PARTY GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE

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PART I

Parliamentary History of the Third Republic

P A R T Y G O V E R N M E N T I N F R A N C E

with an

Historical Outline of the Third Republic

PART I : HISTORICAL

CHAPTER I : 1877-1899

When the general elections of 1877 gave a majority to the republican group in the Chamber of Deputies, French politics entered upon a new era. It was a victory, but like most victories it was to be accompanied by dissension, by differences of opinion produced by a century of political conflict, by age-old loyalties aligned against evolutionary conceptions of state and democracy. It was this that Gambetta foresaw when he declared, "The era of dangers is over, that of difficulties has begun."

As we shall see, the new Republic had been faced with perilous dangers. The National Assembly, elected in 1871 to conclude peace with Germany, contained a conservative majority of legitimists, royalists, Orleanists and dissident republicans, who refused to declare the existence of the Republic, but elected as chief of the executive power Thiers, a republican of the Left Centre. The votes for the conservatives had been given, not for the old régime but as an expression of the will of the people for peace. Because, with the exception of Paris, the invaded areas and the south-east, the liste de la guerre, by which the republican list was known from its desire to continue the war, did not receive the support of the electors. Fully conscious therefore of the negative nature of their support, the National Assembly sought to appease republican sentiment without outwardly espousing it. But reaction was inevitable and the union of a year and a half between the Centre parties, with an opposition composed of the Right and Left groups

gave way in 1873 to a government of the Right, and Thiers was succeeded by MacMahon as President of the Republic. The Ministry, like the majority, was a coalition of three parties, the Orleanists, the legitimists and the imperialists, under the leadership of an Orleanist, the duc de Broglie. It was opposed to the official establishment of the Republic, and in favour of conciliation with the Church. But while the parties of the Left Centre and Left were burying their common grievances in an effort to combat the peril of the Right, the monarchists were disrupted by internal strife. The government wished to prolong the presidency of MacMahon for seven years, but by one vote the opposition succeeded in carrying an amendment which replaced this personal expression by the impersonal one, "the President of the Republic". Thus, for the first time, in January 1873, was implicitly recognized the Republican form of government.

Five constitutions had been drawn up in France since 1791. The sixth was to differ considerably from the preceding ones. In fact, the three constitutional laws voted in 1875, supplemented by the one concerning the President's term and the modifications of 1884, comprise less a constitution than a regulation of procedure. Under its flexibility President MacMahon was enabled to assume dictatorial powers, and under it, despite the absence of a Declaration of Rights, French citizens for over half a century have had the full exercise of the privileges springing from 1789.

The Senate, after the elections of 1876, found itself with an almost equal number of republicans and conservatives, but the latter

were able finally to muster a majority of a few votes. Universal suffrage, however, was responsible for a clear republican majority of deputies in the Chamber (360 against 170). Party grouping was similar to that which had been formed in 1873 over the question of the Republic, but there was a change of attitude. The monarchists of the extreme Right had disappeared, and the remainder became the conservatives of the Right, the Right Centre, and "Appel du peuple". No longer free to discuss the constitution, they were thrown on the defensive, and attempted to maintain a personnel in sympathy with their own interests. The republicans were also divided into three groups, the Left Centre, the Republican Left, which was the most numerous and included Grévy and Ferry, and the Republican Union of Gambetta, from which there broke off a small group, the extreme Left.

But the difficulty was,that,while the form of the Constitution was fixed, the practice was not. Questions which remained to be decided were how far the President could go in the exercise of personal power, in choosing ministers not acceptable to the majority, or in using his constitutional right, along with the cooperation of the Senate, to dissolve the Chamber. It was a fight for the possession of power, for the guarantee of public liberties (until 1876 the Press had lived at the mercy of the Government). The question of the attitude to be adopted in regard to the Clergy loomed large on the political horizon, and constituted another line of cleavage between the parties of the Right and the Left. Thus, until December 1877, we have the President and the Senate disputing with the Chamber the possession of power. When the French bishops presented to the government a petition which demanded

the recognition of the temporal power of the Pope, the Chamber replied by a motion condemning the " manifestations ultra-montaines". MacMahon dismissed the republican Ministry, the "16 Mai", and appointed a conservative one, which ended by dissolving the Chamber with the Senate's consent. This action brought together the Left in defence of their interests -- the "363", as the deputies were called who protested against the action of the "16 mai", and prepared the way for concerted republican resistance. Furthermore, the republicans were now able to pose as the real conservatives, those who defended the Republic against the revolutionary coalition of the monarchists and the clergy, and as the proponents of peace in denouncing the movement toward war with Italy, which was being stimulated by the partisans of the temporal power of the Pope.

The elections of October 1877 returned a republican majority, the Orleanists of the Senate were opposed to another dissolution of the Chamber, and MacMahon failed in his attempt to form a "ministry of business men" taken from outside the Chamber. But the fatal question of a budget brought on the crisis, and MacMahon was forced in his own words to conform " to the will of the country and submit to the rules of responsible government", in appointing the Dufaure Ministry, recruited from the Centre Gauche Républicaine. December 1877 marks the final defeat of the conservatives and the advent of the republicans and responsible government. Finally, after the elections had returned to the Senate a strong republican majority (174 against 126), early in 1879, MacMahon resigned and was succeeded by Grévy, a republican of the Left. Thus, the republicans became masters of these three powers, as they have since remained. "The era of dangers is over, that of diff-

iculties has begun." The difficulties were not long in making themselves evident.

For while the republicans were able to maintain some sort of unity when faced with the dangers which were the heritage of the old régime their ranks soon showed signs of splitting when it was a matter of meeting the difficulties of the new. The Left Centre which MacMahon had kept in power was small in number, while the majority had passed to the Republican Left, Grévy's party, and to the Republican Union of Gambetta who, since 1869 and the program of Belleville, had been the leader of the radical republican element. Gambetta's old position was now taken by Clemenceau of the Radicals who, organized in 1876, had adopted the extreme Left-Wing republicanism deserted by its former leaders. Two tendencies were easily discernible ; on the one hand, there was the policy called Opportunism, that of Grévy, Ferry, Gambetta, and their followers, who believed that it was necessary to apply reforms gradually and follow the expedient of watchful waiting. It was necessary, according to them, to "serier les questions", and of the former platform of the Republicans they chose only those parts that seemed practically realisable, But Clemenceau and the Radicals kept the old program and even added to it.

"Les Républicains conservateurs," declared Clemenceau, "demandent a la République son minimum, nous, son maximum." This maximum program comprised : revision of the Constitution in its terms relating to the Senate and the Presidency, separation of the Church and the State, an income tax, and social reforms such as reduction of hours of work, responsibility of employers in cases of accident, and participation of workers in forming factory regulations*

But while the extreme Left were making themselves heard in opposition

* Charles Seignobos : Histoire Politique de l'Europe Contemporaine, p.241

to the Opportunists, the conservative Right, badly discouraged, made but feeble attempts to recover their lost authority. So in spite of dissension in the Opportunists' camp itself -- Gambetta and Jules Ferry were on personal terms of enmity -- and after several attempts to form ministries while excluding Gambetta and his party from participation, the elections of 1881 presented the Chamber with a huge republican representation (467 against 90) and a working majority (204) to the Republican Union. Its chief, Gambetta, came into power, but the"grand ministère" lasted only three months and the leader of the "4 Septembre" retired.

The death of Gambetta the following year brought together Ferry's group and the Union, which had between them 372 votes. Thus, until the next elections of 1885, the republicans were not curtailed in their activity which included : application of the famous decrees against the congregations; vote of the educational laws (1881-82) which envisaged a gratuitous, compulsory, non-sectarian system ; law on the freedom of the press and public assembly (1881) ; law relating to syndicates and municipalities (1884) ; revision of the Constitution (1884), and vote of the scrutin de liste (1885).

The religious problem remained the most vital of the day. It constituted the chief factor in the cleavage between the republicans and conservatives ; for the former its solution meant the very existence of the Republic. Jules Ferry, Minister of Public Instruction and two times head of the Ministry, justified the republican attitude in these terms, "We must defend the rights of the state against a certain kind of Catholicism which is not religious Catholicism at all but which I would term political Catholicism.....as to religious Catholicism accord it our respect....but let us remain masters in our own house." This philosophy the republicans

followed persistently until 1907 and it is still deeply inherent in French public opinion.

Attacked from the Right by the conservatives who, since the fusion of the legitimist and Orleanist groups, had become more forcible, and from the Left by the Radicals, the Opportunists were weakened. Moreover, in the elections of 1885 the conservatives were able to profit by the scrutin de liste at the expense of the republicans, divided, as they were, into two lists, moderate and radical. In addition, the bad state of the finances furnished material for the opposition. The returns showed 382 for the republicans and 202 for the conservatives.

In these circumstances two political policies were possible. One, called "republican concentration", consisted in the Opportunists' relying on the support of the Radicals in the duel with the strongly entrenched conservative opposition. The other, "politique d'apaisement", would involve securing the support of the Right against the Radicals, now filling nearly half of the republican benches. Both were tried but neither was satisfactory from the point of view of stable ministries.

Under these conditions, complicated by serious financial difficulties, and the beginning of French colonial expansion, opposition forces were strengthened. There was witnessed, too, a growing anti-parliamentary feeling. In some circles it was felt that the Empire policy was being pursued at the expense of a program of revenge against Germany. La Ligue des Patriotes was formed. General Boulanger made his appearance. Supported by the Radicals, Boulanger had become Minister of War in 1886 and was very soon known as General Révanche. Securing tremendous popularity, he was considered a menace by the moderate republicans, and sent on a military

expedition where he would be less of a danger. But a scandal was soon unearthed involving the President's son-in-law. Grévy resigned (December 1887) and was succeeded by Carnot, a man of no outstanding qualifications. Thus discredited, the régime found itself faced with a growing coalition under Boulanger, composed of both Right and Left elements, dissident radicals, former revolutionaries, exalted patriots and Bonapartists -- with a program in three words, "Dissolution,Révision,Constituant". The royalists gave their support because they considered it a means of making a hole in the republican dyke. Making a sort of plebiscite of Boulanger's name by means of the scrutin de liste, they at first met with startling success. But meantime the republicans were uniting against the common peril, the scrutin uninominal was restored and Boulanger fled from the country after impeachment proceedings had been launched against him.

This crisis of boulangisme marks France's entry upon a new period, characterized by the predominance of social and economic questions over those of a purely political nature. In the constitution of parties this change showed itself in two ways. On the Right there was introduced the principle of ralliement ; while on the Left there were visible the effects of the growing socialist movement, most notably in the gradual displacement toward the Left.

The failure of the coalition led by Boulanger had shown the strength of republican sentiment and impressed upon the conservatives the necessity of adopting a new policy if they were to make their influence effective. The initiative was taken by a Cardinal, Lavigerie, supported by Pope Leo XIII. Their purpose was to diminish the antagonism between the Church and the State, to eliminate the monarchical tendency in Catholic parties and, accepting the republican regime, to bring about legislative reforms favourable to the

Church. Two divisions in conservative ranks resulted from this intervention of the Pope. One division, under Albert de Mun, followed pontifical advice and formed the Constitutional Right, calling themselves the Ralliés. The others remained faithful to their royalist convictions, but their numbers diminished at each election -- 60 in 1893, 44 in 1898.

While royalism was losing at the Right, socialism was gaining at the Left, and twenty years after the Commune was beginning to take an active role in parliamentary life. This participation,however, had been preceded by a long program of propaganda among the workers. As early as 1879 Jules Guesde, a Marxist, had organized a Workers' Congress, but with the grant of amnesty in 1880 to the agitators of the Commune and their return to France, while socialist opinion was reinforced it was also divided. Three rival groups were formed ; the Marxists under Guesde, the revolutionaries under Blanqui and the possibilistes, partisans of the general strike. Discontent with the democratic régime, as well as the growth of industry, favoured the movement. In the country it was manifesting itself in the form of strikes and concerted risings of the workers, while in parliament several deputies including Millerand and Jaurès were moving toward the socialist camp. Finally, with the election of fifty of their members in 1893, it was a parliamentary force to be reckoned with.

Between the Ralliés and the socialists was the parliamentary coalition, given in 1889 366 seats, (the conservatives had 172), on the boulangist issue. But, elected with an entirely negative program, it was now in the difficult position of merely marking time, maintaining the reforms which the previous decade had witnessed by keeping together the precarious union between the moderates and the radicals. The latter with only 110 seats were gradually losing their raison d'être along with the advent

of the socialists, but the official policy remained republican concentration, although the moderates with their majority formed the ministry. Legislation was unimportant. The principal was the tariff law of 1892, a reaction from Napoleon III's free trade policy beginning in 1860. It resulted from the union between the industrialists of the north and east with the agriculturalists.

But two factors were weakening this parliamentary coalition. To prepare the way for the elections of 1893, the conservatives unearthed a government scandal connected with the company formed to undertake the work of Panama. Government officials were implicated and it served both to strengthen conservative opposition and to alienate the support of the Radicals, fearful of losing popularity in the country. Furthermore, anarchist agitation having increased considerably, resulting in bombs bursting precariously near official heads, the government refused to give the anarchists the protection of the various laws passed since the beginning of the Third Republic. This action served to bring together the conservatives and the moderates, while making common cause for the Radicals and socialists.

Three types of government were formed at various times during this period. The old republican concentration type of ministry was still being tried, and by making concessions to the Radicals and Socialists (a progressive tax on inheritances was attempted in this way) would succeed in lasting a maximum of a very few months. But theoretical parliamentarians were insisting that the ministry should be recruited from one party. The Moderates tried it with notable success under Meline, the protectionist, and although he was dependent upon a floating vote so characteristic of the Chamber, his ministry lasted over two years. Earlier attempts were not

so successful. A third, and up to this time, a novel, feat was that undertaken by the Radicals to form a homogeneous ministry of their own. Supported by the Socialists and with an opposition composed of Moderates and conservatives, they got the principle of an income tax through the Chamber (1896) by nine votes. But the Senate, where the Moderates were strongly entrenched, finally forced the resignation of the Radical Ministry.

This attempt of the Radicals was made possible by a new alignment of republican forces just beginning to make itself felt, and which the end of the century was to witness in all its vigour. Right-wing republicanism, dissident from the old moderate policy, was moving perceptibly toward the conservative camp. This policy, called politique d'apaisement -- and corresponding to the conservative ralliement -- was not new, having been tried before the boulangist agitation had served to unite once again the republican cohorts in governments of concentration. But with the anarchic disturbances of the Nineties and the strengthening of the Left, the old tendency reaffirmed itself, this time, along with the Right-Centre cooperation, by a distinct movement of Left Moderates toward Radical and Socialist union. Finally, a new crisis left no room for doubt as to what republican grouping would be after the turn of the century. The Dreyfus Affair was a powerful searchlight placing in vivid outline the fundamental differences inherent in the political philosophy of the Third Republic.

Chapter II : 1899-1914

The Dreyfus Affair was the culmination of a long and bitter anti-semitic campaign. It was instituted as the result of an influx of Jewish people into France from Central European countries following the War of 1870, and the principal agitator against them was a nationalist Catholic journalist, Drumont, writing in his paper, La Libre Parole. With the exception of the influence of a handful of deputies elected to the Chamber on the Drumont platform, the agitation did not, for many years, reach political significance. But the condemnation of Captain Dreyfus, an Alsacian Jew, before a Court Martial in 1894 on a charge of treason, and the subsequent discovery that the charge had been based upon false evidence, served to bring the question into politics*.

On the one side were the revisionists, composed of most of the "intellectuals", Radicals and anti-militarists ; and on the other, the anti-revisionists, recruited from the army and the Church, and upheld by the royalists and nationalists, who had been the Boulangists a few years before .

The first inscribed on their banner "Justice and Truth", and founded the "League for the Defence of the Rights of Man and Citizen". Their opponents were equally as active in their organization (Ligue de la Patrie Francaise) with "the honour of the army" as their sacred trust. The

*"The Dreyfus Affair was utilized by the Reactionaries against the Republic, by the Clericals against the non-Catholics, by the military party against the Parliamentarians, and by the revolutionary Socialists against the army. It was also conspicuously used by rival Republican politicians against each other, and the chaos of political groups was further confused by it." -- Bodley, "France", in Encyclopaedia Britannica.

insistence of Méline during his Moderate Ministry that the Affair did not exist, in order to maintain his majority, and the Presidency of Felix Faure, secret adversary of revision, served only to postpone the day when Zola was to write his "I Accuse" in the form of an open letter to the President of the Republic, and the question was to become the basis of a realignment of political affiliations.

The death of Faure and the succession of Loubet, a Progressive in politics but opposed by the nationalistic Right, soon followed. The Dreyfus sentence was annulled, and the subsequent abortive attempts of the anti-revisionists to gain control of the army recall the Boulangist episode -- indeed, the results in parliament were very similar. Under the name, "Republican Defence", a former minister of Gambetta and partisan of revision, Waldeck-Rousseau, formed a ministry composed of dissident members of the Progressive party, two Radicals and Millerand, an independent Socialist.

But whereas in 1889 "Republican Defence" had had only temporary influence in bringing together the groups of the Left, the Dreyfus Affair marks the turning point in the political history of the Third Republic. Until this time the Moderates -- now called the Progressists -- had held power almost constantly ; now, during the fifteen years between the fall of Méline and the War of 1914, this power was to pass definitely to parties of the Left. They were organized, under Waldeck-Rousseau (1899-1902) and the following ministry of Combes (1902-1905) into the Republican Bloc -- an expression originally applied by Clemenceau to the French Revolution. The longer term of ministries was a significant feature of this organization. In order to avoid surprise votes in the Chamber, one day each week was set aside for interpellations, and a

clause added to all bills prevented the addition of amendments and the possible consequence of a dislocation of a majority.

The purpose of Waldeck-Rousseau was to unite the Republicans against the Right and the surviving supporters of anti-democratic Boulangism. The army, he knew, must be alienated from its political heritage as an indispensable guarantee of republicanism ; and the new Minister of War, General Gallifet, was appointed, who rallied his supporters "to put an end to agitations directed.....against the régime which universal suffrage has consecrated". In this liquidation of the Dreyfus Affair impeachment proceedings were launched against the nationalistic agitators and the Ministry was upheld by its majority composed of the four Left groups, Union progressiste(the dissidents of the old Progressist party), the Radicals, Radical Socialists, and Socialists.

That a Socialist, Millerand, should participate in a bourgeois ministry, caused considerable scandal among the socialists of Europe. Most French socialists, however, refrained from condemning this policy, but created a general committee, representing the various socialist organizations in France, for the purpose of keeping close watch of the newspapers and deputies of their party. But while Millerand, as Minister of Commerce, was engaged in improving labour legislation as best he could, the groups most attached to revolutionary doctrines, dissatisfied with partial reform, were making themselves heard more and more in opposition. Finally, the followers of Guesde and Blanqui, after forming separate organizations, united in 1901 into the Socialist Party of France to align themselves against the main French Socialist Party in which most of the socialist deputies remained.

Meantime, the work which was principally occupying the Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry was that concerned with associations and congregations. The latter, more particularly the Assomptionists and the Jesuits, had participated in the anti-semitic agitation. This, together with their rapidly increasing wealth and their influence in schools, was incurring the distrust of republicans, determined to bring to an end this "monkish conspiracy" designed to "divide the younger generation in France into two groups, separated by their education."

The law finally passed (1901) dealt separately with private associations and religious congregations, establishing a different régime for each. For the first time in France complete liberty of association was made possible, providing that members were to be free to withdraw voluntarily, and that any association recognized as a public utility should receive the authorization of the government. But congregations, as being subject to an authority not that of the State, and a derogation of common law, required special legal authorization for which all such existing organizations must apply.

This law was to be enforced by the new parliament of 1902, resulting from an electoral battle between two coalitions, the old Bloc and an opposition composed of the Progressists, nationalists, conservatives, and Catholics, now directed by the new Action libérale, founded to defend "religious, civil, and economic liberties, menaced by Masonic, Jacobin and socialist tyranny". The result was a victory for the Bloc which attained 368 seats, with an opposition reduced from 250 to 220 members. The Bloc was composed of the same parties only that the Socialists were now in two groups, and the republican Progressists were now uniting in the Democratic Union. The new Chamber represented the

height of the anti-clerical struggle.

It was to be continued by Combes, a Radical, chosen on the advice of Waldeck-Rousseau, who retired owing to ill health. The new ministry, with a majority from the Radical party, came in resolved to combat the "clerical peril" which had been in so great evidence during the elections. Combes, unlike his predecessor, accused of tolerating the congregations, was ready to suppress them. From the moment he arrived in power he applied vigorously the new law, and ordered the closing of 120 private teaching establishments, which had or had not applied for authorization. Finally, in 1904, the privilege of teaching was taken away by law from all congregations.

These measures were having their repercussions in the Vatican, where a new Pope proved less compromising than Leo XIII had been. A visit in 1904 of the President of the Republic to the King of Italy was considered by the Pope as an affront to the Vatican,and in the altercation which followed, the French government recalled its ambassador at the Vatican -- an action upheld in the Chamber by a vote, 427 against 95. Finally, the matter came to a head over the choice of bishops in a rupture amounting to the de facto termination of the Concordat. Its legal termination was already being considered in commission, and a law, of which Briand,the Socialist, was rapporteur, was soon presented to the Chamber. This law brought an end to the French ecclesiastical system of over a hundred years, and substituted for it the American principle of private initiative in questions of a religious order.

But before this work was completed the Republican Bloc was showing signs of disintegration. During the ministry of Waldeck-Rousseau, and until almost the end of that of Combes, parties as far removed in fundamental doctrine as the Radicals and the Socialists were able to maintain a

unity because of their unanimity on the question of the Church. But even this had been made possible only by a discipline and organization hitherto unknown in the Chamber. We have seen how Waldeck-Rousseau maintained his majority by regulations which avoided surprise votes. Combes, at the beginning of his ministry, went much further in organizing his four parties of the Left under the Délégation des gauches, composed of members elected proportionately from each group, and charged with the preparation of resolutions and the maintenance of collaboration between the majority and the Government. There were, however, growing signs of dissatisfaction, and it was expressing itself in two ways. An opposition was forming little by little among the Progressists of the Democratic Union, composing the Right-Wing of the Bloc. Some considered that the government had gone too far in legislation against the Church, others were discontented with the close union with the Socialists, and still others irritated by the discipline imposed by the Délégation (Combes was accused of causing members to be watched by the police). Furthermore, it was thought that the army and navy were losing all discipline as result of reforms made by the republicans.

At the same time dislocation was noticed at the other extreme, the Left Socialist wing of the Bloc. When Millerand joined the Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry most French socialists had refrained from expressing condemnation along with their colleagues in other European countries. But at the international Socialist Congress of Amsterdam in 1904 the principle of the Class Struggle and proletarian revolution was definitely adopted to the exclusion of gradual reform. Following this, a congress of delegates from all organizations in France founded the United Socialist Party*, which

* Partie socialiste unifié -- Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière (S.F.O.I.)

declared itself to be "not a party of reform, but a party of the Class Struggle and revolution". "The deputies of the party in parliament", stated their program, "form one single group.....they must refuse military credits and the whole of the budget". The large majority of the French Socialist Parties, with Jaurès and Briand, became members of this organization, which resigned from the Délégation des gauches. There was still a socialist parliamentary group, called Independents.

The Combes Ministry, unable to resist the opposition of the Right, (now enlarged by the addition of the dissident group of the Progressists), and of the large majority of the Socialists, was forced to retire (January 1905). It was succeeded by a ministry of concentration, under Roubier, former Minister of Finance, which, composed mostly of Radicals, was still attempting to govern with a majority of the Left.

The country was now faced with the problem of ecclesiastical reorganization left uncompleted by the law of Separation, as well as a new question created by the growing syndicalist movement. Under the new law concerning the Church the State was to undertake an inventory of all ecclesiastical property to facilitate its transfer to lay associations. But as these associations proposed by the Government were not acceptable to the Pope, the State officials undertaking to make the prescribed inventories met with stubborn resistance. Churches were barricaded, and a determined Government called out the troops. Unable to maintain its majority, the ministry was replaced by one of "republican concentration" (March 1906) which saw the entrance of Clemenceau and Briand, the latter having resigned from the newly formed Socialist party. Clemenceau suspended the taking of inventories.

But while the Radicals and Clergy were engaged in conflict, a new

process of opposition was in evidence among the workers. Labour syndicates, composed as in England of workers in the same trade, were grouped in each town under the Bourse du Travail ; and in addition, there were the federations of syndicates in which connected trades were represented. Finally, in 1895 all the Bourses and the federations were organized centrally into the Confédération générale du travail (C.G.T.), which was to hold annual conventions in which each syndicate, regardless of its membership, was to have one vote. It was "to keep clear of all political schools" and refuse participation in international congresses.

The executive direction of the Confederation was disputed between the "reformists" , representing the wealthier and older syndicates who relied upon legal action, and the "revolutionaries" from the poorer and smaller organizations. The anarchists,as the latter were called, were spreading propaganda concerning Direct Action and the General Strike, and were even making converts in the army. While the conservative forces had the support of the majority of all members in organized labour, the revolutionaries, with the majority of syndicates, secured control of the central organization. When the Confederation announced a manifestation for the eight-hour day to be held in Paris the first of May 1906, it was forbidden by Clemenceau, Minister of the Interior, and the secretaries of the Confederation were arrested. This was the beginning of a long agitation which was not without its effect in the Chamber.

The elections of 1906, which had to do primarily with the application of the Law of Separation, resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Left. As in 1902, the battle was fought between the groups of the Bloc on the one side and a coalition composed of the conservatives, Action libérale, and Progressists, on the other. The united front of the Bloc was made possible

by a compromise introduced by the Socialists (S.F.I.O.). While in the first vote the local federations of the party were to support their own candidates, in the second they were left free to vote for candidates of the Bloc, excluding the Independent Socialists. The groups of the Left, Radicals, Radical-Socialists, Independent Socialists, and Socialists, attained a total of 325 seats, a majority sufficient to govern without the aid of their former allies in the Centre, now called Republicans of the Left (with 90 seats) against an opposition of only 174 deputies.

Circumstances seemed to favour a thoroughgoing, constructive program of the Left, and when Clemenceau, chief of the Radical Socialists, constituted his ministry (October 1906), advocating a long list of reforms, including the income tax, there seemed every reason to believe that they would secure the support of the Chamber. The ministry was carefully chosen : as Minister of War, Colonel Picquart, favourably remembered by Republicans for his attitude in the Dreyfus Affair ; as Finance Minister, Caillaux, a dissident Progressist, to secure the support of his party, and Viviani, Independent Socialist, with the newly created portfolio of Minister of Labour. But while the Clemenceau Ministry was to keep its majority for two years and a half, reforms were abandoned one by one owing to failure on the part of the constituent groups to reach agreement on any one of them. There was one outstanding exception. At the very beginning of the ministry the parliamentary indemnity was raised by two-thirds* -- a move that played into the hands of the opposition.

There were still two political legacies which had to be dealt with -- the Clergy and the syndicalists. The Church would not accept the religious associations -- <u>associations du culte</u> -- envisaged in the Law of Separation,

* From 9,000 to 15,000 francs. Indignant public opinion called the deputies the "Quinze mille".

and in order not to offend existing susceptibilities, the government left ecclesiastical affairs untouched. Finally, a curiously makeshift situation resulted in "complete liberty under the form of tolerance, without legal sanction".

But in the matter of labour agitations the government stand was more active. Encouraged by the "revolutionary syndicalists" of the Confederation, workers all over the country, especially in trades of irregular employment, resorted to direct action in the various forms of sabotage. Strikes were instituted and social revolt was rampant. Syndicates of teachers and of civil service employees, employees of the Post and Telegraphs particularly, claimed the right to strike. Clemenceau's attitude was consistently firm throughout, and the rapid succession of arrests and the repeated reliance upon the troops earned for him in conservative opinion the reputation of the "strong hand". But socialist opposition was equally as intelligible, and while the former Progressist opposition voted with the government, a considerable part of the Bloc des Gauches was joining with the Socialists in voting against it. Reforms such as Clemenceau had started out with would not certainly be considered by the majority which resulted from his conflict with labour. In spite of increasing expenditure due to workers' pensions, primary schools, and military and naval equipment, the levying of a tax on income was postponed, and the expedient of ever-increasing borrowing was adopted. Finally, by 212 votes against 196, Clemenceau was overthrown.

Another issue had entered into active politics -- electoral reform. Parties at the two extremes of the Chamber were advocating proportional representation, which would clearly increase their votes, as minorities. The attitude of the government was uncertain, and even contradictory.

Clemenceau had declared himself to be in favour of the scrutin de liste, and when Briand succeeded him as head of the ministry, although the principle of proportional representation was voted, he prevented its being instituted before the elections of 1910.

These did not prove to be very decisive. The Radical and Radical Socialist Parties united under one direction* in an attempt to maintain the unity of the Bloc, but the other groups which had supported the Bloc were divided on the question of electoral reform, and the attacks of the Socialists served to place them in a rather uncertain position. Furthermore, as happens sometimes in parliamentary life, there was a more than average influx of new deputies**, who were not yet sure as to their party affiliations. The Unified Socialist group increased, however, from 55 to 74. And on the question of proportional representation there was a group of 310 adherents, who first applied the principle to the Commissions --- henceforth Commission members were elected from all groups in proportion to their adherents in the Chamber. The wider application of the principle was a subject of discussion for the next four years, but was finally abandoned.

Ministerial coalitions were now more numerous. In the four years from 1910 to 1914 there were eight. A general strike of railway employees and its suppression by the government made the Left-wing Bloc and Socialist vote more floating than before, and ministerial majorities fluctuated between Centre, and even Right, groups. French policy in Africa and conflict with Germany served to bring military questions to the front. After several short-lived ministries***, Poincaré came in with a "national

* Under the "Comité de la rue de Valois".
** 234, from the elections of 1910.
*** Those of Briand, Monis, and Caillaux.

policy" which had as its formula "keeping France guarded in the face of the foreigner"*.

Finally, the majority of the Left was in such an enfeebled condition that it could no longer fill the chief elective offices with its own candidates. A Progressist, Deschanel, upheld by the Right, was made President of the Chamber, and the Presidency of the Republic was given to Poincaré in opposition to the official candidate of the Left. When Barthou, a Progressist, formed a ministry in succession to the third Briand coalition, the three presidencies of the Republic, the Chamber, and the Council were filled by adversaries of the Bloc.

But it was not long before a new force was in evidence bringing together the groups of the Left. In 1905 military service had been reduced from three to two years ; there was now an agitation to restore the three year period of training. It was said that German expenditure on aramaments was increasing, and that the country must be prepared. Violently opposed to this new move the parties of the Left had, however, an alternative which would consist in a better utilization of reserves, and this was strongly presented by the Radicals and Socialists. But a new law was passed re-establishing the three year service, with a minor concession to the Left (July 1913), and as the age for service was made 20 instead of 21, the two contingents of 1912 and 1913 went into training at the same time. Thus France had a larger army in service than usual in 1914.

This discussion served to place Left-wing groups on common ground. They considered the new law reactionary and the War Office was suspected of entertaining hostile sentiments toward democracy. The newly formed Radical and Radical Socialist party adopted a program (September 1913) acceptable

* "Ne pas laiser la France à decouvert vis-a-vis de l'étranger".

to all groups of the Left, consisting of military service for two years and an income tax, and Caillaux, former Progressist, now converted to "radicalism", was selected to take charge of it. The Barthou Ministry, in an attempt to exempt a new loan from taxation, was overthrown, and one headed by Doumergue with Caillaux as Minister of Finance succeeded it. The tax on income was passed by the deputies but held up in the Senate, finally becoming law during the financial stringency of the war.

Chapter III : 1914-1924

The decade, 1914-1924, which we now approach, marks a truce between rival groups in French parliamentary life. During the first half of the period,until 1919, the union sacrée brought all political factions together in the accomplishment of a common task, to which the partisan conflicts, apparent enough in the elections of 1914, were subordinated. The remainder of the period, when an attempt was made to deal with the aftermath of the war, saw some recurrence to party dissension, but a huge governmental majority made opposition of little effective importance.

In the 1914 elections the electors had been called upon to express themselves upon three main issues : the three year military law, proportional representation, and the income tax*. There was an affirmative majority in the new Chamber on all three of them, but the difficulty was that in each case the majority was differently constituted. Thus, the Unified Socialists, the Republican-Socialists, and the Radical Socialists were arrayed against the three year law, and formed part of a slender majority favouring a supervised income tax ; but proportional representation could not be carried without the support of the Unified Socialists who on that issue were not in agreement with the Radical Socialists. Doumergue did not like the looks of the situation and resigned. President Poincaré, after calling upon five political leaders, asked a conservative senator, Ribot, to form a cabinet which was turned out on its first appearance in the Chamber. The Ministry which followed was headed by Viviani, a Republican Socialist, and resembled that of Doumergue, with

* In connection with the income tax, the question was whether the government should be given authority to investigate individual returns.

seven of the former ministers reappearing.

This was the cabinet in power when the war came. With its outbreak Viviani reorganized his ministry, bringing in Ribot and two Unified Socialists, Sembat and Guesde, to give greater effect to the union sacrée for which Poincaré had called.

It would be useless to follow through in detail the history of the war period, because the differences that arose were mainly of a personal, rather than political, nature, and were concerned primarily with the slowness of the war's progress, impatience to find new leaders, and military appointments. Viviani continued in power until October 1915, and was succeeded by Briand, but the majority remained the same. Briand resigned in March 1917 and the two succeeding cabinets, those of Ribot and Painlevé, were of short duration. A strong hand was needed. It was supplied, in November 1917, by Georges Clemenceau, who with his "je fais la guerre", and a more homogeneous ministry, subordinated everything to the prosecution of the war.

This, together with the making of peace, was considered sufficient reason for the postponement of elections from the spring of 1918, when they would normally have been held, to November of 1919. But before we consider their results, an examination should be made of certain tendencies that were making themselves evident in public opinion and political affiliations during and immediately after the war.

The effect of the war was undoubtedly to strengthen conservative, and weaken radical, parties. Those in France who in the years preceding 1914 had emphasized the German peril and the need of preparation to meet

it were confirmed, apparently, in their views and their opponents discredited ; while Left leaders who during the progress of the war had demanded a new foreign policy to secure a truce and a return to pre-war status were in disrepute after Versailles as having been willing to accept a less decisive peace than that ultimately agreed upon. The latter were known as "Defeatists" during the war, among whom Caillaux, leader of the Radical-Socialists, was accused of treason and banished for ten years.*

In this connection it is interesting to study the reaction of the French socialists to the war. At its beginning, after the murder of their leader, Jaurès, the great mass of socialists supported the government, Sembat and Guesde accepting portfolios in the Viviani Ministry. But a small minority opposed the pursuit of a "capitalistic" war which had only imperialism as its object. This faction was led by Jean Longuet, a grandson of Karl Marx. Before refusing war credits, he demanded a statement of peace aims, and advocated an early termination of the war. Gradually the minority element grew. Albert Thomas, appointed Minister of Munitions in the Briand Cabinet, was forced by his party to leave Painlevé's Ministry. Finally, Longuet carried the Socialist Conference of July 1918, which demanded the definition of war aims and refused to vote military credits, while Humanité, the party's official organ, passed to the hands of the new majority. One reason for this change was the postponement of the trial (and final acquittal) of the murderer of Jaurès. It was alleged that the murder of a socialist leader was of little importance in a bourgeois society. But more significant were the effects of

* Malvy, the other Radical-Socialist leader, was convicted on a similar charge.

new events in Russia. The open hostility shown by the Allies to the Bolshevist revolution inevitably drove French Marxists into opposition to the war, a renewed insistence upon the "class struggle", refusal to participate in bourgeois ministries, and collaboration with the Moscow Third International.

But while French socialists were breaking away from bourgeois parties, these parties were finding themselves on common ground in facing the new issues, to which older and minor ones were being subordinated, and in preparation for the elections of November 1919, practically all groups , with the exception of the Unified Socialists, formed what was known as the National Bloc. The lead in this movement was taken by the new Democratic Alliance, the members of which were mostly Progressists who in the preceding election had been split up into several parties. Unity was secured on questions such as national defence, foreign policy and, particularly, hostility to the domestic and international program of the socialists. In the elections the victory of the Bloc was complete, parties like the Democratic Alliance and Liberal Action increasing their representation from 77 to 133 and from 32 to 69, respectively. The Radical Socialist party, somewhat discredited by agitations against its former leaders, Caillaux and Malvy, and now under the leadership of Herriot, lost considerably, while Socialist representation was reduced to 68 seats. "The final result was to give France one of the most conservative Chambers she has ever had"*

This complete turnover was due,undoubtedly, to natural popular reaction, but the Bloc had one mechanical advantage working in its favour. Before the elections a return was made to the scrutin de liste, in which

* Roger H. Soltau : French Parties and Politics, 1921, page 55.

votes are cast for a whole list. With this was combined a curious and elaborate system of proportional representation, whose very object, the representation of minorities, was made, in most cases, impossible. Thus the Socialists, who lost so many seats, actually polled 300,000 more votes than in 1914.

Now that the union sacrée had, in a sense, been prolonged, what was the new Chamber to offer in the form of a constructive program ? This was what many people were asking themselves after the Bloc had been elected, envisaging a return to party strife once the negative nature of their appeal to the electorate had carried them into office.

The first duty of the Chamber, along with the Senate,* was to elect a new President of the Republic to replace Poincaré. The logical man seemed to be Clemenceau, and he was not the last to consider himself in such a position. But his popularity had steadily waned. To the Trade Unionists he stood for repression. To the Socialists he was chauvinist and imperialist. But more significant, considering the complexion of the new National Assembly, he was, to the militarist and reactionary, "the man who lost the peace", after having been "the man who won the war", and to the clerical zealots he was still the atheistical enemy of the Church. Furthermore, a Frenchman dislikes too much authority, and it was with this that Clemenceau's name was associated. Deschanel, the other candidate before the National Assembly, was elected.

Millerand, the new head of the Ministry after Clemenceau's resignation, did not attempt to distribute portfolios according to groups in the Chamber. Instead, he called upon representatives of various interests

* In the Senatorial elections of January 1920 the Bloc parties gained 25 seats and the Radicals lost 16.

in the country. Thus,the banking institutions, the chambers of commerce, the agricultural associations, and the new Economic Council (a product of the war) all had representatives, some of whom were not members of the Chamber. Some observers considered that this Ministry represented the "passing of parliamentarism and the rise to power of the economic unit in government"*

But this was not to be. The resignation of Deschanel eight months after his election and the succession of Millerand to the Presidency deprived the Bloc of the man who was probably best suited to carry on the coalition** A short Ministry under Leygues gave way to one formed by Briand(January 1921), and following his cabinet of a year's duration, Poincaré carried the Bloc through the two years and a half to the next general elections.

During all this time since 1919 the Bloc was occupied with problems of finance arising out of the war. Reconstruction within the country, with a foreign policy such as would allow for it under the Treaty of Versailles, was taxing the brains of all political interests. Because this problem was inevitably linked with the payment of reparations from Germany, even in the minds of most Left-wing politicians. The income tax, as we have seen, was only passed after long years of agitation, and then only because of the immediate demands of the war ; while a proposed capital-levy in a country with multitudinous bondholders was far from meeting with approval. Clearly, one course or the other must be followed and under the conditions we can understand the foreign policy which finally led to the occupation of the Ruhr.*** It was also connected with the well-

* The Nation (New York),April 10,1920, p.458.

** Jean Prévost : Histoire de France depuis la Guerre,1932,p.137.

*** "C'en est assez. Puisque nous n'aurons que ce que nous prendrons,prenons"-- Le Temps,26 November,1922.
"If Germany does not pay the problem is insoluble"-- Chairman of Senate Budget Commission,quoted in Revue des Deux Mondes,April 15,1921.

known "security" policy — the enfeeblement of the Germand being one method to bring about is fulfilment. But first Briand endeavoured to secure it by other means. This would be at the price of French concessions in return for British cooperation, with which the Chamber would not agree. Briand resigned and, determined to take the matter into its own hands, regardless of world opinion, the French government led by Poincaré entered the Ruhr (January 1923). That this was the wrong way to carry on international relations was not long in proving itself. The results were clearly shown in the elections of 1924.

But first let us examine what was happening among factions opposed to the Bloc's policy.

In spite of its very small representation in the Chamber, the Socialist party had, in the elections of 1924, received nearly one-fourth of all the votes cast; as such it was a force to be reckoned with. But the scission which we saw developing during the war was to result in the formation of the Communist party (1920), not, curiously enough, entirely along the lines which minority socialist opinion followed in regard to the war. Thus, Jean Longuet, who had led the minority movement, remained a Socialist while Cachin, one of the patriotic Socialists, went over to Communism. The latter group were now occupying themselves primarily with the syndicates, and trying to fulfil the "twenty-one conditions" laid down by Moscow. This left the role of active opposition in the Chamber almost entirely to the Socialists, and the Left-wing Disraeli, Léon Blum, by his constant warnings that the Ruhr policy would fail, and his prediction of the return of the Left in the next election, made this opposition consist of more than empty phrases.

Outside parliament voices protesting against the policy of the Bloc

were coming from two sources. The rise in prices since the war had left wages and salaries behind, and this led to numerous strikes throughout the country. And in spite of the government's refusal to abrogate the law of the eight-hour day which Clemenceau had passed, and its attempt to introduce social insurance*, there was gradually developing latent socialist and radical support among the electorate which could be utilized against the present government coalition. With the addition of the fonctionnaires, who were protesting most vigorously the legal ban on their right to organize and strike, this comprised an opposition of no small proportions. The other resulted from a campaign conducted by the League for the Rights of Man and other"Left" organizations. This was concerned principally with foreign policy, denouncing the Bloc as a danger to international peace.

As the parties of the Right had organized in 1919, so now the Left groups undertook a campaign under the sign, "Cartel des Gauches". The Radical Socialists and the Republican Socialists cooperated with the Socialists in campaigning, and in many cases they had listes in common.** Their success left no room for dispute. Over 300 "Cartel" deputies were awaiting the commands of their leaders, Herriot, Painlevé, and Blum, on June 1, 1924, while Poincaré was handing in his resignation.

* It was held up in the Senate.
** The system of 1919 was still in use.

Chapter IV : 1924-33

The two problems which had been calling for solution since the war were still very much to the front when the Cartel* came into power. In the political order was that concerning foreign policy, the attitude to be adopted toward Germany and the settlement of Reparations. But the problem which was to command the combined resources of the whole Chamber was the financial policy in the interior.

It was on the basis of the first that the elections had been fought, almost entirely for or against Poincarist policy in foreign relations. The victory of the Cartel, placing Franco-German relations on a new footing, through the policy of Herriot and Briand, led successively to the settlement of Reparations by the Dawes and Young Plans, to the guarantee of existing frontiers under British sanction by the Locarno agreements, to the entry of Germany into the League and the early evacuation of the Rhineland.

But the financial question caused more difficulty. Millerand, who was accused of supporting the National Bloc during the elections, was forced to resign the Presidency of the Republic, and Doumergue, a Centre man, more or less neutral in policy between the majority and the minority, was elected**in opposition to Painlevé, the Republican Socialist candidate.

* The new Chamber was composed as follows:
Left: 328 Deputies(Unified Socialists,105; Republican Socialists,42; Radical-Socialists,140; Left Radical,41)
Centre: 80 deputies(Democratic Republican Left,44; Republicans of the Left,36; the Left Radical group might be included in the Centre).
Right:146 Deputies(Democratic Republican Union,104; Democrats,14; Independents,28).
Communists,28.

** An example of the disproportionate power of a numerically weak Centre in French politics. See Jean Prévost: Histoire de France depuis la Guerre, page 222 et seq.

Of the three Cartel leaders, Blum was necessarily restricted in his activity because of his doctrinaire principles, Painlevé remained President of the Chamber and Herriot undertook leadership of the Ministry in an effort to straighten out the budgetary problem.

The value of the franc had been falling steadily since 1919. Inflation continued beyond the legal limit, but the main handicap under which the government suffered was a lack of confidence. Finance Ministers followed one another in rapid succession. The paradoxical phenomenon of Caillaux being recalled from exile, supported as Finance Minister by the very ones who had sent him there, and rejected as a "bourgepis" financier by his old friends of the Left, was not sufficient to restore it. For while the members of the Cartel had been united in their formulation of a new foreign policy, they could not reach agreement on matters of an economic nature*. "Taking money from where it was to be found"** was the happy formula of the Socialists and advance Radicals, but the thought of a capital levy or a stiffening of the income tax frightened moderate cartellists who did not wish to lose the support of their bourgeois electorate. The latter stood out for heightened indirect taxation and slashing of expenditure.

In an attempt to bring about a balance between cartellist forces, Herriot was followed (April 1925) by two Painlevé Ministries, three under Briand -- each time with a new Minister of Finance -- and finally by himself again for two days (July 1926). But the spectacle of the pound sterling at 250 francs and no constructive program unanimously agreed upon to restore confidence called for immediate action, and Poincaré was recalled to form a "national union" cabinet (July 23, 1926).

* In connection with governments of the Left and their difficulties over finance, see André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France, p.123 et seq.

** "Il faut prendre l'argent ou il se trouve."

Thus a man came to power* in the same parliament that had been elected to overthrow him. But the explanation is found in what has already been said concerning the issues over which the 1924 elections were fought. There was no question now of returning to the old foreign policy which had been condemned. In fact, Poincaré had himself already accepted the Dawes plan when first formulated as a substitute for the strong-arm policy. But more reassuring was the fact that Briand, who since April 1925 had been Minister of Foreign Affairs, was to remain in that position.

That Poincaré in a few weeks was able to bring about financial stabilization where others had failed was owing to his command of all sections of the Chamber except the Unified Socialists and the Communists. It was secured as a result of the feeling of panic that had been generated in the country amid the financial chaos. The election of Marshal Hindenburg, associated with the old German régime, as President of the German Republic, might also have had its effect in creating a desire in France for more authority which had been weakened during the past two years by the numerous ministerial changes.

Certain it is that the Poincaré coalition remained outwardly unbroken for well over two years. Briand continued in his rapprochement policy in foreign affairs despite the frequent protests from Right benches, and although the Radical Socialists chafed at being under the leadership of their former enemy, the dread of a return to financial chaos saved the party truce.

The change in political outlook in the Chamber was confirmed as result of the elections of April 1928. They consisted in a virtual plebiscite on

* The vote of confidence in the Poincaré government was given July 31,1926;
for Poincaré: 345
against Poincaré: 135 (Communists,Unified Socialists,and a small Left-wing of the Radical-Socialist Party).

the name of Poincaré. It was Poincaré the man , or still more, the symbol, that was presented to the electorate, and the elections showed enormous confidence in the régime established since 1926. Although a man of the Right in finance, Poincaré was fundamentally a Republican in politics*, with the esprit des gauches, a combination which stood him in good stead when faced with the necessity of maintaining the confidence of his majority, composed as it was of moderate Left parties as well as the conservatives of the Right.

Of the 607 new deputies, about 400 were Poincarists. Parties of the Left lost considerably, and while the Right gained, it was the Centre, representing the idea of compromise, that gained most considerably.**

Until this time latent differences between the parties had not been finding expression. All had been cooperating in the effort to restore financial order. But now this work seemed to be completed. Would there be a recurrence to the old issues ? Poincaré was attempting to preserve some semblance to a National Union government, with men like Herriot from the Radical-Socialists, and conservatives, like Marin, leader of the Democratic Republican Union, in his ministry. But forgetting the financial peril the parties of the Left were remembering the Clerical one. "Laicité or clericalism", comments M. André Siegfried, "that old and ineradicable preoccupation of our public life". Anti-clerical policy since

* André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France, page 143.

** Left : 272 (Unified Socialists,107; Radical-Socialists,114; Republican Socialists,15; French Socialists,14; Left Independents,22)
Centre: 163 (Radical Left,51; Republicans of the Left,64; Democratic and Social Action,31; Social and Radical Left,17)
Right : 144 (Democratic Republican Union,85; Independents,41; Popular Democrats,18)
Communists,11; and "not inscribed",20.

the war had been merely a negative one, consisting in preventing any relaxation of existing laws against Catholic orders, although an unsuccessful attempt had been made to introduce lay laws into Alsace. Now, in the budget of 1929 deputies of the Left picked out two clauses* which smacked slightly of clericalism. When the Radical-Socialists' Congress met at Angers in November 1928, it was decided that members of the party must give up their portfolios in the Poincaré cabinet, and the resignation of Herriot brought with it a weakened National Union government. The situation was similar to the change from the union sacrée to the National Bloc in 1919. There was now the danger of a swing to strict conservatism. When Poincaré resigned (July 1929) Briand succeeded him, but was defeated the following November on the question of the Hague agreements, by a combination of the Right and the Left, the latter group giving expression to their wish to overthrow a government rather than dissatisfaction with the agreements. The situation clearly called for new political manoeuvring, because under the circumstances there was a deadlock between Right and Left groups. But first M.Daladier, who had recently succeeded Herriot as leader of the Radical-Socialists, spent a few days trying to form a ministry, but neither a Radical combination with the Socialists nor one with the moderate Centre groups could be agreed upon. Finally, Tardieu, Minister of the Interior in the two previous ministries, formed a coalition of central and moderate conservative parties. Tardieu was known as the leader of the anti-Socialist Centre groups, and as such commanded the respect of Right benchers, but there was a group on the borderline between the Centrists and the Left, the Radical Left, whose vote was to determine

* They had to do with authorization of missionary societies.

the rise or fall of ministries. This brought the defeat of Tardieu's first cabinet, February 1930, by a small margin*. It seemed as though the Left and the marginal Centre might barely succeed in collaborating, but the attempt to do so under Chautemps failed (February 1930), and Tardieu came back. Conditions remained unchanged until the elections of 1932, and as a result ministries were numerous. When the elections came Tardieu was head of his third ministry, after three under Laval and one under Steeg had been tried.

In presenting themselves before the electorate the parties of the opposition had an abundance of factors to play up to their own advantage. The Tardieu-Laval type of ministry had been forced to sacrifice doctrine to organization in order to stay in power, because by introducing a project acceptable to the Right, it was in grave danger of losing its floating support at the borderline of the Left groups; while a frankly radical proposition would have immediately alienated the conservatives. Furthermore, the blame for world economic conditions could be placed at the door of the government in power. And so once more there was a swing to the Left. Unlike in 1924, however, this was accomplished without the formation of a Cartel or any official collaboration between the Left groups, although with the return of the scrutin d'arrondissement, voluntary cooperation between candidates of different parties usually took place**. The

* Against the ministry, 286 (all the Left and the Communists, 17 Radical Left, and 6 Social and Radical Left).

** See articles by Marcel Lucain and Francois Leuven, Revue de Paris, May and June, 1932.

Radical-Socialists* and the Socialists became the largest group in the new Chamber**.

The new ministry under the leadership of Herriot was destined to last for six months when, in December 1932, he was succeeded by Paul-Boncour. The latter, formerly member of the Unified Socialists, now in the Senate as an Independent, was defeated two months after taking office, when power reverted to the Radical-Socialists with Daladier as head of the ministry.

Each ministry since the last election has been forced to rely upon the support of the Socialists, who have the second largest group in the Chamber, but have consistently refused to participate in any cabinet not entirely Socialist. This support was not forthcoming when Herriot proposed the payment of the War Debts' instalment on December 15, although it was said that Léon Blum personally favoured payment but finally yielded to party discipline. Previously they supported the government's Lausanne policy and the security proposals elaborated by Minister of War Boncour at Geneva. But in internal finance the difficulty was and still is to maintain collaboration calling for reduced expenditure or heightened indirect taxation. The one exception, reduction of the military budget,

* In the Senatorial elections of the fall of 1932, the Radical-Socialists gained nine seats. The parties and their adherents are now as follows: Radical-Socialists,155 ; Republicans,71 ; Radical-Republicans,37 ; Socialists,17 ; Republicans of the Left,15 ; Conservatives,6, and others,13.

** Right : 81 : Independents,15 ; Republican and Social,18 ; Action économique,sociale et paysanne,7 ; Republican Federation,41.
Centre :155 : Republican Centre,34 ; Republicans of the Left,28 ; Popular Democrats,16 ; Republicans of the Centre,6 ; Independents of the Left,23 ; Radical Left,48.
Left :338 : Radical and Radical-Socialists,160 ; Independent Left,14 ; Republican Socialists,14 ; French Socialists,13 ; Socialists (S.F.I.O.),128 ; Unité ouvrière,9.
Communists,10, and "not inscribed",28
--- Taken from Journal Officiel of November 27, 1932.

has on two occasions been effected, while a revision of the method of income tax collection, as well as a bond conversion, has been carried out without injury to the coalition. Under these conditions the Radical-Socialists are faced with two alternatives. They can continue to depend upon the shifting support of the Socialists — even make concessions to secure its stability* — or adopt openly a Radical-Socialist-Centre coalition. It remains to be seen which course will be followed during the remaining term of the present legislature.

* There is a minority Left-wing group of the Radical-Socialist party, known as the "Young Turks", who are demanding it, and even voting with the Socialists on crucial issues, as on December 15.

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PART II

The Organization of Parties

Part II : The Organization of Parties

Chapter V : Party Organization Outside the Chamber, and the Electorate

French parliamentary history, such as we have been studying, is the story of Governments which have successively held power under the Third Republic. They are the outward manifestations of growth and development produced by changes of political opinion within the country. This holds true of any democratic system. But in France there are certain characteristics that differentiate her system from any other -- they have to do primarily with the organization and functioning of the political parties.

Our first duty will be to study the parties as they work outside of parliament ; not until this is done shall we be in a position to understand their formation and grouping inside. This is a distinction that is peculiarly true of parties in France, and it is through failure to study their actions outside that many foreign observers are unable to grasp their significance inside the Chamber and Senate. Organizational activity outside is closely connected with the electoral psychology of voters in the various regions of France. This, too, will require our attention.

To one accustomed to the normal functioning of a two-party system, the heterogeneous aspect of French parties and groups -- many of them with names that are very deceptive or else denote nothing at all -- leaves the impression that the elector when faced with them must have considerable difficulty in casting an intelligent vote. In this chapter an attempt will be made to show that the difficulty is not really as great as might appear, owing to a certain process of simplification that takes place in the complicated parliamentary groupings when they appear before the electorate.

The Parties

There are five main electoral organizations in France. On the Right is the Republican Democratic Federation, while on the Left there are the Communist, Socialist, and Radical-Socialist Parties ; and between the two extremes is an organization known as the Republican Democratic Alliance. While these parties receive the great bulk of the votes cast, two other minor ones might be added, the Republican-Socialist -- more Republican than Socialist, barely distinguishable from the Radical-Socialist -- and the Popular Democratic, groups. The Action Française has refrained, since 1925, from electoral activity.

The general framework of these organizations dates from the opening years of the present century, during the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair and the political struggle with the Church. We have seen how the first resulted in a definite break between conservative and liberal forces, which was further intensified by the passing of various laws discriminating against, and finally overthrowing, the established Church. In order to accomplish this there had to be brought about a consolidation of republican tendancies. With a nucleus composed of the Radical-Socialist party, founded in 1901, the Bloc des gauches, under the leadership of Waldeck-Rousseau, succeeded in gathering together the scattered elements favourable to the reforms in hand. In the same year was organized the Republican Democratic Alliance under which diverse Centre sympathies were rallied to the cause. With the help of the Socialists, unified in 1905, the Bloc was able to complete its work, and although disintegrated after 1909, its component organizations, along with the Republican Democratic Federation (1903) which concentrated the conservative opposition, remain to this day. By adding the Communists, the product of the War, we have the principal

electoral agencies.

At present the Republican Democratic Federation is presided over by M. Louis Marin*, one of the most able Right bench politicians, who also leads the group in the Chamber, known as the Republican Democratic Union. The Federation has a National Council with representatives from all Departments, and a central office in Paris, which is active throughout the parliamentary term in the distribution of propaganda and organization work. In policy it is republican, but extremely conservative -- nationalism in foreign affairs is matched by its tireless energy within the country in the promotion of big interests. Its insistence upon the family as a social unit, in regard to education and inheritance taxes, is no less typical of bourgeois opinion than of the Church. "We proclaim the rights of the family.....to direct the education and instruction of children, conforming to religious and moral conviction ; the extension of testamentary liberty and the suppression of succession duties destructive of family patrimony."**

Less decisive in its opinions is the Republican Democratic Alliance. As its name indicates it is looser in its organization than the more disciplined Federation, having no single group in the Chamber to which it attached allegiance. When a deputy is elected under its standard he joins one of three of four Centre groups in the Chamber. In fact, the organization is opposed to the "tyranny of groups", which infringes upon the liberty of the individual deputy. It does not pretend to be an organization of doctrine, favoring anything "republican" in nature, equally opposed to Catholic reaction and "revolutionary" tendencies.

* President since 1925

** Bourgin et Carrère: Manuel des Partis Politiques en France (Éditions Rieder), p.70.

Between conservatism on the one hand and socialism on the other stands the Radical-Socialist Party.* Radicalism, as a word in political terminology, goes back to the time of Louis-Philippe, when it meant nothing more than Republicanism. Coming up through the tradition of Thiers, Gambetta and Clemenceau, the Radical-Socialist Party represents liberalism in French political life, advocating "socializing"** remedies to preserve the individual's rights, but believing in the maintenance of the present economic system. The Party has an elaborate organization of local committees and central federations, and its annual Congress is the high-light of the year's activity. The Party has maintained moderate discipline within the ranks, forcing, for example, the resignation of Herriot and other Radicals from the Poincare Cabinet in 1928. At the 1932 conference there were signs of disagreement particularly among Left-wing, or "Young Turk" members, and recently, complete unanimity has not been secured on the question of War Debts.

If we are among those who believe that Liberalism is a dying force, the Socialist Party*** would represent much of interest. It is an organization that has gained steadily in strength since unification took place in 1905 — often at the expense of the Radical-Socialists. Its attempt to obtain control of the peasant electorate, along with the industrial workers, has led to compromise and modifications in its program. Nevertheless, with the exception of concessions# to the small landowner, the Party remains true to its name. It restricts itself to parliamentary action and until recently has looked upon the British Labour Party as its

* See Fernand Corcos: Catéchisme des Partis Politiques, 1932, p.49 et seq. and Alain: Éléments d'une Doctrine Radicale.

** "Socialisation"

*** The S.F.I.O. -- for its history see Corcos, ibid, p.103 ; for doctrine Bourgin et Carrère: Manuel des Partis Politiques en France, p.178.

\# M. Herriot, the Radical leader, once remarked that the Socialist program reminded him of a restaurant he had once seen which bore the sign -- "Restaurant ouvrier, Cuisine bourgeoise"

ideal. Unlike its English counterpart, it has consistently refused to participate in government coalitions. It is the most highly organized of the large parties and until February 1933 has been under the leadership of Léon Blum.

Finally, there is the Communist Party, which "considers itself as one section of the single, large, world Communist Party, with its direction at Moscow under the protection of the first triumphant, proletarian, Revolution."* Thus, although the Party is organized thoroughly within the country, directive control comes from outside. It is extremely doubtful that the electoral strength of Communism in France results from its doctrine. Due to the wide fluctuations in the votes received from one election to another, it would seem that Communist votes rather than coming from adherents of the Party, are merely the expression of the discontented**. True it is, that Communist representation in the Chamber is in no way proportionate to the number of votes received***; this is due to the fact that its candidates are found in almost every constituency in the country, in the vast majority of which they are doomed to defeat before the fight begins, success being assured only in certain Paris banlieus. But Communist leaders are undoubtedly viewing with optimism the time when Socialism will succeed Radicalism as the great governmental party of the Left, leaving the party of the Third International alone in the opposition field.

* A motion of the Congress of October,1922, at Paris.
** For a discussion of this see W.L.Middleton: The French Political System (Benn,1932) page 81 ; also André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France, page 169.
*** This is particularly true under the system of scrutin d'arrondissements.

The Electorate

We have found that the number of political forces, though reduced, is still quite considerable at the stage where the people are being consulted. But one thing must be remembered. Whereas, in Anglo-Saxon countries, governments or parties are elected, in France it is only the Chamber of Deputies. That is to say, the elector is interested merely in voting for the candidate who most nearly represents his views. The oft-repeated saying that the French vote for the man and not for the party explains to a considerable extent political organization in France.* The proverbial man-in-the-street in France, unless he happens to be a Socialist or a Communist, in which case he can be recognized by his insignia, does not proclaim aloud his party affiliations, although he is not slow to recite to the nearest bystander his own political creed. It will be agreed that this is in sharp contrast with British habits of Conservatism and Liberalism. This is, without doubt, one reason why the multitudinous array of party placards does not confuse the Frenchman to the extent that it would an Englishman.

Furthermore, he has a very congenial method of classification, a certain rule of thumb. To him a candidate is either a man of the Right or a man of the Left, and regardless of party labels this is the only division that he can understand. The way the candidate voted on some clerical question or on one relating to syndicates is carefully remembered by the elector, and he is placed on one side or the other as result.** A number of considerations influence the elector in making this classification. Here we arrive at a problem which is characteristically French, and its explan-

* See Jean Prévost: Histoire de France depuis la Guerre, p.114.
** A notable feature of votes in the Chamber on any issue of importance is the number of abstentions.

ation would take us back to 1789*. Suffice it to say, that in addition to, or sometimes even regardless of, economic doctrine, the elector is still concerned over religious and political controversy. A visitor to France is surprised to find that the Republic itself is oftentimes in question. As M. Albert Thibaudet puts it, the Republic still remains something less than France**. When to this is added the prevailingly inherent sentiments concerning the Church, particularly as pertaining to educational questions, which arise periodically, French political divisions are sometimes difficult to make. The interplay of these forces does not always give a clear resultant. Thus, a man who might quite conceivably take up a position on the Right regarding the economic, might equally as conceivably be an ardent supporter of the Left on the religious, question.

But these conflicting principles, while explaining the difficulties of centralized political organizations, and also the large number of those organizations, although perhaps still existent, are more simple in their application in any local constituency. This is due, to a great extent, to the localization of sentiment in France according to geographical districts. The four general divisions of South, West, North and East, while too large and individually diverse to allow for easy generalization, do, each in turn, offer characteristics which are peculiar to the district in question.

What are these characteristics ? The stronghold of "Radicalism", meaning by that Republicanism -- the section where the catchwords of the Revolution always find an enthusiastic audience -- is the Midi, the South-West and a large part of the Central Plateau. It was here that the Cartel

* This will be discussed in Chapter VII
** Albert Thibaudet: Les Idées Politiques de la France, 1932.

of 1924 received 50 per cent of its votes*, and it is here that the majority in the present Parliament finds its support. Political sentiment takes the form of enthusiasm in defence of the Republic and an inborn suspicion of Clericalism. In the economic order the proverbial conservatism of the French peasant would seem at first to offer a challenge to parties of the Left, especially extremists, but they are able, even the Socialists, to secure his vote as the protectors of small interests, at the same time giving satisfaction to his political and religious preoccupations.

Conservatism, on the other hand, is at home in the West, where the imprint of feudalism and the reign of the Church is most visible. This is particularly true of the Vendée, Maine and Anjou, Lower Normandy, and Upper, or French, Brittany**. It is from here that a large number of the conservative Independents are elected, some of whom having royalist sympathies. But the majority are Catholic Conservatives who remain Republican in their tendencies. The Popular Democrats, who had their origin in this district, offer a striking illustration of the cross-sections of French politics. While devout Catholics, they have attempted to break away from the traditional association with conservatism in politics by producing a program of Christian Socialism. In spite of this, however, they have succeeded in progressing no further than the Right-Centre. So, although conservative in spirit, sentiment in the West is not as consistent and clearly defined as that in the Midi, but at the same time the district remains sufficiently distinct politically from the rest of the country.***

Outside of these two divisions, one of the Left, the other of the Right,

* André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France, p.171.
** Ibid, page 187.
*** André Siegfried: Tableau Politique de la France de l'Ouest sous la Troisième République.

which together elect three-fifths of the Chamber of Deputies, there is one other area, the East, which presents a similarly well-marked partisan character. Here the prevailing tendency is conservatism, but conservatism of a different colour from that of the West. Lorraine, a province of France only thirty years before the Revolution, is not influenced by traditional conservatism as regards régime, but like other frontier areas devotes itself to nationalism, a protective authority, at the same time, however, remaining republican. This, combined with the influence of the Clergy, who are particularly active in this region, gives never-failing support to Right-benchers. Political sentiment in this region is well represented by M.Poincaré, a true son of Lorraine, just as M. Herriot of Lyons represents the district south of the Loire, and any name with a prefix can be taken to signify the politics of the West.

The remaining area of the North with the exception of some frontier nationalism is free, to a considerable extent, from the old preoccupations and prejudices, and comes nearest to representing political conditions in an industrial country such as America, where questions of the moment are more apt to be treated on their own merits. Here economic considerations far outweigh any others ; here, as a geographical district, there is little evidence ot partisanship owing to fairly well-balanced forces of Right and Left. The result is that representation is strikingly miscellaneous. This applies to the region of the Seine, including Paris, which with a population of four or five millions has until recently in the history of France influenced to such a great extent the political conceptions of the country. "One can say that since 1889, the year when Paris failed once again to lead the country into another adventure (Boulangism) Parisian influence upon French political orientation has been nil"*

* André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France, page 193.

Parisian politics have become philosophical, out of step with action in Parliament. An interesting illustration is the position of Action Française, which,with learned leaders like Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet, has a huge and clamorous following among Paris students but not one representative in the present legislature*.

Political tendencies in these four regions can be readily illustrated by the geographical representation as result of the elections of 1924 or 1932. In 1924 the division into Right and Left was particularly well defined. The following table**shows the ascendancy of the Left in the South and Centre of France, the unmistakable indication of conservative strength in the West and East, and the more evenly distributed forces of the North and Paris area.

The Political Regions of France

Supporters & Opponents of the Herriot Govt.,1924

	Supporters	Opponents	Communists
South of Loire (54 departments)	199	50	1
West (14 departments)	20	74	1
East (7 departments)	6	41	0
North (4 departments)	31	19	3
Paris Area (4 departments)	24	36	19

With the local proclivities of the electorate in mind the seven political organizations which have been described go before the people. In no constituency therefore are all of these parties represented, nor is any party represented in all the constituencies. The nearest to being

* Léon Daudet was himself defeated in the elections of 1932.

**Given in The French Political System by W.L.Middleton,p.39

an exception is the Communist Party, which has candidates nearly everywhere ; and in the elections of 1932 the Socialists put up candidates for the first time in as many as 600 constituencies (out of a total,615). On the other hand the Radical-Socialists had only 320 candidates. In 1932 there were 3,617 candidates for the 615 seats, making an average of less than six for each constituency. But of these six probably two at least cannot be counted as serious candidates, if the receipt of, say, 1000 votes is necessary to qualify as a serious candidate.

Thus, of these four or five candidatures (five,because of the Socialists in 1932), one is certain to belong to the Communists and another to the Socialists. The remaining three would be distributed among the other organizations according to the location of the constituency. This choosing of constituencies results from a habit of a certain amount of discipline between parties of the Left, and even those of the Right, in the first ballot. In a radical stronghold, Left organizations can afford to compete among themselves, and conservatives do well to concentrate in one candidature. The reverse is true where conservative traditions prevail. Thus in a constituency of the Midi the line-up of candidates might be something like this :

Republican Democratic Alliance*

Radical Socialist)
or) or both
Republican Socialist)

Socialist

Communist

On the other hand, in an electoral division of French Brittany we should

* This candidate would probably call himself "Republican of the Left" to appeal to local susceptibilities.

very likely find another arrangement, such as this :

Republican Democratic Federation

Popular Democratic)
or) or both
Republican Democratic Alliance)

Radical Socialist)
or) or both
Socialist)

Communist

Here the concentration is in the Left camp. First-ballot discipline in the last elections was weakened, however, owing to the persistent competition offered by the Socialists to the Radical-Socialists, although this always gave way to cooperation on the second ballot.

In May, 1932, 256 candidates received absolute majorities, leaving 359 constituencies where the people had to return to the polls. Just as there is a certain amount of discipline among parties on the first ballot, so is there even more in the second, a number of candidates always retiring between the two. But even if this were not done the electorate is sufficiently well trained to know that a reshuffling of candidates is necessary, and here the native political shrewdness of the Frenchman comes into play.

It would be possible to take the returns of any constituency to illustrate what occurs. This is what happened in Boulogne-Billancourt (the 8th circonscription of St.Denis) in the elections of 1932. Out of 23,134 inscribed voters, 18,572 went to the polls on May 1st for the first ballot. The candidates, their party affiliations and the votes received were as follows :*

* Taken from Journal Officiel.

MM. Lagorgette .....5,271 votes
(Socialist, S.F.I.O.)

Laurent .....4,379 "
(Republican & Social Concentration)

Costes .....3,878 "
(Communist)

Jacobson .....3,833 "
Republican of Left)

Others .....1,209 "

In this constituency, which is apparently fairly well divided between Right and Left, the Radical-Socialists and the Republican-Socialists left the field to the Socialist candidate, and although the latter received a plurality of votes he did not get the required majority of 9,287 (one-half plus one of the total number of votes cast). The remainigg votes were split between two conservatives, M. Jacobson (Republican of Left), the candidate of the Democratic Alliance, and M. Laurent, who sits in the Chamber as an Independent of the Centre, as well as the Communist candidate and two minor ones. What happened in the second ballot was that M. Jacobson retired, nearly as many voters, 18,244, came back to the polls and the vote was as follows :

MM. Laurent.....7,799

Lagorgette.....7,681

Costes.....2,680

Others..... 84

Thus, M. Laurent succeeded the Socialist candidate to first place because of the transfer of the Jacobson supporters to his standard, and the Socialist lost out in spite of additional votes from the Communists* and the minor groups.

* This bears out what I have said concerning the nature of Communist support.

It happens that in this constituency slightly over 80 per cent of the inscribed voters came to the polls for both ballots, which was the average percentage at the first ballot for the whole country, although the percentage at the second was slightly lower in 1932. This is sufficient proof of the interest taken in politics by French people, and from what has been said, it would seem that the interest is an intelligent one, rendered possible by the successive stages of a simplification process, arising from three factors. The first is discipline among the Parties, leading to a concentration of both ~~a~~ Left and Right forces. The second, a more natural element in the process, is the varying nature of political sentiment in the country according to geographical districts. This leads to an elimination of certain political considerations in any one of them and makes possible an intelligent division on the remainder, a process which would otherwise be extremely complicated. Finally, and perhaps most important of all the factors, is the electors' habits, which have been trained to disregard to a large extent political placards and labels, and in conjunction with his prejudices lead him to vote for the candidate rather than the Party. The effect that these phenomena have upon the composition and organization of parliament will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter VI : Parties and Groups in Parliament and their Combinations

"Quand on regarde l'éventail des partis, says M.Emmanuel Berl*,..... il semble que la France doive etre ingouvernable." The French themselves are not the last to admit that their system does offer complications. These are in particular evidence when the Deputies enter the Chamber fresh from the elections.

The absence in most cases of a clear electoral issue, the inconsistencies of the electoral organizations, each attempting to appeal to different political sentiments, and the mixed popular support of any particular candidate, all tend to make party alignment within parliament a confusing and difficult problem. To meet this problem there has been developed an intricate system of "Chamber politics". The British Member of Parliament, after a strenuously fought campaign in the country, leads a life of relative leisure in Westminster, compared with that which faces the French Deputy once he has entered the Palais-Bourbon. For the latter there are two sets of political tactics, one electoral, the other parliamentary, that must be efficiently mastered ; while for his British colleague a knowledge of electoral strategy often suffices, and even in this the powerful political party to which he attaches allegiance is of no small assistance.

On the other hand, from the point of view of security the Frenchman has the advantage with four years of uninterrupted tenure, without fear of impending dissolution. This, together with far greater individual freedom from party pressure, gives larger scope for the satisfaction of personal ambition than the British system offers its members. Hence, perhaps, one

* La Politique et les Partis (Rieder,1932), p.103

reason for the peculiar nature of French parliamentary politics.

In this chapter we shall be concerned with the manoeuvring of the parliamentary groups through which the individual deputy finds expression, and while we shall confine ourselves to what happens in the Chamber, it will be understood that the same is true, although on a smaller scale, of events in the Senate.

The Groups

When a new Chamber is elected the first step is to distinguish between the various groups and arrange them in accordance with their political sentiments from Right to Left in the sections of the amphitheatre. This is no easy task, and several days are consumed in consultation between the various leaders. First there are the groups which represent the fixed entities of the Chamber, whose positions are more or less clear ; then, secondly, come the more variable groupings which change in name and composition from parliament to parliament, and even within the lifetime of any pa/ one parliamentary term.

The staple political framework of any Chamber is provided by the first category. These groups correspond to the main political organizations which have been described. On the Left are the Communists, Socialist and Radical groups. On the Right is the Republican Union*, and occupying a Centre position is the Popular Democratic Party. The other electoral organization, the Republican Democratic Alliance of the Centre, has no single group in the Chamber, and its members come under the category of variable groupings. The Republican-Socialist Party which, as we have seen, conducts an electoral campaign, has not been entirely represented since 1928 by the group which

* This group is the same as the electoral organization, the Republican Federation.

bears its name in the Chamber, but for the sake of simplicity we may include it with the other fixed groupings. Also, a group at the extreme **Right** might be added, members of which, although belonging to no political party, are all reactionary, many of them Royalists, and about whose position there is no ambiguity. In the following table will be found these groups, with their numerical strength in the Chambers since 1924.

Strength of Fixed Entities in Chamber

		1924	1928	1932
Right	Independents	28	41	15
	Republican Federation.....	104	85	41
Centre	Popular Democrats.....	14	18	16
Left	Radical-Socialists.....	140	114	160
	Republican-Socialists.....	42	15	14
	Socialists.....	105	107	128
	Communists.....	28	11	10
	TOTALS	461	391	384

It will be seen from this classification* that the number of deputies belonging to fixed party groupings is relatively small ; in the Chamber of 1924 there were 461 out of a total membership of 582, in that of 1928, 391 out of a membership of 610, and in the present Chamber only 384 out of 613 deputies.

Certain features distinguish the members of these fixed groups. In the first place, there is a close connection between their positions outside and inside the Chamber. They have all, except the Independents, fought the electoral campaign under the aegis of their party organization, and upon

* It is to some extent arbitrary, particularly as regards the Right Independents.

election there is little question of their forsaking that affiliation when taking up their position in parliament. Sedondly, they are the nearest approach that the French have to disciplined parliamentary parties. This is particularly true of the Communists and Socialists, whose outside organizations are able to secure obedience to orders issued to their political representatives, and less so of the Radical-Socialists and other groups.

The remaining groups are composed of deputies who are, in varying degree, free lances. They might have run in the elections as independents, under a political placard of their own choosing, or else as members of the Republican Democratic Alliance. They are particularly attracted to the Centre of the Chamber, which is known in French political jargon as the "swamp", as result. Here many of them step into ready-made little compartments with names such as Radical Left, Independents of the Left, or Republicans of the Left (neither of which is Left in anything but name). These parties find a large percentage of their recruits among candidates elected on the "Alliance" ticket. Others form groups of their own, which account for the changes in political terminology from one parliament to another. Undoubtedly, many of these deputies would not join any group at all if it were not for organizational reasons, the wish to have representation, as a group, on committees, and privileges as regards speeches and motions. The result is that in everything but mechanical organization they are far from homogeneous, in fact may include the most diverse elements. There is always one group, numbering in the present Chamber 28 members, composed of the residual deputies -- those who are not able to fit into any group with a political epithet -- who are known as the Isolés or "not inscribed", but even they as a mechanical

conception secure the parliamentary privileges.

Governments -- the Coalitions

The aim of any parliamentary system is only indirectly concerned with the formation of groups and parties as representative of political opinion-- in this the French system is particularly adept -- the chief concern is the organization of Government. And before we study the various types of Government which are produced by the group system in France, certain clues which would render possible the understanding of their formation might well be pointed out.

The first and most obvious distinguishing trait of any French Government is its coalition nature. No one party ever has a voting majority; in fact, the combined forces of any two parties can never command it in the Chamber of Deputies. While a parliamentary coalition is a rare phenomenon in Anglo-Saxon countries and always regarded, or instituted, at least, as an emergency measure, it is quite the normal feature of French government.

How is this coalition brought about ? Presented with the various groups in any Chamber -- eighteen of them in the one of 1932 -- some of them of a fixed nature, others more variable, the task is to organize a sufficient number of them to command a majority. The participants in a coalition, however, will not be drawn from anywhere between the two extreme ends of the Chamber, one here and one there. But like an harmonious grouping of colours in a spectrum, they will form one continuous block in which one colour shades gently into another and upon the degree of harmony which results will depend the extent to which stability will be realized. Unfortunately, a violent clash of colours seems to be an all too frequent manifestation of the French political spectrum.

The chief factor which determines these political groupings remains the old division into Right and Left. Just as this constitutes the main electoral cleavage so does it find expression in parliament, but in a much more complicated and ambiguous manner. If this division were clear-cut and easily discernible it would suggest some dividing point, midway between political forces, most probably in the Centre section of the Chamber -- what M. André Siegfried calls the watershed, the Great Divide, of French politics. But as he himself points out such a conception remains largely theoretical owing to the heterogeneous formation of each group. Each one of them, except those at the extreme Left, contains its own Right and Left elements, in a state of continuous flux, now in one direction, now in the other. Nevertheless, while the division may be difficult to make, the tendency persists and constitutes the most influential factor in the alignment of groups into Government and opposition.

But not for the French the stereotyped forces of Government and Opposition that exist in the British or American parliament. The closest approach to this state of affairs is found in a Chamber immediately after an election fought on a clear-cut issue. Such a Chamber was that of 1924 when Herriot and the Left came into power as the result of popular opinion deciding against Poincaré and his foreign policy. But regardless of how plain the electoral issues are, the division between Right and Left is not likely to remain the same throughout the four years of a parliamentary mandate. One type of coalition gives way to another.

Thus, the Chamber elected in 1894 saw a conservative government under Meline, an ultra-Radical Ministry formed by Bourgeois, and the moderate coalition of Ribot. The Chamber of 1898 started off with a Meline Ministry and finished with Waldeck-Rousseau's "republican defence" coalition. The

"red" Chamber of 1914 brought in Caillaux and Malvy of the Radicals and afterwards allowed them to be imprisoned. More recently, Herriot and the Radicals, in spite of the clearly pronounced mandate of 1924, gave way to their opponents, the Poincarists, halfway through the legislative term after an attempt had been made by the Radical leader to dispense with Socialist support and rely on the cooperation of the Centre.

In these changes there can be distinguished three types of coalition. The first, and apparently the most popular one of the past thirty years, is a coalition of Left groups. In this the Radical-Socialists, who have been called the party of government, with the largest parliamentary group, have taken the initiative. This type of ministry has representatives from the Independent Radicals, the Republican Socialists and the French Socialists, the three groups most ready to lend support to the Radical-Socialists. But no government of this kind can endure without the backing of the Unified Socialists, the second largest group in the Chamber, and they have consistently refused to participate in the making of ministries. Their voting support has been merely conditional, usually upon the acceptance of a certain minimum Socialist program, and can never be relied upon to maintain a government of the Left in power.

Nevertheless, this kind of ministry is the most homogeneous that the Republic is able to produce. First, it most nearly represents the division into Right and Left of French politics. Secondly, it is composed of, or supported by, the most highly disciplined groups in the Chamber -- those which we have called the fixed entities. Here, the fall of a ministry is not due to the almost imperceptible defection of border-line deputies, which is true of other ministries,but results from the withdrawal of an entire group or groups, sometimes, as is the case with the Socialists, owing to a decision of the National Council of the Party outside the Chamber.

But while it is a government of the Left to the greatest extent possible, it is in reality a union of the conservative and radical forces of that Left section of the Chamber. In fact, in many countries the differences between Radical-Socialists and Socialists would represent quite sufficiently the demarcation between Government and Opposition. In France they attempt to pull together, and the results are usually disastrous.

This is due to the incompatibility of their economic doctrines. A government of the Left always falls on some question of finance*. In Herriot's attempt to stabilize the franc in the period following 1924, a financial program acceptable to the Socialists would have alienated the rest of the Chamber, perhaps even his own Radical-Socialist group, and the ministry would have fallen ; if he had adopted a conservative program, the Socialist vote would not have been forthcoming, and any semblance of a Cartel des Gauches would have disappeared. This is what actually happened.

The old formula that Cartel ministries are fond of repeating, "No enemies at the Left", while applicable in the political and religious fields, is increasingly difficult in the economic or financial. This is well illustrated by the situation since the 1932 elections, which, although giving to groups of the Left a clear numerical majority, were not fought on as definite electoral grounds as those of 1924. From the table above which shows the relative numerical strength of fixed and variable groups in the present legislature, it is clear that an unusually large proportion of the deputies belongs to the latter category, in this case to groups of the Centre. How long ministries can continue under the circumstances without relying on Centre support would seem doubtful. Here again the difficulty is financial. Faced with a peculiarly important budgetary problem, three

* See André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France.

Cartel ministries have attempted a solution. Although the Herriot Ministry was overthrown ostensibly on the War Debts question it is quite evident that the same fate would have met him on the question of the budget as met Paul-Boncour's following Ministry, on January 28th. With a Radical-Socialist, Daladier, back in power, the problem is still far from solution, and there can be little doubt that after a few more attempts, recourse will be taken to a new kind of coalition.

In a study of the ministries of any legislature there is usually apparent a gradual evolution from the strictly Cartel type of coalition to ones that rely more and more on Centre support. This process of evolution is strikingly illustrated by the series of ministerial changes in the first half of the 1924 legislature. Beginning with Herriot's Cartel government, there was a clearly perceptible movement in the ministries that followed toward the Centre. This was true of the ministry formed by Painlevé and to a gradually increasing extent of the successive ministries under Briand. By distributing an undue proportion of portfolios to Left-Centre groups, and multiplying under-secretaryships to a quite fantastic extent, the support of numerous variable groupings, each numerically insignificant by itself, could be substituted for that of the more disciplined fixed entities at the extreme Left. Whatever the name given to this type of coalition -- it is usually known as Republican Concentration -- it is sufficiently representative of French ministries to deserve attention.

This entails consideration of the Centre, that political puzzle of the French system. In a nation where people make politics a passion, where to take politics seriously is to be partizan -- either a man of the Right or a man of the Left -- there exists, not withstanding, a motley crowd of parliamentarians, unorganized, without doctrine*, and yet considered by

* "Sa doctrine est justement qu'il n'en faut point avoir"--Emmanuel Berl: La Politique et les Partis, p.172.

one eminent authority to represent the very essence of government*, known as the Centre.

In electoral origin it seems clear that the members of these groups are partizan, that they have been forced to appeal either to conservative opinion on the one hand, or radical opinion on the other, to be elected. Nevertheless, as soon as they enter the Chamber, they are free from what electoral affiliations they might have had to become part of whichever group appeals to them most. It would be useless to name the groups themselves, "which are born of one political manoeuvre and die of another"**. Perhaps a ministry is being formed. A certain group is asked for its support. It refuses. But there is a minority that forms a new group to offer its support. It will undoubtedly last long after the occasion for its formation has passed.

It has been said that while groups of the Left live in the future and those of the Right in the past, the Centre groups are concerned with the present. This in my opinion is the true explanation of the Centre's existence. It is in this sense that M. Siegfried can call the Centre the essence of government, because it is concerned with the maintenance of social and economic conditions as they are, and judges each legislative measure on its own merits, with neither the prejudice of the past nor the anticipation of the future. For this reason, then, it has no existence in the country, nor has it organization in parliament.*** There is no doubt that if there were this organization the governing of France would be a comparatively easy thing.

* André Siegfried: Tableau des Partis en France, p.172.
** Emmanuel Berl: La Politique et les Partis, p.39.
*** For a clear case for the organization of the Centre as an instrument of government, see an article by M. deFels in Revue de Paris, Sept.1929.

Instead, the "swamp" harbours elements that are incompatible, any attempt at organization has failed, and no coalition has been formed exclusively from it. In it we find groups that are radical in finance, others that are conservative in finance, and still others that combine with either of these tendencies leanings toward anti-clericalism or clericalism. Obviously, the only manner in which they can govern is by linking their forces either with the Left or with the Right, or, and this very often happens, by voting with the Left on some questions, with the Right on others.

The extent to which there is this cleavage between Centre deputies is illustrated by the formation of two new groups at the beginning of the present legislature. M. Herriot, not wishing to disturb financial prejudices, made a bid for moderate support. This caused a split among certain moderates. A Minister of Finance in the previous legislature, M. Flandin, gathered around him a group, Republicans of the Left, with the manifest purpose of keeping on terms with the Radicals. M. Tardieu, on the other hand, who disapproved of this attitude, formed another group, the Republican-Centre, on a basis of avowed conservatism. But since M. Herriot attempted to keep the support of both moderates and Socialists he was doomed to failure. Nevertheless, by means of a shifting majority, not a rare phenomenon during the rule of any particular ministry, he was able to pass certain financial proposals in July with moderate support, although voted against by the Socialists ; and later he put through a conversion of Rentes by means of Socialist support without the votes of the moderates.

That first majority from which the Socialists were excluded might be taken to represent the second kind of government coalition in France. When

the Herriot Ministry was defeated in 1926, it was this new form of coalition that was instituted under Poincaré. Several Radicals, including Herriot, remained in the Ministry, but the name, National Union, betrayed its conservative tendencies. While more bourgeois or conservative in finance, it was still pronouncedly Republican, and in favour of the maintenance of the lois laïques. In this type of ministry a great deal depends upon the prestige of the leader or of one or two ministers. To fill these roles in French political life there has grown up a large body of non-party statesmen, who are able, when called upon, to reconcile much more readily than party leaders could do the conflicting interests and claims of the various groups represented in a coalition of this kind. To cite the names of Clemenceau, Briand, Poincaré, is sufficient to infer their importance in the working of the political machinery. To M. Siegfried the Poincaré government represented the nearest approach to perfection of which the French system is capable. Here we had, he says, the old Republican, Poincaré, as Prime Minister, with the old Moderate, Poincaré, as Minister of Finance. His fervent Republicanism was necessary to keep in line the remaining forces of the Left, while with his confirmed moderation in finance he could maintain his Centre following. As soon, however, as the financial emergency had passed from the political situation, the Republican tie was not sufficient to bind the allegiance of the Left, and the succession of ministries pointed toward a more conservative coalition. As the Union sacrée -- this, too, an emergency coalition -- gave way in 1919 to the Bloc National , so the Poincaré union made way finally for the conservative coalitions of Tardieu and Laval.

This is the third possible government formation. When Herriot and the Radical members of the Poincaré government were ordered by their party Congress in November 1928 to withdraw, and obeyed, the Radical Party

(with the exception of a group under Franklin-Bouillon, which remained to support Poincaré) joined the opposition ranks with the Socialists, and the Centre, instead of governing with the Left, was forced to join hands with the Right.

Here again is a government which is infinitely precarious. Remembering the diverse elements which constitute groups of the Centre it is not difficult to see why. In order to stay in power such a ministry must be continuously on its guard lest certain susceptibilities be offended. Once again the Centre is a complex group, and the Right is not strong enough to do without its objectionable factions. "Left of the Centre: liberty for all but watch the priests ! Right of the Centre: liberty for all but special privileges for those in charge of our morals ! "* Obviously, the ministerial platform must not take too firm a position in regard to the clerical issue. But even if there are only a few additional fathers of the Church on official platforms the tendency is expressed, though subtly. It is said, for instance, that M. Tardieu in his ministerial Declarations neglected to affirm his support of the lois laïques , which has become customary for all newly-chosen leaders of the government.

These incidents in themselves would be quite sufficient to put Left-wingers on their guard. Then at the slightest opportunity these dissident groups, already suspicious, do not wait long to break up ministries. It happens occasionally that there is a rapid swing from a government of the Right to one of the Left, and then perhaps back again. In December 1930 M. Tardieu, whose ministry leaned on Right support, was defeated. For a few weeks M. Steeg followed with a majority made up of the Left, and finally Laval's Ministry succeeded it, which reverted to the Right support. The majorities, with the names of the groups which both Steeg and Laval

* Duo Caroli: Le Manuel du Candidat, p.150.

commanded, are found in the following table :

Chamber of 1928 : Steeg and Laval Majorities

STEEG			LAVAL	
For	Against	GROUPS	For	Against
...	37	Independents	38	...
...	85	Republican Federation	85	...
...	31	Democratic Action	29	...
...	18	Popular Democrats	18	...
5	53	Republicans of Left	59	...
1	14	Social & Radical Left	15	...
13	6	Independents of Left	15	7
24	18	Radical Left	35	10
12	1	Republican-Socialists	4	9
112	...	Radical-Socialists	...	99
14	...	French Republican-Socialists	1	12
106	...	Socialists	...	105
...	9	Communists	...	11
5	7	Not Inscribed	11	5
292	284	TOTALS	312	258

In addition to showing such a rapid change from one majority to another, the votes of the various groups given above testify eloquently to the manner in which the Chamber divides into Right and Left. The Steeg majority starting from the Left went as far as the middle Centre but reached its highest expression in the border-line groups of Independents of Left and Radical-Left. Conversely, the Laval majority started from the

Right and ended at the same middle ground of Right and Left tendencies. The split in the Centre votes shows the conflicting interests which both Centre-Left and Centre-Right coalitions are forced to reconcile. That they usually fail in doing so should not be found too surprising.

We have reviewed the three types of government coalition ; first, a Cartel government of the Left, secondly, a coalition of Centre and moderate Left groups, and finally, a disguised government of the Right and Centre. It is not to be supposed that these coalitions spring from clear-cut divisions among the groups ; one gradually evolves from another, and the element of compromise must always be present. The diverse tendencies in French politics find their nearest expression in this way -- often in a very conflicting manner. The question as to what extent their can be stable government under these conditions is now raised, and immediately comparisons are made with political systems in other countries. Has France parliamentary government in the British sense ? Where is authority to be found in the French system ? These questions among others will be discussed in the two following chapters.

PART III

The French Parliamentary System

Part III : The French Parliamentary System

Chapter VII

The French Parliamentary System : An Explanation

The system which we have been describing is in marked contrast to that developed in Great Britain. For, although the rudiments of British constitutional practice, such as two Houses, with a Ministry responsible to the more popular one, elected by universal suffrage and with control of the purse, have been imported into France, her system is an adaptation to her own peculiar traditions and environment. Advantages may be found in the British conception ; it may be said that it provides for smoother functioning of governmental organs, but when the attempt is made by writers, especially Anglo-Saxons, to suggest reforms in the French Parliament to bring about a closer resemblance to the English model, the underlying, fundamental differences between the two nations in history and racial characteristics are completely ignored. Instead, emphasis is laid upon mere mechanical devices which, it is said,* prevent the workings in France of parliamentary government in the British sense.

It is my purpose to review briefly the history of French political institutions, to show that in them there is evidence of a consistency in parliamentary forms, and in particular, that the group system which we have been studying presents itself as a natural product, as it were, of French soil. Finally, it will be suggested that such a phenomenon, like a plant that grows in a certain environment, is a manifestation of natural characteristics of the French people.

Since the summoning of the States-General in 1789 France has undergone

* A. Lawrence Lowell: Governments and Parties in Continental Europe, 1897.

a series of revolutions which have marked her in the opinion of many observers as a fickle and capricious nation that is forever leaping from one form of political organization to another. It is interesting to note that at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century exactly the same thing was said by the French of their neighbours across the Channel*. While centuries of political experience had been preparing the British people for complete responsibility in parliamentary government, the development was not free from revolution. Unlike events in France, however, the evolution was from absolute to constitutional monarchy. The outward forms did not change but their underlying principles were so adapted to changing conditions, and changing concepts of the relation of the state to the people, that from Magna Charta to the Statute of Westminster can be traced the gradually evolving philosophy of Parliament and Empire, embodied in that vague expression, the British Constitution.

With the exception of one short period of republican fervour, the monarchy has always been accepted in Great Britain. The dispute was, formerly, between two factions, one upholding the absolute, the other defending the constitutional, conception of monarchy. And the existence of two parties in the English parliament, descended from the court and country factions of the Seventeenth Century, has become engrained in the sentiment of the nation, although the traditions of their origin are dead.**

When we look at France we are presented with an entirely different picture. Under the ancien régime changes in political concepts were very feeble indeed, and it was not until after 1789 that the principles were altered, and with them, unlike in Great Britain, the outward forms themselves.

* "Nation dont la legèreté est connue ; ils changent souvent d'idées" -- Marquis de Torcy ; and Montesquieu spoke of the changing humour of the English people. Quoted in Seignobos: Histoire Politique de l'Europe Contemporaine, page 278.

** See J.E.C.Bodley: France, bk.4,Chapter 1.

Furthermore, with each one of these changes there was the seemingly inevitable accompaniment of revolution. Here we arrive at the fundamental difference which characterized the concepts of Government and Opposition in France for a hundred years after the Revolution from those concepts which have always held in Great Britain, or have held at least since the end of the Seventeenth Century.

In France, after the Revolution, and before the firm establishment of the Third Republic, instead of changes of ministries, the rise and fall of dynasties and of constitutions have reflected the varying moods of the nation. The opposition, instead of being looked upon as a potential governing force under the existing system, was regarded as a menace, and it was, to the régime. There was no question here of alternating Government and Opposition Ministries according to the British mechanism ; when there was this alternation, a new constitution was formed and a new ruler placed on the throne -- by means of some form of revolution.

The explanation of these phenomena is found in the fact that the Revolution of 1789, unlike similar movements in England, had split public opinion into several, instead of two, conflicting tendencies of political sentiment*. As soon as the first Napoleonic Dictatorship was swept away these were manifest. When the Bourbons were restored, and a parliamentary constitution adopted for the first time, there were people who felt that France would now follow along the lines of British constitutional development. But its impossibility was soon evident. In the Chamber of 1818 there were four distinct, though somewhat artificial, groups -- the "Ultras", who believed in divine right ; the Ministerialists, a Centre group, who were the opportunists of the day ; the Doctrinaires, upholding the pure doctrine

* J.E.C.Bodley: France, p.344

of democratic,representative government ; and the Liberals who demanded the literal fulfilment of the Charter, the Constitution of the Restoration. There were also two other factions which were unrepresented, the Jacobin radicals of 1793 and the supporters of the Napoleonic tradition, but this did not mean that they were not to make sudden appearances in parliament during the following century to confuse still further political issues.

With the advent of the junior branch of the Bourbons after the July Revolution, five or six new groups were formed, having little to do with the past political history of France. Bodley concludes that " any political assembly of Frenchmen must needs split up into sections". It was not until after the introduction of universal suffrage under the Second Republic that, in the opinion of Professor Seignobos*, the groups correspond in any way to the permanent repartition of political opinions in the various parts of France. The tendencies then revealed were represented by the Monarchists, the Conservative Republicans, Radical Republicans, and Socialists. Although measures advocated by each of these groups have continually changed, and although crises have resulted in the temporary fusion of some of them, they still remain largely characteristic of political opinion. It was due principally to insufficient cohesion among the Republicans that the Second Republic was a failure**. The Empire that succeeded brought forth the latent Napoleonic traditions, it was not a clearly parliamentary régime, and party government was suspended. By 1863 the opposition had grown from five to thirty-five members, and even they, though Republicans, were soon divided into several companies, all of which were fighting to destroy the existing régime, rather than merely offering opposition to particular

* Vol.6 of the Histoire de France Contemporaine,edited by M.Lavisse.
** Roger H. Soltau: French Parties and Politics,p.28.

ministries.

With the coming of the Third Republic there were, at first, two parties, but being Monarchists and Republicans they were obviously not suited under a Republican régime to institute the British parliamentary practice. Furthermore, they very quickly divided into numerous factions, the Monarchists being displaced gradually by other Republican groups, and the total augmented by the advent of those parties which trace their origin back to the Jacobins and up through 1848 and the Paris Commune.

Bodley's assertion that any political assembly of Frenchmen must needs split up into sections seems to find definite confirmation. The group system as it works in contemporary France is not a new phenomenon. It had precisely the same effect upon the stability of ministries in the early days of parliamentary government under hereditary monarchy as under the Third Republic. At the end of 1818, in little more than four years, thirty-six changes of portfolio had taken place, and the pamphleteers of the period compared this record of about 50 months with the 50 years' reign of Louis XV, who in all his councils had only 57 ministers.

The evils, therefore, from the British standpoint, of French parliamentary practice -- the multiplicity of groups, the instability of ministries -- are not of recent origin, having a venerable tradition behind them, that would be hard to explain away on the grounds of certain mechanical devices that have been adopted. Although he admits other reasons for the peculiarities of the French parliamentary system, Lowell emphasizes the influences of three practices in their procedure that have prevented the French from enjoying what he terms true parliamentary government. These are the method of voting, the system of committees, and the practice of

interpellations.

The system of voting in France, whether under the scrutin de liste or scrutin d'arrondissement, which is now in force, requires an absolute majority on the first ballot for the candidate to be elected*. Failing the securing of this majority a second ballot is taken when a mere plurality suffices. Lowell's reasoning is that because of this system groups are multiplied in the first ballot, that owing to the necessity of an absolute majority there is less incentive to form large disciplined parties. Small groups consider that there is nothing lost in adding to the number of candidates, and resort only in the final ballot to the discipline, or "concentration", that should have come in the first. The faultiness in this reasoning, it would seem to the writer, is due to a mistaking of cause for effect. The method of voting rather than being a cause of so many political groups is itself the result of their existence, and has tended to eliminate the smaller and less significant electoral parties, as well as to necessitate a certain amount of electoral discipline which might otherwise be lacking**.

Lowell's criticism of the committees is of a slightly different order. To some extent it is now invalid because of a change in the method of their election since the time when he wrote. Originally the members of committees were elected by Bureaux, which were themselves chosen by lot in both the Chamber and the Senate. There was thus no assurance whatever that the committees would be of the same composition as the majority of the government in power. The resulting evil need not be emphasized here. In an attempt to remove the confusion which resulted in the relations between

* The system dates from 1789 -- see Poudra et Pierre: Droit Constitutionnel, liv.2, ch.7.

** See above, Chapter VI.

the executive and legislature under the old system the new reform of proportional representation was applied in the direct election of committees by the two Chambers*, each group being entitled to membership in proportion to its representation. Theoretically this means that a committee majority changes automatically with that of the ministry**, which was an end desired by Lowell. Once again, however, he was mistaken in considering the committee system as a cause of the inherent difficulties in French legislatures. It is rather a method of overcoming them, and if new difficulties arise, such as too great legislative power** at least organization is provided which, with the multitudinous, undisciplined, groups in the legislature, would, otherwise, be difficult to find. In fact, an explanation other than the system of voting or of committees must be found for French legislative behaviour.

In both the British and French parliaments there exists a practice known as "questions to ministers". But while in the British parliament a question is usually asked for information and is rarely followed by a debate and vote (on a motion to adjourn)***, the French system is ordinarily quite the reverse. Questions are addressed, it is true, to French ministers by members who really want information. But another kind of question has developed, intended to call the cabinet to account and give the Chamber an opportunity to pass judgment, which is known as the interpellation#. In the two cases of questions and interpellations the procedure is quite different. A question is addressed to a minister only with his consent ;

* See above, Chapter II
** A discussion of these problems will be found below in Chapter VIII.
*** See May: Parliamentary Practice, 10th ed., p.240 et seq.
# See Lowell: The Governments of France,Italy and Germany, p.95 et seq.

whereas the interpellation is a matter of right, which any deputy may exercise without regard to the wishes of the cabinet. But the most important difference is that the author of the question can alone reply to the minister, and neither general discussion nor a motion is permitted ; while an interpellation is followed by general debate and motions. These are to pass to the Orders of the Day, and may be motions"pure and simple", according to the French terminology, with no expression of opinion, or they may be motivés, that is, contain an expression of opinion, such as, "the Chamber, approving the declarations of the Government, passes to the Orders of the Day". If a motion like this is rejected or a hostile motion passed, after a heated debate, the cabinet resigns, providing the Government has asked for a vote of confidence.

This is the most usual method of turning out a ministry. It gives considerable power to the individual deputy who endeavours to frame a motion is such a way that he will secure the vote of many in the majority who, although approving of the Government policy as a whole, are unsympathetic toward the particular action or policy mentioned in the motion. Furthermore, as the Chamber itself decides upon the time when the interpellation is to take place, the Government is often overcome by a surprise vote, which gives no opportunity for a sufficient rallying of Government supporters. It is quite clear, therefore, that the interpellation as it is worked in France is used to place tremendous power in the hands of the legislature, and handicaps the working of the Government. A criticism such as Lowell's is quite justified in itself, but when he advocates the removal of the practice to bring the French parliament closer to the original British model, he is leaving the grounds of practical French politics; in fact, he is ignoring the real meaning of French political

concepts.

The practice of interpellating Governments in France, exactly like the electoral system of voting and the procedure of committees, is the result of conditions peculiar to the country and of its political habits. An interpellation is merely the means, the mechanical device, adopted to give expression to fundamental political preoccupations. It is not the interpellation which results in the instability of ministries, but the peculiar composition of the French legislature, with its many incoordinate groups, or, if we wish to trace the cause to its ultimate source, the characteristics of the deputy or Frenchman himself. If the interpellation were introduced into the British parliament, nothing would happen and it would soon be discarded.

In our survey of the working of French parliamentary institutions after the overthrow of the Capets, we have noticed the persistency of certain forms and practices which differ from those that have developed in Great Britain. How are we to account for their existence if we do not take into consideration the characteristics and psychology of the French people themselves ? "The political institutions of a modern state are the outcome of the temparament of its people, as developed by gradual evolution or modified by violent convulsion ; and the idea of introducing the party system into the French parliament is a chimerical dream of theorists who close their eyes to that historical truth."* A French writer expressed more recently the same opinion ; "the question is sometimes asked, 'why is the parliamentary system not worked here as in England ?' I reply completely with a simple question, 'why would one fail if one wished to cultivate coffee and vanilla in the glaciers of Spitzbergen ?' "**

To analyze fully French racial characteristics would be outside the

* J.E.C. Bodley: France, p.349 ; for the psychological basis of this reasoning, see Graham Wallas: Human Nature in Politics.

** Jules Roche: Quand serons-nous en République ?, p.140-141.

scope of this work. But if the political institutions which we have been studying depended to so great an extent upon these intangible factors, some attempt must be made to understand them. Political traditions which contribute to constitutional development are themselves but the manifestations of the habits, impulses, and thought of the people to whom they are peculiar.

In a work which presents in an admirable manner the ideological basis of French politics, M. Albert Thibaudet says, "Of the parliament which sits in the Luxembourg and the Palais-Bourbon one could say about the same thing that Mallarmé did of the French Academy: it is a fallen god which always remembers the heavens which it has left".* And if we would understand the French character we could do no better than liken it to that of a fallen god a little bewildered by the environment in which he suddenly finds himself. He theorizes, he disputes, and he must necessarily lack those practical qualities which distinguish the more terre à terre in the "nation of shopkeepers". But if more confusing, it would be still nearer reality to say that in a nation of forty million there is an equal number of gods, each with his own philosophy, his own dogma, and his own conception of their application to the immediate needs of his environment.

The Frenchman is an ideologist, and this, combined with his deeply engrained individualism** (even Caesar remarked upon it when he invaded Gaul), accounts for the assertion that "any political assembly of Frenchmen must needs split up into sections". Furthermore, living in this world of ideas he remains attached to many whose practical significance has long since passed away. If Chartists, Anti-Corn Law agitators and United Empire Loyalists had been political phenomena of France they would still be represented in the Palais-Bourbon. Perhaps this explains the great difference

* Albert Thibaudet: Les Idées Politiques de la France, 1932, p.10.

** See F. Sieburg: Dieu est-il Francais ? and Curtius: The Civilization of France.

between an English political party and its French counterpart. While the former evolves by internal change, continually readapting itself to altering circumstances, the French party is less malleable, a brittle organism that can only be completely destroyed by outside forces, otherwise it lives on. Compromise seems alien to French individualism.

Enough has been said to account for the fact that in France the greatest fundamentals are in dispute. The political principles of 1789 are still warmly defended by some ; since they are, it means that they are denied by others. The duller Briton has long ago forgotten these matters, and concerns himself with the material satisfactions which he has, or has not, as the case may be, as result of his political privileges. This has meant that in Great Britain greater emphasis could be placed upon the economic, rather than the political, functions of the state. There, it would be very near the truth to say that it is the results of legislation which matter ; in France, much more attention is paid to the principles behind the legislation, and after it is passed, interest is usually lost in its application.*

This leads us to the mention of another manifestation of the French character: the prevailing suspicion of the people regarding any exercise of authority. It is this, rather than the material devices upon which Lowell lays emphasis, that explains the position of any French government. It must be continually on its guard lest it offend. As André Siegfried says, the Frenchman always needs a peril, and whether it be that of the Right or that of the Left, he is forever keeping close watch. Indeed, to

* The history of the dispute between the Church and the State, as also the long agitation preceding the passing of legislation on the income tax, and the subsequent apparent disregard of its practical application, would both seem to bear this out.

most Left-wingers the very idea of Government seems a derogation of the rights of individuals*. The mysticism of French democracy combined with the logic of the French nature, fully applied, could lead only to anarchy. Some authorities consider that it does.

* This is clearly shown in a work which has become a classic on the subject, Alain: Éléments d'une Doctrine Radicale.

Chapter VIII

The French Parliamentary System : An Evaluation :

In all parliamentary regimes there is a conflict, implicit or avowed, between the executive and legislative organs of government. The long evolution from absolute to parliamentary, or constitutional, rule has been but the struggle between these two powers ; sometimes the one has succeeded in gaining the mastery, sometimes the other. French political history in the Nineteenth Century shows a constant shifting from the one form of government to the other -- now the executive is predominant, now the legislature. The framers of the Republican Constitution of 1875, which is the least written of all written constitutions, provided, nevertheless, for some stability of authority in the executive branch of the government, although this authority was to be subject to the control of the Chambers. Two devices inserted in the Constitution were intended to ensure sufficient authority to the executive organ -- the first was the method of dissolution, which was to be used along with the consent of the Senate*, and governmental initiative in legislation was the second**. But along with the written Constitution there has grown up since the founding of the Third Republic another one of custom which has ensured that the first device should fall into disuse, and the second be considerably modified by the encroachment of the legislature. The net result seems to be that in France the legislature has won out in the struggle.

The authority of ministries, however, in the French parliament varies considerably. A government which must always depend upon a coalition will be just as strong and no stronger than that coalition. When circumstances

* Const.Law of Feb.25,1875, Art.5.
** Const.Law of Feb.25,1875, Art.3.

are favourable, sometimes directly after an election when a decisive mandate has been expressed, or with the emergence of a dominating issue with power to divide clearly political sympathies, the majority, and consequently the ministry which commands it, will be at their strongest. Of this type were the governments formed under Waldeck-Rousseau and Combes, which were able to capitalize on the ecclesiastical issue at the beginning of the century. While the "clerical peril" lasted ministerial stability was realized ; an elaborate organization maintained the loyalty of border-line groups, regulated the use of the interpellation, and avoided surprise votes. Similarly, the Herriot government elected in 1924 was able, while it lasted, to exert an authority comparable with that of a government under any parliamentary system. All three of these ministries were dependent upon groups of the Left, which contains elements most readily assimilable into working governmental coalitions.

But when we take one ministry with another, of the many that have been produced in the Third Republic, we must conclude that governmental authority, as measured by the stability of ministries, is not as high as the Constitution seems to have envisaged. French governments in the Palais-Bourbon change, if not as often, with almost the same precision and mechanical regularity as do the guards at Buckingham Palace. It is this comparative instability of governments that always attracts the attention of any observer of the French political system. That it is a characteristic peculiarly significant of the relations that have developed between the executive and legislative organs in French government is beyond dispute.

Its broader significance, however, must to some extent be qualified. The changes from ministry to ministry are not of the same degree of importance, and "The Fall of the French Government" which has become such

a familiar feature of newspaper headlines, does not always denote the radical change which many observers attach to it*. For while a new deputy or senator may be asked by the President to form a ministry in succession to a defeated one, it is often nothing more than a reorganization, a redistribution of portfolios among the members of the former cabinet, that takes place. The Briand Ministry, for example, which succeeded that of Viviani at the beginning of the war, comprised practically the same membership as its predecessor. Furthermore, it is not unusual to leave an important portfolio in the hands of one man through many changes of ministry. Declassé and Briand, who were for so many years at the Quai d'Orsay, were able in this way to provide for continuity in the conduct of Foreign Affairs, even though the actual majority which was supporting them changed periodically. There is another kind of ministerial change whose importance must not be exaggerated. Sometimes a cabinet is able to command the support of its majority on the general policy of the administration, but on some small issue this support is not forthcoming, and the government is defeated. It very often happens that the new coalition formed among groups which voted against the previous government, though of a radically different composition from that of the former coalition, is of a very temporary nature, and after lasting for a few days, power reverts to the old majority. Of this type were the short lived ministries of Chautemps and Steeg in 1930 and 1931, coming between the more permanent ones of Tardieu and Laval. But while considerations such as these may alter our opinion concerning

* Very often the change can be regarded according to the refrain of Mme. Angot's daughter --

"C'etait pas la peine assurément
De changer le gouvernement."

the effects upon the parliamentary system of ministerial instability, its significance as indicative of lack of harmony between the executive and legislative branches requires our attention.

The present administrative and governmental system in France is the product of a gradually evolving development. While at first sight it might appear that at each change of regime during the Nineteenth Century there was a complete transformation of governmental machinery, there was, in reality, merely a readaptation to new conditions, and the essential framework of French institutions was maintained. Napoleon at the beginning of the century contributed, among other things, a vast administrative hierarchy, strongly centralized, which with minor modifications has persisted to the present day. It includes the central administration organized under ministries and services, the Departmental administration directed by Prefects and Under-Prefects, and the communal administration*. In France, where local government has not developed to the same extent that it has in Great Britain or the United States, this administrative hierarchy, a Civil Service of huge dimensions, is an organization with tremendous powers.

When the principles of democracy and popular government were applied to the working of French institutions, some reconciliation had to be effected between the administration, which had always exercised powers delegated from above, and the new popularly elected organs of government, which receive their authority from below. The Constitutional Laws of 1875, which remain the official basis of the Third Republic, were passed by a National Assembly which was divided between Monarchists and Republicans ; the compromise which inevitably followed was inspired by the position in the

* Now modified by popularly elected Mayors.

British Constitution of an executive which, theoretically, could be rapidly transformed from a responsible to an autocratic institution. Hence, the executive in France was given considerable power, including the appointment of ministers who were, however, to be responsible to the Chambers*. In theory, then, the ministers form the link which connects the executive administration with the popularly elected legislature, and it is through them that the latter exerts control over the executive organs.

In practice, executive authority, though vested constitutionally in the President of the Republic, is exercised by the Council of Ministers under the leadership of its President, the Prime Minister, a personage unknown to the Constitution. Elected only indirectly by popular vote, by the National Assembly, composed of members of the Chamber and Senate, the President of the Republic lacks intimate connection with the people. Furthermore, though given considerable power by the Constitution, its real purport is diminished by one merciless clause which says that each Presidential Act must be countersigned by a minister**, who is responsible to the Chambers, while the President is not. The right to initiate legislation concurrently with members of the Chamber and Senate, for instance, which was given to the President has thus become the privilege of the Council of Ministers. This is a power indispensable to the efficient functioning of any governmental system ; the extent to which it can be efficiently used in conjunction with the French parliamentary system now commands our attention.

* Const.Law of Feb.25,1875, Art.6. The article is worded, "The ministers are collectively responsible before the Chambers". In reality, the responsibility is mostly to the Chamber of Deputies, but due to the ambiguous wording of the Constitution the matter has never been satisfactorily decided ; on at least three occasions the Ministry has resigned after a hostile vote in the Senate.

** Const.Law of Feb.25,1875, Art.3.

There are two classes of measures which come before the legislature, one is the governmental Bill and the other is the private member's Bill. The first is known as a projet de loi and the second as a proposition de loi. Under the press of parliamentary business in modern times Government proposals of legislation receive in all countries most attention. France is no exception and here Government measures occupy almost the whole agenda of any session. But there has been developed a system of legislative control by means of Committees or Commissions. These were referred to in the last chapter, and while the reasons for their existence have been suggested, arising from the peculiar nature of French political organization, we must now consider the effect that they have upon the relations between the Executive and Legislature in the French parliament.

When a government measure is introduced in the Chamber it is immediately referred to a legislative Commission. Since 1920 the number of permanent Commissions has been fixed at twenty. Each is composed of 44 members, elected proportionately from the political groups. Between these permanent Commissions approximately every division of ministerial activity is covered, but provision is made for the appointment of temporary Committees to consider particular legislative measures not within the jurisdiction of the permanent Commissions. These were originally intended to act in an advisory capacity, to consider the practical application of the proposed legislation, and to prepare and submit a Report to the Chamber. It cannot be denied that such a system would provide for efficient discussion of legislation, which, particularly in the French parliament, might otherwise be lacking. The Commissions have, further, an advantage in being enabled to become fully acquainted with the particular class of legislation with which they are respectively intrusted.

The system has been criticized on several grounds. From being simple organs of criticism and suggestion, the Commissions have gradually become engines of control over the whole action of the Government. Legislation which is referred to them is often so modified or amended that by the time it is submitted to the Chambers there is little resemblance between it and the original measure proposed by the Government ; and it is not uncommon for the Minister concerned and the rapporteur of the Commission to take opposite sides of the debate, with the Chamber acting as a tribunal. It is true that if the Government is in command of a sufficient majority -- if the coalition is a strong one -- the Government case can be carried in opposition to that of the Commission. But this is not always possible. While Governments are formed and reformed in accordance with shifting coalitions, the Commissions remain practically the same throughout the legislative term ; indeed, it is often true that many members remain on the same Commission from parliament to parliament. The result is that there is not always a shifting of Commission majorities in accordance with changes in the legislative coalitions, owing to the fact that the Commission has in the meantime acquired a corporate consciousness, which slight alterations in group affiliations in the Chamber are powerless to overcome. The Commission rapporteur may become an individual more powerful than the minister, because the latter can be forced to resign owing to consistent opposition on the part of the rapporteur and his Commission. In the past seven years there have been eleven Ministers of Public Works, but only one rapporteur on the Commission in charge of the budget of that Department.

The Finance Commission of the Chamber is the most powerful of the Commissions. Because of the nature of its work it is particularly desirable to recruit its members from among experts, who often remain members

for long periods. They can thus become much more familiar with the financial requirements of the country than the various Finance Ministers who hold the portfolio. Inasmuch as the budget is the most important legislative measure of any session and often occupies most of it, the Finance Commission commands a great deal of attention both in the Chamber and in the newspapers outside. Nor is its work confined to technical details and criticisms ; finance problems being particularly liable to party dispute, the political influence of the Commission is often considerable. When the Cartel came into power in 1924 the membership of the Finance Commission was in strict conformity with the Cartel majority and relations between the ministry and the Commission were smooth. But when Herriot was defeated and more moderate coalitions were formed, the Commission with its old Cartel members succeeded in holding up legislation*, forcing the resignation of one Finance Minister before he could even present his case to the Chamber, and becoming, in fact, more powerful as an organ of government than either the ministry of the Chamber. It was not until Poincaré formed his coalition that the Government was able, by its command of a more stable majority, to win out at the expense of the Commission.

The assumption of great powers by organs such as the Commissions shows the danger of creating institutions unknown to the Constitution, and hence uncontrolled by any authority other than the regulations of the Chamber. The Commission has become a means of legislative control much more important than the interpellation, because it can be applied in the day-to-day relations between the Executive and Legislature, and sets up a

* The functioning of the Finance Commission in this Legislature is described by W.L.Middleton in "The French Political System", p.164.

permanent body whose interference can be made more constant and effective. But in spite of a possibility of abuse under the Commission system, its advantages in the despatch of parliamentary business give it good claim to remain as part of the regular machinery of the Legislature. Under the conditions prevailing in the Chamber, the existence of several political groups, the absence of strong organization and discipline, and the particularly abstract and deliberative nature of legislative debate, complete government by Commissions might almost be considered the logical extreme to which political tendencies seem to point.

But even to the extent to which it has been developed the Commission system is a valuable institution. As we have state before, executive authority in the working of the French parliamentary regime varies considerably, depending entirely upon the nature of the coalition whose support the government commands. When conditions are favourable and a stable parliamentary coalition is formed, the Government is able to exert its authority and put its program into effect in spite of any obstructive opposition existing in the Commissions. At the same time, the Commission remains a valuable organ of criticism and detailed technical examination, services which its composition and organization prevent the French Legislature from supplying fully*. When, on the other hand, coalitions are weak and wavering, and ministries are short and precarious, the Commissions provide an authority, a means of legislative action, and, most important, lend an idea of continuity to legislative work,-- all of which might otherwise be temporarily lacking.

When we take a general view of the question it is apparent that the French parliamentary system has departed, more in fact than in theory, from

* For a discussion of Commissions and the advantages they might have in connection with the British system, see Lloyd George, Hansard, Dec.19, 1916, cd.1343.

its model, the British system. The conflict between the executive and legislative organs in France has resulted in the gain of power by the Chamber of Deputies, of which it has a larger share than the House of Commons. In the last chapter we considered the criticisms of Lowell and his proposals to remedy the unBritish-like behaviour of the French people in their conduct of their parliamentary system, by abolishing certain mechanical devices which have developed, in our opinion, due to perfectly natural causes. Other authorities, this time mostly French writers, have proposed numerous reforms of a constitutional nature to bring the system closer to what they consider the ultimate ideal.

There is one clause in the Constitutional Laws which, if applied, would obviously lead to a radical change in the functioning of the French system. The executive was empowered in 1875 to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, providing the consent of the Senate was forthcoming. This power has been exercised once, and only once, by MacMahon in 1877. The somewhat arbitrary nature of the way the power was exercised at that time has ever since prevented its use under conditions which might conceivably call for that action by the French President. The application of this power would entail many advantages. When conditions in the Chamber came to such a pass that stable governments could not be formed, an appeal to the electorate would result in a new alignment of groups ; furthermore, the appeal would be on some definite issue, and not consist, as it does now, of a vague two weeks' consultation every Leap Year. But the dissolution of the Chamber assumes such a radical alteration in the nature and conception of French government that its use will probably remain impossible. It is advocated*apparently, to put greater power in the hands of the Executive.

* See an article by M. André Tardieu in L'Illustration, Feb. 18, 1933.

But it would seem that before it could be used this very power would have to be already existent ; one method would be to make the President of the Republic elective by popular vote, thus giving him a firmer foundation on which to exercise his authority. Suspicion, however, of such a procedure is widely prevailing in France, because of former unpleasant experiences with Prince-Presidents, who have used universal suffrage as a convenient step to power.

The French parliamentary system is one in which the tenets of democracy have been applied, theoretically, to the fullest extent. The constitutional reforms that are advocated periodically in France are usually based on the premise that the democratic régime has outgrown its usefulness, that modern conditions, particularly economic ones, require a turning back to Plato ; and, indeed, since the War, precedents have been established in various countries which might perhaps justify the soundness of this contention. But the fact is that parliamentary government as it has developed in France, in accordance with that country's ideas and environment, represents the most complete theoretical application of abstract democratic principles. The faults inherent in the French system could be traced to the weaknesses of its philosophic basis, and in evaluating the degree of success which the French have attained in the working of their political institutions we must bear this in mind.

Practically, the mysticism of French democracy does not reach its extreme expression. If their were not qualities in the régime established by the Third Republic to compensate for the apparent instability of authority, that régime would not have lasted over sixty years,and endured the crucial test of the last war, which strained the resources of all countries and resulted in serious political readjustments in many of them.

Mention has already been made of the administrative hierarchy established in France by Napoleon. It still remains in but slightly modified form and constitutes a much more powerful permanent body of administration than the Civil Service of either Great Britain or the United States, owing to its strongly centralized character. When, therefore, criticisms are made of the French system on the ground that executive authority is weak, as evidenced by the instability of ministries, the existence of this bureaucracy always functioning in the background is ignored.

> "Republican France has, in reality, two Constitutions : the one, that of 1875, official and visible, which commands the attention of the press, is parliamentary ; the other, secret and silent, that of the Year VIII, the Napoleonic Constitution, gives to the administrative corps the direction of the country.....The intervention of the fonctionnaires is constant. The laws which parliament discusses are nearly always prepared by them ; the Reports which deputies submit are nearly always prepared on their advice, often written by them. And when the legislation is voted.....it is the fonctionnaires again, the Councillors of State, who give it executive form by their administrative pronouncements." *

This is undoubtedly an exaggerated estimation of the importance of this organization in the French political system, and may be considerably discounted.

The existence, however, of this administrative bureaucracy under the Napoleonic Constitution counteracts to a great extent the weakness of the executive under the Republican Constitution of 1875. Regardless of ministerial changes, it continues to function. Its political leaders, the Ministers, are connected with a bureaucracy but not long enough to become part of it.

> "A change of Ministers is very desirable. Ministerial stability is only an advantage in moderation. The Minister is actually the controller of a bureaucracy, but he must not have the spirit of a bureaucrat, which he undoubtedly would

* Daniel Halévy: Décadence de la Liberté, p.95.

> have if he remained for long periods in office. His vigilance must constantly be kept on the alert by parliamentary control, and the threat of removal. He is not a technical expert, but rather the political superintendent of a stable and specialized bureaucracy. Hence a certain instability of Ministers is more advantageous than not. The aim is to obtain a balance ; and the French system of today is in my opinion not far from it."*

This is a view which has a great deal to support it. To sacrifice stability of ministries in order to insure that the policy of a government is always in conformity with the wishes of the majority, that, furthermore, the opinion of minorities is not disregarded, is the result achieved in the working of the French system. What in itself is of small importance is the sacrifice made to secure the realization of much more fundamental and valuable aims. Greater stability is achieved in the functioning of a two-party system -- but too often at the expense of individual and minority. Habits of Liberalism and Conservatism have led to the domination of huge, unwieldy, party machines which turn out decisions automatically and as automatically secure the support and blind obedience of those who compose them. In such a system criticism and opposition are matters of form, expected as they are disregarded, while the governmental machine rolls on, like the king's chariot of old, crushing any feebly offered resistance by the force which is always behind it.

In the French parliament, however, speeches can always influence votes. Here the mechanism is of more delicate structure -- finely adjusted scales which respond rapidly to a shifting of the political burden they support. That there are possibilities of abuse is only too plain ; opportunism and political manoeuvring are not foreign to the Palais-Bourbon. But a general view would confirm the opinion that the balance achieved in the end

* Joseph-Barthélemy: The Government of France, pp. 106-107.

is a reasonable one between collective authority on the one hand, and the assurance of political liberties on the other. In order to insure this balance new means of legislative action have been adopted -- that is sufficient justification for their maintenance as part of the regular governmental machinery. Her parliamentary system, like the many achievements of the French nation in other realms, has become the product of her own civilization.

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