# THE RISE OF THE FOURTH FRENCH REPUBLIC

by

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# PREFACE

France is a small caldron in which the great issues of our time are being smelted and refined. The issues are socialism from eastern Europe and human liberty which has its being chiefly in the Atlantic community. If France succeeds in transforming these forces into a new and dynamic doctrine, her achievement will help to stabilize the World. If she fails, a bastion of freedom shall be lost; and the democratic world will be less stable and the process of the adjustment more painful and prolonged. Daily radio broadcasts and news releases carry additional evidences of the ebb and flow of this process which holds world diplomatic maneuvers and political temperaments on a razor's edge. An understanding of the contributing forces will do much to help allay unnecessary anxiety over destiny shaking events.

When questions were raised in a Comparative Government discussion over elements in the newly reorganized French constitution which could not be answered with a feeling of certainty an excellent challenge was afforded for a graduate problem. Initial research on the question revealed such a rich field for further examination and study that thesis possibilities were considered.

It is the purpose of this study to present a compact analysis of the constitutional development in France from the time of the decline in effectiveness of the constitution

of the Third Republic until the adoption of the instrument establishing the Fourth Republic. To do this it will also be necessary to investigate and analyze the philosophical and idealogical changes and developments in order to understand their ramifications in the final document. It is hoped that such a study and evaluation will help give some coherence to events as they occur in France to the total world picture.

Acknowledgment for interested and valuable advice, information, time, service, and moral support is gratefully made to: Dr. A. Bower Sageser, graduate advisor; Mr. I. V. Iles, professor of Comparative Government; the staff of the department of History and Government at Kansas State College, who so willingly gave advice and encouragement; The French Embassy Information Service, for documentary information; the Kansas State College Library force; and all others who were so kind and helpful in many little ways in making this study a reality.

## CHAPTER I

## THE DECLINE OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC

In 1946 France had had more experience at drafting and adopting constitutions than had any other European people. Between 1789 and June 1940 she had no fewer than seven constitutions, each of which, with the exception of the one in 1875, was believed by its framers to be a movement of constructive statesmanship and worthy of a long life. The five documents comprising the constitutional foundation of the First Republic were a direct outgrowth of the popular demand for changes in the entire social structure of France. Each of these instruments elaborated the previous constitutional document after the duration of only a few years. Government under each of these instruments was unsatisfactory because of incompetent leadership to put the wishes of dominant political groups into practice.

The Second Republic attempted to secure more competent leadership for the political aspirations of various groups following an interim of absolutism and monarchy. The constituent convention provided a scheme of government that was simplicity itself. France was to have a president directly elected for a four-year term aided by an elective parliament with a single chamber. But again for lack of sufficiently competent leadership the Republic was replaced by monarchy and absolutism.

Out of the defeat in the Franco-Prussian War which

was the culmination of the absolutist regime there grew up an elected National Assembly with ill-defined powers to pass on terms of peace with Germany. Since power was so poorly defined and the emergency was acute the group assumed unlimited leadership. This assembly produced three acts which became the fundamental legal basis for the Third Republic. This basis was more fragmentary than comprehensive, but it endured because no system of political philosophy was embodied in it.

The legal basis of the Third Republic covered only the method of selecting the members of the National legislature, the executive power, and the organization of the Senate. Amendment was provided for by a vote of the National Assembly. Under such a broad flexible system many errors in administration and governmental functioning could and did occur. Many Frenchmen felt that the evils were the result of the difficult living conditions of the time which had a tendency to intensify the weaknesses in the constitutional system.

Three main defects were early discernable and they quickly became more complex and involved as administration intensified them. Such a broad flexible system gave much room for individualism on the part of elected and appointed officials in the exercise of their duties. This tendency was greatly augmented by the absence of a strong two-party system which might check radical departures from the orth-

odox in policy. So coupled, these conditions made for grave instability of the executive position, which caused many to fear collapse of the entire governmental structure during its entire life.

Shifty cabinets, generally taken as a symbol of parliamentary chaos and dry rot, were offset to a large extent by the extreme stability of the administration. Civil servants were responsible for the length of life accredited to the Third Republic. They were the great mass of the bureaucracy from the undersecretaries of ministry down to the lowliest officials who devoted a lifetime to public office. In practice these people made all decisions except the political ones.[1] This had a tendency to exercise a strongly conservative influence on National politics.

As in Germany before 1918, the collapse of the Third Republic appears much more as a breakdown of the military caste, dragging down with it the morale of the nation than as a result of the inadequacy of constitutional arrangements. France went through a period of acute internal crisis between World War I and World War II. She developed an unhealthy mental reaction to domestic problems and world affairs as she began to experience a sense of frustration in accomplishing reconstruction and a position in post-war Europe. Thefirst fundamental principle of her foreign policy, eastern alliances, had disappeared along with the

[1]Approximately a half-million candidates for positions were subjected to strict competitive examinations.

second principle, reassurance in the west. What balance of political stability had been achieved quickly vanished when the army began to sense that all effort or sacrifice would be useless in another war which was surely coming. Previously, the French squabbled over their domestic affairs, but unity would be automatically and immediately restored the moment there was a threat from the outside. In June 1940, this automatic regulation no longer operated. It was with ill-concealed reluctance that, following the British lead, war was declared on Germany. With an equal degree of reluctance and an unhealthy attitude of "defeatism" the war was promoted. Small wonder that in June 1940 France collapsed!

The French defeated themselves. What happened was the logical consequence of French history. Among the many conflicting views expressed concerning the fall of the Third Republic, a few substantial causes for its failure can be discerned. The French were the victims of a new type of mechanized warfare of such a nature that the defensive preparations of the Maginot Line proved inadequate. Political leadership in the Third Republic was corrupt and weak. Too long had the French been tolerant of bureaucratic, slothful, and ineffective leadership. When France adopted the authoritarian form of government which was centered in Vichy no fascist mass party, which today is the indispensable prerequisite of popular upheavals, was in existence. It was a coup d'etat from above, a deliberate act of the defeated military leaders and their political advisers - in short a

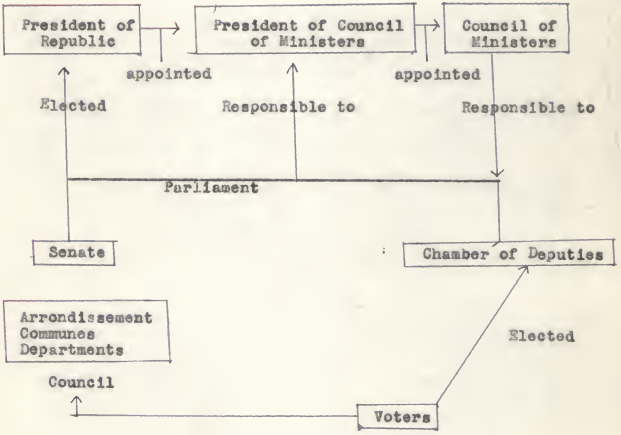


Fig. 1. Structure of the government of the Third Republic.[1]

[1]Herman Beukema, Contemporary Foreign Governments (New York, 1946), 66.

skillfully engineered political stratagem.

The new government which was established was, according to George Soloveytchik, writing in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, "composed partly of political perverts and adventurers, partly of paid traitors, and partly of honest but misguided men who thought they could do no better because the struggle against Germany had come to an end."[1] For the first two and a half years of its existence the Vichy Government followed a policy which fluctuated between subservience to Germany and semi-independence based on Germany's increasing difficulties on the battle fronts. The basis of its power both internal and international was fourfold. The control of the French Army[2] was retained as was that of the Mediterranean fleet. Administration of the unoccupied southern zone gave Vichy officials some opportunity for precarious and spasmodic freedom of action. These powers plus the person of Petain, who was the rallying point for popular confidence gave enough prestige to the government to make it at least the de-facto government of unoccupied France.

The de-facto government promulgated various reforms in an attempt to meet some of the evils of the Third Republic. An authoritarian administration was established to replace representative government by giving the legislative constit-

[1] George Soloveytchik, "Some Permanent Aspects of French Policy," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 234:54-60 (July, 1944).

[2] The "Armistice Army" was composed of 100,000 men. See David Thomson, "Storm Clouds over France," Contemporary Review, 165:145-51 (March, 1944).

uent power to the cabinet. The cabinet itself was revised so that only ten agencies dealt with the domestic and foreign problems of the government. To enforce the administrative decrees the civil service ratings were withheld from all applicants and given only sparingly to those of established French Nationality. All communal and municipally elected councils of more than 2,000 members were abolished in order to give the positions to government appointed members.

As the people began to recover from the stunning blows of constitutionally administered reforms, they realized that the war was still going on and that there was no basis for so close a collaboration with Germany; a collaboration which demanded a submission of deeply revered and strongly rooted liberties to a hated authoritarian conquorer. They began to organize resistance. The changes in France following the armistice in June 1940 can be summarized roughly as follows: 1940, stupor; 1941, uncertainty and resignation; 1942, disillusionment; and 1943, revolt.

The resistance movement served as a transformation of healthy plasma to a dying France. Secretly and slowly new strength and energy flowed into the veins of former basic ideals and forces in French life. Rapidly the old automatic transition to unity took place in the shadows of the Vichy regime. In the shadows was effected what had been impossible in the bright light of liberty and freedom. A member of the underground expressed the attitude of the

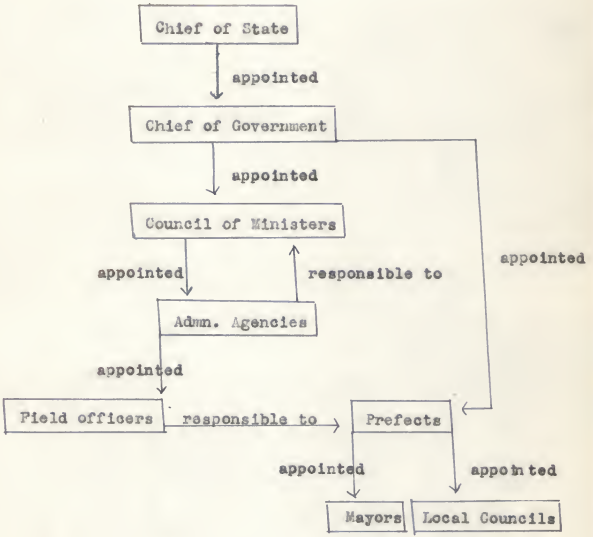


Fig. 2. The Government of Vichy[1]

[1]Beukema, op. cit, 84.

French people very aptly by saying that never were they freer than under the German occupation. The more the Nazi venom crept into their thoughts the more each precise thought became a conquest.[1] Thus in blood and shadows a republic erected itself; perhaps the strongest of republics yet known for the French.

The newly erected republic, existing in the fear of momentary extinction by Vichy or Germany if it be discovered, assumed the guise of the F.F.I.[2] with ill-defined leadership. The closest form of leadership which could be recognized for the embryo state was in the form of one of two men; Henri Giraud, the Commander of Colonial forces in North Africa; or Charles deGaulle, the organizer of the underground of occupied France.

Gradually deGaulle struck the popular imagination as a great hero in France's fight for freedom, and he quickly gained popular favor. To the people, he was a near-mystic figure in the crusade against the forces of evil. DeGaulle, however, was not a mystic figure; but a person of great practical mental capacities. He had long tried in vain to persuade France to scrap the antiquated theories of warfare then being applied. For twenty years, in lectures, magazine articles, and in his book, Toward the Career Army, he had urged the creation of a motorized and armored force. He

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[1] Jean Paul Sartre, "Paris Alive, The Republic of Silence," Atlantic Monthly, 174:39-40 (December, 1944).
[2] French Forces of the Interior.

actually prophesied that the future professional army would roll entirely on caterpillars.[1] Immediately upon the collapse of France he recognized the need for strong leadership and organization which might demand the support of the French populace in opposition to Vichy and at the same time provide a framework to crystalize the soluble republic of the F.F.I. This he accomplished in London where he had escaped at the time of France's capitulation. His famous clarion call for resistance, "France has lost a battle but she has not lost the war," was his point of departure. As support for the movement grew and acts of resistance became more frequent and effective deGaulle made longer range plans for the establishment of a Fourth Republic in France.

To fulfill these plans deGaulle moved in 1943 to Algiers to work with the French Government already located there. Although no French Colony was self-governing, certain colonies such as Algiers were treated as integral parts of France. French colonists and citizens, including certain categories of natives within them, were privileged to elect representatives to the French Parliament. For local governmental purposes these areas were organized into departments and governed according to the pattern established in France. Algeria was completely unlike European France, however, in that it had not experienced invasion, its food restrictions were more bearable and the Vichy dictatorship was milder in character. In such a situation it was easy

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[1] Newsweek, 15:20 (June 17, 1940).

to find the core for a government-in-exile when Germany began to deny Vichy more and more power. The French settlers in Algeria favored resistance to the Nazis, but they were far from supporting deGaulle. The same mood prevailed in the army and navy.

Admiral Darlan, a Vichite head of the French Army, headed the North African government from November 11, 1942 until his assassination on December 24, 1942. He pledged full support to the United Nation's cause and became High Commissioner of the French government-in-exile in Africa under their authority. He created the Imperial Council of French Africa as his advisory body. Upon his death, General Giraud, a French officer who had recently escaped from a German fortress where he had been held as a prisoner-of-war, was elected his successor. As such, Giraud held the position from December 27, 1942 until June 3, 1943.

DeGaulle feared the consequences in the future government of France if the supporters of Vichy remained in control in the government in Algiers. On Bastile Day, July 14, 1943, in line with his long range policy he issued an appeal to the general mass of the French people to transfer their support from the exiled government to the Committee of National Liberation.[1] This committee would serve as the trustee of France which would be the means of securing the Fourth Republic of the Future.

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[1]Hereafter referred to as the C.N.L.

In the declaration of intent for such an organization it was stated that power would be surrendered to a provisional French government at the earliest possible moment, presumably as soon as all or the greater part of French territory was liberated. In the meantime the C.N.L. was to constitute a directing committee of people who would be in charge of various services. Also it was to form a larger council than in the Vichy controlled government-in-exile, where distinguished or representative Frenchmen would be able to deliberate on French affairs and give advice to the administration.

Many conflicting points of view as to the composition of the administrative organization of the C.N.L. beset deGaulle as he attempted to put functional teeth into his program. There were three forces which vied for acceptance; parliamentarians; those who felt France should be made unified through her governmental executive; and those who strongly supported the interests of Giraud. After much compromising the committee's executive consisted of an executive commission of seven members[1] with the two generals, Giraud and deGaulle, sharing the presidency. From the appointments of this executive arrangement came the cabinet members who by cooler headed actions maintained a balance between governmental policies and the hot-headed quarreling generals.[2]

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[1] Henri Giraud, Charles deGaulle, General George Catroux, Jean Monnet, General Alphonse Georges, Rene Maseigli, Andre Philip.

[2] Especially was balance maintained by the efforts of Catroux and Monnet.

The cabinet was made aware of the wishes and desires of the supporters of the C.N.L. by means of the Consultative Assembly. This assembly served as a sounding board for as much public opinion as was available. Still it was something different from a single consultative body for it legislated as well as offered suggestions. Hence, in effect a new parliamentary form was born. Certainly it was representative of occupied France's opinion for 45 out of its 100 members had left France in October and November of 1943, delegated by the resistance and the other political parties to represent them. From the maze of underground resistance arose several well-knit, capably managed organizations. The most important of these were: The National Front, made up largely of Communists; The National Liberation Movement, a federation of people of divergent political tendencies; and a half dozen or so secondary groups including those called Liberation Combat, Liberation North, and Civil and Military Organizations. Consumation of unity in the assembly so constituted was retarded for many months because of deep idealogical differences and personal rivalry between Giraud and deGaulle.

Once this group became the head of the government of France, it acted quickly. Three acts followed each other in rapid succession. First the French Empire was pledged to fight until there should be unconditional surrender of all the Axis powers. Then the people were again reassured that the C.N.L. would surrender power as soon as liberation

of the Metropolitan territory would permit, at the latest at the time of total liberation of France. And finally the United States and Britain were formally notified of the existence of the C.N.L. But under the surface of the brilliant start dissention and lack of harmony were becoming evident. Giraud had presided over the session of the assembly independently of deGaulle after deGaulle had expressly stated that for the best interests of everyone they both should preside. A second snag was struck shortly after the opening of the session which brought the undercurrent of discontent bubbling forth into a fountain of conflict. When it was suggested that a purge be made of all Vichites, Giraud seriously objected on the grounds that the C.N.L. could take no such action. Then in rapid succession deGaulle demanded in addition to support of the proposal that the C.N.L. be wholly civilian; a larger executive group with virtually a full-fledged cabinet; a stronger French representation in Allied councils be maintained to defend sovereign French rights abroad; and all Vichy legislation in liberated French territory be annulled.[1]

The spirit of the new regime which the French people were seeking in their liberation has been defined by the Paris paper, Le Populaire, in the following way:

> Like almost the entire nation we want an honest regime, at once strong and democratic, resting firmly on universal suffrage and--- while respecting and promoting human freedom

[1] Newsweek, 21:63 (June 14, 1943)

and dignity---firmly resolved to brush aside everything that is opposed to the interests of the community.[1]

The maintenance, in the face of popular sentiment, of the Vichy order of things rather than the institution of the pure republican form government seemed to be the crux of the dispute between Giraud and deGaulle. As long as the conflict was unresolved the claimants to supersede Vichy's authority were twofold, the conservative Giraudists and the revolutionary deGaullists. DeGaulle wanted not only to liberate but also to "renovate". He called for new men and new methods of government. He wanted more than a Fourth Republic, he wanted one that would work. In other words, he wanted both a political and an economic revolution and a transfer of power, but the Gaullists were the most dynamic in urging a change in the constitutional form of government. Without defining it, they wanted a political revolution with a strong central authority, supported according to the Resistance organization by a single party.

The issue turned on the question, whether France will face the future, as Giraud would have it, on the foundations which proved too weak to stand the strain of crushing social problems, or whether it would accept as real the forced liquidation of ancient internal hatreds and confront the future with new men fresh ideas and more solid bases. Some attempt was made by the C.N.L. to compromise the problem

[1]David Thomson, "The Fourth Republic," Contemporary Review, 166:199 (October, 1944).

by a reorganization which might make the administration reflect more adequately the political composition of France.[1] Still the conflict was not reconciled. Giraud who was deeply interested in the welfare of France, rather than sacrifice unity, withdraw into the background of official activity. The resignation symbolized the strength of the democratic idea within the committee, and a new beginning in French politics.

DeGaulle might have been challenged in his position as leader, if the resistance had set up in the Consultative Assembly a group who were prone later to break away and take over the control of post-war politics. But they were more concerned with keeping their best men in the underground where they might be more useful. Hence deGaulle remained unchallenged until after the first National election in October 1945. Unchallenged; in France, but among the Allies favor for deGaulle and his actions did not reach the high point that it did in France.

In England and the United States, the idea progressively gained ground that deGaulle without the knowledge of the French people had developed a "dictatorial complex." But opposition to deGaulle was not motivated by the Allied regard for the democratic wishes of the French people. No such concern had been shown in Italy, Spain, or Poland, rather France was to be held to a second class position to

[1] Structure of the revised executive of the C.N.L.: 5 Parliamentarians, 2 Socialists, 2 Radicals, 1 Moderate, 4 representing resistance movements, 3 supporting deGaulle from the beginning, and 2 designated by Giraud.

check any tendency for social and economic changes demanded by deGaulle blocking the conservative British system in western and southern Europe. Probably the United States' support for the advancement of any British policy which might serve as a buffer between the problems of Europe and the United States combined with the deep personal imcompatibility of deGaulle and Franklin Roosevelt played a large part in the diplomatic deadlock over recognition of the C.N.L.

In 1942 a United States memo to deGaulle did accord recognition to his government as a military organization but not as the de-facto government, by stating:

> The government of the United States recognizes the contributions of deGaulle and the work of the French National Committee in keeping alive the spirit of French traditions and institutions and believes that the military aims necessary for an effective prosecution of the war and hence the realization of our combined aims are the best advanced by lending all possible military assistance and support to the French National Committee as a symbol of French resistance in general against the Axis Powers . . .
>
> The government of the United States wholeheartedly agrees with the views of the British government, which is also known to be the view of the French National Committee, that the destiny and political organization of France must in the last analysis, be determined by free expression of the French people under conditions giving them freedom to express their designs unswayed by any form of coercion.[1]

Not all of deGaulle's efforts for more permanent recognition were completely fruitless, however, for tentative recognition of the C.N.L. was given by Great Britain and

[1] C. E. Black, "Now Fighting France," Current History, NS. 5:42 (September, 1942).

the United States at the Conference of Quebec in August of 1943.

Still in quest of more complete recognition deGaulle went to Moscow in November 1943 for talks with Joseph Stalin. The discussions which took place there were secret, but upon his return to Algiers deGaulle completely reorganized the C.N.L. forcing Giraud entirely out of his position in the Consultative Assembly to which he had retired upon resignation from the presidency. Some well-known parliamentarians who had been formerly excluded were then included. This act was undoubtedly in compliance with commitments made in Moscow or with the new ideas of political philosophy gained from the Russian system.

The gravitation toward Russia had a simple basis. Stalin had never shown any inclination to diminish French sovereignty. On the contrary he had been most urgent in wishing its re-establishment and in recognizing the Algiers government as the authority qualified to preserve it. In spite of the movement towards Russia the other Allies did not grant complete recognition.

Even partial recognition on the part of some of the Allies strengthened by complete Russian support was enough to give a new feeling of encouragement to deGaulle. In the light of the reorganization in the administration the Consultative Assembly used the term provisional government in presenting the president of the C.N.L. So enthusiastically was the title received that immediately deGaulle was

advised to rename the Committee. He did, on the same day, indicating that for convenience sake it would go into effect June 2 of the same year.

The change in name had brought about the hope on the part of deGaulle that he might continue to govern France during the interim between liberation and the elections, but the Allies had consistently during the German occupation favored either Vichy or Giraud. Even at the time of liberation they were still reluctant to grant recognition to deGaulle.

As the liberating armies moved into France, utter confusion reigned concerning sovereignty. DeGaulle had visited Normandy prior to the invasion, at which time he appointed representatives to take charge when liberation occurred. In place of these authorities assuming responsibilities for administration the Allies had planned for military men assigned by General Dwight Eisenhower to fit into civil administrative positions immediately upon liberation. DeGaulle objected so seriously to this that for the sake of unity Allied officials allowed him to address the people of France immediately following a statement of Allied governmental policy given by Eisenhower. The net result was confusion.

In an attempt to relieve the confusion deGaulle was invited to discuss the questions with Roosevelt. At that time an accord was effected which was worked out in detail by Allied and French experts. Still the chief stumbling block lay in the contention that the consultative Assembly

was not representative. Its general acceptance by the French people however was above questioning. The Council of Ministers had changed much in composition from the first days of the C.N.L., always to include more and more members of the resistance groups. It ruled by ordinances and decrees based broadly upon the laws of the Third Republic with sanction from the various resistance groups, former political parties, and the great trade unions as well as delegates from overseas possessions. It further functioned under a solumn promise to convoke a Constituent Assembly as soon as possible.[1] In the face of such conditions the Big Three finally granted complete recognition on October 23, 1944.

Even with recognition France found it difficult to get along smoothly with her Allies. She was more interested in her own governmental affairs than in those affecting some remote Nation or group of Nations. On November 20, 1944, the Consultative Assembly met in Paris for the first time and the people settled down to a period of constructive government building.

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[1]See deGaulle's "Government of the Republic" speech given to the Consultative Assumbly in Paris on September 13, 1944. Available in Vital Speeches, 11:73-75 (November 15, 1944).

## CHAPTER II

## THE PERIOD OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Liberation of French territory by the combined efforts of the Allies and the F.F.I. brought a wave of wild optimism to the French people. They not only hoped an opportunity had presented itself which would enable them to establish a stable government but also to rebuild their calorie deficient diet, their mine and rubble infested land, their bomb-racked homes, and their war-shattered family and social life. When it became clear that the Battle for Germany would continue during the winter of 1944-45 the sense of expectation and hope gave way to uneasiness. It was in this atmosphere of growing anxiety that the Provisional Government of the French Republic, formed by General deGaulle, took office on September 9, 1944.

Even as early as the days of Algiers, deGaulle had won the adherence of the French masses because, without mentioning the word "revolution," he nevertheless represented a revolutionary idea. The program which united Communists, Radicals, Socialists, Christian Democrats, Resistance Delegates, and the C.G.T.[1] in the Assembly and in the reconstituted committee of April 1 (The Government of Rassemblement National) was revolutionary. "Against collaborators and trusts!" meant that liberation would be

[1] Confederation Generale du Travail.

accompanied by the transfer of power from the dominant classes, which is the essence of any revolution. Before 1940, no French Government could function except by the grace of the real holders of authority, the 200 banking, industrial and landholding families who, with trusts, press, and an effective liaison with the Army ran the country. France had rejected the leadership of the old bourgeois parties because to them were assigned the historical responsibilities for Fascism, war, and national disaster.

DeGaulle took office at the head of a nineteen-man cabinet. Most of his ministers[1] had held equivalent positions in the C.N.L. in Algiers, but new names on the list showed the influence of the forces of French resistance. Owing to the close contacts which the Provisional Government kept with the underground leaders the reestablishment of authority in liberated French territory proceeded with remarkable smoothness. The administrative positions were immediately given to the resistance workers. For after all, the people who stayed in France were the ones who were eventually going to have the final voice in the Government. They were going to take dictation from no one. On the whole they knew little of deGaulle, his struggle with Giraud, or the intricacies of Free French politics. They had nothing against him as a person, but in order to make good in France he had to satisfy them.

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[1]Officially named commissioners.

The Provisional Government thus established in France could claim no electoral sanction but its general acceptance by the French people as a whole was not open to serious doubt. The Council of Ministers had changed much in composition from the days of Algiers, with the tendency always to include a greater proportion of members from the resistance groups. It ruled by ordinance and decree, basing its authority broadly upon the laws of the Third Republic. The Consultative Assembly too had been reorganized before it met in November of 1944 in its first session in liberated France. There were 102 seats in the original organization which were later expanded to 248.[1] Sanction was received wherever it could be found from the support of resistance groups, former political parties, trade unions, and delegates from overseas territories. It constantly functioned under a solemn oath to convoke a constituent assembly as soon as the 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 Frenchmen held in Germany could return to make a National election possible.[2]

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[1] Resistance members in Metropolitan France 148
Resistance members from overseas 28
Former Parliament members 60
(in proportion to party strength in the Chamber of Deputies as of Sept. 3, 1939)
Representatives from overseas territories 12
*Time*, 44:35 (November 20, 1944).
Ernest J. Knapton, "The Balance Sheet in France," *Current History*, 8:230 (March, 1945).

[2] The "absent ones" numbered nearly 3,000,000 prisoners proper, conscripted workers, and political hostages.
755,000 in German oflags and stalags
225,000 captive soldiers supposedly transformed into free men
600,000 drafted laborers
600,000 deported on political and racial grounds
450,000 Alsatians and Lorrainers
plus casuals and unrejected.
*New York Times Magazine*, 9 (April 15, 1945).

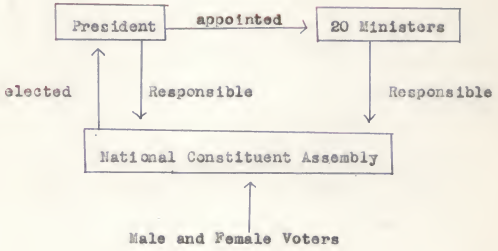


Fig. 3. Structure of the Provisional Government[1]

[1]Herman Beukema, Contemporary Foreign Governments (New York, 1946), 95.

In its reaction to the new government the Paris press varied from enthusiastic to polite. The French people were still too absorbed in collaborationist hunts and private squabbles to acclaim or attack it. Foreign reaction, however, was most emphatic. Recognition was still withheld by the majority of the Allied powers, primarily because they felt the Assembly lacked sufficient representation of popular sentiment. After the Government had been in operation for nearly a month the support of the prisoners who began to arrive home in torrents rather than the expected rivulets, stimulated the foreign powers to revise their approach and attitude. On October 23, 1944, the Big Three officially recognized the international status of the Provisional Government, and on December 10, 1944, Russia signed a 20 year alliance with France.

Quietly, as though there had been no long and terrible interruption, France began her first free election campaign in five years. Throughout the campaign it became evident that most Frenchmen did not want to return to the inept rule of "professional politicians" in a government dominated by a bickering Parliament. During the long period of its existence, Vichy propaganda was rejected by both the heart and brain of the bulk of the French people. Its effects were telling in many ways. One of the direct results was to convince the average Frenchmen that the Third Republic had been rotten to the core and that every individual associated with it should be looked upon with suspicion, sus-

picion of dishonesty or inefficiency, or both. This was made clear in the clandestine publications of the French Underground during the period of occupation.

The word revolution ran throughout the publications of the underground. But, the term was used in the sense of a complete renovation rather than a systematic break with the past. The French did not wish to break with their past, rather they thought a return to the basic traditions would be indispensible to the moral health of the nation. The notion of liberty, which is founded on faith in reason; of equality, which pre-supposes respect for the individual; and of fraternity, which is but another aspect of the French genius for the universal, were still fundamental notions to the French. To them it seemed that the Third Republic failed, not because it entertained such ideas, but because it did not sufficiently cherish them. Hence, the problem of reconstruction was first and foremost a moral problem.[1]

A year and a half before liberation, the various political and resistance groups had been more or less consolidated in the National Council of Resistance.[2] In March of 1944, this organization finally achieved a definite program of action for the postwar period, known as the Resistance Charter. In broad outline the charter called for the continued unity of the resistance groups after liber-

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[1]Andre Messard, "Plans for a New France," New Republic, 111:30 (September 11, 1944).

[2]C.N.R.

ation in order to defend the political and economic independence of France; punishment of traitors who had actively collaborated with the enemy; maintenance of the democratic freedom of press, conscience, and assembly; and achievement of "indispensible reforms." The most important feature of the charter was its insistence that, in the desperate situation in which France found itself, some form of planned economy was needed. Specifically in its short term policy it asked for, first of all, a policy of nationalization which would include confiscation of illicit fortunes gained either by unpatriotic collaboration or chauvinistic crookedness, a limit on the size of lawful fortunes, and abolishment of trusts. Second, it asked that all collaborators be sought out and punished. Third, it was suggested that to give the little fellow a chance a work's committee be set up to study and deal with his problems. And fourth, the program called for a renovation of the army in an attemot to check the recurrence of the situation of June 1940. Finally it proposed that a vote of no confidence of the cabinet be accompanied by the dissolution of the chamber followed by a new election in order to put an end to the parade of cabinets which had so long disgraced parliamentary activity.[1]

But faced with the problem of changing from a destructive to a constructive attitude, the resistance political

[1]Winifred N. Hadsel, "France Since Liberation," Foreign Policy Report, 22:28 (April 15, 1946).

groups disintegrated in their unity. After the Provisional Consultative Assembly convened at Paris it soon became clear that a crucial question from the political viewpoint was the ultimate status of the resistance groups. So completely did they become merged with longer established groups of the former Third Republic that they rapidly lost their importance as an agency of political influence. The parties which appealed to the greatest number of resisters were those embodying socialism in one guise or another. Especially since it had become apparent that in order to resume even a semblance of the former framework the future must provide for some plan for submission of private interests to public interests, prevention of the exploitation of the national assets for the benefit of the few, and the abolition of cartels.

DeGaulle clearly recognized and included these new attitudes in his request on governmental action. In addressing the Consultative Assembly in Paris on March 2, 1945, he said that he believed there were three bases upon which France could and should build a new prosperity; greater and more rational production resulting from a frank association of all men, who in their various offices would cooperate in all undertakings; state action which would be careful not to crush the initiative of competition and just profit and at the same time hold the principle levers of command. The state alone should be qualified to act so that the multiple component parts would form a whole, and

would be integrated with the whole of world economic development. He further added that it was the State's prerogative to insure by itself the development of the great sources of energy: coal, electricity, petroleum, as well as the principal means of transportation on which all else depends. It was the State which must control credit in such a way that it would be able to divert national economy toward the vast investments which are needed for such developments, and to prevent groups of private interests from opposing the general interests.[1]

To put these new attitudes into administrative practice proved to be a greater task than it appeared on the surface. A number of clashes in political viewpoints and ideals arose to complicate the matter of quickly re-establishing a workable foundation for the government. Those who left France during the occupation were challenged by those who had remained, as to the former's right to participate actively in the government. Those who wished a limited form of authoritarianism as the new governmental form were criticized by those who felt only a democratic government with complete civil liberty for all would work; while those who wanted lenient treatment of collaborationists were severly antagonized by those demanding mass executions as the only just treatment. None of the groups could arrive at a satisfactory agreement as to the mode

[1]Vital Speeches, 11:359-62 (April 1, 1945).

of procedure to be followed in the national elections.

Some people, with deGaulle as their leader, were opposed to the laws of 1875 because they felt that in order to resurrect France and safeguard her in a world threatened by new vicissitudes it was wise and necessary to establish a presidential type of government. The principal feature of the presidential regime as it was understood in Europe in general consisted of a president chosen by an electoral body larger than Parliament. The President in turn would choose ministers responsible to him and would have the recognized right to dissolve Parliament for a direct appeal to the people. Such a situation in France, however, could lead only in the direction of despotism.

In the meantime, in place of parliamentary rule, until the problem could be solved, deGaulle established a government in which the powers of the President and Premier were combined in the hands of the President of the Provisional Government while parliamentary powers were severely limited and placed in the Consultative Assembly's scope of influence.

As an aseptic start the Gaullist Government formally abolished the French State of Petain. In law, it proclaimed, the Third Republic had never ceased to exist. To quiet the clamor of the resistance movement for a bigger administrative role, deGaulle reshuffled his cabinet twice within two weeks. And to curb the great man hunt sweeping the country all resisters still grouped in independent bands were asked to give up their arms. But all did not go well.

The first political test came almost immediately when many F.F.I. men objected to the disarmament order. The resistance council announced that in preference to forfeiting their leftist organization they intended to arrange a more active new French Army. Opposition also reared its head in deGaulle's cabinet as two Communist members openly attacked the General with the charge that he was treating the resistance movement as a negligible quantity. Other problems, bringing the party divisions in the nation to the surface of the political scene, also were subject to heated debates and near governmental collapse. The C.G.T., with Communist support, asked for a flat 40 per cent wage increase throughout France in place of the former local-scale plan then in use.

The first opportunity for the French voters to declare their sympathies at the ballot box occurred April 29 and May 13, 1945, when communal councils were elected. On September 23 and 30 of the same year cantonal elections were held. Temporary local governmental organizations had been established until elections could be held. The laws of the Third Republic affecting the election of municipal and departmental officials had been restored in 1945. It was under these conditions that the voting took place. These two elections, each requiring second ballotings to determine final choices, did not clearly reveal political alignments.[1] Local personalities and issues were consider-

[1]Philip W. Buck and John W. Masland, The Governments of Foreign Powers (New York, 1947), 166.

able factors, and more than 20 parties put forward lists of candidates. Nevertheless these elections had a considerable value, for after a political blackout which had lasted more than four years active campaigning stimulated interest in public affairs and gave leaders an opportunity to meet the voters.

In October 1945 and in June and November 1946 national elections were held. Interest in all contests was keen with 80 per cent or more of the voters participating on each occasion. A form of proportional election according to the principles set forth in the Ordinance of August 17, 1945, was used. It tried to do away with some of the evils associated with the system used by the Third Republic. One hundred three small constituencies were drawn up, each with a minimum of two and a maximum of nine deputies, the average being five. The voters in each department then cast their ballot for the party list[1] which contained a candidate for every seat. The utilization of unused votes through a system of national pooling of remainders was ruled out. Thus each constituency elected the full number of deputies allotted to it, using the method of the highest average resulting from successive divisions.[2] Full party control

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[1] scrutin de liste.

[2] See appendix A.
Mario Einaudi, "Political Changes in France and Italy," Frederic Pottecher, "The Constitutional Debate in France," Nation, 161:231 (September 22, 1945).
Buck, op. cit., 166.

was imposed by also ruling out preferential voting: candidates were to be elected rapidly in the order of their inclusion in each list with the order dictated nearly always by what the French like to call the "general staffs" of the several parties. Clearly this system favored the country at the expense of urban centers, particularly the laboring centers, for there were no up-to-date statistics upon which to base the establishment of the new departments. DeGaulle gave his support to the election of October 21, 1945, but the left offered opposition primarily because they felt the electoral machinery gave the rural voters greater voice.

In the electoral campaign public opinion was divided between two opposing tendencies. The parties and "movements" which arose in the resistance experience definitely supported the concept of a single-all-powerful Constituent Assembly to which the government should be entirely responsible. The Radical Socialists and some of the Socialists on the other hand were equally opposed to such a solution. The dispute began the day deGaulle asserted that a sovereign Constituent Assembly might lead to dictatorship. He further complicated the issue by saying that pending the formation of a new constitution the government should not be answerable to the Assembly except in matters having to do with the budget, military affairs, structural changes, and the ratification of treaties.[1] Immediately

[1]Frederic Pottecher, "The Constitutional Debate in France," Nation, 161:280 (September 22, 1945).

EXPLANATION OF PLATE I

National Constituent Assembly Elections 1945-1946[1]

Abbreviations used
All. dem. - Alliance Democratique (moderate right)
Entente rep. - Entente republicaine
Fed. rep. - Federation republicaine
Jeune rep. - Jeune republique (reformist republican)
M.L.N. - Movement de liberation Nationale (Northern resistance)
MRP - Parti Republicain Populaire (Catholic Moderate)
PRL - Parti Republicain de la Liberate (rightist and conservative)
Rad. Socialists - Radical Socialiste
SFIO - Section Francaise de l'Internationale Ouvriere (Socialist)
UDSR - Union democratique et Socialiste de resistance (reformist group of resistance)

[1]Buck, op. cit., 167.

| Parties | Popular Vote | | | | | | Seats | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1945 | | June 1946 | | Nov. 1946 | | | | |
| | Millions | % | Millions | % | Millions | % | 1945 | June 1946 | Nov. 1946 |
| Left | | | | | | | | | |
| International Communists | 0.01 | 0.07 | 0.04 | 0.25 | .... | 0.3 | 154 | 148 | 168 |
| Communists & U.SSR. | 3.00 | 26.1 | 5.14 | 25.98 | 5.2 | 28.2 | | | |
| SFIO; SFIO-UDSR; SFIO-MLN | 4.49 | 23.4 | 4.19 | 25.14 | 4.2 | 17.9 | 136 | 120 | 107 |
| Rad. Socialists; UDSR; Jeune Rep.; & other lefts | 2.02 | 10.6 | 2.30 | 11.6 | 1.97 | 11.1 | 41 | 40 | 45 |
| Center | | | | | | | | | |
| MRP | 4.58 | 23.9 | 5.59 | 28.22 | 5.03 | 26. | 145 | 162 | 160 |
| Right | | | | | | | | | |
| Entente Rep.; All. Dem.; Fed. Rep.; Parti Paysanne PRL and other rights | 2.89 | 15.2 | 2.53 | 12.77 | 3.14 | 16 | 43 | 43 | 82 |
| Other Unaffiliated | | | | | | | | | |
| Algerian group and Independents | 0.11 | 0.6 | 0.01 | 0.06 | 0.09 | 0.5 | 8 | 11 | 12 |

a storm arose in which the majority of delegates in the Consultative Assembly ranged themselves against deGaulle, for they charged he had sacrificed the best interests of France in the hope of securing personal power. An ultimate compromise which submitted a dual referendum plus the scrutin de liste to the voters solved the crisis with little damage to France's program of recovery and reconstruction: 1. Shall the newly elected Assembly draft a constitution for the Fourth Republic? and 2. If so, shall the provisional government of deGaulle continue to exercise full power while the constitution is being drafted?

Much confusion resulted in the minds of the voters as to the correct way of answering all the questions on the ballot. There were 2,500 candidates for the 586 assembly seats in addition to the dual referendum. At the polls, however, men and women alike asserted by a resounding majority their support for a Constituent Assembly much to the left[1] in character which would draft a new constitution and provide a speeded up program for socialistic reform. In addition by not quite so large a majority, the strong executive interim government was also approved.

Soon after the liberation of France it became evident that a change had come over the political thinking of the people. They were more than ever wed to the principles of self-government, but they were also keenly aware of the

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[1]See chart on page 35.

need for meeting economic and social problems with a modern system of government. This awareness led them to reject the constitution of 1875. Never had a bitterly contested French election made a trio of rivals so happy as the Communists, the Socialists, and the new Popular Republicans when the returns were made known following the October elections. Still it was surprising that the elections passed off so calmly and left the voters feeling so strong. The voters had been warned about so many things not to do and they were advised as to the correct procedure in the marking of the ballots.[1]

Certain important trends were clearly revealed in the elections. First, the nation was overwhelmingly in favor of breaking with the Third Republic. Ninety-six and four tenths per cent of the voters favored a new constitution while only 3.6 per cent requested retaining the one of 1875 with modifications. The party most closely associated with the Third Republic, the Radical Socialists, with the rightist Union Republicain Democratique pooled only 45 seats out of the 522 in the Assembly. Second, majorities slightly smaller than those favoring a new document wished the transformation to be under the direction of deGaulle.

[1]Because so many voters were inexperienced they were told what to do and what not to forget; to bring their elector's cards, their identity papers, and a fountain pen, or at least a colored pencil for an ordinary pencil invalidated the ballot. They were sternly warned not to drop ink spots, not to dog-ear the ballot, tear it, crumple it, or even smudge it.

Third, even though deGaulle was still a symbol of national unity a majority of the voters held views well to the left of the Provisional Government.[1] Fourth, three parties of approximately the same strength and approximately the same program of structural reform, divided between the Communists, Socialists, and the M.R.P.[2] over three-fourths of the seats.

Although the new "Big Three" had similar programs for economic and social reforms and were moved by the spirit of the Resistance, it would be misleading to picture a state of perfect harmony among them. No longer in France were there two blocs of opposing forces on economic issues. But the accumulated grievances and philosophical differences that create an atmosphere of mistrust still existed. Essentially the left feared the dictatorship of one man; and the right, the dictatorship of the working classes.

The Socialist party derived its greatest strength from the working and lower middle class. They advocated a program of socialization of key industries with a large sector of productivity retained for free enterprise. In regard to the Fourth Republic they favored a strong, popularly elected executive with a single-chambered parliament aided and assisted by a consultative chamber of experts from trade unions, business, and agricultural interests. In the event of parliamentary lack of confidence in the government, they favored the British plan of dissolution of Par-

[1] See Appendix A.
[2] Parti Republicain Populaire.

liament and the calling of a new election. In foreign affairs they advocated democratization of all nations and an alliance with Great Britain to create a better balance in international affairs.

In the October 21 elections, the Communists emerged as the largest single party when they obtained 151 of the 522 seats in the Assembly. Many of their popular votes came, however, not from general support of the party but because many of their candidates had been run on other party tickets. Their strength might be attributed partly to the record of Communists elsewhere in the world and partly to the revolutionary mood of many people of western Europe during the post-war dislocation. On the constitutional issue they were in favor of continuing the strong assembly-weak executive idea of the Third Republic. But a system of checks and balances between branches of the government was definitely not looked upon with favor. Broad control of economic life and a Soviet alliance were remaining strong planks in their platform.

The platform of the new M.R.P., known as the Popular Democratic or Social Catholic Party before the war, appealed much to the conservatives who feared the radical Left-wing parties. The social and economic program was similar to that of the Socialists but the approach to the problems was tinged with a greater religious fervor. On constitutional questions too the platforms were similar

except that the M.R.P. favored a two-chambered parliament with political power centered in the lower chamber as a check on political emotionalism. DeGaulle, to them, was the one who could accomplish the task of fulfilling the program.

The results of the elections were due not merely to the working of the electoral law or to the presence of temporary circumstances operating to the disadvantage of the older traditional parties. The attempt to show that a great difference is to be found between the French local elections of September and the national elections of October does not seem to be based on a very strong foundation, for in both elections slightly more than half of the votes went to the two Marxist parties. The only significant difference is in the better showing of the Radical Socialists in the local elections. This was to be expected in contests where personalities and concrete issues weighed more than general principles. The pressure of national problems was little felt, and the traditional strength of the Radical Socialists asserted itself to some extent. But the weaknesses of the older parties revealed themselves and new movements proved their strength when the needs of the country as a whole came to the front in October.

Despite the differences among the three major parties, the Assembly elected deGaulle president of the new popularly sanctioned Provisional Government on November 13, 1945, with

only one rightist delegate abstaining. Unity, however, was short-lived. On November 16 deGaulle returned the mandate for the presidency to the Assembly because there had been an open clash with the Communists over the appointment of the cabinet. Procedure in appointing the cabinet had bogged down when the Communists had demanded the right to hold one of three positions, foreign affairs, war, or interior, and the right to name the members for the position. DeGaulle opposed some of their platform planks and refused to give in to any compromise solutions. Deadlock was the result. When the Assembly met again they voted 400 to 163 to renew the mandate to deGaulle. On November 23 he presented his legislative program to the Assembly. The broad questions were supported by all parties, but opposition still lurked under the surface of apparent accord.

In spite of the discords much of value in terms of long range plans in the field of economics was accomplished by the Assembly. Early in December of 1945, a proposal was accepted for the nationalization of French banks. Even though all the banks were not included and credit was not nationalized, the plan went farther than the government had at first suggested. Later in December the Bretton Woods agreement was ratified and the exchange value of the franc was adjusted. A Planning Council for Modernization and Re-equipment was appointed on January 3, 1946, to coordinate plans for improving equipment and technical methods employed in agriculture.

In the political realm, the immediate task of the Provisional Government was the maintenance of at least a semblance of national unity because party conflict could sap the strength of the impoverished country as it tackled the problems of reconstruction. In one respect this task appeared relatively simple, because the right wing groups and leaders whose stock-in-trade during the occupation had been in collaboration with Vichy had either gone to Germany or done their best to fade out of the political picture. If deGaulle's government had been successful in handling the concrete problems of reconstruction it might have been able to check the growing cleavage between the M.R.P. and the Communists. But economic recovery did not progress far enough or rapidly enough to satisfy the nation's basic needs and halt the inflation which had already begun under occupation. Despite the avowed non-political character of deGaulle's cabinet it supported relatively conservative policies on nearly every important political question that arose during the first year after liberation.[1] Among the decisions of the Provisional Government which precipitated the opposition were those concerning the F.F.I. and the purge of the collaborationists. Gradually the F.F.I. had become merged with the regular army and deGaulle in his eagerness to restore order felt that by-gones should

[1]Winifred N. Hadsel, "France Since Liberation," Foreign Policy Reports, 22:28-9 (April 15, 1946). For additional information on accomplishments of the Constituent Assembly see Appendix B.

be by-gones and the purges be stopped.

DeGaulle's unwillingness to go beyond limited reforms may be explained by a number of factors. During the first year following liberation his primary concern was with France's diplomatic position and securing a definite mandate from the people. Technical problems such as insufficient statistics, economists, and an unwieldly bureaucracy also checked reform. But the main reason for non-realization of the goals in the Resistance Charter was the personal opposition of deGaulle to changes which might have had far-reaching social implications or have destroyed property rights.

More important however, as a function of the Assembly, rather than the program of reconstruction and recovery was the mandate from the people to form the constitution for the Fourth Republic. As the 42 members of the Constitutional Commission, chosen by the Assembly from among the various parties on the basis of their electoral strength, began to work on the preliminary draft of a new constitution the same political struggles that were taking place on the floor of the Assembly were being duplicated behind the closed doors of the commission.

## CHAPTER III

## THE FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFT AND ITS REJECTION

In the campaign prior to the election of October 21, 1945, the constitutional mandate was mentioned only in general terms. It would appear that in turning their backs on the past by demanding something new the French generally reacted against the terrible defeat of the Third Republic and were thinking more in terms of morality, social reform, and economics than in terms of a particular law. The only limitations imposed upon the Assembly's power to draft the constitution were those of the seven month's duration of the Assembly itself, and the proviso that the government might demand the reconsideration of any decision the government might make. But, because the attitude in the Assembly was that it had been born to set right every wrong, to reform all errors, and to inaugurate a brave new world, constitution-making was relegated to the backstage until the last few weeks of the Assembly's life. Many hoped that by putting off until the last minute the actual drafting of the constitution, which would be the fourteenth since 1791, the problem of securing a less volatile government and at the same time that of preserving dearly won individual liberties could be met more easily.

The actual work on the draft in the last few months of the Assembly's duration was done by a special forty-two

man commission working in sessions closed to the representatives of the press and members of the government. Hence there was no official indication of the form the draft would assume until the text was laid before the Assembly for its ratification. In the popular parlance of the Assembly, as they debated the ratification issue, the draft was referred to as the "cot constitution", a name which derived its origin from the fact that Pierre Cot was the rapporteur for the constitutional committee.

At the beginning of the debate on the provisions of the "cot constitution" by the commission everyone recognized that the great defect in the Third Republic's Constitution was administrative instability. Even the fifteen study groups, which during the occupation period had drawn up plans for the Fourth Republic, sensed that governmental stability was an essential pre-requisite. To meet the challenge the first proposals included suggestions for a small[1] single chambered parliament of five years duration advised by a second chamber of experts and technicans. Such a parliamentary group would have been elected by universal compulsory suffrage for all over twenty years of age, under the auspices of parties officially recognized by the State. It would have had sole legislative power; while the question of the executive power remained

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118-22 votes. See David Thomson, "Building the Fourth Republic," Contemporary Review, 169:67-68 (February, 1946).

undecided. It was decided, however, that local governments would play a more important role than formerly.

The position of the executive was undecided in the minds of the planners because they felt the cabinet should be placed in a position to risk the question of responsibility to the Parliament and yet be certain of success with the support of a permanent and assured majority. However, supression of ministerial responsibility to the Parliament was no solution at the time of grave need on the part of the French people for strong capable leadership in the new government. After much debate in the Constituent Assembly's commission over the problem, two general principles became identified with the general intent of the first draft of the constitution. These were the establishment of social and political rights for all citizens regardless of sex, and a more decisive political leadership drawn from a single representative assembly.

The unicameral legislature proved to be the center of debate in the Assembly prior to their ratification of the "oct constitution." In the past, the Senate had not only caused cabinets to fall, but by its uncompromising attitude had brought about conflicts which without the Senate would never have been so bitter between the government and representatives of the country. Consequently, in the new draft text, the National Assembly, a single representative chamber was empowered with the chief powers of legislation and the

determination of policy. During the first half of its five-year term it might be dissolved only by a resolution voted by a two-thirds majority of the Deputies. During the second half of its life dissolution might be pronounced by Presidential decree following a decision to this effect by the cabinet, providing the fact that two ministerial crises had occurred during the same session.

Such concentration of power in one body was partially modified by the creation of a Council of the French Union, elected by the Councils of the departments in Metropolitan France and in the territories overseas, which was to exercise advisory powers over proposed legislation. Advisory power was also to be exercised by an economic council the membership of which might be determined later by law.

The final supremacy of the Assembly was assured, however, by the assignment of essentially honorary functions to the President who was elected in much the same manner as under the Third Republic. He no longer would be authorized to appoint the President of the Council of Ministers because he would merely submit the names of various candidates to the Assembly. Also the power of pardon was taken from him and was given to a committee of the judiciary. He was still permitted to promulgate the laws, but within a fixed time limit. About all that was left for him to do was to keep the records for the Council of Ministers. Even the Premier's powers were confined to the execution of the

laws. Certain restrictions were imposed upon the use of interpellation[1] and the vote of want of confidence to avoid the easy means of forcing the resignation of ministeries which had been possible under the procedures of the old Chamber of Deputies in the Third Republic.

The second general principle, the rights of man, evidenced in the "cot constitution" whittled down, in many respects, the claims recorded in the fundamental laws of the Third Republic. The forty diffuse clauses embodying the claims were used as a preamble in an attempt to meet the demand of the resistance study groups for a new Declaration of the Rights of Man based upon the concept that the people should have every liberty except the liberty to deny liberty. Besides listing the classic political and civil rights which had been a part of the French republican tradition it also enumerated a number of social and economic rights. It was in this field of social and economic guarantees that the interests and privileges of the individual became subordinated to the State. Especially was this true in regard to property.[2]

Other provisions in the draft also attempted to meet the economic and social demands of the French citizens in

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[1] A Process of forming a formal question by some member of the Chamber and addressing it to a member of the Ministry.

[2] Article 26 of the "cot constitution" provided that economic monopolies would be nationalized (turned to collective properties).
Article 26 stated that every man must be able to acquire property by work and saving.

both international and domestic fields. The clauses relative to the overseas empire were perhaps the most absurd of all. Colonial territories were to acquire the right to separate or remain a part of France only by international treaty; a most tenuous arrangement in the light of fluctuating diplomatic maneuvers. Also the highly experienced and trained governors of the important colonies were to be removed and replaced by members of the cabinet who would take up residence abroad. But in the local communes and departments of continental France the development of individual initiative was encouraged by provisions for wider elections of representative councils with increased powers. This implied a corresponding decrease in central supervision, a marked change from the traditional pattern.

The conflict between the traditional pattern of governmental procedure and the newly proposed all-powerful assembly plan became so marked in the Assembly debate that a political crisis was precipitated. To deGaulle the new proposals on the President and Premier meant that he would have the choice under the new Fourth Republic of becoming a figure-head as President of the Republic, or the leader of a party who would have to take his chances of being elected to the Premiership by a majority of the Assembly. Faced with these alternatives he became convinced that opposing groups were attempting to eliminate him from the Fourth Republic, so on January 21, 1946, he abruptly re-

signed as head of the Provisional Government officially because of continued conflicts over large army expenditures. Secretly he hoped France would again request his services and offer support to his theory of government.

The resignation left French morale in a state of emptiness and gloom, and with the realization that they would have to wait upon the action of the Assembly to determine their future government. Promptly the Assembly set out to prove they could govern without deGaulle. To tactfully solve the problem of maintaining the support of the M.R.P. (deGaulle's party) without its traditional leader, Felix Gouin was offered the headship. He represented to the bewildered, dissolusioned Frenchmen a transition from an exceptional aristocrat with a powerful will to a man of the people with an instinctive knowledge of the ordinary Frenchmen and a mastery of politics.

The first thing this "man of the people" did was to address the nation revealing the long concealed and desperate plight of the economic situation. He appealed to the people for understanding, support, and cooperation in his proposed two-fold strategy for economic recovery. Taxes would have to be increased and governmental expenditures drastically curtailed to maintain the stability of the government. In the meantime, an attempt would be made to secure a loan from the U. S. to tide France over the immediate difficulties. Teeth were put into the pro-

gram by Andre Philip who was the chairman of the committee of national economy.

In this spirit of emergency cooperation the Assembly voted on ratification of the draft of the "cot constitution." By a vote of 309 to 249 the draft was accepted and it was submitted in referendum to the people on May 5. But, a growing number of Frenchmen viewed with distrust the poor progress made by the Assembly and towards the end of its term were actively restive at being asked to approve a frame for the nation's life so hastily thrown together.

Numerous arguments against the public adoption of the draft were based upon the provisions in the constitution itself. Some felt that liberty was insufficiently asserted and that ownership was no longer guaranteed. The main points of opposition came in the single-chamber problem because still the idea of a second chamber to counter balance the assembly was quite prevalent. Too, the President was no longer a check on the powers of the Assembly, nor was the judiciary which was subordinated to politics. Revision, the opponents claimed, was too difficult to enable the electorate to check the governmental power of the too-powerful Assembly. As a solution the Provisional Government should be retained until a better constitution could be produced.

Supporters of the constitutional draft on the other hand found equally convincing reasons for the adoption and

support of the document. They felt it necessary to put an early end to provisional government and its resultant instability by accepting a constitution. They admitted the draft was inadequate in many respects but felt any constitutional form more stable than none at all. Moreover, it did guarantee certain basic freedoms and protect the right to exercise them. The National Assembly would not be hindered in its need for quick action but it would still be advised by two competent non-legislative councils. The system provided for in the draft insured ministerial stability, a need strongly felt after the Third Republic experience. Justice too would no longer be in the hands of a secluded caste, and the constitution could be revised by the representatives in the National Assembly if the need presented itself.[1]

Among the powerful political groups supporting the adoption of the draft perhaps most ardent in their campaign for acceptance were the Communists. From the beginning they insisted upon a single chambered, all powerful assembly which would elect the President. At first this point of view was maintained because they distrusted deGaulle's motives in his foreign policy which supported the idea of western blocs. In foreign policy they felt Germany to be the key to peace which could be lost if the U.S.S.R. were excluded. Later they began to feel that

[1]News From France, 12:3-4 (May 16, 1946).

only a strong assembly would express the "sovereign will" of the people. Only control of the judiciary, civil servants, education, and unity in the trade unions could assure the necessary strength.

Since liberation the Communists had presented themselves to the people as the "great French patriotic party of the extreme Left, working to achieve social justice, which three French Republics have been seeking since the French Revolution, but at the same time carrying the historic national banner of France and determined to defend it against any new German agression."[1] They professed to respect not only civil liberties but even private property. True, they advocated the nationalization of all key industries and important corporations, but so did the Socialists and the Christian Democrats.

The Socialists, too, supported the adoption of the draft but they disagreed with the Communists on the power of the single-chambered legislature. They opposed the concept of a second chamber with veto powers over proposals made from a group elected by universal suffrage, but they felt an advisory or consultative chamber of experts and technicians highly desirable. They were reluctant to sacrifice all the powers or prestige of the executive. His position might be strengthened by direct popular election or election by a broad electoral group including members

[1]Andre Visson, "Will the Communists Win France?", American Mercury, 64:521 (May, 1947).

of the Assembly and delegations of various communes and departments. As a further counterbalance, in the case of a vote of lack of confidence, both the Assembly and the Government would automatically dissolve. In this fashion they hoped to avoid the weakness of the Third Republic of chronic crises and new elections. The members of the party were determined to check any infringement of the "sovereign will of the majority" or the basic rights of man. Like the Communists they felt strength in the representative body was the necessary element of protection, but even though they advocated state control of education, unity in trade union policies, and economic planning they did not want the designated executive or judiciary powers dependent upon the wishes of the all-powerful assembly.

The M.R.P., a strong Catholic party, went much further than even the Socialists in demanding a stronger executive in the government. To check the emotions of a newly freed people they advocated a two chambered legislature and an annual vote of confidence. If the vote was unfavorable both the government and the Assembly would have to end. This position was identical with the position taken earlier by deGaulle in the government crisis which brought his resignation. They opposed any Socialist-Communist plan to favor a larger union type of government which might not allow freedom in education, property, ownership, and international collaboration.

The M.R.P. wanted to carry on the fight for the Rights of Man by adding a new principle of spiritual rebirth. They felt the Christian principle the best model yet evolved for human conduct, but they had no intention of making the church a political power. Unlike other leftist groups they did not oppose the church as such. This opposition on the part of leftist groups had begun in 1789.

Minor parties[1] ranging from those slightly left of center to the most conservative, generally were more favorable to the platform of the M.R.P. than to a combined Socialistic-Communistic one. They all opposed the all-powerful single chamber legislative idea as well as control over former basic freedoms. In an attempt to regroup the established rightist parties the new P.R.L.[2] was formed. It stood on a frankly conservative platform, criticizing in particular the economic programs of the three big parties. Further it reasserted its belief that political freedom could survive only if property rights and private enterprise were safeguarded as much as possible.

While the rightists were busy trying to coalesce their interests, movements were also under way among center groups under the head of the Rassemblement Republicaine which

[1] Republican Party of Liberty
Radical Socialists
Democratic Union of Socialist Resistance
Independent Republicans
Internationalist Communist Party
Social-Democratic Party
See News From France, 15:8 (June 6, 1946).

[2] Parti Republicain dela Liberte.

tried to accomplish the same purpose. Both groups hoped to gain supporters at the expense of the M.R.P. whether support came from the M.R.P. or from lukewarm leftists, there were enough followers of the conservative platform in the country as a whole to reject the referendum by a majority of 6.25 percent even with 20 percent of the electorate abstaining.[1]

Defeat of the referendum on the constitution by such a small percent can be explained in spite of the fact that the document was hastily and poorly done.[2] Expectation had run high during the seven months drafting period that the constitution would promote stability; but when the draft was finally submitted to the people in referendum only a month lapsed for a campaign. Too short a period of time gave the voter scant opportunity to become familiar with the provisions or their total implication. An electorate composed of so many novices certainly would be prone to accept at face value any document handed them, for they

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[1]Party vote on the referendum.

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| Socialists | M.R.P. |
| Communists | Democratic and Social Union of Resistance |
| United Movement of French Rebirth | Young Republic Movement |
| National Front | Radical Socialists |
| C.G.T. | Republican party for Liberty |
| League of Right of Man | Republican Federation |

-News From France, 12:2 (May 16, 1946).

[2]See proposed first draft, available in French Embassy Information Service.

lacked a critical spirit engendered by long practice and experience in weighing political issues. Even those more familiar with the ropes of politics were confused and bewildered by a task of such major proportions and felt perhaps a poor constitution better than no constitution at all.

The rejection was unexpected in France and abroad. Some felt that such a turn of events meant that the French were calling a halt to the direction imposed upon the French Government by the French Communists. They felt perhaps it was a revolt against some of the salient features of the proposed constitution: particularly against the concept of a single chambered legislature, with no system of checks and counter-checks; and also against a judicature subservient to the Assembly.[1] Certainly acceptance of the "cot draft" would have aggravated the state of terrible confusion between the two main functions of the State; government action and government control. Acceptance, however, was far removed from the minds of groups of peasants and women voters who protested a project of a

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[1]Catholic World, 163:465 (August, 1946).
World Report, 26 (November 5, 1946).
Andre Giraud, "The New French Constitution," Foreign Affairs, 25:443 (April, 1947).
John Pollock, "France and a Constitution," Contemporary Review, 169:326 (June 1946).
George Slocombe, "Is France Swinging to the Right," Nation, 162:591-3 (May 18, 1946).
Christian Century, 63:613 (May 15, 1946).

government incapable of meeting the solution of a primary economic problem, food.

Following the rejection of the project the political campaign for the new election of assembly members got under way in earnest. Contrary, however, to general expectations the campaign fight centered not so much on the constitution as on the issue prevalent throughout Europe, the struggle for power between the left and the right. The French had no liking for single party rule. The Socialist-Communist coalition which would have governed if the draft and new electoral law had been accepted would have too closely resembled a single party to please a nation of individualists. So, no substantial increase was given the Communists or Socialists in the June 1946 elections. In fact the deflections from the two parties went to the M.R.P.[1] which according to traditional standards advocated a program of advanced radicalism.

In view of the composition of the new Constituent Assembly it was certain that no further nationalization would be decided upon while the constitution would undoubtedly follow a pattern set by deGaulle. And to form a government in keeping with the new political line-up proved a difficult problem. The M.R.P. was the largest single party in the Assembly, having polled 6,000,000 votes, so they claimed the Premiership. They feared assuming the respon-

[1]See chart page 59.

| Party | No. of Assembly Seats | Gain or Loss since October '45 |
|---|---|---|
| MRP (Bidault) | 160 | +16 |
| Communist (Thorez) | 146 | - 3 |
| Socialists (Blum) | 115 | -15 |
| PRL (Rightists) | 58 | + 2 |
| Radical Union (Herriot) | 38 | + 3 |
| | 517 | |
| Misc. | 5 | |
| Overseas (Uncounted) | 64 | |
| | 586 | |

Fig. 4. Party alignment following June 1946 election[1]

[1] Time, 47:29 (June 10, 1946).

sibility however because the Communists and the Socialists retained a veto power over the new regime. Together these two parties had polled 9,000,000 votes. The Socialists had retracted some of their platform planks, such as the unicameral legislature, in favor of M.R.P. suggestions, but the Communists remained firm in their demand for a unichambered assembly. To aid their position the Communists still retained control of the C.G.T. which meant they could wreck any recovery program with a paralyzing strike. If the Socialists could be given the position as head of the government they might become the target for the criticism and discontent of the masses thus enabling the M.R.P. to reap the benefits of popular favor and to avoid every issue which might cost it votes. The Socialists under the leadership of George Bidault did assume the Premiership when the Communists eased the situation by abstaining from participating in the Assembly's election, and again work was started for a constitutional draft.

## CHAPTER IV

## ACCEPTANCE OF A CONSTITUTION

Following the formation of the compromise Provisional Government in June 1946, Andre Philip was placed at the head of a new forty-two-man constitutional commission.[1] He had acted in the same capacity during the drafting of the "cot constitution" until he was selected to become the Minister of Finance in February 1946, at the time of the resignation of deGaulle. With his knowledge of the debate on the first draft he suggested that the commission begin its work using the previous committee's minutes. It was decided that only those articles and sections which had aroused controversy were to be reopened for consideration. The other articles would be used verbatim in the new draft.

During its first working sessions the committee undertook the revision of the controversial articles concerning the composition of Parliament and the President of the Republic. The principle of a two-chambered parliament was adopted after heated debate and a compromise between the M.R.P. and Communists which was instituted by Vincent Auriol, the Socialist leader. One chamber of deputies, known as the Assembly, was to be elected by direct universal suffrage. A second chamber, known as the Council

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[1]Composition of the constitutional committee:
11 Communists
9 Socialists
12 M.R.P.
2 Radical Socialists
5 Misc.
Newsweek, 28:40-42 (July 22, 1946).

of the French Republic, was elected indirectly, partly by local councils and partly by the Assembly, with greatly limited powers. The program of the M.R.P. had called for a parliament composed of three houses while the Communists had favored a uni-chambered plan. The Council as a result of the new accord had neither the right of veto over legislation proposed by the first chamber, the Assembly, after a second reading, nor the power to overthrow the government. It could examine and revise legislation submitted to it by the Assembly during the two month period following its passage, but any revisions or suggestions were not mandatory on the Assembly's action. If, however, the Assembly did reject the Council's suggestions it must be done by an absolute majority on a publicaly recorded ballot.

Further advice and suggestions could be given the Assembly in its action by two bodies, the Economic Council and the Council of the French Union, which had been created without much controversy in the first draft. According to the coalition government's agreement, these two bodies took the place of the third parliamentary chamber originally advocated by the M.R.P. The Economic Council, composed of representatives of management, labor, government, and the consumers, was to serve as the guardian of economic planning[1]

[1]Under the constitution, the council must be consulted before Assembly debate on the adoption of a National economic plan for the full employment of men and the rational use of material resources.
Constitution, second draft, Title 3, Article XXV. Available in Current History, 12:164 (February, 1947).
"France Wants Internal Truce to Hasten Economic Recovery," World Report, 9 (October 29, 1946).

while the French Union, composed of 50 percent continental delegates and 50 percent overseas delegates meeting in two houses, was designed to cement the French Empire into something comparable with the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Unlike the British Commonwealth, however, France hoped for a president. There were some substantial differences between the two constitutional drafts and the party programs with regard to the powers which the president should have. He still was to be elected, according to the second draft, in the traditional manner of the Third Republic for a seven year term, but he would be eligible for reelection only once. Under the second draft, he recovered the right to select the Premier, a right which had been denied him by restrictions in the "cot constitution." The appointment of the premier was, however, subject to the confirmation of an absolute majority in the Assembly, but the original choice resided in the President's hands. The Assembly retained its authority to dissolve itself with the advice of the Premier during the first 18 months of its existence, but the President's influence could be more directly felt because of the closer contact with the Premier.

The executive's influence was to be felt also from another source, for within the five to ten day period of

promulgation for laws of the Assembly he might request reconsideration of the measures which had been passed. Such a request, according to the constitution, had to be met by a new vote. If the proposal passed the second reading it automatically became a law, but if not, the veto was effective. Other executive powers such as pardon and participation in the Judiciary were restored in part by the new draft after having been denied completely by the "cot constitution."

The second draft also modified considerably the first draft's long recital of basic rights. In preference to the 40 diffuse clauses in the preamble of the "cot constitution" the new draft merely reaffirmed the declaration of rights of 1788 and the principles recognized by the Republic. Then in addition, a few clauses were added which guaranteed the suggestions of the resistance programs on equality and stipulated man's social duties and responsibilities. Not only did the constitution make work mandatory for all Frenchmen but it also recognized the position of trade unions, collective bargaining and private monopolies. Here a slight reversal of the "cot constitution's" denial of personal liberties eased the anxiety of some Frenchmen but still many social controls over former highly cherished liberties were retained.

Liberty of other peoples was recognized also by con-

stitutional provisions on condition of reciprocity, but if in the defense of peace it became necessary to limit sovereignty provisions were inserted which would allow France the liberty to defend herself or submit to the U.N. or other world organization.

Debate in the Assembly over the acceptance of the committee's completed document revealed three facts which proved to be of significance in the public acceptance or rejection. First of all, it became evident that in the second draft the M.R.P. was resolved, for the sake of governmental unity and preservation of the coalition government until after the referendum, to compromise to the limit with the Communists on all provisions under question. Second, the crux of the entire question of acceptance or rejection centered on the presidential power. And third, back of the question of presidential position loomed deGaulle as a point of potential opposition to the institution of the second draft. If certain powers were denied the position of President, deGaulle as leader of the M.R.P. threatened to split the delicate balance in the coalition government thus throwing the entire program of social, economic, and political reconstruction into a condition of chaos. Acceptance depended upon support of the M.R.P., a party of increasingly conservative strength as well as the Socialists who were not a party to the active compro-

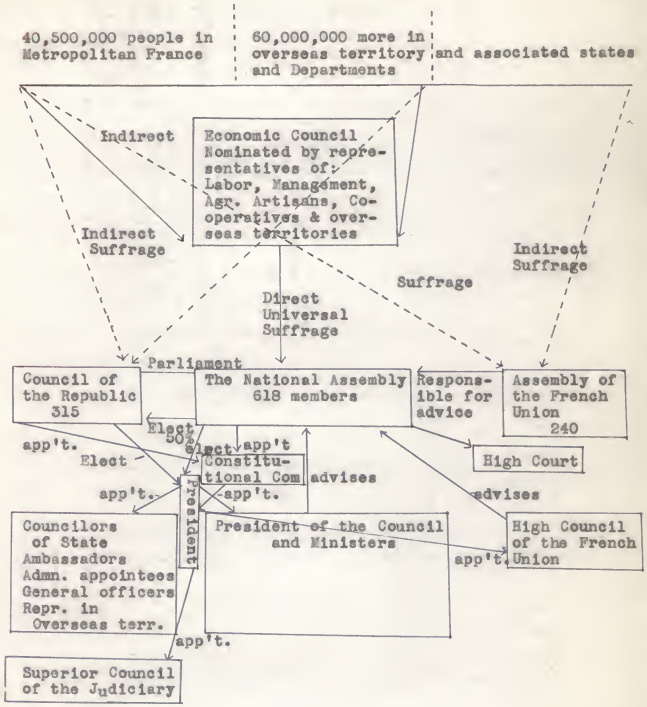


Fig. 5. Structure of the Fourth Republic.[1]

[1]Chart published by the French Embassy Information Service.

mising so definitely written into the draft.

On September 29, 1946, only a few hours after the draft had been accepted, 440-106, by the Assembly, deGaulle demanded rejection of the constitution in the forthcoming public referendum. He objected most strongly to the chief executive's dwarfed significance, for to him in spite of appearances the chief-of-state was still a mere figurehead, a situation which could lead only to anarchy and despotism. What he wanted was a strong government with a strong executive elected by the people.[1]

He specifically advocated, in place of the suggested unicameral system, a co-existence of two houses of Parliament. The upper chamber of the dual legislature was to be corporatistic in character, representing professional and social groups rather than the electorate in general. Neither body, the upper or lower chamber, would be entrusted with the selection of a prime minister but the President was to be the "arbiter" in the designation of the Government. He clearly expressed this attitude on September 29, 1946, when he said:

> The chief-of-state should be one man, that is to say, that he should be chosen and elected really to represent France and the French Union, that it should be his task in our divided and threatened

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[1]Vital Speeches, 13:8-9 (October 15, 1946).
Henry W. Ehrmann, "Uncertainty in France," New Republic, 115:137-8 (August 5, 1946).
"DeGaulle Tries to Rally France into Anti-Communists Crusade," World Report, 11 (May 13, 1947).

> country to insure the regular functioning of our institutions above all parties and to further the permanent interests of the Nation without regard for any political contingencies.[1]

He further emphasized his position by advocating the complete separation of the three powers of the State, legislative, executive, and judicial with clearly defined and full responsibilities in its own domain.

The position of deGaulle and his party, which was directed towards breaking the compromises among the parties, was perhaps a factor in the trend of the vote which submitted the controversial document in referendum to the people. The supporters knew that at best the draft would probably be accepted, but they hoped that it would be passed by only a small percent so that a campaign for revision could be launched immediately. Approval for the draft came as only 54 percent of the electorate indicated their attitude. Of the 36 percent abstaining the majority were members of deGaulle's M.R.P.[2] Even though the coalition was not broken the policy of deGaulle emerged as still the largest single influence in France.

DeGaulle's position, however, was not the only factor involved in the small vote of support for the plan which leaders hoped might start France on the straight road to recovery. It was the vacillation in the views of all

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[1] Vital Speeches, 13:9 (October 15, 1946).
[2] World Report, 26 (November 5, 1946).
Newsweek, 28:53 (October 21, 1946).
Time, 48:34 (October 21, 1946).

leaders and parties the people had formerly trusted which caused many voters to refrain from casting a ballot rather than indicate some program which might suddenly reverse itself. The method of voting under the principle of proportional representation was itself so confusing that it discouraged intelligent people and invalidated many votes that were cast in good faith. Also vast numbers of people had no real knowledge of the nature of the new constitution for they had been too occupied with personal problems of reconstruction and readjustment following the war to pay attention to the subtle ramifications in the short space of time allotted for consideration of the issues. In fact, tri-partism in politics and power revealed so much bickering, delay, and intrigue and so few material results that the average Frenchman felt nothing but disgust. This attitude he manifested by lukewarm support of the constitution because he was impatient for economic reform, or open demand for immediate revision in support of deGaulle's demands.

The constitution was promulgated, according to Article 106, by the President of the Provisional Government two days after the proclamation of the results of the referendum. It took some time, however, to publish the proclamation which consisted of the official returns[1] and then the National

[1] In order to acquire official referendum returns it was necessary for each Prefecture to collect the authenticated record of ballots received in each polling station. Then the Departmental Polling Committee compiled the records from the Prefectures and forwarded the results in the form of a sworn statement to the Prefect at the Ministry of Interior. The

Assembly elections were held. The document went into effect, according to Article 98, on the third Tuesday following the election of the members of the Council of the Republic.

Revision became the central and immediate issue in the election campaign. Fortunately the document was flexible enough that revision, even by Parliament without a popular referendum might not completely invalidate all the work done by the framers who attempted to express the demands of the people.

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overseas territory sent in their official count by cable. Then the National Committee for the referendum compiled the final returns which were "proclaimed" by the Minister of the Interior by a simple communique published in the Journal officiel.
News From France, 33:4 (October 24, 1946).

## CHAPTER V

## PUTTING THE CONSTITUTION INTO OPERATION

Following a tense campaign involving questions of world-wide significance, on November 10, 1946, 78 percent of the French electorate again went to the polls. The political direction which France might assume would undoubtedly influence economic developments in a number of world spheres of influence. Surprisingly, in spite of some notable changes, there were no sharp swings either left or right in political sentiments. The Communists gained 20 seats over those acquired in the June 1946 elections, while the Socialists were relieved of 27 seats. This meant that nearly 29 percent of the total popular vote had gone to the Communists[1] giving them a 170-161 lead over the M.R.P.s.

Communism as a doctrine, however, had not captured the popular imagination of the French, rather Communist leaders both inside and outside the cabinet of the Provisional Government were merely helping to put into action some of the theories previously advocated but subsequently discarded by the Socialists. They were determined and efficient in reconverting the Nation's economy to peace-

[1] The Communists received 5,200,000 votes in June 1946, and 5,475,000 in November 1946, but there were only 1,000,000 registered.
Ernest J. Knapton, "The Fourth French Republic," Current History, 10:125 (February, 1947).

time needs. A program such as they followed would have been considered treasonable in Russia. Especially would it have been so in the light of the policy of the French branch of the party in regard to sanction of private property and the formation of profit-sharing co-operatives. As such an institution the Communists gained popular support over the M.R.P.s and the Socialists.

Both the M.R.P.s and the Socialists lost about 500,000 votes to the new left, the Communists, between the June and November 1946 elections. The M.R.P. which had had a phenomenal rise as a Catholic party devoted to social reform formerly had had the blessing of deGaulle, but it lost that as the party members indicated their willingness to accept the second draft constitution. Their program along with that of the new Rassemblement des Gauches, which included elements of the Radical Socialists, was not far-sighted enough to win popular majorities comparable with those in the June election. The Socialists, too, lost their support because the party itself reverted to a position only slightly left of center. This shift was repulsive to some of the staunch supporters, who in preference to sacrificing their old viewpoints, cast their lot with the Communists. In this situation the Socialists placed greater emphasis upon individual liberties in preference to the more complex socially controlled state advocated by the Communists.

Following the adoption of the constitution and the Assembly elections, the Communists began to bargain for as much power as possible in the new cabinet. As the largest single party they offered Maurice Thorez as their candidate for the premiership. They indicated a willingness to join with the Socialists in forming a government, but they were uncompromising in their refusal to work with the M.R.P. In consequence Thorez was defeated by a vote of 259 to 314.[1] The M.R.P. immediately offered an alternative by suggesting that George Bidault, who was then head of the Provisional Government, and his coalition government be retained as an interim regime until the President of the Republic could be elected in January. With the Communists leading the opposition however he was defeated by a vote of 240-361.

In this deadlock Leon Blum reluctantly agreed to attempt the formation of an interim coalition government. Previously he had refused to act in such a capacity primarily because of his age, 74 years, and the fact that his party had won only one-sixth of the seats in the election. Also he hesitated to serve after two terms as premier in the Third Republic under a constitution destined to be opposed by a figure as powerful as deGaulle. Once in a position to act again, however, he at first attempted to draw up a government composed of Socialists, Communists,

[1] Ibid., 126.

Radicals, Independent Republicans, and M.R.P.s. By an overwhelming vote of 575-35 he was authorized to proceed. But the mutual mistrust of the various parties made his first plan unsuccessful because the Radicals and affiliates refused to join a government which did not include representatives of the Rightists, while the Communists refused to participate in one which did. Abandoning the attempt to effect a compromise, he appeared before the Assembly on December 17, 1946, to propose an all-Socialist cabinet in which he would assume the role of President-premier and retain the portfolio of foreign affairs. With 69 members abstaining from voting the list was accepted 544-2 because the other parties felt the Socialists could then be forced to assume the responsibility for the unpleasant economic measures so necessary for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Immediately the government launched a campaign to cut prices drastically by ordering a reduction of five percent in virtually all prices in commerce, industry, and agriculture. The program was based on a conviction that speculation and hoarding could not be stopped until prices were forced downward. The government leaders felt that inflation had not been caused by a shortage of goods or an oversupply of money in circulation. Rather, they felt that prices had been climbing because speculators, big and small, had been holding quantities of goods off the market

in the hope of bigger profits. The government plan was designed to force goods onto the market. Still additional funds were needed to purchase grain, machinery, and raw materials for export leads, which could come only from loans by the U.S.

The U.S., however, was reluctant to grant the loans in the face of the increased position of the Communists. The Communists themselves sensed the fact that their support by Russia was a retarding factor in many phases of French recovery. It was primarily that approach which the weaker allies and the enemies of the Communist sponsored program used to tip the scales of popular favor against them. This was even the more disastrous when it is recalled that the party had just reached a new high in parliamentary power which might ultimately lead to leadership, such as the premiership or the presidency, in addition to significant influence in all French policy as it was carried out under the provisions in the new constitution. But, their errors were capitalized upon by their enemies to such an extent that they were not a serious threat in the actual election of the President of the Republic.

The constitution itself contained no specific provisions on the manner in which the President was to be elected, or what constituted a sufficient affirmative vote to make the election effective. Finally, after a last minute session of the chairman of the various party groups

in both the Assembly and the Council an acceptable method of procedure was agreed upon. In compliance with the plan, on January 16, 1947, both houses met in joint session and by secret ballot indicated their choice for president. Solid support from the Communists and Socialists enabled Vincent Auriol, the "old guard" Socialist chairman of the Assembly, to win 452 of the 883 votes cast.[1] The M.R.P. had supported Auguste Chanpetier de Rihes, the new president of the Council. The vote was more than the necessary absolute majority which the party heads had decided would be necessary to elect a president.

President Auriol who had been installed at once immediately accepted the resignation of the Provisional government's Premier, Leon Blum, and his all-Socialist cabinet. In his place Auriol commissioned Paul Ramadier, also a Socialist, to form a government under the new constitution. Ramadier selected a cabinet to present to Auriol and the Parliament on January 22, 1947, which combined a wide coalition of party groups based on a central nucleus of Socialists who would retain control of the most important economic positions. Largely because of his ability to accept challenges the premier was able to form a government which not only represented popular French opinion but one also capable of remaining in tact in the face of

[1]Ibid., 127.
International Conciliation Papers, 116 (February, 1947).

political disputes which would undoubtedly be the order of the day as the government began to function.[1] Such problems as the strengthening of mild deflationary measures, socialization of industry, curbing a vigorous foreign policy, and the nature of French society intensified by determined political propaganda and idealogical conflicts, did not cast a very roseate hue to the picture of conditions as the Fourth Republic faced the future.

The most striking general characteristic of the newly established Fourth Republic was its sharp resemblence to its immediate predecessor, the Third Republic. The basic charters, in addition to the men at the head of the government and their methods, of the two republics were most similar. To many Frenchmen this was indeed a disappointment because the main hope of the young leaders of the resistance had been one of the national reniassance and renovation. But the resistance had been unable to assert itself during a period of destruction. The three main parties holding four-fifths of the seats in the new Assembly were composed to a large extent of inferior men, without personality or clear opinions who were picked for their docility. Such a situation was due in large extent to the system of proportional representation provided for in the electoral law of August 17, 1945[2] which permitted the party leader,

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[1] Ramadier in giving the weak Left Republican Rally equality with the powerful Communists and M.R.P. performed a brilliant but precarious feat of jugglery. Nation, 164:113 (February 1, 1947).

[2] See Appendix A.

caucus, and machine to designate whomever they wished as deputies and councillors.

In spite of the weakness of parliamentary members, unity of the three parties on such issues as economic recovery enabled French to make some progress. The Communists who controlled the C.G.T. kept strikes down to a minimum during the first months of the Fourth Republic. This made possible enough political stability for a French representative in the United States to attempt to negotiate a loan, and a representative at the Moscow conference of Foreign ministers to secure a British, U.S., and German promise to give France more German coal.

Additional plans for recovery worked out by Jean Monnet,[1] however, were slow to get into full operation. As the recovery lagged political tempers grew short. The truce among the political parties, none of them strong enough to rule France alone, wore so thin that deGaulle felt the time ripe to reappear on the political scene. This he did by launching a new political party, the Ras-

[1]The Monnet Plan consisted of eleven volumes of words and statistics, containing the most comprehensive surveys ever made of French economy, plus detailed projects for production and investment in the country's main industries. For the six basic industries - coal, steel, electricity, cement, agricultural machinery, and transport - it lay down specific programs for the years 1947 through 1950. It scheduled the exports and imports which would be needed to sustain such programs, and then estimated the trend in the balance of payments and the amount of foreign borrowing required. It also included separate reports on manpower and livestock, in their relation to the rest of the country's economic development.
Michael L. Hoffman, "The Best Things in France Today," Harpers, 2:251 (September, 1947).

semblement du Peuple Francais,[1] which opposed everything the Fourth Republic had attempted since its inception with the exception of the Monnet Plan. Such an organization and program posed additional problems of self-preservation for the new Fourth Republic as it faced an even more difficult period in its maturation process.[2]

[1]Reunion of the French People, R.F.P.
[2]See Appendix C for Chronological order of the Development of the Fourth Republic.

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# APPENDIX

Appendix A

Provisions of the Ordinance of August 17, 1945.

Electoral lists:

Each party or independent group presents its list of candidates in the departments or department of its choice. This list contains a number of names equalling the total number of registered voters of the said departments when divided by 42,000.

National quotient:

After final voting returns are in, the quotient, or number of votes needed to secure a seat, will be determined by dividing the total number of ballots by 579 (number of seats in the Assembly). In each department each party will receive as many seats as it had obtained quotients.

Primary Fractional Remainders:

A section of the Ministry of the Interior will add the remainders obtained by each party in all departments, thus obtaining a new number of votes to be divided by the "quotient". The number of additional seats attributed to each party will be equal to the number of times the quotient is contained in the total of its fractional remainders. As the distribution of seats will be determined on a national instead of a departmental basis they will be allotted according to the following procedure; the percentage of remainders for each department will be determined in proportion to the total number of votes for each list in each department. The departments having the highest percentages of fractional remainders will be given additional seats to be filled from the departmental lists.

Secondary Remainders:

Any fractional remainders after the first division will be subject to redistribution, by applying the system of the "highest average." According to this procedure the total number of votes (for each party list) will be divided by the number of its elected deputies, plus one. The party with the highest average will be given a seat. This procedure will be continued until all available seats have been filled.

Parties not receiving 5% of the national vote will not be entitled to redistribution of remainders.

Departments receiving a number of votes divisible by the quotient will be attributed two seats on the primary remainder.

## Appendix B

### Accomplishments of the Constituent Assembly (exclusive of the first draft of the Constitution)

Nationalization:
1. banks
2. budget council created
3. gas and electricity
4. insurance
5. coal mining

Social laws:
1. Miner status
2. overtime pay rates in salaries
3. Old Age pensions
4. total reimbursement for war damage
5. employee representative, if more than 10 employees

Administrative Reforms:
1. supression of Regional organisms
2. supression of Vichy organized committees

Agriculture:
1. farming and share-cropping statutes
2. conversion of cantonal and district parity commissioners into parity tribunals with elected assessors.
3. suppressed corporate agricultural organizations of Vichy
4. Cooperatives organized

Overseas:
1. departmental status to some territories
2. forced labor suppressed
3. citizenship to all members of the Union
4. local elected assemblies

Economics:
1. civil and military economies
2. taxes increased to gradually liquidate government subsidies

Electoral Law:

Appendix C

Chronological Development of the Fourth Republic

June 10, 1940 - Military collapse to Germany

June, 1940 - National Assembly gave governmental power to Marshall Petain in Vichy

1941 - 1943 - Organization of the F.F.I.

July 14, 1943 - DeGaulle proclaimed the C.N.L. and promised a future Fourth Republic.

August, 1943 - C.N.L. given tentative recognition in Quebec Conference.

June, 1944 - Military Invasion by Allies, Allied officials assume civil responsibilities.

October 23, 1944- Allies give official recognition to deGaulle's Provisional Government.

December 10, 1944-Russia signs a twenty-year Military Alliance

April 29, 1945 - Elections for local officials.
May 13,

September 23-29, 1945 - Departmental elections.

October 21, 1945 -Constituent Assembly Election plus dual referendum on interim government.

May 5, 1946 - Referendum on "oct constitution."

June 2, 1946 - Second Constituent Assembly election.

October 13, 1946- Referendum on second draft constitution accepted.

November 10, 1946-National Assembly Election.

November 24, 1946-Elections for Council electors completed.

December 17, 1946-Leon Blum appointed Premier

January 16, 1947 -Vincent Auriol elected President of the Republic.