is generally felt, be showing one's incomprehension of politics if he were to infer from that failure that his effort had been useless. Until a proof to the contrary is furnished -- and it is difficult to do that -- it must rather be assumed that he has "made the crisis advance"; for the moment, for the benefit of others. But in a not too remote future they will, he may hope, "send the elevator back to him." (Many French elevators cannot be summoned to an upper floor by somebody who wants to use them for going down, but may be sent up from below.) A week later the candidate who was to succeed (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury) did not fail to allude to this typical situation, announcing with justified assurance:

> I shall proceed as quickly as possible in the accomplishment of my mission, my work having been facilitated by the efforts of those who preceded me.[45]

A variety of processes -- e.g., the one in which a majority "emerges" in a new Assembly, or the delicate operation known as "reversal of the majority" -- are expected to include phases which stand in contrast to the outcome sought. When a Moderate (Paul Reynaud) tried to become Premier at the beginning of the long crisis in the spring of 1953, one of his "principal trump cards," according to a journalist, was "the fact that the Left desires for the present a Premier of the Right....Conversations are now going on with a view to the formation of an alternative majority of the Left Center, a majority which

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might take power a year from now."[46] One month later, and still in the same crisis, another journalist, explaining the refusal of the Christian Democrats to accept Antoine Pinay, another man of the Right, as Premier, advanced a related hypothesis:

> The Christian Democrats still hope to achieve one day the regrouping of the Left Center which they desire. Though this is a remote goal, nothing should be done, they feel, to render its realization impossible. A government too much oriented on the Right would involve that risk. If a transition be necessary before the regrouping of the Left Center is accomplished, it must be provided by a man of the Center.[47]

A few months later, the Laniel government having been constituted in the meantime, a newspaper predicted the return of the Socialists to the government according to the following schema:

> In a first phase they will replace the Gaullist ministers in the government and the Gaullist deputies in the majority. Then, next spring, they will impose M. Vincent Auriol, whose mandate as President of the Republic will have expired, as head of a large ministry of the union between the Left groups.[48]

Whatever the content of the calculation, the insistence on a plurality of phases remains:

> If it is inconceivable that the Socialists become at one stroke the leaders of the majority and take the direction of the government, it is possible for such an operation to be attempted in two phases.[49]

As so many formalities are involved in a major political operation, a great deal of time is required. Thus, a journalist made the following observation, still about the planned "reversal of majority" in the second legislature:

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> The declarations made by Messrs. Vincent Auriol and Guy Mollet as well as the speeches at the National Council of the Christian Democrats stressed the return of the Socialists to the majority in the near -- or rather the remote -- future. That both the Socialists and the Christian Democrats keep silent about the matter of subsidies to Catholic schools indicates... that such a regrouping is no longer impossible within the present legislature.[50]

When a major innovation is proposed -- whether it be the EDC, the common market, or the "framework law" for Algeria -- opponents appear who disclaim radical enmity to the measure envisaged and merely ask for limited concessions. It is then likely that it will be strongly demanded that the innovation in question be "spread out" through time: that the status quo be maintained for a certain limited period; that several phases must be completed before the new state of affairs be fully introduced; and that clauses be added which might permit one to stop for a longer time on the way, or even to return to an earlier phase. In a debate of this kind a parliamentarian said,

> There is a notion which might permit the attenuation of certain difficulties and might make it easier to pass certain critical points: the notion of stages. The arrangement which I suggest would... provide certain stages, certain phases, certain delays.[51]

* * *

If wise and considered slowness is likely to succeed, rude and mad precipitation is likely to provoke a catastrophe. One is frequently obsessed by the questions: Is it not too early to act? Am I not proceeding too quickly? Let us not press the movement too brusquely! Those who urge rapid proceedings are likely to be suspected of acting with the aim of sabotage. In the course of the long ministerial crisis in the spring of 1953, with its unprecedented succession of four candidates for the premiership who were rejected by the Assembly one after the other, this intention was frequently attributed to the President of the Republic in the corridors of the Assembly. He was said to be anxious for the political situation to

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deteriorate even further so as to increase the chance of having his tenure as President of the Republic being followed by a premiership in the name of "the public weal," following the precedents of Raymond Poincaré and of Gaston Doumergue. As to the person upon whom he called first, Paul Reynaud, and who tied his candidature to a proposal for a reform of the constitution, a journalist declared after one month of crisis:

> If he were to present himself today with the plan which he suggested three weeks ago and which suffered from being issued too early, Paul Reynaud would be understood and perhaps followed.[52]

Another journalist remarked about the next candidate before his failure, "that the Machiavellis who are behind political events have only called upon M. Mendès-France in order to drown his chances prematurely...."[53]

When in the autumn of 1952 an "atmosphere of pre-crisis" arose in the Assembly, Georges Bidault and René Mayer began to be cited as possible successors of Antoine Pinay, then in power. A journalist noted that

> ...this game might well be a counter-maneuver of the "true friends" of M. Pinay, hoping thus to spoil the chances of certain potential candidates.[54]

For "it is not certain that one serves a cause" -- or, we might add, a man -- "by announcing it prematurely," as a Christian Democrat noted in the spring of 1951. This parliamentarian predicted that the Gaullists would utilize the "school question" to disintegrate the so-called third force; he demanded in consequence that the component members of this force find their own solution to the "school question"; but he also added that, for the reason just cited, "we do not desire to propose a particular solution at this point."[55]

Were one to indicate a "solution" too early, it would be apt to fail. If those concerned are given enough time to look and consider, they are likely to discover disadvantages in what seemed at first sight wholly attractive. Those who oppose the proposed solution will add their "enterprises of demolition" to the wear and tear of time. Thus a parliamentarian observed in a debate on the "political solution" of the war in Algeria:

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> Perhaps it was not opportune to open, in the course of this debate, a discussion on the future statute of Algeria. Clearly, any statute proposed now, even though only its vague contours may be indicated, will immediately be torn to pieces in passionate discussions.[56]

Above all, when one approaches a negotiation, it is fatal to announce beforehand the concessions which he is ready to make, even if he couples them with those he expects to receive in return. "To reveal one's hand," to "show it too openly" before a negotiation begins, is "to render it useless."[57]

> To the extent to which there is a possibility of negotiating, the first condition is not to talk about it in advance.[58]

It was thus with great reluctance that even "liberal" elements moved towards indicating the details of a "political solution" to the Algerian war. A leader of the Christian Democrats insisted on

> ...the peril in which the government would find itself were it to commit the imprudence... of defining publicly not only the basic principles, but also the details of the future statute of Algeria....What would happen if the government were to show its hand, as one irresponsibly asks it to do?[59]

Before the executive committee of the Radicals, Pierre Mendès-France recalled:

> There are things which one should not announce in advance, concessions which one may envisage but which one must not formulate explicitly.[60]

"It doesn't seem possible to me," confirmed the leader of the Socialists, "to give today more details on what the future organization of Algeria might be. I even think that this would be dangerous: any proposal formulated today, however far-reaching, would soon come to be considered as a simple point of departure in future discussions," instead of remaining "a point of arrival."[61]

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In such circumstances one also tends to avoid formulating in one's own mind, or secretly, one's objectives too much in advance of the moment at which their realization begins to seem close. In the spring of 1956, when much of the French army had already been transferred to Algeria, a deputy of the Socialist minority noted this phenomenon:

> While the problem of Algeria has taken first place in the preoccupations of the nation, it seems that a peculiarly thick fog envelops it. I am assured that the measures of intimidation which the Minister of National Defense has taken toward journalists or intellectuals guilty of having expressed their ideas are not really responsible for this fog....[62]

According to a widespread conviction, a "valid solution" of a "problem" must be worked out "in the heat of the situation," at a moment very close to that in which the communication of the solution to the public, or at least to the opponent, will establish it on the political scene. In similar fashion a new Premier is "born" in the torments of the crisis and not in its preceding phases when one whiles away pre-crisis leisure time by noting the composition of the future government on the back of an envelope.

Various projects for the revision of the constitution which were discussed early in 1958 attempted to change precisely these practices of the Assembly in creating and resolving ministerial crises. It was proposed that a government could be overthrown only by a majority which would suggest for designation by the President of the Republic the name of a new Premier.

Inversely, if external exigencies lead to a detailed public announcement of how a problem that is not yet "ripe" can be solved (as happened in 1957 in the case of the "framework law" for Algeria), the very fact of such an announcement will convince many parliamentarians that the proposed solution, with all its details, or rather because of all its details, will never be executed.

* * *

What a contrast between the damage wrought by precipitation and the benefits to be derived from delay!

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Sometimes it happens that "time itself furnishes the solution," that "the situation settles down all by itself." Though such hopes have often been deceived, they always seem to arise again. At a time when France was renouncing almost all the demands she had raised in relation to Germany at the end of the Second War, a Minister of Foreign Affairs (Robert Schuman) confided to a high functionary of his ministry:

> One experiences, in office, the happy surprise of seeing that many difficulties resolve themselves spontaneously.[63]

They do indeed frequently "resolve themselves" in another way than that envisaged by Robert Schuman, a way which is less agreeable but also permits the avoidance, if not of action, then at least of the torment of choice. The practice of deferring a decision may lead to nothing but a deterioration of the situation in various ways. For example, the costs of the prevailing policies may increase steadily and more and more options on acceptable alternative policies disappear, so that nothing remains but a choice between distasteful possibilities. Finally -- and here the maleficence of time creates a situation which resembles the benign effect that one falsely expected of the passage of time: the feeling that a choice is to be made is abolished by the evident presence of a force majeure which dictates the conduct to be adopted. Foreseeing the imminent "abandonment" of the French enclaves in India, a parliamentarian perceived this connection:

> For months, for years perhaps, one has patiently waited for the miracle which would bring things back into good shape; or rather, I fear, one has waited for a situation in which we could no more react in any way.[64]

"You have said," a parliamentarian (Edouard Depreux) addressed the Premier (Edgar Faure) in a debate on Morocco, "that the solution is still possible today and will no longer be possible tomorrow. Permit me to tell you that the solution was easy yesterday but has already become much more difficult today because of your delay."[65] A few weeks later an event occurred (the submission of the Glaoui to the former Sultan) which subdued the feeling that a choice still had to be made. "It is too early, we are being told today," noted a former parliamentarian at another occasion; "will it not be suggested at some time in the future that it is already too late?"[66]

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That one may really be looking for a situation of force majeure is usually effectively masked for those who "wait" by the excellent reasons they believe they have for waiting. Several of these reasons have been described above; others will be indicated now.

In the debate on Morocco which has just been mentioned, the Premier (Edgar Faure), analyzing the position of his opponents of the Right, whose "only idea" was to "gain time," described their calculation as follows:

> Perhaps one could, maneuvering skillfully and gaining time, obtain the aid of certain nationalists, not of all, but of some among them, and find other combinations.[67]

Thus the time one wants to "gain" is not always felt as a period of useful inaction on his part. On the contrary, he may wish to gain time for further maneuvers, always hoping thereby to hit upon the device which fits the situation exactly. He may feel most strongly that such a device exists, but not know of any other means for discovering it than continued experimentation. Thus, according to a journalist, a "European" Premier (René Mayer), deferring the moment of decision about EDC, as he believed its passage difficult to assure at the time, put his trust in "time which sometimes enables one to discover a way out of what one believed to be an impasse."[68]

At the same time the parliamentarian may hope that a miracle, as it were, may happen during the time which he puts at its disposal. When René Mayer was deferring the decision on EDC, envisaging time as a resource for maneuvering, there were, on the other side of the issue, in the words of a journalist,

> ...the eternal gainers of time who simply want to retard the moment of ratification, hoping for "something unforeseen."[69]

* * *

In any case, the period during which a "delicate" decision is deferred is often time gained for my "presence in power" if I happen to be a member of the government. Since every measure of any consequence is apt to create disagreements within the government or within its "majority," and since the transition

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from disagreement to the "disintegration" of the government or to its "assassination" seems easy, a government is tempted to preserve its existence by inaction. Knowing that "to act is to die a little," and that "the best means for living a long time is to play dead," governments tend, in the words of a leader emerging from some years of opposition, to "sacrifice all action to the desire for maintaining...the coherence of a majority which nothing unites."[70] "The experience of the last few years proves," a Premier (Edgar Faure) proclaimed, "that one easily agrees on ends, and that it is difficult to agree on means, except on that of delaying decision."[71]

An agreement to delay may be a necessary condition for the formation of a government. After four weeks of crisis (in the fall of 1957), a leader (Guy Mollet) tried to create a government which would promise to concern itself only with three major problems (Algeria, finances, and the Constitution) in a first protracted phase of its existence, leaving for an unreal future three others (the reform of education, that of public health insurance, and that of the electoral law), on which not even the semblance of an agreement could be reached.

Behaving in this way, one may leave to one's successor a problem which one's inaction has rendered even more difficult than it was to start with -- except in certain cases in which, as an observer points out, the disappearance of a minister also liquidates his worries:

> The minister to whom an interpellation has been addressed asks that the moment of its discussion be deferred for a period which is likely to amount to a few months. At that moment, in all probability, the ministry will have fallen. The interpellation will be withdrawn and that will be all.[72]

* * *

The counterpoint to the lucid awareness of how little time remains is the feeling behind many of the maneuvers discussed in this chapter: We have lots of time!

This belief is often facilitated by attributing one's own slow pace to the opponent. In July and in the first half of August of 1955 the Resident General in Morocco (Gilbert Grandval) constantly warned the government that the Moroccan nationalists were going to act decisively in the near future;

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that the 20th of August, anniversary of the deposition of the former Sultan, would be capital. But the Premier (Edgar Faure) answered:

> It must not be forgotten that Morocco belongs to the Orient, where conversations or negotiations are always very long drawn out.[73]

Two weeks before the Franco-British expedition to Suez a former Premier (Paul Reynaud) explained the weakness of the French reaction during the months since the nationalization of the Suez Company in this fashion:

> Is it not true that while the government knew in advance about Nasser's strike, it had prepared no counter-measures, neither by itself nor in accord with our Allies?....And why had it not prepared any such measures? It seems because it believed, if we take its own declarations, that Nasser's action would come considerably later.[74]

The conviction that an abundance of time is at one's disposal is so strong and widespread that even opponents of the regime, who wish to repudiate all its ways, may perceive that they have become assimilated to it. Thus a militant of the Action Française recalled an extreme opposition group within that extreme organization to which he had belonged in 1937:

> We thought more or less overtly that we still had a great deal of time before us. Democracy had accustomed us to its ponderous and interminable game.[75]

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Chapter 5

PRECAUTIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS

Members of the political class, weighing the usefulness of hard and soft procedures (pp. 121-123), mostly decide against "brutality" in parliamentary conduct (pp. 123-125). This involves a heavy use of the following well-known devices of the art of politics: expressing contradictory attitudes side by side (p. 127); denying all hostile intent towards those who may be affected disagreeably (pp. 128-130); not naming the groups or individuals attacked (pp. 130-131); accompanying attacks with gestures of appeasement (p. 131); not taking a stand on "delicate" problems, however important they may be (pp. 133-138); having recourse to imprecision (pp. 138-140) and equivocation (pp. 140-144). Thus everything can be "arranged" (pp. 144-145). The supreme activity in politics is "arbitration" (pp. 145-146). To adopt intermediate lines of action is felt to be necessary in view of the distribution of voting strength in parliament, but also to reduce the chances of success outside of that body (pp. 146-149).

* * *

Must one be agreeable or can one with impunity, or even profit, be brutal? This universal problem appears to assume particular importance in the souls of the members of the political class in contemporary France.

In the political class the Radicals play an important role; among them those from the southwest constitute a major bloc; and in that bloc the dominant personality has lately been Jean Baylet, successor to Maurice Sarraut as editor and publisher of what was the Dépêche de Toulouse and has after the war become the Dépêche du Midi. Here is a journalist's brief portrait of this politician which corresponds to an image which many entertain about him:

> Just as much as Maurice Sarraut was supple, M. Jean Baylet is brutal....The Radical parliamentarians of the southwest tremble before his outbursts of rage.[1]

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Another journalist described a supper in a Paris restaurant on the night of the fall of the Mollet government in the spring of 1957. Those present were Robert Lacoste, the Socialist minister in charge of Algeria -- who had resigned with the government but was rather sure of returning with the next one -- an important Moderate parliamentarian (Louis Jacquinot), and the "non-political" editor of a newspaper with a large circulation (Pierre Lazareff):

> If your correspondent in Algiers continues to bother me, said the minister to the journalist, I am going to have him expelled.[2]

Informed readers will surmise that Lacoste did not use the by now rather mild verb embêter, but another one, emmerder, which is still felt as indecent but begins to be printed in respectable contexts and is constantly used between men at work, in politics, and elsewhere. The informed reader will also know that the rudeness here attributed to Lacoste is supposed to be customary with him, and that he is apparently proud of this trait.

In contrast to the portraits of Baylet and Lacoste here is a journalist's portrait of another leader (Maurice Schumann), which also corresponds to a widespread image of that individual:

> He is always in agreement with his interlocutor. When he wants to vote against a premier or somebody who wants to become one, he goes to see him the next day, apologizes for the "misunderstanding," and explains that his vote had been cast for him by his group contrary to his instructions. Or, again, while in favor of continuing the war in Indochina to the very end, when he encounters somebody in favor of negotiation, he tells him that "we are really in agreement, for we are going to find a common position at the expense of the military!"[3]

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The opposition of agreeableness and brutality is of course not a simple one. There are so many ways of being tough and of being tender in politics (if we agree for a moment to bisect the rich field of relevant phenomena in this way), and so many ways of combining both approaches. But in a first approximation one might say this: In the Fourth Republic -- and this corresponds no doubt to a general trend in the West -- a politician must above all be smooth if he wants to maximize his chances of stable success. Those who are viewed as "cutting" may gain glory (General de Gaulle) or celebrity (Pierre Mendès-France) or an unusual reputation (René Mayer, Jules Moch). But in the Fourth Republic they are likely to be kept away from power, whether they go into retirement (de Gaulle), into isolation within the Assembly (Mendès-France), back into big business (René Mayer), or into the U.N. (Jules Moch).

Most politicians at all levels of the hierarchy are obsessed by the fear of antagonizing those with whom they know they are "condemned to live together," that is, practically everybody. "The circumstances which created conflicts between you will pass," an observer reminded politicians mindful of their careers, "and you know very well that tomorrow you will still need each other."[4] Hence I must at all costs avoid imprudent acts which could lead to a definitive break between myself and others with whom I must maintain relations, even though they be tenuous for a time. Though experience shows that political quarrels are unlikely to be irremediable, any aggravation of hostilities is likely to provoke an anxious feeling: this time it won't be possible to repair the damage. The functioning of the system depends on the collaboration of so many individuals, so many cliques, so many groups, between which a state of "fraternal hate" prevails, that one always fears a breakdown of this delicate machinery. <u>If members of the political class are really going to be "intransigent," the dreaded "crisis of the regime" will be their punishment</u>.

This catastrophe may seem foreshadowed by the violent altercations which suddenly and for a brief moment flare up in the Assembly, not only between deputies accepting the regime and the two extremes, but also between those attached to the <u>status quo</u>. "I do not want to introduce passion into this debate," "I do not want to render it venomous," one says frequently when one wants to avert such a danger or when one disclaims responsibility for increasing it. Frequently one

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observes and proclaims with relief that a certain debate has, up to its very end, "on the whole kept its dignity."

Then one can be content with having, against many temptations and pitfalls, obeyed the great rule of sparing everybody's susceptibilities. In 1937 an officer attached to Marshal Pétain, a future parliamentarian, dared to ask his chief insistently that he raise the question of the "hole" in the Maginot Line between the Ardennes and the sea. Pétain refused: "I do not want to torpedo Gamelin!" And his aide thought:

> This is the reason for the general silence. Pétain spares Gamelin, Gamelin spares Daladier, who in turn spares Pétain.[5]

When a politician, talking with de Gaulle in 1956, conjectured that the Prime Minister of the time, Edgar Faure, "would not be against your return," the General is supposed to have answered:

> Do you imagine that Edgar Faure is capable of being against anything?[6]

That important politician who likes to say "I do not want to be disagreeable to anybody" would presumably agree with the words of a great journalist of the Third Republic, editor of a daily paper called The Intransigent:

> Politics is an eternal deal....The politician makes deals. The Intransigent can only regret it.[7]

The conviction that intransigence leads to catastrophe is so strong that General de Gaulle had to combat it in so many words at a difficult moment of the war:

> I maintain that we are reasonable. While we have chosen the hardest way, it is also the most adroit one: the straight way....Events have proved that this rectitude...remains the best policy possible. Without any doubt, if we failed to some extent to act according

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> to our duties, if we consented to certain arrangements...we would appear easier to get along with....But in the extremity in which France finds herself, no deals are conceivable. What would have become of the Fatherland if Jeanne d'Arc, Danton, Clemenceau had agreed to deals?[8]

Perhaps this is so for 1942, the Edgar Faures would answer; and even that is far from certain as in that very year General Weygand, General Juin, and Admiral Darlan entered into "deals" of which one is no more sure that they were entirely harmful. In any case the words of General de Gaulle seem to imply that accommodation is of the essence of politics in "normal" periods: a precious concession by the greatest proponent of the "hard" orientation.

* * *

<u>It is</u> first of all <u>necessary to avoid all "brutality" in words</u>.

That is not easy. The temptation to be impolite is strong. In the Assembly the usual "courtesy" may at any moment be interrupted by rude exchanges not all of which are preserved in the record of the proceedings. Actually, this does not happen too frequently, but one is aware of a temptation which one has constantly to control. One knows of course that it is possible to "slam doors without destroying bridges," but, still, one fears that the one may lead to the other; and that would be grave.

It is often felt that <u>the clear expression of a decided opinion</u>, even though it be of a strictly political nature, <u>may be "shocking"</u> to those against whom it is directed or who merely hold other opinions which are definitely rejected by one's categoric statement. Hence it is wise to avoid all too "firm" statements which may appear "hard" and hence "brutal." A politician whose spontaneous inclination is rather in the direction of "brutality" (Pierre Mendès-France) explained (on the occasion of the Radical Congress of the spring of 1957) why he imposed on himself the discipline of "not expressing his thoughts freely":

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> I do not have the right to take an unnecessarily aggressive and brutal position inside the party and thus alienate certain elements which are essentially sane and share our convictions, but which could be shocked by an attitude or a word.[9]

"You should fear to arouse fear," a politician of the Third Republic (Alexandre Millerand) advised his colleagues. "You should fear to shock," would be the formula of his successor today. "I shall go very far and risk shocking certain of our colleagues," one is likely to say when one is simply about to express an opinion that does not entirely correspond to current conventions. Or one maintains that the view one is going to advance "could not possibly frighten anybody"; and this is not a self-criticism. To be sure, these are often turns of phrase applied in automatic fashion. Still, they are likely to reflect genuine feelings which may be more or less conscious.

One can never be sure that one has not "shocked" someone; in any case, an excuse can't do any harm. Thus a new speaker of the Assembly (Pierre Schneiter), having thanked it with a few ceremonial words for electing him, added:

> I am not going to say more for the moment. I have let my heart speak without having prepared anything. If I have pronounced any words which may have shocked anybody or may have appeared exaggerated to any among you, please forgive me.[10]

The new speaker knew, in fact, that there was one person among his listeners whom he had profoundly "shocked," the former speaker, who, though a candidate, had not been re-elected (André Le Troquer); it was for the first time in many years that such a thing had happened. Subsequently, Le Troquer was re-elected and Schneiter became in his turn an unsuccessful candidate for the speaker's chair. Still, Le Troquer could not forget, and, on one occasion, denied the former usurper the right even to be a candidate (arguing that a speaker should be elected by a "massive vote"). This happened in a probably unpremeditated outburst of M. Le Troquer on the

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occasion of his re-election in the fall of 1957, arousing much indignation among the friends of the defeated M. Schneiter, and, one may imagine, apprehensions of M. Le Troquer about their future vengeance. This is one of the numerous small incidents which show how precarious is that self-control on which one depends so much. The vicissitudes of political life exacerbate one's feelings, but it is imperative that rage be channeled into entirely appropriate expressions so as not to endanger one's career.

* * *

If I am afraid of shocking others, I may try to diminish the danger by reducing my acts to a minimum -- a technique which will be analyzed further below. But that maneuver may in itself become invaded by the tendencies which are warded off: _silence, abstention in a vote, absence on the occasion of a decision, may all come to be taken as polite expressions of profound enmity_. (This was facilitated by the constitutional provision, up to 1954, according to which a candidate to the premiership needed the absolute majority of deputies to be "invested"; abstention had then the same effect as a negative vote.) An anonymous journalist believed to be inspired by Edgar Faure wrote,

> Cassandra does not express herself anymore by prophetic disarray but rather by sullen isolation, by reticence, by silence. Abstention becomes bravado and taking a leave of absence from parliament an act of exemplary courage. Instead of the usual clamor "but I said so at the time!" one now hears the "but I remained silent" of M. Mendès-France, and the "but I thought it" of MM. Reynaud, Schuman, Pineau, and Faure [_sic_].[11]

* * *

If I cannot avoid talking, I may use the time-honored, ridiculed, and hardy method of _expressing contradictory attitudes side by side_. One cites the speech of a new member of the Academy (André François-Poncet) in which one could

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perceive a carefully arranged "equilibrium" between phrases supposed to be favorable to Marshal Pétain and words of praise for General de Gaulle. In his address of acceptance, a speaker of the Assembly (André Le Troquer) elected in January 1954 because the communists voted for him, deplored that "on too many points of the earth...men are dying without understanding for what reasons the supreme sacrifice is imposed on them;" at the same time he exalted "those...who on the soil of Indochina defend a sacred cause." These two passages led to the intended bursts of applause in opposed sectors of the parliament.[12] It also happens that the same person or group applauds views between which there are flagrant contradictions; this is supposed to be the normal reaction of Radical congresses.

If I cannot diversify my words in such a fashion as to please everybody, to some extent, I may at least deny all hostile intent toward those who may be disagreeably affected. Such denials may be a matter of pure form: nobody is in doubt about the discrepancy between what I say and what I mean. Thus one of the worst enemies of Pierre Mendès-France (Frédéric-Dupont), trying to prove that Mendès had sabotaged the activities of Georges Bidault and of himself during the first weeks of the Geneva Conference of 1954, addressed himself to his victim:

> I do not understand why you do not answer with a yes or with a no when I recall the historical fact of a conversation between us; I am doing this without any malevolent intent. (Laughter and exclamations on the Left.)

He added:

> You will at least do me the honor of acknowledging that I am speaking not in order to embarrass you (Exclamations on the Left)....[13]

A Premier (Edgar Faure) recalled that on one occasion, when he was a Minister, he had addressed a letter to the President of the Republic in which he had expressed his disagreement with a decision (to depose the Sultan of Morocco) taken by the government of which he intended to remain a member. Turning toward the Premier under whom he had served (Joseph Laniel), he added:

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> In the letter which I addressed to the President of the Republic...I indicated that I did not mean to disavow you by taking this position.[14]

A deputy (Roland de Moustier) discussed the activities of the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Antoine Pinay) at a moment when France was in an awkward position at the U.N. He recalled that the Minister's predecessor (Pierre Mendès-France) had been able, the year before, to prevent the adoption of an undesirable resolution in the U.N., and added:

> I wish the situation were the same today, without of course wanting to criticize in any fashion the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

This provoked "murmurs," "laughter on numerous benches," and the exclamation of a Communist: "It was a good thing that you made it clear," which in turn led to "more laughter."[15] It is "normal" to underline in this fashion that one is presented with a "façade which deceives nobody" and which does not even pretend to deceive anybody. But it is equally normal to use such a façade.

On other occasions there may be, instead of frank hypocrisy, some degree of momentary sincerity. Thus a deputy to whom firm convictions are usually attributed declared:

> To begin with I should like to express the desire not to offend anybody in this Assembly. I do not want to hurt any Frenchman, while expressing my own convictions in good faith.[16]

In an exchange with a deputy of the extreme Right (Jean-Louis Tixier-Vignancour), a Socialist (Arthur Conte) maintained about himself:

> I am in the habit of expressing myself with extreme courtesy toward all....I have never offended anybody.

About the position taken by his group he said:

> And when we express ourselves in this fashion, M. Tixier-Vignancour, it is not our intention to be disagreeable to anybody.[17]

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Knowing that he was about to be overthrown and wanting to "fall leftward," a Socialist Premier (Guy Mollet) did something unusual:

> I wish, and I apologize for this, to refer here to a little document: that which is given to every new member of the Socialist Party. It comprises not only the statutes of the party but also a declaration of principles.

When the speaker proceeded to read this declaration, the Right protested against the emergence of the perpetual Secretary General of the Socialist Party (the same Guy Mollet) behind the Premier who was about to "die": "Let us have no more propaganda!" Appearing surprised by the "loud exclamations" which he had provoked, Guy Mollet turned toward his opponents:

> But there is nothing here that could offend you![18]

* * *

If, going even farther, I undeniably attack a group or an individual that belongs to the Assembly, it is wise not to name them. As soon as I have pronounced a proper name, the person in question acquires the right to answer me immediately, and I appear as aggressor. If I limit myself to allusion -- making it as intelligible as I desire -- my victims cannot counterattack on the spot without damaging themselves. If they do respond right away, I can close the incident by observing, for instance: "If you absolutely insist on recognizing yourself in the portrait I have drawn...." Thus a partisan of a governmental proposal of educational reform (Maurice Deixonne) attacked the dilatory maneuvers adopted by the rapporteur of the Education Committee of the Assembly (Hippolyte Ducos): he affirmed that "one" is deliberately delaying the parliamentary progress of the proposed reform. At this point M. Ducos interrupted and justified his conduct by the necessity of avoiding precipitate decisions. But this permitted his adversary to conclude:

> My dear colleagues, I notice that the rapporteur has recognized himself in the description I have given. I can only thank him for this.

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Ducos, beaten, could only answer:

> You should have named me instead of proceeding by allusion.[19]

Had the aggressor named his target, the victim's counterattack would have appeared as a defense of the tacitly recognized parliamentary privilege of not being attacked by name. But counterattacking in response to a mere, though clearly intelligible, allusion, the victim seemed to want to deprive his colleague of what is not only a privilege of parliamentarians but a right of man, that of using the weapon of veiled speech.

* * *

When I cannot even deny that I am attacking such and such a person or group, I may still try to reduce the consequences by acts of appeasement that accompany my aggression. I may take as my model that delegate at a dramatic party congress (that of the Radicals in the spring of 1955) who was applauding a speaker while at the same time expressing his violent disapproval by blowing a whistle. Announcing a vote which will lead to the downfall of the government (that of René Pleven in the winter of 1952), a group in the Assembly (the Socialists) may at the same time abound in amiable words toward the Premier they are about to "kill"; the group may applaud his speech and later on his exit to proceed to the President of the Republic in order to submit his resignation, without such applause being interpreted as an expression of joy about the success of the "execution." After the "investiture" of Antoine Pinay, the first Premier of the Fourth Republic belonging to the Right and having been connected with Vichy rather than with the Resistance, the spokesman of the Socialists, in the words of a journalist, "courteously apologized to Antoine Pinay for having been unable to vote for him."[20] In the same vein a leader of the Moderates mentioned a special reason of economic policy "which to our great regret obliged us a year ago not to vote the investiture of M. Christian Pineau," a Socialist leader.[21]

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On the occasion of an important debate in the Assembly it is customary to demand that "nothing be left in the dark" this time, that "everybody speak clearly," that all "abscesses" be "opened up" and "emptied."

But one also knows that this will not happen, and that it should not happen: an excess of light kills. Only an enemy who seriously desires my political annihilation would want to deprive me of the shade in which I can stay alive. It is with an air of reprobation that one cites the saying that "politics is not the art of settling problems but that of making those who pose them shut their mouth." But it is with a sense of fulfilling one's duty that one may declare in the Assembly, referring to matters which are not at all classified: "Here I shall not say all that I know." (However, when the act of concealment is made so conspicuous, it may also have an effect similar to that of an exposure.) In a debate on painful matters, for instance on the use of torture in North Africa, speakers frequently referred to things "which I shall be careful not to mention here." A Premier about to be overthrown (Pierre Mendès-France) declared:

> M. Maurice Schumann will confirm that I do not tell the worst, for there are things which one does not dare to say in public.[22]

A parliamentarian (Roland de Moustier) questioning another Premier (Edgar Faure) on the same subject asked:

> Are these horrible exactions of the police going to cease?...You have asked us to be restrained in our words, hence I shall not say anything further on the subject....I shall not add anything; for if I did, I would have to blush with shame.[23]

Another deputy (Henri Caillavet) began a speech on Algeria with this declaration:

> This evening I shall be extremely discreet.[24]

The only one to deny the duty to be silent was a deputy close to the victims (the Algerian Moslem Mostefa ben Bahmed):

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> As a Moslem, as a Frenchman, as a Socialist, as a man, I cannot even consider for a minute being silent about any misdeed, whichever it may be, from wherever it may come.[25]

But the predominant attitude was expressed by a Moderate (André Bettencourt):

> Must one be silent, or may one say here what one thinks and what is happening? We have the obligation to be extremely prudent in our words. I believe that the deputies, whether they belong to the majority or to the opposition, are obliged to act in a spirit of national solidarity when French policy outside of continental France is involved.[26]

If it appears proper to avoid words which might become detrimental to the reputation of the country, it may also seem prudent not to speak of grave problems, unless electoral considerations constrain one to do so. Thus the Assembly almost never discusses the great problems of national defense and quite rarely those of foreign policy. During the three last calendar years of the Fourth Republic, 1955-1957, such discussions occurred only -- if at all -- when a new government had to be invested, a budget to be passed, a treaty to be ratified, or an acute crisis (the Suez expedition) to be explained -- with the mere exception of four days of debate on foreign policy (December 18-19, 1956 and March 26-27, 1957). There is a widespread feeling that this reticence about grave problems is distinctively French. Having indicated how rare the debates on foreign policy had been in the Assembly for the past eighteen months, an eminent journalist (Jacques Fauvet) concluded:

> There is surely not a single other democratic country in which this is the case.[27]

When a debate on one of the habitually avoided subjects nevertheless takes place, this fact is likely to be treated as extraordinary, and those who have brought it about appear

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especially meritorious; so do those who take the trouble of participating in the debate. Thus the Minister of Foreign Affairs declared on the occasion of a debate on the unification of Europe:

> At the moment at which a debate of such gravity is to be concluded,...I want first of all to express congratulations to Parliament which saw its way clear to studying a question of a veritably national character.[28]

For it seems normal for Parliament to be absorbed in serving a multitude of special interests. Three years later a parliamentarian (Edouard Depreux) announced:

> The Socialist group is happy that a debate on the grave Moroccan problem could finally be held in the National Assembly.[29]

And another parliamentarian (Diomède Catroux) thanked the Premier (Edgar Faure):

> Your government has had the merit of opening the Moroccan file.[30]

When, on the insistence of the government (which wanted to insure itself against the tendency of the Assembly to draw back at the last moment), a debate on the common market was held before the signing of the Treaty -- it was thus a debate which could have been avoided -- a parliamentarian (André Morice) declared:

> We should all render homage to this Assembly which has made the opinions of the various groups on a major problem known....[31]

Several motives are behind the parliamentary aversion to discussions of numerous important problems. First, they may leave the average voter cold without benefiting from the existence of an adequate pressure group. Also, parliamentarians may feel that a subject is somehow beyond them. This holds true, in particular, of nuclear energy -- a matter which seems to require special knowledge, access to secrets, and secret

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discussion. Until a short while ago nuclear energy appeared to be something which only countries larger than France could afford; and the great decisions in that sphere seemed to be taken on a level above that of Parliament or even of the country.

But there is often also the desire not to introduce supplementary conflicts into a system already overloaded by unavoidable matters of contention. Between 1952 and 1954, any debate, and, yet more, a decision, on EDC seemed to raise the probability of a cabinet crisis. Between 1954 and 1956, to pose the question whether France should acquire nuclear weapons appeared to be fraught with similar consequences. For a "majority" to be formed and to continue in being, it is usually necessary that its components remain silent on important problems on which there is disagreement. (Its enemies may then attempt to disintegrate it by rendering such an avoidance impossible. One instance is the classical maneuver of the Gaullists in 1951 by virtue of which the Third Force was disrupted by introducing the question of subsidies to Catholic schools.) For a party or a parliamentary group not to "blow up" the same condition must often be fulfilled.

* * *

In these circumstances it often appears prudent to those who want to rise to the upper levels of power <u>not to take a stand</u> even on the limited number of important problems which are being publicly posed and discussed. One derives greater advantage from being "reserved" than from proposing "solutions." Any stand I take up publicly may "mark" me and thus become the reason for a veto raised against me by some individual or group at a crucial juncture. "One becomes premier by the force of one's silence,"[32] stated a satirical journal which attributed the following complaint to unsuccessful candidates for the presidency of the Republic:

> But how could he have done less than
> I did?[33]

And here is the conduct proper to an aged "demi-god" (Edouard Herriot) when human beings are tearing each other limb from limb (at the Radical Congress in the fall of 1956 at the beginning of which Edgar Faure and certain others were expelled, and at the end of which the group led by André Morice left the party):

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> The President of the Party is besieged in turn by M. Mendès-France and his friends and by...M. André Morice and the anti-Mendès tendency. But Herriot carefully refrains from clearly intervening in one sense or the other....On the occasion of the expulsion of M. Edgar Faure, Herriot, asked to give his opinion, remains silent.[34]

The disciples of Herriot in this respect are the two young Radical premiers of 1957. Belonging to a party which had been rent by violent conflicts for the two preceding years, neither of them had taken much of a stand in these conflicts. A satirical journal embroiders upon this:

> There came an epoch when the tranquil sea of radicalism was agitated by incongruous waves....Intrigues of the seraglio were followed by palace revolutions, and the other way around. What did M. Gaillard think of all these peripeties so apt to excite the passions of youth? He thought nothing whatsoever of them. M. Gaillard had something quite different to do than to entertain opinions and preferences: he administered his career, which was not so easy in the midst of all these people, imprudently producing waves.[35]

November 22, 1950, on one of the rare occasions when the Assembly debated the war in Indochina, Pierre Mendès-France intervened, expressed unorthodox opinions, and created a mild stir. June 3, 1953, he presented himself to the Assembly as a candidate for the premiership, delivered a sensational speech, and was refused. Though the war in Indochina had not yet become a central problem for public opinion and Parliament, it is probable that Mendès failed at that moment because a decisive number of deputies had been antagonized by what was believed to be his tendency to terminate the war at whatever price would appear necessary. In any case he had insisted on the necessity of a "choice" between the pursuit of the war in Indochina and other national purposes. In the summer and early fall of 1953 the situation

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in Indochina became more acute, and a debate on the war was to take place, for the first time in three years, on October 23, 1953. It did, but Mendès-France did not speak. The debate was continued October 27, and the concluding votes on the resolutions proposed was to take place in the course of the night. That day, Mendès-France took leave, left the Palais Bourbon at the end of the afternoon for London where he was to speak on French policy. Here, then, we see the person who presents himself as the great reformer of French politics giving a signal example of a vice which he frequently castigates, that of a discrepancy between word and act; he illustrates himself the widespread belief according to which persons of authority are likely to be the first to violate their own laws. The same debate on Indochina was, by the way, in the words of a journalist, "characterized by the absence or the silence of most of the great leaders."[36]: Robert Schuman, René Mayer, Antoine Pinay, Jacques Soustelle. When a difficult ministerial crisis was about to begin (in the spring of 1957 after the fall of Guy Mollet),

> "I prefer not to be around during the crisis," declared Edgar Faure, taking off for China.[37]

If one does not absent oneself one can always abstain. This happens so frequently that the various proposals for a revision of the constitution in early 1958 were in good measure directed to making this attitude impossible on the occasion of important votes. At present, a parliamentarian recalled,

> ...it is just as easy to assemble a simple majority against a proposal of the government as it is difficult to marshal against it...an absolute majority.[38]

Similarly, a government may try to survive by taking up a safe stand on the most explosive problems of the hour, namely by the obligatory abstention of its members. This happened in the case of the law granting subsidies to Catholic schools in 1951, and in the case of the treaty establishing EDC in 1954. A parliamentary group which threatens to "blow up" may attempt to preserve itself in the same fashion. On the occasion of a vote on a candidate for the premiership (Antoine Pinay, in the fall of 1957) a journalist said about the Christian Democrats:

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> It was easy to obtain the abstention of the large majority among them. That position had the advantage of preserving the unity of the group.

And about the Radicals:

> Trying to have the group take up a common attitude, M. Daladier proposed collective abstention.[39]

When it does not seem appropriate to abstain, it may at least be possible not to speak; or the leaders of a group may remain silent, leaving it to the rank-and-file to explain their position. Thus a government is often "strangled by the dumb slaves of the seraglio," as Clemenceau called his Radical enemies.

During the first decade of the Fourth Republic, Henri Queuille appeared as the incarnation of the art of not taking a stand. But he was also a man who knew how to violate that rule when it was really worth it: when the electoral law was at stake. A Radical parliamentarian recalled the end of the first legislature during the agony of the second (in the fall of 1955):

> May I remind you that the government of M. Pleven ran into difficulties because it did not want to take a stand on the question of the electoral law. At that moment a man presented himself ...who was imbued with the will to have an electoral law voted by his majority, and who succeeded in this by staking the existence of his government on the matter.[40]

* * *

If I cannot help taking a stand, I may still have recourse to imprecision.

One frequently invokes the postulates attributed to Descartes in order to violate them the better. Sometimes one merely imagines that one has invoked them. Thus a parliamentarian affirmed that "in the difficult settlement

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of the problems of North Africa we have often appealed to Cartesian reason,"[41] an allegation which is not borne out by an examination of the debates.

To the traditional cult of "precision" and "clarity" has more recently been added the aspiration to be "concrete." Thus a leader (René Pleven) who was about to lose the presidency of his small party (UDSR) demanded the creation of a new party "with a carefully worked out minimum program, which means, I should like to repeat this, one which has been made thoroughly concrete."[42] Still, a journalist observed that the speech in which this injunction was raised contains no indications as to what such a program might contain, and raises the question "whether this be the discretion...of a statesman who views the problems from high up, or that of a future Premier."[43]

For a Premier, of course, the "concrete" is that which is likely to be unacceptable to one or more of the various groups, clans, and individuals which "parliamentary arithmetic" obliges him to assemble in order to arrive at a "majority" which is in any case fragile enough. A journalist notes that in speaking about a controversial problem (that of the revision of the constitution) before a committee of the Assembly, a Premier (Félix Gaillard) "has been above all careful not to antagonize the diverse tendencies of his majority. He has therefore refrained from expressing his intentions with too much precision...."[44] When a government has been overthrown because it proposed certain "precise" measures (for instance, the Mollet government in the spring of 1957 which was defeated on its financial program), its successor will often want to avoid any kind of precision, at least to start with. In the words of a journalist:

> M. Bourgès-Maunoury...has not wanted to commit himself on the details of his program or on the contours of his majority. This is no doubt the only means to prevent the unleashing of mutually incompatible demands and vetoes of the various groups.[45]

Similarly, when a group is torn by conflicts on a certain subject (for example, the Radicals on Algeria, 1956-1957), it may try to forestall its "exploding" (as the Radicals did at

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the "conclave" at Chartres in the spring of 1957) by using the same technique. The resolution on Algeria which was voted at that "conclave" was "sufficiently vague and ambiguous not to be opposed by anybody."[46]

There is, to be sure, a tendency to reduce the role of the standard ambiguous formula in the resolutions and programs of parties and groups, and even in the declarations of governments. When a man who aims at a reform of politics (Pierre Mendès-France) succeeded for a time in dominating the most "classical" party (the Radicals), he proposed the establishment of a comprehensive program which would be entirely concrete, full of figures and dates. The failure was complete: the program had not yet been produced at the time when its promoter abandoned his efforts to reform the party. Who, whether in the political class or in the country at large, knows the "concrete" proposals which the programs of the various parties may contain, except their authors or groups whose special interests are visibly affected?

To unmask the opponent's lack of precision remains a minor weapon which can be used against him. Above all, I can use precision myself for the purpose of sabotage, for instance if I want to prevent the conclusion of an agreement which I do not desire to reject out of hand. Thus, as has already been mentioned (see Chapter 2, pp. 64-65), in the course of a crisis (that created by the fall of the Mollet government), a group (the Socialists) wishing to "torpedo" a candidate for the premiership (Pierre Pflimlin) sent him a thick file of concrete demands, whose full acceptance was to be a necessary condition for the group participating in his government. This having been refused, as expected, and the candidate having thereupon withdrawn his candidacy, the same group, confronted with another candidate, who was deemed acceptable (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury), posed no "concrete" conditions whatsoever.

* * *

Imprecision permits equivocation, the use of expressions which "everybody can interpret in his own fashion."

Here again, it is customary to insist on this being "inadmissible": all equivocations should be "cleared up," a situation should be created which is "neat and clear."

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"Words ought to signify the same thing for everybody,"[47] according to a politician, many of whose colleagues might find it difficult to imagine how his career would have looked had this principle always been obeyed. "We do not have the right to maintain such doubts, such uncertainties, such equivocations in our debate today,"[48] said a parliamentarian during the debate about the Franco-Tunisian Conventions, when most of his colleagues knew, more or less clearly, that all these features were needed if one wanted to reach a decision to accept the Conventions, as a majority did. "This equivocation cannot last long," one often says, conveying a more or less sincere disapproval by a forecast. Sometimes this is confirmed; thus the separation between Tunisia and France in 1956 ended the equivocation of 1955. But usually another equivocation is ready to replace the one which is disappearing.

The birth of an equivocation may be easy to observe. At a party congress (that of the Christian Democrats in the spring of 1957) the partisans of a loose association between continental France and the overseas territories connected with it, proposed that the resolution of Algeria demand a "profound administrative and political decentralization of Algeria"; their opponents conceded only an "administrative decentralization in the framework of the Republic." The impasse was broken by the proposal of a leader to keep in the text only one word: "decentralization." Every tendency within the party was then free to add the "precisions" which it desired, while of course knowing that other groups were supplementing the now bare text with still other "precisions."[49]

On some occasions one can only suspect that the author of an ambiguous formula destines it to be filled in with interpretations which are, to be sure, mutually incompatible but whose effect is expected to be invariably favorable to the individual or group issuing the formula. The testament of a legendary anti-clerical (Edouard Herriot) insisted on the one hand on a purely secular funeral, but left on the other hand enough latitude so that his widow was able to call upon the services of Cardinal Gerlier.

Antoine Pinay was among those leaders whose public utterances and silences on Algeria in 1957 did not greatly deviate from what was then normal; but he was often said to be resigned to very far-reaching concessions to the Algerian Nationalists and to express this unorthodox position in private conversations. However, in presiding over a session

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of his departmental Assembly, he expressed only "the wish that the efforts made by the government and the country [in Algeria -- N.L.] might rapidly lead to a solution in keeping with the national interest." To this he added that he deliberately said no more "in order to avoid the varying and contradictory interpretations which might be given to my words."[50] But should we not replace "avoid" by "invite"?

Sometimes it does not seem safe to leave to the recipients of an equivocal expression the entire work of developing the "varied and contradictory interpretations" which I desire. I may then add to such an expression the procedure of "offering contradictory interpretations" (Daniel Mayer on the utilization by Edgar Faure of the formulae accepted at the Franco-Moroccan Conference of Aix-les-Bains in the fall of 1955);[51] or, in other words, the "method" of "presenting things in a different light according to the person to whom one speaks" (Jacques Chaban-Delmas about the same event).[52] In another great matter, EDC, on which a Premier (René Mayer) knew his majority to be divided, he is said to have used the same technique, applying it to an already exceptionally ambiguous "declaration of investiture." According to a journalist of the Left,

> René Mayer supposedly stressed his devotion to EDC to some, while he told the Gaullists with a wink of his eye: Look at my real intentions: I am replacing Robert Schuman by Georges Bidault, who is hardly enthusiastic about EDC.[53]

A journalist of the Right confirmed that the already "sibylline" phrases of René Mayer's declaration of investiture were in this case "explained differently, according to the listener, by the person who had written them."[54]

The targets of such procedures regularly complain that they have been deceived. Still, they frequently know, in some degree, what is happening, though they do not usually permit themselves to become fully aware of it. When, for instance, a majority is finally assembled at the end of a long struggle around a resolution closing a debate of interpellation, that is, when a text has been patiently constructed by many substitutions, subtractions, and additions, it is difficult for those participating in this process not to know that the

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point of the complicated object thus created is precisely that "everybody will find in it some food and some drink which he likes"; that the agreement finally established cannot and must not go beyond a common movement of the lips. The same device appears in declarations of investiture destined to assemble a majority which is divided on several problems which it would be inappropriate to ignore by a too obvious silence. Pretending not to know and yet knowing, each component of such a majority will add something to this "contract," which will be remembered as long as the government lasts, and which one calls "precise" only when one claims, not too seriously, a monopoly for one's own particular interpretation.

In the autumn of 1955 the Sultan of Morocco and the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Antoine Pinay) published a declaration envisaging negotiations between the two governments with the aim of making Morocco "an independent state," but one "united with France" by "permanent links" of an "interdependence" which would be "freely agreed and defined." A few days later a journalist noted:

> The negotiators would be ill-advised to define their vocabulary if they want to avoid a rupture. Wisdom counsels imprecision. The Moroccan Nationalists no doubt emphasize in their declaration the independence which has been promised them; nothing obliges us to listen to them. They abstain, no doubt, from mentioning interdependence; nothing forces us to notice that. We can imagine, on our side, that the Moroccan nationalists will themselves limit the exploitation of their victory to a few discreet municipal reforms. We have the right not to hear the words which displease us.[55]

As in the case of the "lifting of the mortgage," we have here the application to the world outside of Parliament of a technique which is "normal" inside it and does not greatly change the relations of forces there. Inside Parliament I do not need to worry too much about interpretations differing from mine and incompatible with mine which other groups or individuals put on texts which we have all signed together. There will always be time to deal with the others when they

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begin acting according to their distinctive conceptions. For the moment, equivocation will permit deferring the moment of conflict; that is already a valuable result. But when the same technique is applied outside of Parliament, for instance in the case of Morocco and Tunisia in 1955-1956, it may become the instrument by which great changes come to pass, and perhaps changes which I have not desired. The device of equivocation makes it possible to maintain, throughout a period when unfavorable changes are taking place outside of parliament, an attitude of "I do not want to know it" which parliamentary life has made customary to its practitioners.

* * *

Armed with the diverse techniques which have been analyzed, the politician convinces himself that everything can always be arranged, settled, smoothed out. It is a matter of skill. If one is sufficiently ingenious, one will be able to conciliate conflicting positions which seem at first sight utterly incompatible. There are no insurmountable obstacles; everything depends on finding the device which will furnish the desired solution. "Life?" said with a shrug of his shoulders a great politician of the Third Republic whom his classmates in high school had called "the arranger" (Aristide Briand). "Life? It's made of rubber!"[56] Pierre Laval, the liquidator of the Third Republic who saw in Briand his model, also thought himself capable, in the words of Pierre Pucheu, "of settling any problem anywhere if he could only contact in good time the appropriate interlocutor."[57] General de Gaulle confirmed this estimate:

> Laval believed that, whatever happens,... a certain degree of shrewdness would always master events, that there was nothing that could not be turned around, nobody who could not be manipulated.[58]

The Henri Queuilles and the Edgar Faures have continued this tradition. The capacity to "arrange" everything often seems essential not only in order to assure the functioning of the regime, but also in order to safeguard what remains of the position of France in the world. As an eminent journalist put it,

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> In the state of affairs which has developed, our weakness can hardly be compensated in any other fashion than by our gifts of intelligence and imagination, if these will permit us to find the formulae of conciliation for which others are looking in vain.[59]

* * *

In "a state where everything gets arranged," the supreme activity in politics is "arbitration." It is when one has reached the summit of power that he enters fully into the realm of arbitration. Most divergencies between ministers, even if they concern mere details, require recourse to the "arbitration" of the Premier; and almost any decision of that personage tends to be called "arbitration."

As to the first aspect mentioned, it absorbs a major fraction of the time and energy of the head of the government. On December 31, 1953, *Le Monde* announced that M. André Marie, Minister of Education, had offered his resignation; the newspaper had already informed its readers that this minister viewed the budget accorded to him by the Finance Minister as insufficient. *Le Monde* continued about M. André Marie's action,

> He has left the Council of Ministers this morning, declaring that he was withdrawing from the government. However, before becoming definitive, his decision will be the subject of further conversations. The minister is going to talk with the Premier, M. Joseph Laniel, toward the end of the afternoon in order to examine the disagreements which have arisen between his colleague and him. These disagreements will be arbitrated by the Premier personally.

Similarly, on March 8, 1957, René Billèles, one of the successors of M. André Marie, speaking of a raise in the salaries of the personnel of the National Scientific Research Center, remarked that

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> ...the discussions concerning the details of this raise have lasted several weeks and have ended with an act of arbitration at the highest level of the government.[60]

How many acts of "arbitration" by premiers may have occurred, with regard to this one ministry, between these two dates!

To arbitrate, in this sense, is to decide. But it is to decide between "choices" established by others and only in the case in which conflicts have arisen between them. In the course of a crisis (that of the spring of 1953) a leader (Robert Lecourt, a Christian Democrat) told about a talk between a delegation led by him and a candidate for the premiership who regards himself as a master in the art of arbitration (André Marie):

> We were impressed by what seemed to us the absence of an economic and social plan. The Président André Marie answered us that he had not proposed one because he thought that there was no basic disagreement between the groups on this matter.[61]

It is also usually understood that correct arbitration renders a decision which establishes a middle position between the various conflicting demands. André Marie, fourth candidate for the premiership in a long crisis (that of the spring of 1953), composed his declaration to the Assembly largely of pieces taken from those of his unfortunate predecessors (whom he asked, in addition, to become members of his government).

* * *

To the arbitration performed by a higher authority corresponds the "synthesis" worked out by equals who wish to reconcile their differences. In this synthesis what is only implied in the case of arbitration becomes manifest: the solution must give substantial satisfactions to everybody, it must create a middle ground between the demands which have been opposing each other.

When it is a matter of arriving at an act which is sufficient unto itself -- for instance, a resolution of

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Parliament -- this procedure appears adequate. After all, such an act is satisfactory precisely to the degree to which it satisfies those who participate in its elaboration. But in the case of a decision which is to apply to the world outside of Parliament, one may ask whether the middle ground between the conflicting demands of various groups within Parliament will furnish a good solution for the real problem at hand. If a "framework law" for Algeria takes good account of the demands of the various groups in the Palais Bourbon, by virtue of a "skillful mixture" of their preferences, what chances are there that this law will also be the one most likely to minimize future reductions of the "French" character of Algeria? At the time of the fight within Parliament and within the government around the first draft of the "framework law" for Algeria, in the late summer and early fall of 1957, a journalist noted:

> One seems to forget that the framework law is also made for the Moslems.

Those who did not neglect the extra-parliamentary dimension of the matter revealed by that very fact their rank as statesmen:

> M. Pflimlin has opportunely recalled this fact, and so has M. Edgar Faure.[62]

What chances are there in such an atmosphere that one will find that policy which would bring the country nearer to the goal sought?

The discrepancy just noted is being increasingly felt in the political class; it seems impossible to resolve the conflict between the nature of Parliament which so often imposes half-measures, and the shape of the world outside of Parliament which usually condemns them to failure. The country thus seems fated to cumulate the disadvantages of the various clear-cut policies which are being avoided in a parliamentary "bastard solution," without garnering any of their profits. What one does is too much from one point of view and too little from another; the policy adopted is apt to be too hard with a view to its soft components, and too soft with a view to its hard ones. After a bloody incident on the Algero-Tunisian frontier early in 1958, the Premier sent a general, together with a civilian, to deliver a message

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to the President of Tunisia, who refused to receive the officer. This led a parliamentarian to ask:

> What was the point in sending this general to Tunis? Either one was engaged in a diplomatic negotiation, and for that the Ambassador would have served; or one intended a display of force, and in this case one does not send a general all alone.[63]

(However, according to an interpretation which spread in the corridors of the Assembly and even reached the press, the Premier had been in need of a national humiliation in order to increase his chances of survival on the occasion of an imminent vote of confidence which was bearing on austerity measures directed against veterans and former prisoners-of-war.)

In one kind of inexpedient intermediate policy, elements of a tough line co-exist with components of a tender one. Thus, in 1952, according to a journalist,

> ...both in Tunisia and in Morocco France seems unable to choose between the attitude of the outstretched hand and that of the closed fist. Reform projects are followed by brutal police operations, arrests by liberations; France blows hot and cold.[64]

In another variant one maintains a certain conduct which, however, falls between two more extreme, and more efficient, positions. Thus one "fed" the war in Indochina without "leaving" on the one hand and without "putting everything into it" on the other. As to Algeria, according to the words attributed to a parliamentarian talking to an American journalist,

> We can't really go to war, because this would offend the Left, and we can't conclude a peace, because this would offend the Right. Hence we continue to lose blood and money without any favorable perspectives.[65]

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In a third variant one sets oneself intermediate aims which are either difficult to realize or even contradictory. An instance of an aim difficult to realize was the objective set in the early phases of the war in Indochina: "neither abandonment nor reconquest." An example of a contradictory objective is the goal often mentioned toward the end of the Indochinese war: "an independent Viet Nam in the framework of the French Union;" for most of those who advocated this objective did not really envisage the French Union on the model of the Commonwealth.

In Parliament, however, one is strongly tempted to have one's cake and eat it. Thus a prominent parliamentarian, developing his ideas on the future of Algeria, declared himself first to be in favor of "one electoral college" -- a formula usually taken to mean equal suffrage for all inhabitants -- but hastened to add: "There must be no crushing of any minority, under whatever formula." At this point he was interrupted on the Left: "Then don't talk about a common electoral college!" He retorted that "this is a dilemma, which has, like all dilemmas, a third solution."[66] If such a "third solution" is indeed likely to be available when a formula is to be devised for parliament, it is much less likely that a "third solution" can be found when the issue involves transforming or immobilizing the world outside of parliament.

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Chapter 6

THE SEARCH FOR A FORCE MAJEURE

According to a major belief of the political class itself, the government, parliament and the administration only act when they are with their backs to the wall (pp. 151-153); to anticipate problems seems strange behavior (pp. 153-155). Arguments in favor of a major change point not so much to its merits as to the catastrophic consequences of inaction beyond a certain point (pp. 155-156). Politicians credit each other with much readiness to accept immediate advantages even if they clearly involve a high cost in the future (pp. 157-158) and to isolate each problem from all the others with which it is interdependent (p. 158). A variety of factors contribute to the "immobilism" analyzed in this chapter (pp. 159-162).

* * *

"In the domain of industry our country is holding a world record," declared the Minister of Finance in the fall of 1957. "It is in France that, from 1952 onward, the most rapid rate of growth has taken place: ten per cent per year."[1] As the state plays a decisive role in the French economy, this performance of "dynamic France" can hardly have occurred without its active support. Nevertheless, in the beliefs of the political class itself the state often appears as belonging essentially to "static France."

According to a major theme, <u>the government, Parliament, and the administration only act when they are with their backs to the wall</u>, when they can't do otherwise, when it becomes impossible just to perpetuate the existing state of affairs, unfeasible to delay a decision any longer. After a vote of confidence accorded to his successor (Edgar Faure), a former Premier (Pierre Mendès-France) noted that "the Premier, armed with a vote of confidence, now possesses freedom of action" and demanded:

> He should use this freedom of action.... He should not wait for events to impose a choice on him which should issue from his own resolution.[2]

But as it seems unlikely that those in power will heed the implied postulate, such an exhortation is apt to be felt as an accusation. Half a century ago an observer discovered that the

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members of the government "are getting into the habit of acting only under the pressure of events."[3] The only aspect of this sentence which sounds strange today is the affirmation that the habit in question is just being formed.

The pressure on it which the government needs in order to act may be that of a group which is coupling its demands with threats serious enough to make it worthwhile for the government to disarm it by appropriate concessions. Politics then becomes, in the words of a journalist, a matter of "filling, day after day, the hole from which the loudest voice is issuing."[4]

It may be a matter of preventing a "scandal." According to an observer,

> To govern...is to deal with immediate difficulties. A minister is said to be facing an immediate difficulty when grave or scandalous events which have occurred in his department cannot be hidden anymore.[5]

Or one may be confronted with an acute crisis in a certain domain, a crisis which one then attempts to render latent again by a symptomatic cure, so as to be able to forget about the matter until the next eruption. In the words of an analyst,

> The symptoms of a crisis are not sufficient to make a government act: it is necessary for the crisis itself to have arrived in order to induce the strict minimum of action on the part of the government.[6]

As to agricultural policy, a journalist predicted:

> One is surely going to continue to fill gaps. The many agencies involved will be feverishly agitated when there is a disturbance in the market, and will fall back into lethargy between two crises.[7]

Loud demands for independence on the part of Vietnamese nationalists led the Assembly to discuss the Indochinese war, which had not been done for almost three years. On that occasion a parliamentarian observed:

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> The debate on Indochina for which we have been asking so long is finally taking place. It is probable that one would have continued to avoid it had not a new event put public opinion on the alert. Our Assembly seems to be condemned to deal with problems only when they arise in dramatic fashion, to trail after events rather than anticipating them. Thus the strikes of last August were needed to make the Assembly interested in the problems facing the wage-earners, and the expressions of the farmers' wrath were required to make the Assembly consider agricultural problems. The tradition continues. The present debate on Indochina is a direct consequence of the emotion created by the recent declaration of the National Vietnamese Congress in Saigon about the relations between Vietnam and France.[8]

Serious action, according to this belief, takes place only under the menace of imminent catastrophe. "It seems," observed a parliamentarian, after having recalled how unprepared the French economy was for entering the common market, "that there is a tendency to wait for some external constraint in order to act. It seems that one is waiting for the difficulties which will arise from the common market before proceeding to the appropriate economic reforms in France. That would be a government by catastrophe."[9] According to a belief which is widespread in the political class, the country will get out of the "rut" in which it has got "stuck" only under the pressure of the increased numbers of young people born after 1940. Similarly, according to General de Gaulle only "a grave crisis" could lead to a "rebirth" of "a deep concern for national salvation" in the country.[10]

While ostensibly waiting for this mutation, many among those in power console themselves by feeling that it is both difficult and worthwhile merely to assure the "survival" of the country -- an aim similar to the goal which one likes to attribute to members of the government: that of simply remaining in power.

To "anticipate problems" may then appear as strange behavior, as a counsel of perfection which is usually inapplicable in the difficult circumstances of the moment. All that it is feasible to do is to deal with events as they come up.

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"I am, to be sure, young," declared a deputy of the extreme Right (Jean Marie Le Pen):

> ...but ever since I have been a citizen of this country [sic], I have heard an exclamation which characterizes French politics: Too late! Always, too late! The beneficent maxim, "prevention is better than cure," has been stricly relegated to children's manuals on morals.[11]

Reacting against this trend, a Premier (Pierre Mendès-France), addressing himself to a series of problems (those concerning North Africa), announced his resolution to anticipate difficulties:

> It is quite another matter to resolve these problems in advance as we plan to do.[12]

Such an affirmation tends to appear as simply boastful, unless it turns out, in a rare instance, to be supported by actions. One day the general rapporteur of the Finance Committee of the Assembly (Charles Barangé) declared that "the debate on finances which we are now beginning occurs in conditions quite different from those which have characterized so many debates since the liberation." In general, continued this experienced parliamentarian, the government had been "pushed" by "difficulties" which "required immediate action." This time, however, "the Premier asks us to make in advance decisions of a kind which we have accustomed ourselves to take only under immediate pressure."[13] In similar fashion a Premier (Edgar Faure) said about the Franco-Tunisian Convention of 1955:

> Let me note one satisfying thing about the negotiations between the French and Tunisian delegates which led to the present Conventions. These Conventions appeared to us as necessary by virtue of a lucid view of the situation. We did not wait for events to overtake us and for necessity to transform itself into a threat.

But a few moments later the Premier made a more realistic allusion to what had happened. Addressing himself to an enemy of the Conventions and assuring him that he, the

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Premier, had well understood his references to the Tunisian friends of France, Edgar Faure added:

> We should perhaps have agreed at an earlier moment to the concessions for which they were asking us, rather than wait for our friends to be reduced in importance by the tendencies which we have to confront today.[14]

* * *

In these conditions there are some who believe that the country should be thrown into the water so that it would be forced to learn to swim. According to a major argument of the "Europeans" in favor of EDC and of the common market, France would consent to a general "renovation" only in consequence of the "electro-shock" which she would receive upon entering into European organizations where she would hopelessly fall behind if she did not radically change.

In a similar vein one argues in favor of a major change not so much by pointing to its merits as to the catastrophic consequences of rejecting it.

Such was the principal argument which almost overcame resistances to EDC and did overcome those against WEU. As the decision approached in both cases, affirmations stressing the advantages of one or the other institution receded in favor of grim portents of the consequences of rejecting the arrangement in question: the "Anglo-Saxons" would return to a "peripheral strategy," they would unilaterally rearm Germany. For agreement to be obtained it had, in large measure, to be a "gesture of resignation" and also a gesture of ratification in a double sense: not only a free assent to a treaty freely negotiated, but also a forced codification of imminent developments which one felt powerless to prevent. One of the motives of the partisans of EDC for their hostility to its successor, WEU, was to make one of their great arguments in favor of EDC come true, namely that the rejection of EDC would lead to an impasse. Nonetheless, after the first refusal of WEU (December 24, 1954), when the Assembly was moving towards its acceptance (December 30, 1954), a journalist noted this:

> ...it was with much relief that deputies of various tendencies received the Premier's unambiguous declaration that our Allies would not agree to another negotiation.[15]

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Half a year later an adversary of the Franco-Tunisian Conventions observed:

> We are being told: if you don't ratify the Conventions, grave and unpredictable consequences will occur.[16]

Another parliamentarian addressed himself to the Premier in these words:

> You will surely not omit to tell us that the ratification of the Franco-Tunisian Conventions... is inevitable and that not to ratify them would be even more risky than to do so. Parliament has already heard this resigned kind of reasoning in connection with the EDC and with the Paris Agreements.[17]

Fifteen years before, Parliament had listened (in Vichy, July 10, 1940) to the reasoning of a political leader (Pierre-Etienne Flandin) in favor of the transfer of full powers to Marshal Pétain:

> If the delegation of powers to Marshal Pétain were to be refused, what would happen in France? What would one say abroad? Terrible damage would have been inflicted on the country. Hence I view the acceptance of the proposal before us as necessary.[18]

Another political leader (Pierre Laval) underscored this:

> I have wanted to speak to you in order to underline an argument of M. Flandin who has declared: "If you do not vote the proposal before you, what will happen?"[19]

* * *

If all one does is to deal with the most acute difficulties, there will be <u>little continuity in policy</u>. Its progress will resemble that which a satirical journal attributes to an aged politician (Henri Queuille) whose infirmity is often viewed as a symbol of that of the regime, "the progress of a dead leaf pushed hither and thither by the wind."[20] A deputy spoke of the "habitual error" of engaging in "a course of action which

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is alternately hard and soft according to chance incidents or to shifts in parliamentary arithmetic."[21]

The diverse policies which follow each other are likely to involve a sacrifice of the more remote future in favor of the days immediately ahead. For one thing, the principles of action which have been described exclude enterprises with a long delay in pay-off. "Even the most urgent reforms do not usually lead to immediate benefits; it takes a few months or frequently a few years for their advantages to appear. In this sense a reform...is similar to an investment..." explained a reformer (Pierre Mendès-France), who then added:

> But the dominant tendency is to care only for the present and to sacrifice the future.[22]

If this be the case, one does so to the accompaniment of the demand that "a long-range policy be finally established" in whatever the matter in question is. But there are always circumstances which prevent one from proceeding right away to "defining" such a policy at the time when one expresses the wish for it.

In addition, members of the political class easily attribute to their colleagues a readiness to accept immediate advantages even if these clearly involve a high cost in the future. A senior official (Jacques Dumaine) affirmed in his posthumously published diary (on April 5, 1946) that "the Socialists in the government have proposed to offer the American government concessions in the sphere of French demands concerning the Rhineland in order to obtain an increase in American financial aid." This civil servant, who was not generally hostile to the Socialists, added:

> This proposal equated a historical act and a temporary deal; it envisaged an impairment of our security in the future for the sake of a momentary lightening of our economic situation.[23]

In a more generalizing and less direct fashion the same observer said at another moment:

> One tries to avoid a slight immediate unpleasantness by means which involve a future catastrophe. Such is politics sometimes.[24]

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--even frequently, according to a widespread feeling in the political class about itself.

It is even possible to attribute publicly such calculations to those in power without creating any major difficulties between oneself and those to whom one imputes a rather deliberate sacrifice of the future for the sake of the present. In this vein an opponent of the "framework law" for Algeria (Jacques Isorni) noted the various delays stipulated in that law and reasoned as follows:

> If the government has agreed to include in the law delays before an Algerian executive will be created, it is because the government recognizes the danger of this institution.... Aware of the danger, the government asks us to vote the law, assuring us that the peril thus provoked will only materialize tomorrow.

Addressing himself to the Premier (Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury), the speaker added:

> You are in fact asking us to light a fuse which is long enough so that the bomb won't explode right away.[25]

The lack of regard for the future is, according to an equally widespread belief, accompanied by a tendency to isolate each problem from all the others which have to be dealt with at the same time, though their solutions are evidently interdependent. Against this tendency to take only "fragmentary" measures one is in the habit of calling for an over-all plan each element of which would be conceived in relation to the rest; one frequently demands a "policy which is a whole," "an entire set of measures which form one single bloc." As no definitions of these ambiguous phrases are offered, it is easy for the government to affirm that it does propose a "whole," and equally easy for its enemies to maintain that "the propositions submitted do not form a whole," which has been "the argument most used today" according to a Premier looking back on a day at the Assembly which presaged his imminent fall.[26]

As against an imaginary policy that is a "whole" and that extends far into the future, "partial solutions" may sometimes appear vain or even harmful: they might merely "aggravate the disorder." The image of perfect action may serve to justify

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the attachment to an existing state of affairs which one admits to be highly imperfect. Speaking about measures against the excessive consumption of alcohol, a deputy declared:

> Let us not yield to the temptation to think that we ought to do nothing as we cannot resolve everything at one and the same time. Let us not say...that all fragmentary measures ought to be rejected as long as an all-embracing plan dealing with the entire problem has not been voted. My dear colleagues, if we want to wait for such a plan to be voted...we might as well admit that we are resolved to do nothing.[27]

* * *

How can one explain the tendency to "immobilism" which the political class so readily attributes to itself?

(1) The grave difficulties which France has constantly encountered since 1914 are supposed to absorb those in power to such an extent that they are hardly able to do anything but deal with the difficulties of the moment. "Four years ago," a deputy (Pierre André) reveals, "I asked a Premier: at what moment...do you think of the France of 1970? He answered me that he did not have the time to look farther than fifteen days ahead."[28] There are already enough troubles for the day; what imprudence to engage in acts which one can for the moment omit with impunity!

(2) After the first few months in the life of a government, its members must spend a great deal of effort on insuring its survival from day to day, which again reduces the energy available for long-run pursuits.

(3) Those politicians who see the advantages of certain innovations may be so impressed by their constituents' attachment to the established order of things that they are discouraged from attempting reforms.

(4) Or again those in power desiring changes may foresee -- the past furnishes many instances -- that multiple strivings for varied and incompatible changes will only neutralize each other to the benefit of the status quo.

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(5) One fears the unleashing of conflicting forces which might be provoked by an imprudent tampering with the "delicate equilibrium" which has been attained at the price of so many efforts and so many conflicts with a long past. "Educational reform," a Premier affirmed "is an urgent matter." "The government," he added, addressing himself to the Assembly, "begs you not to evade it as we often tend to do in the case of difficult problems."[29] But to those who know the intensity of the reactions likely to be evoked by every proposal for change in this domain, the "temptation" not to touch the matter does not seem so unreasonable. At least there should be, in a sphere where one proposes major innovations, a state of acute crisis which might help in overcoming the resistances against the innovation. In most domains the situation appears similar to that which obtains in Parliament when a group, deeply divided on a certain issue, has managed to work out a formula, for instance for an ordre du jour which the group as a whole will be able to approve. "The text," said a journalist, speaking about the ordre du jour proposed by the Socialists when the Assembly debated the London Agreement establishing WEU, "had been worked out with such difficulty, and composed so carefully, that it became from the very moment of its creation a delicate matter, or an outright impossibility, to abandon or to amputate it. The suppression of any one of its paragraphs would have disrupted the equilibrium of the concessions made by all groups within the Party, and thus would have risked reopening the quarrel."[30] In the same sense a journalist wrote about the present relations of church and state that they "constitute a complex edifice which has been slowly built in the course of fifty years of a religious history which was often agitated and which finally seems to have found a point of equilibrium. One could not attack any one of the aspects of the present situation without risking a shattering of the whole and a revival...of struggles which have abated."[31]

Once one has put into question the established order of things, the consequences are often felt to be unpredictable. One does not know where one will end up; one fears that an impasse may develop. This is the apprehension which often counteracts the desire of deputies to "massacre" the government of the moment. The Premier who is in office at a given moment relies, according to a belief frequently expressed in the political class, mainly on the difficulty of replacing him as the factor which will ensure his survival for some time. "What other policy with what other combination of groups?"[32] he may ask those who plan his overthrow. (He may wish to say; and he

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will certainly be understood as saying: which other set of ministers with which other head of the government? But that is a question which is often easier to answer than the first one: governments, more often than not, change without policies or the composition of the majority being much modified.)

(6) Governments having to look forward to "death" in the near future may be little disposed to engage in long-range enterprises. "Governments," a leader explained, "renounce... all long-range policies as they know that they will doubtlessly not have the time to execute them to their end."[33]

* * *

But what is it that is really supposed to discourage a government from acting? Is it the apprehension that its successors may not continue and carry to its completion an enterprise which a government had begun? Or is it the danger of working for competitors who will appropriate one's initiatives and draw benefits from them, having left to the initiators only the unattractive early phases of the enterprise when the costs of change are more impressive than its ultimate advantages? Naturally both motives are likely to be present and fused. But in the image which the political class has of itself the second plays a crucial role: one believes so easily in the "immobilism" of those in power because one sees them motivated by strictly personal concerns.

If I am above all interested in my own career, then the instability of governments will make it imprudent for me to concentrate on long-range enterprises. "A continuous preoccupation with the state of his health," said a politician of the Third Republic (Charles Daniélou) about one of the leaders of the time (André Tardieu) "made him more interested in isolated and sensational acts by which he might be remembered -- he often told us this -- than in long-run enterprises which he was not sure he would be able to complete."[34] "A continuous preoccupation" with my political "state of health" may have the same consequences.

If I feel my death to be my annihilation; if posterity is unreal for me because I will have fallen back into nothingness when it enjoys existence; if I am above all attached to my ephemeral self, then long-run enterprises will in any case tend to seem pointless. During the conference at Versailles, Clemenceau conceded, in the course of a conversation with

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Maurice Barrès, that the positions which France was obtaining on the Rhine were fragile:

> -- certainly, we have failed to reach our historical aims, but so what, we have lived!
>
> -- and in fifteen years?
>
> -- in fifteen years? I shall be dead by then.[35]

A joke, to be sure, but probably a significant one.

Finally, if I want to be in power as often and as long as possible, I must not risk antagonizing any group or individual, if I can at all avoid it. But to act involves precisely such risks. "To the extent to which a reasoned policy involves a choice," a leader (Pierre Mendès-France) recalled, "it cannot fail to antagonize a fraction of the country at the beginning." Hence "if one does not want to antagonize anybody, one condemns oneself to immobilism." When governments are unstable, it is particularly important not to antagonize anybody: I may reasonably expect that I will have to leave my present ministerial post before a certain policy, which displeases some, will have achieved its pay-off; and at the next ministerial crisis -- which I should prudently assume to be imminent -- I might need the support, or at least the toleration, of precisely those whom the policy in question would antagonize. Hence I will tend to act only when things have come to such a pass that perpetuating the present state of affairs may provoke even more discontent than a change.

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30. Loc. cit., Vol. 3, p. 453.

31. Edward Spears, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 308-309.

32. Quoted by Jacques Benoist-Méchin, op. cit., Vol. 3, pp. 454-455.

33. André Chênebenoit, Le Monde, August 21-22, 1955.

34. Le Monde, September 1, 1955.

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1. A.N., December 29, 1954; J.O., p. 6938.
2. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4950.
3. A.N., January 22, 1957; J.O., p. 203.
4. Le Canard Enchaîné, June 17, 1953.
5. Le Monde, June 13, 1953.
6. Comité Cadillac, May 24, 1957; cf. Le Monde, May 26-27, 1957.
7. Michel Debré, La République et ses problèmes, Paris, 1952, p. 20.
8. Loc. cit., p. 98.
9. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, December 25, 1952.
10. Robert Gauthier, Le Monde, February 17-18, 1957.
11. A.N., July 28, 1955; J.O., p. 4417.
12. A.N., June 12, 1957; J.O., p. 2684.
13. A.N., July 28, 1956; J.O., p. 3722.
14. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, November 12, 1951.
15. Carrefour, January 28, 1953.
16. May 24, 1957; cf. Le Monde, May 26-27, 1957.
17. Anatole de Monzie, Ci-devant, Paris, 1941, p. 288.
18. André Stibio, Indiscrétions, Paris, 1951, pp. 178-179.
19. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, June 9, 1954.
20. May 24, 1957; cf. Le Monde, May 26-27, 1957.

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22. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, May 31, 1957.
23. Demain, May 30 - June 5, 1957.
24. Ibid.
25. J. R. Tournoux, Combat, October 4, 1957.
26. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, June 7, 1957.
27. Raymond Dronne, A.N., November 5, 1957; J.O., p. 4650.
28. A.N., June 12, 1957; J.O., p. 2683.
29. A.N., June 12, 1957; J.O., p. 2699.
30. Cf. Le Monde, July 7, 1953.
31. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, June 14, 1957.
32. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, May 23, 1957.
33. Léo Hamon, Terre humaine, July, 1951, p. 31.
34. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, January 14, 1952.
35. Loc. cit., January 15, 1952.
36. J. R. Tournoux, L'Information, June 6, 1953.
37. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, May 29, 1953.
38. Le Canard Enchaîné, June 27, 1951.
39. Pierre Emmanuel, L'ouvrier de la onzième heure, Paris, 1953, p. 27.
40. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4947.
41. André Stibio, La Voix du Nord, March 4, 1953.

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42. A.N., July 17, 1957; J.O., p. 3700.

43. August 25, 1955; cf. Le Monde, August 27, 1955.

44. May 31, 1957; cf. Le Monde, June 2-3, 1957.

45. June 5, 1957; cf. Le Monde, June 7, 1957.

46. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, May 27,1953.

47. Georges Mamy, Le Monde, June 24, 1953.

48. L'Express, September 26, 1953.

49. Ibid.

50. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, May 26, 1953.

51. Jacques Soustelle, A.N., March 21, 1957; J.O., p. 1781.

52. André Stibio, La Voix du Nord, June 20, 1953.

53. Claude Bourdet, L'Observateur, June 4, 1953.

54. Georges Altschuler, Combat, November 29, 1952.

55. Léo Hamon, Terre Humaine, July, 1951, p. 35.

56. Jacques Soustelle, A.N., June 5, 1956; J.O., p. 2308.

57. Alfred Coste-Floret, A.N., November 17, 1953; J.O., p. 5206.

58. Michel Debré, C.R., November 12, 1953; J.O., p. 1743.

59. Maurice Schumann, A.N., May 31, 1956; J.O., p. 2180.

60. June 8, 1956; cf. Raymond Barrillon, Le Monde, August 29, 1956.

61. Guy Mollet, A.N., March 27, 1957; J.O., p. 1910.

62. Raymond Badiou, Le Monde, May 6-7, 1956.

63. Jacques Dumaine, Quai d'Orsay, Paris, 1955, p. 351, (February 8, 1949).

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64. Michel Raingeard, A.N., August 28, 1954; J.O., p. 4348.

65. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4959.

66. Gaston Palewski, Combat, July 10, 1956.

67. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4947.

68. André Stibio, Liberté de l'Esprit, March-April, 1953.

69. Claude Bourdet, L'Observateur, November 20, 1952.

70. Christian Pineau, Le Monde, January 7, 1956.

71. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4945.

72. Robert de Jouvenel, op. cit., p. 51.

73. Gilbert Grandval, Ma mission au Maroc, Paris, 1956, p. 141.

74. A.N., October 16, 1956; J.O., p. 4133.

75. Lucien Rebatet, Les décombres, Paris, 1942, p. 59.

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2. Demain, May 30 - June 5, 1957.
3. L'Express, May 28, 1955.
4. Robert de Jouvenel, op. cit., pp. 53-54.
5. Georges Loustaunau-Lacau, Mémoires d'un Français rebelle, Paris, 1948, pp. 123-124.
6. Demain, December 13-19, 1956.
7. Léon Bailby. Cf. Edmond Wellhoff, Autour du député Moyen, Paris, 1932, p. 180.
8. Speech of June 18, 1942; cf. Charles de Gaulle, op. cit., pp. 672-673.
9. Cf. Le Monde, May 11, 1957.
10. A.N., January 11, 1955; J.O., p. 5.
11. La Nef, December, 1956.
12. January 14, 1954; cf. Le Monde, January 16, 1954.
13. A.N., July 22, 1954; J.O., p. 3541.
14. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4964.
15. A.N., October 6, 1955; J.O., p. 4813.
16. Jacques Soustelle, A.N., June 9, 1954; J.O., p. 2863.
17. A.N., February 10, 1956; J.O., p. 245.
18. A.N., May 21, 1957; J.O., p. 2596.
19. A.N., March 13, 1957; J.O., p. 1546.
20. André Stibio, Antoine Pinay, Paris, without year, p. 21.

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21. Paul Reynaud, A.N., January 31, 1956; J.O., p. 140.

22. A.N., February 4, 1955; J.O., p. 760.

23. A.N., October 6, 1955; J.O., p. 4813.

24. A.N., October 11, 1955; J.O., p. 5027.

25. A.N., October 12, 1955; J.O., p. 5062.

26. A.N., March 26, 1957; J.O., p. 1857.

27. Le Monde, July 25, 1953.

28. Georges Bidault, A.N., November 20, 1953; J.O., p. 5354.

29. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4957.

30. A.N., October 8, 1955; J.O., p. 4927.

31. A.N., January 22, 1957; J.O., p. 189.

32. Le Canard Enchaîné, May 22, 1957.

33. Ibid., December 16, 1953.

34. Georges Rotvand, Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Politiques, October 8 and 12, 1956.

35. Le Canard Enchaîné, November 6, 1957.

36. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, October 29, 1953.

37. Demain, May 23-29, 1957.

38. Pierre Brocas, Le Monde, January 15, 1958.

39. Georges Mamy, Le Monde, October 20-21, 1957.

40. Emile Hugues, A.N., October 30, 1955; J.O., p. 5384.

41. Roger Gaborit, A.N., October 13, 1955; J.O., p. 5103.

42. Congress of U.D.S.R., November 8, 1953; cf. Le Monde, November 10, 1953.

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43. Raymond Barrillon, Le Monde, November 10, 1953.
44. January 30, 1958; cf. Le Monde, February 1, 1958.
45. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, June 8, 1957.
46. Raymond Barrillon, Le Monde, March 26, 1957.
47. André Morice, A.N., January 22, 1957; J.O., p. 190.
48. Jean-Michel Flandin, A.N., July 7, 1955; J.O., p. 3678.
49. Cf. Le Monde, June 4, 1957.
50. Cf. Le Monde, May 15, 1957.
51. Cf. Combat, October 4, 1955.
52. Cf. L'Express, October 17, 1955.
53. Roger Stéphane, L'Observateur, April 30, 1953.
54. Paul Dehème, Economie et Réalités Mondiales, January, 1953.
55. André Frossard, Bulletin de Paris, November 17, 1955.
56. Philippe Barrès, La victoire au dernier tournant, Paris, 1932, p. 97.
57. Pierre Pucheu, op. cit., p. 216.
58. Charles de Gaulle, L'unité, Paris, 1956, p. 299.
59. André Fontaine, Le Monde, May 4, 1956.
60. A.N., March 8, 1957; J.O., p. 1407.
61. Cf. Le Monde, June 18, 1953.
62. Jacques Fauvet, Le Monde, September 21, 1957.
63. Jacques Isorni, A.N., January 21, 1958; J.O., p. 162.
64. André Chênebenoit, Le Monde, December 12, 1952.
65. Le Canard Enchaîné, August 21, 1957.
66. Jacques Soustelle, A.N., September 26, 1957; J.O., p. 4387.

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2. L'Express, October 20, 1955.
3. Robert de Jouvenel, op. cit., p. 141.
4. N. Jacquefont, Le Monde, December 25, 1953.
5. Robert de Jouvenel, op. cit., p. 115.
6. Charles Morazé, Les Français et la République, Paris, 1956, p. 133.
7. Pierre Drouin, Le Monde, October 16, 1953.
8. Raymond Dronne, A.N., October 23, 1953; J.O., p. 4545.
9. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, A.N., January 17, 1957; J.O., p. 94.
10. Press conference, December 4, 1954.
11. A.N., November 12, 1957; J.O., p. 4725.
12. A.N., December 10, 1954; J.O., p. 6092.
13. A.N., August 5, 1954; J.O., p. 3860.
14. C.R., August 3, 1955; J.O., pp. 2189-2190.
15. Raymond Barrillon, Le Monde, December 29, 1954.
16. Edmond Barrachin, A.N., July 7, 1955; J.O., p. 3678.
17. Raymond Pinchard, C.R., August 3, 1955; J.O., p. 2176.
18. Cf. Jacques Benoist-Méchin, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 226.
19. Loc. cit., pp. 229-230.
20. Le Canard Enchaîné, December 16, 1953.
21. Pierre de Chevigné, A.N., July 28, 1955; J.O., p. 4438.

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22. Le Monde, April 8, 1953.

23. Jacques Dumaine, op. cit., p. 78.

24. Loc. cit., p. 281.

25. A.N., September 30, 1957; J.O., p. 4438.

26. Guy Mollet, A.N., May 17, 1957; J.O., p. 2564.

27. Madeleine Poinso-Chapuis, A.N., October 21, 1955; J.O., p. 5199.

28. Pierre André, A.N., November 19, 1957; J.O., p. 4869.

29. Félix Gaillard, A.N., November 5, 1957; J.O., p. 4633.

30. Raymond Barrillon, Le Monde, October 10, 1954.

31. Georges Hourdin, Le Monde, April 30, 1957.

32. Raymond Barrillon, Le Monde, December 9, 1952.

33. Pierre-Henri Teitgen, A.N., March 14, 1957; J.O., p. 1596.

34. Charles Daniélou, Dans l'intimité de Marianne, Paris, 1945, p. 145.

35. Philippe Barrès, op. cit., p. 26.

36. Le Monde, April 10, 1953.

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