4-1977

Foreign Policy and the French Left in the Fifth Republic: An Analysis of the Role of Foreign Policy with Regard to Leftist Unity

Steven C. Gerts
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses

Part of the Political Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Gerts, Steven C., "Foreign Policy and the French Left in the Fifth Republic: An Analysis of the Role of Foreign Policy with Regard to Leftist Unity" (1977). Master's Theses. 2163.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/2163

This Masters Thesis-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
FOREIGN POLICY AND THE FRENCH LEFT IN THE FIFTH REPUBLIC: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF FOREIGN POLICY WITH REGARD TO LEFTIST UNITY

by

Steven C. Gerts

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
April 1977
Since, June, 1972, the French Socialist Party and the French Communist Party have been formally united in their attempt to gain power. Thus far, the strategy of unified opposition has proved successful; elections since 1972 have shown a steadily increasing voter response to the Left's proposed program. The ability to agree on a joint foreign policy, which constitutes an important part of the Common Program of 1972, was a fundamental factor in the formulation of a united Left electoral platform.

Before the signature of the Common Program, foreign policy had been a subject of severe controversy between the Socialists and the Communists.

Throughout the Fifth Republic, various factors promoted unity among the Socialists and the Communists: the end of the Cold War, a common socialist heritage, the new electoral system, and General Charles de Gaulle's supreme personal influence on the national political system. Foreign policy, however, proved to be a persistent obstacle to a common front. Disagreement over foreign policy has been so persistent, in fact, that despite written agreements contained in the Common Program, it still
exists to this day. The factors that served to bring the Left parties closer together have not sufficed to remove this fundamental point of difference.

A historical approach has been adopted for this study for two important reasons. In the first place, lack of substantive primary research materials has precluded other types of approaches. Details of negotiating sessions, as well as party personalities are inaccessible, but would probably provide insights into the more profound considerations which have gone into the formulation of the "joint" foreign policy of the Left. The official record of parliamentary debates, the Journal Officiel, is also difficult to procure. This important tool for students of French government and politics is little known in the United States. Consequently, great reliance has been made on the works of those researchers who have had greater access to these materials. In the second place, past events continue to play a very important role within the two main political parties of the French Left. In fact, both parties' "raison d'etre" is determined as much by historical tradition as by present-day economic and social exploitation of the working class. To understand the history of the relations between the French Communist Party and the French Socialist Party is to understand the French Left itself, for there is little else by

iii
which to define the term. Furthermore, there is much in the
respective parties' past foreign policies that is helpful in under-
standing exactly where the French Left's foreign policy lies today.
Around this belief is built the entire study.

In accordance with this historical approach, the first
chapter will briefly summarize the main lines of the French Left's
foreign policy from the beginning of the socialist movement to the
end of the Fourth Republic. Chapter two will treat the factors
promoting unity, and demonstrate that throughout the first ten years
of the Fifth Republic, differences over foreign policy effectively
prevented the elaboration of a positive program for a future govern-
ment of the Left. The events in 1968 had such a profound influence
on the French political system that their discussion warrants the
beginning of a separate chapter. Reactions to the events of May
and August were among the most important aspects leading to the
formulation of the Common Program. The Common Program's
foreign policy sections will be the subject of analysis in the fourth
chapter. A close examination shows inconsistencies that reflect
continuing party divergence. The fifth chapter, besides being a
concluding chapter, marshals additional evidence to demonstrate
that foreign policy remains a point of divergence for the two main
political parties of the Left.
Terms such as socialist, communist and left, when capitalized, refer to specifically French contexts. Otherwise they are meant as general terms.

All translations, except where otherwise indicated, are by the author.

In preparation of this thesis, I have benefited from the aid of a great many persons. Dr. Ernest Rossi, Associate Professor of Political Science, Western Michigan University, was gracious enough to find time during his period of sabbatical leave to help me through each of the various stages of writing. His lucid corrections of each draft were thoroughly appreciated. Dr. Kenneth Dahlberg and Dr. Jack Plano both served on the thesis committee, read the final draft, and added their own valuable improvements. Both my sister, Marda, and my parents-in-law, M. and Mme. Georges Montagne added to the richness of the study by providing many books and articles that were unavailable in the United States. In addition, moral and financial support was offered by the Department of Political Science, Western Michigan University, in, among other ways, providing me with a graduate assistantship for which I am very grateful.

I cannot conclude these acknowledgements without mentioning the enormous debt owed to my parents. Their unrelenting
effort to provide me with the foundations necessary to undertake
and fulfill this project will forever be remembered. Eternal
gratitude must be expressed to my wife, Nathalie, whose constant
couragement and inspiration are at the heart of this thesis.

Responsibility for mistakes is, of course, mine alone.

Steven C. Gerts
INFORMATION TO USERS

This material was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from "photographs" if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of "photographs" may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

5. PLEASE NOTE: Some pages may have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

University Microfilms International
300 North Zeib Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106 USA
St. John's Road, Tyler's Green
High Wycombe, Bucks, England HP10 8HR

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
MASTERS THESIS 13-9840

GERTS, Steven Carl
FOREIGN POLICY AND THE FRENCH LEFT IN THE FIFTH REPUBLIC: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF FOREIGN POLICY WITH REGARD TO LEFTIST UNITY.

Western Michigan University, M.A., 1977
Political Science, general

Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preface and Acknowledgements</th>
<th>ii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE FRENCH LEFT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early History of Left-Wing Conflict</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Foreign Policy before World War I</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between the Wars</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Foreign Policy Positions of the Left during the Fourth Republic</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II THE LEFT'S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FIFTH REPUBLIC: THE FIRST TEN YEARS</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New Reality</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Legacy of the Fourth Republic: 1958-62</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Open Search for Unity: 1963-68</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III THE MOVEMENT TOWARD UNITY: 1968-72</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Events of May</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Invasion of Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeGaulle's Resignation</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Final Preparations before Unity: 1969-72</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>FOREIGN POLICY IN THE COMMON PROGRAM OF JUNE 27, 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French International Relations</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmament and National Defense</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Security</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The French Left and EEC</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Foreign Policy Issues</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>PROBLEMS, PROSPECTS, AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Trends and Unity</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indications of Further Foreign Policy Disagreement</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE FOREIGN POLICY HERITAGE OF THE FRENCH LEFT

Since 1900, disunity has most consistently been the outstanding descriptive characteristic of the French political forces termed "of the Left." The divisive conflicts expressed by this disunity must be surveyed before embarking upon the study of the apparent unity which has characterized the leftist movement in recent years. This chapter will clarify the earliest disagreements and demonstrate that they form the basis of later struggles over internal and external issues. Before World War I, the greatest divisions occurred over internal issues. Only later, as France slowly accepted foreign priorities dictated by the World Wars did conflicts over foreign policy rage within the French Left. In the period after World War I, these foreign priorities were a constant concern. Throughout the cold war, disagreement over foreign policy kept the two major parties of the Left far apart. Nonetheless, the original conflicts persist today.

Early History of Left-Wing Conflict

The history of French socialism can be traced back several hundred years, but it is most usually described as obtaining its
greatest impetus from the French Revolution of 1789. The irreconcilable traditions that developed from this event have resulted in numerous models for society. They became the basis of constant historical divisions not only throughout French society, but also within the "revolutionary" leftist forces. The socialists, being the self-proclaimed inheritors of the common worker's cause, have always perceived themselves responsible for the promotion of revolutionary ideals; yet those ideals were many and varied.

Opposition to monarchic, tyrannical, and capitalistic rule as seen in the revolutions of 1830, 1848, and 1871 is part of the historic socialist tradition, although a different set of ideologies framed each revolt. It can be said, however, that the revolution of 1871 and the harsh governmental repression of the Commune and the "communards," plus the subsequent movements stemming from it are at the heart of modern socialism. During his five-year exile for his support of the "communards," Jules Guesde, who, of working class background, later became the father of radical French left-wing socialism, was introduced to the person and writings of Karl Marx. Only upon his return to France in 1876 from Switzerland did the widespread distribution of scientific Marxism take

place.¹ This particular brand of socialism, then, was a latecomer to France. Nevertheless, the adoption by the newly formed "Parti des Travailleurs Socialistes de France" (PTSF) in 1880 of a minimum program written by Marx and Friedrich Engels is indicative of the rapid reception that Marxian socialism was accorded in the trade union movement. It was a revival of what was thought to be a dead political ideology in France. Yet by no means were all socialists determined to rally around a document too "inflexible and anti-French" written by Germans insensitive to French particularities.² Various schisms consequently arose.

Five groups, each with independent ideologies competed for prominence within the working class movement. The Guesdist party, as did Marx, believed that the emancipation of the proletariat would be achieved by a mass uprising of that class, and not, as an older group, the Blanquists thought, by the leadership of a small conspiratorial army. The French Socialist Workers Party (PTSF), though adopting the aforementioned minimum program, toned down calls to arms by favoring parliamentary action and election campaigns. As a kind of synthesis of these groups Jean Allemane, in


1890, formed another movement, the Allemanists, who accepted parliamentary action (strictly controlled by the party leadership) yet felt that revolution was inevitable. Finally, Jean Jaurès, the father, leader, and spiritual inspiration of the socialist movement in the early years of the twentieth century until his untimely assassination in 1914, represented an independent and centrist stance, feeling that all of the above movements were too ideologically rigid to participate in politics as he understood it.¹

In this brief overview of the different schisms that developed in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, it is obvious that the socialist label served as an amorphous bond. It was only the "revolutionary" ideal and "mystique" which kept the conflict over the methods and tactics for attaining the socialist society from crumbling into even smaller pieces. Although the conflict at this time concerned the path to greater power and influence, as the socialists gained respectability and acceptance in the French political system interest soon turned to the question of how far the socialists could go in cooperating with the bourgeois parties without openly collaborating in the repression of the working class. Two examples can help illustrate this problem.

During the Dreyfus affair (1894-1906), in which a young army

officer had been allegedly falsely accused of treason, the conflict over collaboration was addressed by the two strongest leaders of the socialist movement, Jaures and Guesde. Guesde felt that as this concerned a Jewish army officer, a member of the bourgeoisie and not a member of the proletariat, it was none of his concern, and he counseled abstention on the part of the socialists. The younger liberal humanitarian, Jaures, to the contrary, felt that all individuals should be protected by all Frenchmen who followed a socialist extension of the republican tradition. Therefore, it was imperative that the socialist movement take up the cause of defending all individuals in French society from oppressive conspiratorial authoritarianism. As more evidence was presented, it became apparent that Dreyfus was innocent, and that Jaures had successfully defended the rights of a bourgeois individual. But the theoretical aspects of a socialist movement defending interests formerly considered strictly bourgeois did not take root. The problem of the extent to which socialists could act as part of the government of France was not yet resolved. A second crisis further provoked the issue.

The socialists, having grown in strength through membership and votes, found themselves increasingly incorporated into the parliamentary system of government. In June of 1899, Alexandre

---

Millerand, a right-wing socialist of reputable standing in the parliament was asked to join a cabinet that also included as minister of war, General Gaston Galifret, well-known to the socialists as the "butcher" of 1871. Jaures reasoned after witnessing various unsuccessful attempts to form a government that given the composition of the parliament, socialist participation was essential, especially in light of earlier threats of an impending coup d'etat. Those opposed to socialist ministerial participation, including Guesde, were of course outraged, even more so when in April, 1900, the police clashed violently with strikers at a factory in Chalon-sur-Saone. The worst had transpired. Millerand and the "ministerialists" were now implicated in an act that seriously compromised their credibility in the eyes of the working class.

For the next five years, this conflict over ministerial participation overshadowed all others until the Sixth Congress of the Socialist and Labor International in Amsterdam. It was at this meeting that the question of socialist participation in bourgeois governments was largely resolved to the satisfaction of Guesde. The Rheims-Dresden resolution, condemning ministerial participation was passed and subsequently elaborated to form the basis of the rhetorical Pact of Union of 1905. The separate entities that

1Ibid., p. 92. 2Ibid., chapters 3 and 4.
constituted the socialist movement were now one political party, the French Section of the Workers International (Section Francaise de l'Internationale Ouvriere, SFIO). According to this pact, the SFIO was:

A "distinctly revolutionary organization" fundamentally opposed to the bourgeois state, attaining the goals of socialization of the means of production and exchange and transformation to the collectivist or communist society. The party was to vote against "military credits, credits for colonial conquests, secret funds, and the budget as a whole." Finally, participation of socialist deputies as ministers was definitely prohibited.  

Paradoxically, the question of ministerial participation was resolved to the satisfaction of Guesde and the more radical left-wing of the SFIO, but with Jaures at the helm of the new party, there was now more than ever a deep commitment to the evolutionary tactics of parliamentarism. With unity of the Socialists now achieved, the Socialists could turn their attention to other subjects. As the Republic of France was increasingly menaced by the growing threat of war in Europe, the great preoccupation of all the political forces was focused on foreign policy. Here again, the same underlying conflicts resurfaced.

---

1 Ibid., p. 118.
Socialist Foreign Policy Before World War I

During the decade before the war, the foreign policy of the SFIO was distinctly based on a concept of "Defensive Patriotism." Although there was a ritual adherence to the theory that a general strike could debilitate a "capitalist war," in reality the Socialists exuberantly professed typically middle-class attitudes toward patriotism. The emphasis given to the concept of the general strike was more a realization that the Socialists had only this tool to wield and as such it constituted a substantial threat. Repeatedly the SFIO leadership and the rank-and-file affirmed their willingness to participate in any battle to defend France from an unwarranted aggressor (whom they defined as one unwilling to submit to arbitration). These public statements, however, were mostly in reaction to accusations from the Right wing political forces of acts such as treason, or subversion within the army. The Socialists proclaimed a basic hostility to the professional standing army as they felt it to be an instrument for maintaining bourgeois dominance within French society and that it prolonged an atmosphere of anticipated war, which was threatening to external observers. Jaures argued that a "massive body of armed citizens could bear the brunt of a crushing German offensive." Universal disarmament represented

1Ellis, The French Socialists, p. 14. 2Ibid., p. 34.
a step toward the international society the SFIO hoped to attain. The SFIO also felt that international arbitration and negotiation were the best methods of reducing the tensions that caused war, despite binding secret clauses of previous bilateral agreements. Finally, the Socialists believed that Franco-German rapprochement was the best and most urgent policy to avoid war. They were appalled by those in their own party and in France who desired a "war of revenge" against the Germans over Alsace-Lorraine, and they advocated severe restraint in military operations that could provoke the Germans over Morocco. ¹

Although the Socialists voted against the budget every year, protesting the organization and thrust of French foreign policy, the most important issue in which the concept of defensive patriotism and socialist pacifism were challenged was a proposed three-year term of military service. This proposal was put forth in February, 1913, to counter Germany's increase in military strength. During the next three months the Socialists campaigned vigorously against this measure, supporting their own views with a petition of 800,000 signatures. They were convinced that the proposed three-year-law represented the "antithesis" of Socialist ideals. But even though the Socialists gained in strength in the next election, they could not

¹Ibid., chapter 2.
prevent its passage nor could they repeal it before the final prepar-
ations for war were well under way.

The pre-World War I period was difficult for the French
Socialists. For the first time they were a major influence in
French political life, yet their ideological doctrine had specified
non-cooperation. The problem was in the transition of orthodox
Socialist doctrine to effective realistic policies.

French Socialists' attitudes toward national defense
from 1904 to 1914 reveal a basic ambiguity resulting
from the attempt to reconcile Marxian internationalism
with patriotism... (yet) they were Frenchmen first
and Socialists second. They insisted on the coexistence
of patriotism and internationalism. They sought peace,
but were ready to support France in a just and defensive
war. They failed to see that any war involving France
would be presented to the nation as a just and defensive
war.¹

On July 28, 1914, the Austria-Hungarian Empire declared war
on Serbia, and the German Empire did so on August 1. France was
on the brink of war when on July 31, the moderate Socialist leader
Jean Jaurès was assassinated by a right-wing nationalist fanatic.
On August 1, France began its mobilization, and on August 3
Germany declared war on France. French president Raymond
Poincare immediately appealed to the French people for a "Sacred
Union" which was to defend the French nation. In a display of
remarkable national unity, all sectors of the French population

¹Ibid., p. 41.
joined in the defense of France against Germany. Jules Guesde and another prominent Socialist, Marcel Sembat, accepted portfolios in the Republican-Socialist Viviani's reconstructed government. For a time, the Right and the Left were united in the struggle to defend France.

Doctrinal problems soon began to appear in the Socialist party, however. Jean Longuet, a grandson of Karl Marx, led a radical left-wing minority throughout the war. He believed that the "imperialist" war should not be fought by French workers, and that the Allied governments, being as capitalist as the Central powers, were also considered the enemy. In effect, he represented the doctrinaire internationalist revolutionary who felt that the "capitalist" war was a sham. The conflict over participation and non-participation once again became a heated issue. Eventually, in July, 1918, the Longuet group became the majority faction within the Socialist Party.

One of the most important causes for the rise of this extremism was the inability of the war-time government to bring the assassin of Jean Jaurès to justice.

The constant postponing of the trial of Vilain, the murderer of Jaurès, undoubtedly exasperated Socialist opinion; it was alleged that the trial would stir up party strife . . . . . . the postponement of the trial for five years and the subsequent acquittal of the murderer led Socialists--and many others--to believe that to a bourgeois society the murder of a Socialist leader for
political reasons was a matter of little importance. ¹

Between the Wars

After the war, the appeal of the traditional SFIO diminished. Workers were unenthusiastic about the success of the Sacred Union that was formed to defend the Republic. Disillusion with moderate policies, and the image of a more dynamic future represented by the Russian revolution of 1917 inspired the workers to revolt against the more traditional French opportunists. The "old" leadership desired a return to pre-war normalcy which the rank-and-file could not accept. Membership fell and electoral progress slowed. As a response there gradually developed three factions within the Socialist camp. They corresponded roughly to a small right wing, an influential center and a large vocal left wing. The workers were moving their support toward those who had maintained from the beginning a fundamental protest against the war. Those same workers were also accepting the image of the Soviet Union that orthodox leaders were portraying. What started as a small group of devout idealists ended as a full-scale mass party.

As an attempt to differentiate between the European socialists who were "responsible" for the socialist failure to prevent war

from the doctrinaire revolutionaries proclaiming the glory of the
Russian Revolution, Vladimir I. Lenin formed the Third Interna-
tional, which was profoundly more revolutionary than the Second.
The essential differences between the two were in the relations
between the headquarters of the International organization and the
national "sections" of the international party. In the Second, there
was a great deal of autonomy delegated to the national sections,
whereas in the Third, the national sections were completely subor-
dinated to the political dictates of Moscow, the headquarters of the
Third International. Dissatisfied with social reformism, and
participationist attitudes, many in the French Socialist movement
desired adherence to the Third International, and a list of condi-
tions was slowly formulated by Moscow for membership of the
French Socialists.

At the Congress of Tours, 1920, 76 percent of the delegates
present (3,208 of 4,230) voted to adopt the "Twenty-One Conditions"
necessary for adherence to the Third International. The French
Communist Party was born. ¹

From this rejection of the moderately oriented SFIO to the
beginnings of the Popular Front period of cooperation, relations
between the two leftist parties were severely strained, (the minority

¹Wohl, French Communism in the Making, p. 200.
against the twenty-one conditions remained within the SFIO). In 1921, the SFIO leadership, through a systematic critique of the strategy, doctrine and state practices of the USSR developed a lasting image of the French Communist Party. Leon Blum had taken over control of the SFIO. He, being a strong liberal humanitarian and a disciple of Jaures, criticized the Communist Party as having no liberty of discussion, no freedom of speech, nor any freedom of thought. He considered the PCF as irrelevant to the needs of France, believing that a violent revolution was unnecessary and futile. The other Socialist leaders considered the PCF "contrary to Socialist dignity."^1

The Communists, following Moscow's dictates, underwent a process of "bolshevization" from 1920 to 1928, which entailed a reorganization of the Party's structure, leadership and orientation to coincide with that of Moscow.^2 Lenin believed that only a small minority consisting of the revolutionary pure would accept the conditions laid down for the adherence to the Third International.

When so many French Socialists joined the Communist

---


International, Moscow was forced to remodel the French Party in order to develop it into a truly revolutionary vanguard. After 1928, Stalin's control over the Comintern became more stringent. In France, this was translated into political tactics called "class against class" that attempted to demonstrate that the PCF was the sole representative of the working class, and that attempted to reduce the influence of the SFIO over the workers. Thus, the PCF tried to promote "unity at the bottom," by having the workers unite while the Communist leaders severely criticized the Socialist leaders as "lackeys of the bourgeoisie." Nonetheless, the working class remained divided in its allegiance.  

The momentum precipitating change among the Left came, as in pre-1914, from exterior forces. The economic depression was forcefully felt in 1933. In February, 1934, violent demonstrations broke out against a weak political system discredited by its instability and inability to control the situation. The fascist threat from within the country was heightened by the fascist threat in Germany. Social order in Paris was in disarray. A political scandal, said by the Left to include even some Radicals, appeared at the same time. The fascist "Leagues" within France became

---

increasingly vocal. Confronted by this growing threat, the Communists and the Socialists for the first time demonstrated together against fascism.  

But despite the willingness on the part of the leftist parties' rank-and-file to demonstrate together, the French Communist Party continued the struggle against the Socialist Party, typified by the slogan, "unity at the bottom," until April, 1934. At this point, Moscow intervened by calling both Maurice Thorez, leader of the French Communist Party since 1932, and Jacques Doriot, an advocate of unity on the Left, to the USSR. While Thorez was in Moscow, a clear message was sent to the French Communist Party. On direction from Moscow, there was to be "unity at the top." Thorez, writing in Pravda, May 23, 1934, officially declared:

"... The situation in France is shaping up in such a manner now that the Communist Party will once again have to make a frank proposal to the leadership of the Socialist Party and of the reformist labor federation (CGT) for a joint struggle against the fascist threat."

The PCF was thus forced by Moscow into a tactical reversal. It has been speculated that Moscow's Comintern decision was directly related to the foreign policy needs of Moscow faced with the growing threat of German Nazism. Certainly later developments

---

1 Ibid., pp. 31-38. 2 Ibid., p. 49.
indicate that even at this early stage, it may have been the reason for the Comintern's reversal. As a result of the policy change, the PCF made its first official offer of unity to the SFIO. In July, 1934, a United Action Pact against fascism was signed by the PCF and the SFIO.

The United Action Pact did not immediately become a solid foundation for more comprehensive common action. In a word, the SFIO was suspicious of the PCF's motives. For 14 years, the Communists and the Socialists had been strongly opposed to each other, now the PCF wanted "unity at the top." In October, the Unity of Action Pact was developed into an electoral alliance for local elections. Still, there was hesitation on the part of the Socialists. Before 1935, the PCF was internationalist in character and scope. They advocated international class warfare and the revolutionary vanguard more than national defense. They consistently insulted the SFIO's policies in this area, as in others, as being too "bourgeois." Then in May, 1935, again on order from Moscow, the PCF had to reverse its policies. On May 15, 1935, Stalin surprised everyone by stating that he understood and fully approved "the policy of national defense pursued by France in order to maintain its armed forces at a level constant with its security." 1

After further prolonged negotiations, the Unity of Action Pact was expanded to include the Radical party. In January, 1936, the Popular Front coalition of the Communists, the Radicals and the Socialists was announced. In April, 1936, the Popular Front became the most powerful political coalition in France as a result of the legislative elections held the same month. But the Communists had counted on the Radicals to be the leaders of the coalition. Instead, the Socialists led other parties in the elections, and thus Leon Blum became prime minister. Now the problem became developing alternative domestic and foreign policies.

The PCF had hoped a Radical-Communist leadership could effectively pursue a foreign policy based on "anti-fascism, collective security, and strong ties with the Soviet Union," but with Leon Blum at the helm of the government, it became a different matter. Blum argued for a positive attitude toward defensive patriotism and neutralism in international conflicts based upon a reorganization of French defense forces in order to serve the needs of the proletariat. The SFIO leadership was definitely inclined toward international arbitration through the League of Nations; disarmament was interpreted to mean internationally negotiated simultaneous disarmament. As in 1913, the Socialists wanted to reduce the military term of service from two years to one year. But the hesitancy on the part of the Socialists to react concretely to the growing threat of
war negated spoken demonstrations of pacifist goodwill. The Socialists were much more interested in domestic concerns than were the Communists, who, led by Moscow's control of the Comintern, were increasingly conscious of the German threat. The Communists disapproved of French passivity over the German invasion of the Rhineland in early 1936. Further indecision and the resultant non-intervention policy developed by Leon Blum with respect to the civil war in Spain consolidated the schism in the Popular Front over foreign policy. In 1938, the Communists abstained from a vote of confidence over the Munich agreement which was negotiated by the Radical Prime Minister Edouard Daladier. Expecting to be severely reprimanded for his denial of support to Czechoslovakia, Daladier returned to a France thankful for his preservation of peace. The Socialists hesitatingly welcomed the measure, even though in a caretaker government Leon Blum had recently begun taking a firm position against the Germans. After this vote of confidence on Daladier's foreign policy, the Popular Front no longer had even the semblance of unity. Moreover, as Daladier approached the events of 1939, the French political forces were simply unprepared to meet them. The country was split between the Left and the Right. The Left was divided between the PCF and the various factions of the SFIO and the Radicals. The extreme Right held most of the economic power and financial power,
but the Left still was in control of the parliament. Indecision and hesitancy on the part of the democratic Left precluded effective leadership to meet the crisis.¹

Two dates mark the demise of the Left during World War II. On September 17, 1939, about one month after the German-Soviet pact was signed, the Communist Party was banned in France by the Daladier government. France had declared war on Germany just two weeks before. The PCF's press was suppressed, its deputies were stripped of power and removed from office, and many PCF militants were arrested. The PCF was forced to implement its clandestine organization, the maintenance of which was required by the original Twenty-One Leninist Conditions. When the USSR entered the war against Germany on June 22, 1941, however, the PCF provided the strongest and the most highly organized clandestine assistance to the Resistance effort.²

On July 10, 1940, after Germany had attacked France, the SFIO too almost died. Only 36 out of 126 SFIO deputies voted with Leon Blum against according full powers to Marshal Philippe Pétain. This signified that the centrist faction committed to pacifism at any cost won out over continued resistance. Some felt


that Socialism was to disappear from France altogether. Nonetheless, the Socialists regrouped and survived. Though there was a fundamental disagreement between General Charles de Gaulle and Leon Blum over the role political parties were to play in the France of the future, the new Socialists fully backed the Resistance movement.¹

After the liberation of Paris (August 25, 1944), de Gaulle was able to incorporate the Provisional Government of the French Republic (G. P. R. F., Algiers), into the National Council of the Resistance (C. N. R.), thus according a minimum of traditional political party participation. Since the G. P. R. F. annulled all acts and ordinances passed by the Vichy regime, theoretically it was possible to return to the Third Republic Institutions. The Third Republic was blamed, however, for defeat and capitulation, and de Gaulle proceeded to his first referendum. He combined the election of representatives with a question on the nature of the new assembly. The new parliament, it was proposed, was to be granted powers only for a specific time period which were to be used to formulate a new constitution. The electorate approved the plan, 96 percent to 4 percent of votes cast.²

²Ibid., p. 643.
The Communists and the Socialists won a substantial victory in this election year. The PCF won 26 percent of the votes cast, the SFIO 23 percent. The PCF thus felt justified in demanding a proportionate number of ministerships. De Gaulle refused, although he gave the Communist leader Maurice Thorez the Ministry of state, and allowed two other Communists important posts: National Economy, and Work and Armaments. Two months later, in a bid to reassert his influence, de Gaulle resigned from government hoping to be called back as indispensable, then instituting the strong presidential regime he outlined later (Bayeux, June 16, 1946). He was not called back.

Even though the Communists and the Socialists received a strong mandate for their actions in the assembly, their proposed constitution did not coincide with the wishes of the French people. The proposed assembly would have had absolute predominance over all other political institutions with extremely few limits to its power. When presented to the nation, it was rejected, 53 percent no, and 47 percent yes.¹ This meant that another constituent assembly had to be elected, and another constitution written and approved. In this new assembly, the Socialists and the Communists maintained their strength, but they introduced a series of controls

¹Ibid., p. 644.
over parliament which this time was to be bicameral. For the fourth time in one year, the voters went to the polls and approved the Constitution of the Fourth Republic 53 percent yes, 47 percent no. The difficulty at this referendum, however, was that a full 31 percent of the registered voters abstained, which meant that only 36 percent of the French people approved the Constitution.¹

The Foreign Policy Positions of the Left During the Fourth Republic

After the war, with General de Gaulle's resignation placing him on the sidelines of the political game, and with the Fourth Republic firmly in position, the "turning point in French politics"² came on May 4, 1947, when Paul Ramadier, then Socialist Prime Minister, ejected the Communist Ministers from his government. The issue was a minor one: a wildcat strike had erupted over wages. At first, the French Communist Party did not support the strike, giving witness to their desire to remain a governmental party. But as time passed, more strikers rejected conciliatory attempts at wage negotiations. When the PCF finally decided to support the strikers, they voted against a question of confidence

¹Ibid.

posed by the Prime Minister. It must be noted that it was the PCF's Marxist coalition partner, and not the extreme Right or even the moderate Right which forced the split. In so doing, the SFIO reversed a policy of cooperation with the PCF that dated from 1945.

At the time there was great speculation as to the reasons behind the Socialists' action. It was said that the break was inevitable, given the anomaly of having a Communist Defense Minister severely criticizing the government's defense effort in Indochina. Another reason may have been a difficulty in procuring credit for badly needed economic development. Five days after the Communists were ousted, the World Bank offered France a substantial loan. It was well known that American financial and material aid would go to those countries that expressed the values and policies that the United States government stood for. Still another reason may have been the Socialist desire to establish themselves strongly within post-war French politics. Fearing Communist action that could have reflected the events of Eastern Europe, the SFIO was glad to be rid of a troublesome partner. The result was that the Socialist Party now had to rule France in a left-center coalition.

From this point on, domestic French politics became

---

1 Tiersky, French Communism, p. 153.

inseparable from the realm of international relations. In 1947, it was clear which side of the Cold War France had chosen. The Truman Doctrine was announced just two months before the exclusion of the Communists from the government, and the Marshall Plan was announced only one month after the exclusion had taken place. In excluding the PCF, the Socialist-led government had clearly joined Western anti-communist forces. Moreover, subsequent developments only served to reinforce Communist isolation in French society. The French Communists did not seem to recognize the permanence of their exclusion from French politics and preferred to follow Stalin. When the Marshall Plan was announced in June, 1947, the Soviet government hesitatingly negotiated until July before denouncing the Plan as an infringement on national sovereignty. ¹ It was quite an embarrassment that Czechoslovakia had accepted the Plan and later had to retract. From this need to reinforce the communist bloc was born the Cominform. It was therein perceived that the international system contained two camps, one capitalist and the other communist. The relationship between the two was to be based on "peaceful hostilities," which in France meant obstructionism and "sectarian immobility" for the PCF. ²

²Tiersky, French Communism, p. 157.
At the first meeting of the Cominform in September, 1947, the French and the Italian Communist Parties were severely reprimanded for their reformism, revisionism and right-wing deviationism. The subsequent adjustment of the PCF to Moscow's new dictates was demonstrated in the strikes and riots of November and December, 1947, instigated by the French Communists on the instructions of Moscow. Yogoslavia's "deviation" was strongly criticized by Maurice Thorez and the French Communists. Events in Hungary and Bulgaria also provided forums for Thorez to proclaim his allegiance to Moscow.

The Communist infiltration of some government circles during the two years after the war, and the strikes and riots of the Fall, 1947, gave the Socialists cause for concern. The opportunity for infiltration and control was skillfully exploited while Communist Ministers were in the French government. In reaction to the Communists' increased obstructionism, the Socialist officials after 1947 set about reforming certain key structures to prevent further influence. Robert Lacoste revised the directorships of the nationalized coal mines to limit Communist influence there. Jules Moch


set in motion a program of reforms within the police forces to limit the insurrectionaries' chances of success. Leon Jouhaux forced a split within the largest trade union, the CGT, which increasingly had become Communist controlled.\footnote{Gerard, "Insurrection Fades in France," p. 33.}

With the Radicals and the MRP, (Christian Democrats), the Socialists formed the "Third Force" which, after the municipal elections of 1947, united to oppose both the Moscow directed Communist Party, and the personally directed Gaullists. Throughout the remainder of the Fourth Republic, the SFIO acted first as government participants until 1951, then as part of the "responsible" opposition, then after the 1956 elections they led a coalition government (the longest of the Fourth Republic, 16 months). The Prague Coup of 1948, the Berlin Blockade (1948-49), and the NATO pact of 1949 all served to solidify the SFIO's leadership in its role of combatting Communism in France and elsewhere.

Efforts at European unity, most notably seen in the push for a European Steel and Coal Community were welcomed and encouraged by the Socialists. The concept of a European Defense Community (EDC) which would have provided for limited German rearmament within the framework of a European defense organization was eventually to prove divisive for the SFIO leadership (see below). In
1952, however, there was little question of SFIO approval. The 44th Socialist Party Congress of May, 1952, adopted a motion admitting the concept of German rearmament.

The Party approves the creation of a united European army, open to all democratic nations and submitted to a democratically controlled European political power, and believes that Germany must participate.¹

Europe too was to serve, in the eyes of the SFIO, as a "Third Force" between presumably inevitable American expansionism and Soviet Communism, yet it was to be strongly rooted in Western European political traditions.

The PCF still acted as though it were a member of the Eastern European states. At the February 22-23 meeting of the Central Committee of the PCF, Maurice Thorez attempted to elaborate a response to a fundamental question that plagued the French Communist Party:

The enemies of the people, thinking to embarrass us, pose the following question: "What would you do if the Red Army occupied Paris?" Here is our reply. . . . The Soviet Union is never and never could be found in the position of being an aggressor toward any other country. The country of socialism could not by definition practice a policy of aggression and of war as do the imperialist powers. . . . However, since the question is put to us, let us say clearly this: if the common efforts of all Frenchmen devoted to liberty and peace do not succeed in bringing our country back into the camp

of democracy and peace, if later our people should be
dragged against their will into an anti-Soviet war, and
if under these conditions the Soviet Army, defending the
cause of the people, the cause of socialism, should be
brought to pursue the aggressors onto our soil, could the
workers and the people of France act toward the Soviet
Army otherwise than did the workers and people of
Poland, of Rumania, of Yugoslavia . . . ?

If this passage hadn't been put in the conditional tense, there
would have been a good possibility that the Communist leader would
have been ousted from his seat in the National Assembly and tried
for treason.

Even the personality cult of Stalinism was nowhere more
solidly integrated into the doctrine of a communist party outside the
Soviet Union than in France. Both Stalin and Thorez were revered
and awed by the Communist rank-and-file. Upon the death of
Joseph Stalin then in March, 1953, the PCF was in a quandary as to
the course of action they were to pursue. While accepting super-
ficial aspects of peaceful coexistence and a more liberalized inter-
nationalist doctrine, most critiques of the personality cult that de-
developed in the international communist movement after 1956 were
deemphasized and censored in the French Communist Press.

---

2 Ibid., p. 208.
3 Fejto, The French Communist Party, p. 32
In spite of its professed allegiance to Moscow, the PCF was willing to express its satisfaction in parliament with any French policy that coincided with its current policy. They voted for Prime Minister Pierre Mendes-France in June, 1954, and for the Indochinese settlement in July. During the next months, they also voted with the government on the granting of internal autonomy to Morocco. Later, after the March, 1956, elections in which they became the largest parliamentary party, the PCF voted for the investiture of Guy Mollet and the granting of special powers to deal with the Algerian rebels.¹

During the 1956 election campaign, the SFIO rejected cooperation with the Communists. Guy Mollet thus headed the Republican Front, which was a governing coalition comprised of the SFIO, the Radicals and the UDSR (Union Democratique et Sociale de la Resistance). As were other governments throughout the Fourth Republic, the Republican Front was threatened by all sides. Ideological considerations outweighed pragmatic resolution of national problems. On the Left, the PCF threatened the life of the government with 26 percent of the vote, as did the rightist parties, the Moderates and the Poujadists, who represented another 26 percent.²

¹Tiersky, French Communism, p. 177.
²Chapsal, La vie politique en France, p. 285.
Furthermore, exterior events only emphasized to what extent the government of France had lost control of the political system. Guy Mollet's reactions to this situation featured the "immobilisme" of the last years of the Fourth Republic.

In 1956, the campaign slogans of the Socialists were, "Peace in Algeria" and "Not a Penny, Not a Soldier for the War in Algeria."\(^1\) When Mollet took office as Prime Minister, there were already 200,000 troops in Algeria. He had spoken of the "Algerian Personality" and assigned General Georges Catroux, a liberal in colonial affairs, to the Algerian desk.\(^2\) But five days after taking office, Mollet traveled to Algiers to explain his new policies and was publicly humiliated by mud and tomato-throwing demonstrators. Five days after this, he let it be known that his policies would be completely reversed.

I have better understood you Europeans, you Moslems... These men thought France was going to abandon them. I understood their despair.... That is why I say to you that if I have suffered, the painful demonstrations of Monday contained a healthy element. They have been for a great many people the means for affirming their attachment to France. If this is what the immense majority of men and women at the War Memorial wanted to convey, then let it be


known that they have been heard. ¹

Mollet's government gave evidence to its incapacity to deal with difficult problems in two further episodes. The first was the Ben Bella Affair in which the leaders of the Algerian FLN (Front de Libération Nationale) were arrested without government approval. The military commanders took advantage of a distinctively sensitive situation in which these leaders were flying to Tunis to meet with Habib Bourgiba in an aircraft piloted by French nationals. The military did try to get approval for the arrest, but they could only reach a subordinate who did not grasp the implications of his non-committal action. The government was put in an awkward position, trying its best to transform the blunder into a political success. Before the National Assembly, Guy Mollet openly admitted his government's delayed role.²

The second episode was the secretly planned invasion of Egypt by a joint Franco-British "peace-keeping force," and Israel, in October, 1956. Negotiations proceeded for a long period before the three powers could find a pretext for the invasion, thus proving that it was a deliberate act. Nonetheless, the invasion failed because of international pressure in the United Nations. Essentially, there were three reasons why the Socialist-led government attacked

¹Ibid., p. 23. ²Ibid., pp. 29-32.
First, it was widely believed in France that Egypt was the prime mover of the Algerian revolt. These beliefs were aggravated by the Israeli intelligence services close to the French bureaucracy. Preventing Egypt from assisting Algeria was thought to be a solution to the Algerian War. Guy Mollet believed that Nasser was a second Hitler, an apprentice dictator who had to be stopped.

He kept Nasser's book, The Philosophy of the Revolution on his desk, likening it to Mein Kampf and construing quotations out of it to allege that Nasser lusted for empire over the Arab world as well as for vengeance against the west.¹

Secondly, this "Munich Complex" that Mollet suffered from, was used by the technocrats and the military who were sympathetic to Israel to promote a "tacit alliance" with the Jewish state.² The largely professional army had recently suffered humiliating defeat in Vietnam "at the hands of the politicians." They were anxious to reassert their importance in the eyes of the world.

Thirdly, the actual nationalization of the Suez canal in July, 1956, greatly heightened the French hostility to Egypt in French

¹ Love, Suez, p. 145.

public opinion. The combination of Mollet's beliefs, public opinion and the increasingly serious instability of the Fourth Republic motivated Guy Mollet to action. ¹

Mollet's policies were summarily justified in terms of Socialist principles as leading to greater democracy and freedom for the Egyptians. Socialists believed both Egyptian and Algerian nationalist governments would be more feudal than democratic, and would be directed by a religious fanaticism. With this in mind, the nationalization of the Suez canal was not interpreted as being a socialistic liberation of the productive forces, but rather as an "enhancement of the power of the state to the detriment of the individual."²

In sum, the Socialists' policies towards Algeria and Egypt during their 16 months in power proved to be failures. When Mollet left power in May, 1957, French troops stationed in Algeria had grown to 400,000 and the end was nowhere in sight.³

By acceding to and then championing French nationalist impulses, the SFIO not only helped to create a climate hostile toward the Fourth Republic--for many people attributed the Suez failure to the Republic as well as to the Socialist-led government--but, waving

¹Simmons, French Socialists, p. 33.


³Ibid., p. 38.
the banner of nationalism for the sake of temporary popularity, it was later to discover there were other parties and personalities better qualified by background and prestige to elicit support of their assumed devotion to French national interests.\(^1\)

Yet concerning the general foreign policies of the SFIO-led government, coalition of 1956-57, it cannot be concluded that all was a failure. It was during Mollet's term that independence was granted to Tunisia and Morocco. A law was passed in June, 1956, opening the path to independence for other African colonies. In the European arena, recognition was given to the desires of the people of the Saar who had rejected a French plan for an independent territory. Euratom, the European Atomic Energy Community, and the Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC were all approved during Mollet's term.\(^2\) Without these important foundations, it is questionable whether de Gaulle's later success would have been so rapid or extensive. And more important than any other factor, according to at least one author, it was de Gaulle's success which finally, after so many years of division, would provide the primary impetus for the Left to regroup and unite.

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 48.

Summary

In this chapter, the French Left has been traced from its earliest beginnings to the start of the Fifth Republic when the political life of the nation was fundamentally influenced by Charles de Gaulle. One point should be clear. The French Left, though often representing more than 40 percent of the French voters, has not played as great a part in national politics as these numbers would seem to warrant. Its influence was sporadic, temporary, and ephemeral.

The outstanding cause for this ineffectiveness was disunity within the Left. From its earliest origins, the French Left was divided over questions of ambition and strategy. Until 1905 and the Pact of Unity, there were five factions that claimed socialist purity. Even after the birth of the unified SFIO, the conflict over the definition of the socialist ideal society and the methods to achieve it still raged within the party. Slowly, throughout the pre-World War I period, the socialist movement seemed to develop a hesitant acceptance of the principles of parliamentarianism and the electoral "market" as sources of strength and effectiveness. Still, the Pact of Unity precluded ministerial participation. Dogmatic doctrine outweighed pragmatic realism. The inherent problem might have been overcome at any time had the international climate...
not had such an important influence in French affairs. World War I and the advent of Communist Russia legitimized the radicals within the Left who disclaimed the electoral path to power. The birth of the French Communist Party as a response to the Russian Revolution began a period of further complication. Formerly, the French socialists were firmly committed to the French nation. The PCF's professed allegiance to the Comintern made unity on the French Left depend on the USSR. The Popular Front was common action against the fascist threat, but not a positive negotiated program of socialist agreement.

After World War II, the international climate, instead of facilitating agreement among the Left parties, aggravated the disunity between them. The Cold War conclusively prevented cooperation between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party.

Thus, the intrinsic conflict lasted throughout the life of both the Third and the Fourth Republics. During the latter part of the Third, and during all of the Fourth, domestic French politics simply could not compete for prominence with the international necessities caused by Vietnam, then Algeria and Suez. The Cold War and France's own post-war political system reinforced the original division and the importance of world affairs. It would take both substantial reforms of French political institutions and a changed international climate to allow the French Left to exercise
its representative power.
CHAPTER II

THE LEFT'S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FIFTH REPUBLIC: THE FIRST TEN YEARS

During the first decade of the Fifth Republic, new institutions were created that were to influence the direction of the two main leftist parties. These institutions slowly acted on the PCF and the SFIO in a manner that was to demonstrate the advantages of promoting common efforts in opposition to the policies and personality of General Charles de Gaulle. Nevertheless, there were serious obstacles that prevented the realization of unity. One of the most prominent was foreign policy.

This chapter will examine these new institutions and their effect on the PCF and the SFIO, and it will demonstrate to what extent the questions over foreign policy blocked common action. It will be divided into three sections corresponding to chronological periods of evolution in the mutual relations among the leftist groups. The sections will explore the main factors contributing to unity on the Left and the factors hindering this unity.

The New Reality

The fall of the Fourth Republic occurred in May, 1958. It came in the midst of a seemingly interminable ministerial crisis
and was precipitated by a revolt in Algiers of French Algerians, Gauhlist activists, all of whom profited from the French Army's complicity. As a result, General Charles de Gaulle became prime minister on condition that he be able to renovate French political institutions. Almost immediately, de Gaulle turned to that task of institutional reform by announcing a referendum on a new constitution in September.¹

Only one political party dared oppose the constitution that was to become the basis of the Fifth Republic. First declaring that the 1946 constitution should be respected, and then modifying this stand to advocate the writing of an alternative constitution, the Communist Party of France directed its members to vote against the referendum of September, 1958.² The PCF's directives proved to be a tactical mistake, as the constitution was approved by 80 percent of the French electorate. Two weeks later, the Council of Ministers decided to change the electoral law from a system of proportional representation with majority clauses to a single-member district system with two ballots. Under this system, the country is divided into districts which send one member to the

legislature. On the first ballot, a candidate must acquire more
that 50 percent of the votes cast in order to proceed directly to the
National Assembly. If no candidate receives 50 percent, all can-
didates present themselves one week later at the second ballot, (pro-
viding they received more than five percent at the first ballot). The
candidate who receives the most votes wins the election. This
method of selection was designed by de Gaulle specifically to reduce
the influence of the Communist party in the National Assembly.
With 80 percent of the electorate backing de Gaulle's decisions, if
indirectly, there was little opposition to the new system. The
decision was made only one month before the legislative elections
were due to take place, thus allowing little time for electoral prep-
arations.¹

This new method of election was disastrous for the Communist
Party in terms of its representation in the French political system.
Quite simply illustrated, during the Third Legislature of the Fourth
Republic, (1956-58), the PCF represented 25.6 percent of the vote
and was allocated 150 seats (25.3 percent of 596 seats). This
corresponded quite closely to the electoral system of proportional
representation as it was originally designed to operate. In November,
1958, the electoral system did not allow for such equitable

¹Jacques Chapsal, La vie politique en France depuis 1940

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
representation. Though the Communists received 19.2 percent (losing 30 percent of their traditional voters because of their original opposition to the new regime and its constitution), they won only 10 seats (1.8 percent of 552 seats). Had the former electoral system continued, they would have won 87 seats (within metropolitan France). The same is true for the SFIO. The Socialists benefited somewhat from their early, if hesitant approval of the constitution. The SFIO won about 12 percent of the vote (as in 1956) but acquired only 44 seats, whereas again, had the system of proportional representation been in effect, they would have had 72 seats. The political isolation of the two leftist parties in the National Assembly could hardly have been more complete.1

Throughout the early years of the Fifth Republic, the opposition parties struggled against this electoral system, and this common problem was fundamental in promoting unity on the Left. While the Fourth Republic's two different systems of proportional representation assured individual political parties of at least limited influence in the National Assembly, and in fact encouraged the growth of national fringe parties and parliamentary groups, the electoral system of the Fifth Republic actually reduced the number and influence of the political parties in national life. First, in the

1Ibid., p. 363.
old system, candidates depended on the parties to have their names placed on the top of their lists, whereas in the Fifth Republic, personality and voter appeal became much more important. Secondly, the number of political parties was reduced because of the possibility of forming positive or negative coalitions between the two ballotings to promote the favored candidate, or prevent the election of a strongly opposed candidate. A candidate could withdraw between the two ballots and shift his support to another candidate. It became extremely difficult for a party which traditionally represented 15 or 20 percent of the electorate to control the majority of votes in individual districts.

Perhaps more important than changes in electoral law was the personal success of General de Gaulle in reforming national political life. The new electoral laws, by themselves, could not bring about the radical changes of direction required in order to gain a majority of seats and thus effectively govern. There were other factors associated with the new political institutions that influenced the Left to revise its thinking.

Most important of these institutional changes were the radically altered relations between the executive and legislative branches of government. Under de Gaulle, the chief executive was clearly the leader of the national government. The president had wide-ranging powers, especially in areas that were considered his
special domain. The president, not the prime minister or the
cabinet had the power to dissolve the National Assembly. He was
also able to call upon the special emergency powers to deal with
emergency crises. He was elected for a period of seven years
with minimal possibilities for removal from office. The president
controlled all diplomatic efforts, foreign policy and national defense.

"Presidential dominance became the reality of French political
life."\(^1\) This new development radically changed French politics.

When the presidency became the chief prize of
political competition, the entire party system was
affected. No longer could small parties hope to play a
key role in politics by holding a strategic center posi-
tion . . . . Instead, the parties had to generate mass
electoral support for one candidate in order to control
the government.\(^2\)

The possibility and the impetus for electoral alliances now
existed in the Fifth Republic. But the heritage of the Cold War
effectively blocked any hesitant moves toward unity.

One result of both the electoral changes (in reducing the
influence of the Left in the National Assembly), and de Gaulle's
personal revision of national political life was to effectively create
an opposition atmosphere.

\(^1\) Roy C. Macridis, *French Politics in Transition* (Cambridge,

\(^2\) Franck L. Wilson, *The French Democratic Left: 1963-69,
Toward a Modern Party System* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univer-
In the past, the French parliament had usually contained a small group of deputies who nearly always voted against the government, another small group who always voted for the government, and a great many deputies who continually switched sides. Thus, there had been no real parliamentary opposition in the Third and Fourth Republics. After 1962, the existence of a single-party majority had a polarizing effect, and actually created an opposition.\(^1\)

Despite these structural changes in French political life, the Left did not participate in common efforts to combat the Gaullist regime until 1962. There are many reasons for this refusal, not the least important of which was the history of division over various issues discussed in Chapter I. The Socialists and the Communists still did not agree on a wide range of political issues. Perhaps the greatest agreement that did exist was the feeling, expressed by both parties that the Gaullist regime was only a temporary aberration that would eventually disappear. This was, however, in contradiction with the attitude expressed by the electorate in various opinion polls, elections, and referenda throughout the period. The vast majority of French voters readily accepted the new institutions created by the Fifth Republic.\(^2\)

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 45. \(^2\)Ibid., chapters 1 and 2.
The Legacy of the Fourth Republic: 1958-62

At the beginning of the Fifth Republic, the legacy of the Fourth Republic was too strong to permit serious efforts toward unity within the new framework of the Fifth Republic's political institutions. Only slowly, when in fact these new institutions were strengthened, did the Left perceive the permanence of the Gaullist influence and the necessity to combat it. Besides, all political issues were overshadowed by the more pressing Algerian War. Nevertheless, during the first four years, Algerian policies of the PCF and the SFIO did evolve in relation to the Gaullist Algerian policy to provide a cohesive backdrop for common opposition.

In the beginning of the Fifth Republic, the SFIO could not be induced to revise its harsh opinions of the PCF. That party, according to the SFIO, was obliged to pursue Soviet foreign policy interests over and above French national requirements which were considered of secondary importance. In a letter to General de Gaulle which expressed anguish that the General's return to power would eventually lead to Communist rule in France, Guy Mollet spoke of the PCF as "Bolsheviks."¹ Mollet reiterated these

comments at a meeting of the National Council of the SFIO in
October, 1958, when he said, "There can be no possible compro-
mise with the Bolsheviks."\(^1\)

Mollet originally opposed de Gaulle's return on the basis of a
supposed process leading to Communist rule, but after meeting
with de Gaulle on the 30th of May, 1958, Mollet concluded that the
General was the only person who could effectively solve the
Algerian crisis. He and the SFIO joined de Gaulle's first govern-
ment hoping that they could together produce a liberal agreement on
Algeria, acceptable to all. This was especially important in light
of fears of a possible right-wing coup. Popular Front action, it
was presumed, could have led to stronger right-wing action. In
July, at the National Congress of the SFIO, the majority of the
militants voiced their approval of the above moderate policies.\(^2\)

At the same time, the Communist party was accusing de
Gaulle of leading a personal dictatorship which would eventually
lead to fascism, but although its hostility was "global and perman-
ent,"\(^3\) it was not total. Early during the Fifth Republic there was


\(^2\)Ibid., p. 109.

a call for an immediate general strike by some members of the CGT. The Communist party blocked the action, although there was a solemn demonstration in which the PCF and the SFIO participated. Two elements must be considered in order to understand the PCF's action. First, the PCF had not yet adjusted to the new process of destalinization following the Twentieth CPSU Congress of 1956. Secondly, it was difficult for the PCF to clearly interpret Moscow's new policies. The situation counseled PCF hesitance.

C. L. Sulzberger reported in June, 1958:

For some time Moscow has been wishing that a Gaullist movement would destroy the Fourth Republic. The desire is predicated on the belief that de Gaulle would not succeed in straightening out his country's basic problems and would, at the same time, destroy France's NATO ties. Then, the Kremlin prays, a popular front government could take its place.

But the severely reduced role that the PCF had to play in the politics of the Fifth Republic was bound to lead to profound opposition to de Gaulle. When de Gaulle announced in September, 1959, that he was in favor of self-determination for the Algerian people, the PCF was in a distinct quandary as to what would be considered

---


by Moscow as the correct position. On the day after de Gaulle's statement, Thorez condemned it as another illusory maneuver. A few days later, Khrushchev gave de Gaulle's speech a "positive evaluation," and on October 23, he was invited to France by the President of the Republic. L'Humanité then rectified the situation, calling de Gaulle's announcement "of cardinal importance."¹

A further indication of the Communist party's growing tacit approval of the Gaullist regime is to be seen in its reaction to General de Gaulle's call for special powers to deal with the military revolt in Algeria during January, 1960. The vote was 441 for, 75 against, with the 10 communists abstaining.² The PCF was obviously coming to realize that de Gaulle served its interests more effectively than any other non-communist replacement.

Until December, 1958, the SFIO remained in the government. When it left, it favored a policy of "constructive opposition" accepting de Gaulle's presence and leadership, but rejecting that of Prime Minister Debre. When in early 1960 de Gaulle rejected Socialist demands to convocate the National Assembly for discussion of the Algerian problem, the SFIO began reconsidering its previous policies and in April, the SFIO filed a motion of censure against


²Chapsal, La vie politique en France, p. 422.
the government. In May, Mollet openly attacked Michel Debre. After the government had broken off negotiations in June with the representatives of the Algerian rebels, the SFIO became even more disillusioned. In July, at the National Congress of the SFIO, various speakers called for systematic opposition instead of "constructive opposition," although no majority resolution was passed to that effect.¹

It was in the Fall of 1960 that the first opportunities for common action were presented. The initiative, interestingly, did not come from either the PCF or the SFIO. It came from the "New Left Movement," in which former PCF and SFIO members were joined by numerous university intellectuals, including the 121 signers of the "Manifesto of Insubordination" (which proclaimed the right of French youth to refuse military service in Algeria). Both the PCF and the SFIO were in danger of being outflanked on the left, for the New Left was advocating an immediate negotiated peace, whereas the PCF and the SFIO were supporting—at least tacitly—de Gaulle's more cautious policies. During October, 1960, there were various calls for a national demonstration of solidarity with these ideals. The CGT, through directives of the PCF, explicitly rejected any such cooperation.² The PCF was understandably

¹Simmons, French Socialists in Search of a Role, pp. 110-111.
²Ranger, "L'evolution du Parti Communiste", pp. 73-75.
more concerned about its left flank than was the SFIO.

Here it is important to mention the "Mouvement de la Paix" (Peace Movement), a "front organization" originally designed to promote Soviet foreign policy objectives in France and elsewhere. This movement, headed by prominent Communist leaders, defied the PCF by declaring itself willing to participate in the demonstrations of October, 1960. Their reasoning was that opportunities for unifying action on the Left should not be lightly considered. Furthermore, after de Gaulle spoke of the "Algerian Republic" for the first time on November 4, 1960, and soon after announced his intention to submit the concept of self-determination to a nationwide referendum, the Peace Movement again defied the PCF on December 18, saying that a variety of votes was justifiable. The PCF had already instructed its members to vote negatively. On January 26, 1961, the Central Committee announced through L'Humanité that the leadership of the "Mouvement de la Paix" was to be censured.¹

This problem of the leadership of the French Communist party, challenged by a return to more radical and militant methods, reflected a similar conflict developing at the international level. Though the 1957 and 1960 Moscow Communist Party summit

¹Ibid.
conferences had approved the concept of a peaceful, parliamentary road to power,\(^1\) there was extreme disapproval by the Chinese. The Chinese Communist Party mounted its biggest offensive against Khrushchev's "revisionism." Against the Chinese, Khrushchev required faithful followers, and as always, counted on Maurice Thorez and the PCF for the needed support. The PCF performed well, leaving the attempt to conciliate the beneficial aspects of the Chinese experiment and path to the Italian Communist Party.

When Thorez returned from the 1960 Bucharest meeting of 81 Communist parties, he had acquired the necessary legitimacy to expel those within the PCF who believed the Communists had lost the initiative to the New Left Movement.\(^2\) The PCF now had a stronger than ever commitment to peaceful coexistence and immediately let it be known.

With this new commitment to peaceful coexistence and the peaceful road to power, and with peace in Algeria seemingly near, the PCF allowed its front organizations to participate in a number of activities in common with other French opposition movements. After the April "putsch" of 1961, in which four French army


\(^2\)Fejto, The French Communist Party and the Crisis of International Communism, pp. 116-120.
generals attempted a veritable coup d'etat, the PCF participated in a one-hour national work stoppage that had been encouraged by de Gaulle. In November, 1961, the PCF allowed its youth organizations to participate in a large street demonstration which had been organized by the New Left Movement.

Even though it continued to hide behind "mass organizations," youth organizations, CGT unions, or the peace movement, in order to avoid giving a reason for repression against the PCF itself, the PCF leadership in Autumn, 1961, accepted and even encouraged what it had refused and sabotaged in the autumn of 1960.¹

But it was only in 1962 that strong calls for common action were heeded. On February 8, 1962, in a demonstration against the Secret Army Organization's (OAS) mounting terrorist campaign in France, eight people died at the hands of the police. In a demonstration to honor these deaths, the SFIO and the three largest non-communist trade unions: the CGT-FO, the CFTC, and the FEN, called for an even larger participation, and were officially joined by the French Communist Party and the CFT.² This action signaled the beginning of a long period of hesitant cooperation. The PCF officially pronounced itself in favor of the referendum on the independence of Algeria in April, 1962, as did the SFIO.

At that point, attention was turned to domestic issues that had

¹Ibid., p. 129.
²Chapsal, La vie politique en France, p. 440.
been neglected because of the more pressing Algerian War. For example, now that the war was over, the Left felt that a reduction in the power and scope of the presidency was called for. De Gaulle, however, had not the slightest intention of relinquishing his position and instead proposed a constitutional amendment which would strengthen his mandate by having the President of the Republic elected by universal suffrage. The SFIO and the PCF had moved together closely enough for both of them not to fear each other in common opposition to this Gaullist move. The Communists supported, although they did not sign, the SFIO's motion of censure against the government's attempt to reverse the constitution by referendum rather than by parliamentary action. The motion carried by 280 votes, whereas it needed only 241. Almost immediately, the National Assembly was dissolved and new legislative elections were called.¹

Both the PCF and the SFIO advocated a negative vote at the referendum on the election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage. Then, in an "unforeseen and rather bold tactic,"² and despite the absence of a formal electoral accord, the Communists volunteered to step down in favor of candidates who

¹Ibid.
were in a better position to defeat the Gaullist candidate.

In the 1962 legislative elections, the parties of the Left suffered the full effect of a strong, nationally rooted Gaullist influence on politics in France. With the Independent Republicans at the side of the UNR, the Gaullists controlled 268 seats, an absolute majority of the 482 seats in the National Assembly. This is not to say, however, that the Left considered these elections as a total defeat. The policy of withdrawal between the two ballots did increase the Left's representation in parliament.

But even though the Communists quadrupled their seats (to 41), and the SFIO increased the number of its seats by 50 percent (to 66), there was a slight loss of votes for the two parties, given that 34 percent of the registered voters abstained from this election (as opposed to 22 percent in the 1958 election). The SFIO decreased its percentage of votes on the first ballot from 15.5 percent in 1958 to 13 percent in 1962. The Communists gained, from 19 to 22 percent in the same years.¹ The limited success stemmed from limited cooperation. The two parties together increased their representation in the National Assembly by 100 percent. Guy Mollet announced on November 12, 1962, between the two ballots, that if the voters had to choose between the UNR and the Communists,

they should vote for the Communists. The institutional reforms of 1958 thus played a fundamental part. It was a lesson not soon to be forgotten. Guy Mollet again repeated his conviction on December 16. "We Socialists must reaffirm that one day unity must be remade. We must arrive at this point, or else assure in our obstinence the success of the Right."\(^2\)

Nevertheless, all three of the main events of 1962 at which the PCF and the SFIO cooperated were destined to be purely negative or defensive. The Left was united only in its desire to defeat the UNR and the "accomplices of the violation of the Constitution."\(^3\) They still could not constructively propose their own programs and the most fundamental reason for this failure lay in the realm of foreign policy. The official press revealed the basic disagreement. In the official Communist press organ, Cahiers du Communisme, it was written:

[Because they are] partisans of the Algerian War defending the colonial privileges of a minority, partisans of the Atlantic Pact and of a European policy which makes of the German "revanchards" the spearhead of anti-Soviet aggression, Guy Mollet and his reactionary

\(^{1}\)Ibid.


\(^{3}\)Ranger, "L'évolution du Parti Communiste," p. 79.
allies wish to preserve the Gaullist regime and its Constitution.¹

The official Socialist bulletin, La Revue Socialiste commented:

Whenever there is withdrawal of the Communist candidates on the second ballot, the Communist electors vote socialist with "discipline." Why? Because they know that Socialist candidates have defended and will always defend workers' interests, despite the Communist party's calumnies. But nearly all Socialist voters refuse to vote for the Communists on the second ballot. Why? Because the situation is no longer today what it was in 1936. Then, the USSR was the ally of France against fascism and hitlerism. Today, the USSR . . . is the adversary of France, openly or secretly.²

Both comments indicate that basic foreign policy issues were at the heart of the disagreement between the two parties. The Socialists and the Communists would have to strongly modify their respective foreign policies before a common program of constructive opposition was possible.


The period from 1963 to 1968 was one of renovation for the Left. In terms of party membership and electoral response, the SFIO was in its 18th year of decline. A desire for renovation and change, including some kind of regrouping of the forces of the Left was a dominant theme at the beginning of the year. Beginning in 1963, the relationship between the evolution of France's position in the international political system, and the evolution in relations between the SFIO and the PCF were more direct. Three elements must be considered throughout this period. First, the process of destalinization and the development of the themes, "the peaceful road to socialism" and "peaceful coexistence" rendered cooperation with other political forces in France more feasible. Secondly, de Gaulle's foreign policy promoted this exit from former political isolation, in that its basic orientation slowly legitimized the PCF's own foreign policy. At the same time, the SFIO grew increasingly hostile to Gaullism and searched for effective means to combat it. This political conjuncture, however, did not result in a push to compromise over foreign policy issues.

In order to accommodate certain domestic and international political developments: the solution to the Cuban Missile crisis,

1Wilson, The French Democratic Left, p. 66.
the aggravation of the Sino-Soviet dispute, and the growth of detente, the PCF declared its readiness to court the Socialists. Georges Marchais, then member of the PCF Politbureau expressed the Central Committee's belief that "the renaissance of democracy cannot be led by a single party but that it requires a loyal alliance on the basis of a common democratic program between the PCF and other democratic parties, notably the Socialist party." At the National Congress of the SFIO in June, 1963, Mollet repeated the same theme but qualified his response by saying:

There must be, with the Communist party, a dialogue, a public dialogue, but there can be no contact before positive responses have been furnished to the questions posed. If these responses are positive, we would still have to agree on policies, notably on international policies.

During this same Congress, action was taken to encourage discussion between the parties by including the nationalization of business banks in the SFIO platform.

The PCF also took action. At a meeting of the Central Committee in May, 1963, Thorez tried to dispel the SFIO objections by declaring that:

1. The theory of the single party in the socialist

---

3 Ibid., p. 59. 4 Ibid.
regime was a Stalinist error.

2. It is unjust to associate social revolution with violence.

3. It is acceptable for Christian workers to vote for the Communists.¹

For the moment, these mutual appeals could not promote unity, but at least they did not hinder immediate common action. For example, when the coal miners went on strike during March, 1963, there were numerous demonstrations of solidarity against the Gaullist policies in this area.² But all common action was still destined to be purely defensive. Writing before the strikes of March, another reflection of the official SFIO policy indicates that the fundamental problem had not yet been resolved.

Stalinism had rendered all collaboration impossible; the international situation and the Soviet evolution has modified somewhat the elements of the problem.³

The above statement reflects the uncertainty in SFIO ranks concerning the policies of France, the PCF and the USSR. This is due to the initiatives made by de Gaulle, now being free from the confines of Algeria.

In January, 1963, de Gaulle rejected the multi-lateral nuclear force proposed by the United States and also rejected Britain's

---

candidacy for entry into the Common Market. Furthermore, he reaffirmed the need for the French nuclear strike force. Even with PCF opposition to the strike force, these actions would seem to have pleased the French Communists, and perhaps this was reflected in the CGT's limiting the miners' strike originally to 48 hours. In the same month, however, de Gaulle signed the Franco-German Treaty of Cooperation, which distinctly displeased Moscow. In June, France pulled her naval forces out of NATO, as a prelude to future moves concerning that organization. In his end of year speech, de Gaulle speculated that perhaps one day the East European countries would follow France's lead to become an integral part of a "completed" Europe.¹

Amid these developments, the PCF needed to clarify its foreign policy commitments in light of the SFIO's aforementioned requirements. To facilitate this, Khrushchev invited a delegation of the SFIO to Moscow in September, 1963. Upon the delegation's return to France, an important commission was created within the leadership of the SFIO and given the mission of studying all proposals of unity.²

The mutual appeals in the respective press organs and the


official visits thus proved quite successful. Had the SFIO been a cohesive party, unified under the leadership of men like Guy Mollet, Jacques Fauvet (a prominent member of the SFIO and editor for *Le Monde*), and Francois Mitterand, who had increasingly become a dominant voice within the party, there would have been a good chance that unity with the Communists could have been negotiated.

The major difficulty that lasted until September, 1965, was simply that the Socialist party was not such a unified party. One serious result of its confusion was its inability to designate a candidate for the forthcoming presidential elections. No structures existed within the SFIO for this purpose, leaving the position open to whomever claimed it. In the Fall of 1963, Jean Jacques Servan-Schreiber, publisher of *L'Express*, used his magazine to promote the candidacy of a certain Mr. X, who favored a regrouping of the more centrist tendencies within the party. In October, Mr. X was publicly identified as Gaston Deferre, Socialist mayor of Marseille. Although the party leaders slowly rallied to his candidacy, they did not enjoy being presented with this uncontrollable "fait accompli." Thus, during the period when Deferre was a candidate for the presidency, contact with the French Communists was severely restrained. On January 12, 1964, Deferre explained his attitude toward the PCF.
If I am designated by the extraordinary National Congress of the SFIO, [to be the candidate for the presidency] I will not engage in discussion with the Communist party, I will not negotiate with it, I will not accept a common program.  

The entente between the Socialists and Communists suffered for 21 months during Deferre's candidacy, but later prospered as soon as Francois Mitterand announced his candidacy on September 9, 1965.

During these 21 months, however, the evolutionary process affecting the relationship of political forces in France proceeded. On January 27, 1964, de Gaulle announced French recognition of the People's Republic of China. In his press conference of January 31, de Gaulle rationalized this move and also spoke of the growing Vietnamese question. He spoke of the two Vietnams as one, thus outlining the general course of his policy toward the Vietnam War for years to come. In March, de Gaulle traveled to Mexico and the Antilles, and gave a favorable account of Cuba. This was seen as an attempt to move outside the confines of NATO.  

On October 30, a Franco-Soviet commerce treaty was signed. In February, 1965, a Franco-Rumanian commerce treaty was signed. In March, another commercial treaty with the USSR was signed; this time the French agreed to supply the Soviet Union with its

---


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
system of color television. In May, France boycotted the SEATO meeting and at the United Nations, it took a position against the United States over the Santo Dominican invasion. Finally, in June, France and South Vietnam broke off relations.\(^1\) In May, France recalled her representatives from SEATO and again, at the United Nations in September, France announced that she was in favor of China's admission to the UN and repeated her position for a peaceful resolution to the Vietnamese War.\(^2\)

The consequences of all this for the leftist opposition to the Gaullist regime was twofold. First, Gaston Deferre's policies of favorable attitudes toward Europe, the United States, NATO and the West were in opposition to an apparently more successful policy. France seemed to be faring better with the Gaullist foreign policy objectives. Gaullist foreign policy was more in line with orthodox communist foreign policy objectives and the value of the traditional Socialist foreign policy came into question. Secondly, Communist foreign policy became more acceptable to the French electorate, and especially to the more orthodox Socialist leaders who had been proposing common action with the PCF since 1962.

In addition to these developments in official French policy, Thorez left the leadership of the PCF to Waldeck Rochet, personally

chosen as one who could continue the search for a "peaceful road to socialism." Waldeck Rochet's term (1964-69) was to signal a heterodox doctrine in relation to former international communist directives. At the 17th PCF Congress in May, 1964, Rochet clearly indicated his acceptance of democratic pluralism.

... It is necessary to surmount all the obstacles blocking the road to unity of action without restriction. The Communist party ... has proposed and proposes the agreement of (Communists and Socialists) not only for today, but for tomorrow ... It has affirmed that it is ready to maintain unity tomorrow in order to implement together a program elaborated together. It has rejected the idea that the existence of a single party is an obligatory condition of the passage to socialism. This idea, supported by Stalin, constituted an abusive generalization of the specific conditions in which the Revolution of October took place. ¹

But in October of the same year, Khrushchev was replaced within the Soviet hierarchy. Though hesitant about the long-term consequences, the PCF did reassure French observers by reaffirming their commitment to peaceful coexistence.

Within the SFIO, hostility to Deferré's campaign grew from tolerance of the candidate's "fait accompli" to open opposition in June, 1965. This hostility was expressed in a number of ways and concerned Deferré's campaign directly. Perhaps the most important problem came from the fact that Deferré's largest base of support came from outside the traditional party structures and

¹Tiersky, French Communism, p. 277.
leadership. In February, 1964, Deferre implied that as "arbiter" of the Republic, he would not be constrained by party policies. Along with these two factors, his opposition to negotiations with the PCF and his attempt to form a coalition with left-center forces, including the secular Christian Democrats, contributed to his demise. Gaston Deferre resigned his candidacy on June 25, 1965.

Immediately thereafter, Francois Mitterand was the political personality thought to represent the best chances for the Left. In July, it was learned that Mitterand had discreetly negotiated support from the Communist Party. When it was clear that he had the support of the Radical Party, the SFIO, the various club movements, and the support of Gaston Deferre, Guy Mollet and Pierre Mendes-France, Mitterand announced his candidacy on September 9, 1965. Two days later, a left-wing coalition of these groups was founded, later called the Federation de la Gauche Democrat et Socialiste (FGDS). A provision in the FGDS's founding document specified that the FGDS would one day conclude an agreement with the French Communist Party. The major obstacle to an agreement

---

1 Simmons, French Socialists in Search of a Role, p. 144.

2 Ibid., p. 146.

3 Faucher, La gauche francaise sous de Gaulle, pp. 177-79.

at this time was Communist insistence on negotiations for a formal governmental program, which the FGDS did not yet desire. But as their "primary goal was to become a part of the Left Alliance, . . . by September they had agreed to drop their demands for a common program and accept a purely electoral alliance."

According to Annie Kriegel, this decision to support the Socialist presidential candidate was "eminently personal," and signified that the PCF "intended to become the resolved and active partner of a veritable political alternative: that the interests of the Left passed before those of the (international) socialist camp." But she also states that this action marked the summit of Rochet's authority within the party. During the presidential campaign, "Pravda published an editorial endorsing de Gaulle because of his foreign policy." When Rochet announced his party's support for Mitterand, "Pravda censured the report of his speech." This indicates that foreign policy was a major factor preventing a strong union between the FGDS and the PCF. As another observer put it:

The decline of East-West tensions in Europe

---


prepared the way for collaboration between the two parties of the Left. (But) questions of international politics still divided the Federation and the PCF more sharply than any other matter. The PCF still endorsed Soviet foreign policy; the FGDS, especially the Radicals and the Socialists, was committed to NATO and to European unity. A renewal of the Cold War, or any other increase in international tension would quickly produce new divisions in the French Left.¹

Nevertheless, Mitterand, as the sole candidate of the Left in the 1965 presidential elections, won 45.49 percent of the votes cast on the second ballot in the run-off against de Gaulle.²

The Left entered 1966 riding on a wave of at least limited success. Though there was a sole candidate, the alliance was still purely electoral. There had been little time between September and December for the complicated negotiations necessary to produce a common program. The FGDS and the PCF both reaffirmed, however, their willingness to enter into negotiations. Speaking before the Fifth Session of the Convention of Republican Institutions, (Mitterand's wing of the FGDS), Mitterand declared,

> In my opinion, nothing comes before union of the Left. And in the Left I obviously include the Communist party.³

The difficulty at this time was organizational within the FGDS.

¹Wilson, *The French Democratic Left*, p. 166.


There was disagreement on the question of direct individual membership in the FGDS or indirect membership through local party organizations. In addition, there was a conflict over the question of the fusion of the CIR, the SFIO and the Radicals into a new Socialist party. Behind these two issues, which lasted until the death of the FGDS in 1969, was the ultimate conflict over who was to control the FGDS. Mitterand was forced to initiate new ideas in order to legitimate his claim of leadership. One of these new concepts took the form of a shadow cabinet of FGDS ministers, instituted in February, 1966. Mollet challenged Mitterand on the above issues and Gaston Deferre challenged Mollet within the SFIO, with specific reference to the negotiations with the Communists. In sum, negotiations were slowed because of Mitterand's position. While Waldeck was at the apex of his authority over the PCF, Mitterand was less "a chief of a party than an arbiter of a coalition."

Incertitude over basic orientations prevented the FGDS from formulating a cohesive policy.

The most serious event provoking a crisis within leftist circles was de Gaulle's decision in March, 1966, to separate France from NATO. The Left reacted incoherently. At the end of March, the "Comite Directeur" of the SFIO seemed predisposed toward a

\[1\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 34.\]
motion of censure based exclusively on the rejection of Gaullist Atlantic policies. But realizing that the PCF would never approve such a move, the motion of censure was expanded to include a global condemnation of governmental policies. The motion posed a delicate problem for the Left once it was known that the PCF would not support this resolution either. The Socialists went ahead, with the support of the Radicals and the Center forces. The debate in the National Assembly indicated disapproval with supposed French isolationism, French nationalism, and the disintegration of common defense efforts.

The motion received only 137 votes, failing to receive the required 242 to constitute a majority. The French Communist party voted against the motion of censure, and thus, with de Gaulle. On this foreign policy issue there could be no compromise for the PCF.

Though the April, 1966, events concerning the motion certainly did not encourage negotiations between the FGDS and the PCF, they did not provoke the FGDS to advocate a centrist tendency. In fact, Mitterand was somewhat embarrassed by the debate, because according to one observer, he was already decided not to "permit foreign policy to externally be the obstacle to leftist union."

1L'Annee Politique, 1966, pp. 34-38.
The permanent group of the CIR had already designated a commission which was to clarify and develop a program of foreign policy which would be presented to the FGDS in the name of the clubs."¹ Therefore, de Gaulle's decision to withdraw French forces from NATO command removed a serious obstacle to Left unity. In this way, de Gaulle's move actually facilitated later negotiation.

As the legislative elections were now rapidly approaching, attention was turned to them. The best and most reliable method of assuring the success of a leftist campaign was to achieve another electoral alliance between the PCF and the FGDS. A common program was quite out of the question because of the opposition created within the Left's ranks over the French withdrawal from NATO. At a time when it seemed that the FGDS was willing to accept the membership of the Democratic Center, Guy Mollet reminded the FGDS that it was imperative that the leftist parties agree on an electoral alliance with the Communists. After Mollet's appeal, feelers were sent out once again through the official press, and in December, 1966, the PCF and the FGDS finally met together and worked out a new electoral alliance, which was announced on December 20, 1966. The electoral accord of 1966 specified that within the FGDS and the PCF candidates would

¹Faucher, La gauche francaise sous de Gaulle, p. 201.
withdraw in favor of the leftist candidate who was in the best position to defeat the Gaullist candidate on the second ballot. ¹

The legislative elections of March, 1967, must be considered another limited success for the Left. Together, the PCF and the FGDS increased their representation in the National Assembly by 50 percent. On the first ballot they received 44 percent of the vote, on the second, 46 percent. The Gaullists, on the other hand, lost 40 seats.² Based on this success, new calls for continued cooperation and renewed negotiation for a common program were heard and heeded.

Within the general euphoria of success, however, divergences on matters of foreign policy were not forgotten. While considering the chances of success of a motion of censure condemning the government's proposed special powers to deal with social and economic matters, it was Waldeck Rochet himself who underlined the differences within the Left on foreign policy.

Rochet referred to the FGDS's silence on the subject of the Vietnam War; he remarked on the differences in points of view of the Atlantic Pact and European supranationality. He expressed a categorical opposition to the idea of supranationality and the idea of the creation of a European parliament elected by universal suffrage.³

²Chapsal, La vie politique en France, pp. 584-86.
Even with these strong differences, the FGDS and the PCF signed the motion of censure and voted together. Economic and social policy were the issues at hand, not foreign policy. The motion of censure failed to pass, however, by six votes. Unity of action had grown since the 137 votes in April, 1966.

Nor did these differences on foreign policy disappear during the Mideast Six-Day War in June, 1967. Again, a foreign policy crisis threatened to split what union that had been achieved. The French Communist party without hesitation supported and approved the Soviet attitude in the Middle East favoring the Arabs' anti-imperialist struggle. The FGDS took the opposite position favoring the Israeli interpretation of events. Guy Mollet and the SFIO were the most vocal in their pro-Israeli support and he remarked:

I wonder if our working hypothesis concerning the Communist party is not entirely false at the base. ¹

The leadership of the FGDS, however, was much more guarded when making statements concerning the Six-Day War. Mitterand was concerned about actions which might provoke the PCF into a renunciation of the negotiations that seemed headed in the direction of unity. The Secretary-General of the Convention of Republican Institutions (CIR), Louis Mermoz, on June 11, expressed the hope

the FGDS and PCF "would disengage themselves from certain
reflexes, (which were) sequels to the Cold War." In the debate
over the official French reaction to the war, which was a surprise
alignment with Soviet interests and attitudes unpopular to the large
majority of Frenchmen, it seemed that most deputies were com-
placent in their attitudes of objection. The arms embargo to Israel
did not completely take effect, and France's supposed position of
neutrality was not accepted as real. The only strong objections
voiced in the National Assembly indicated disappointment at the
extreme single-handedness of the Gaullist reaction to the Middle
East events. In L'Humanité, the attitudes expressed by Mollet
and Mitterand were censured, but emphasis was placed on the
FGDS's and the PCF's receptiveness to the idea of continued nego-
tiations. On June 19, Mitterand, as if to put an end to the contro-
versy, said, "We have crossed the Middle East crisis with neces-
sary serenity."

A few factors may be helpful in understanding why this period
did not develop into a major crisis on the Left. In the first place,
both the Six-Day War and the official French reaction to it took

---

1Ibid., p. 234. 2L'Annee Politique, 1967, p. 44.
3Faucher, La gauche francaise sous de Gaulle, p. 233.
4L'Annee Politique, 1967, p. 49.
place so rapidly that again, as in 1966 over the French withdrawal from NATO, a strong opposition did not have the time to fully develop. Had this become a prolonged international crisis, there is greater likelihood that the opposing attitudes within the Left would have become much more ardent. Secondly, the leftist parties may have been acting in a more responsible manner now that they felt closer to power. It was recognized that almost the entire nation was pro-Israeli, but the action de Gaulle unilaterally directed was seen as perhaps the best possible response. Surely the Communists had no reason to exploit the divisions which de Gaulle's actions created. And most important, still enthused by their recent electoral success, the Left was now so close to expected negotiations on a full-scale governmental program that the combination of the above factors prevented the FGDS from going too far in its remarks. In effect, both the PCF and the FGDS, after making their original statements on the issue known, ignored the Middle East crisis.

On June 15, 1967, delegations from the FGDS and the PCF decided to form a Working Group to iron out the details of a joint program of government. Francois Mitterand and Waldeck Rochet both emphasized the need to converge rather than diverge on matters of foreign policy. In July, the Working Group met and specifically discussed this problem. After the first meeting, Mitterand, in an interview, said:
We are telling the Communists that one cannot leave the Atlantic Alliance and refuse Europe at the same time.\textsuperscript{1}

In effect, the FGDS was making a deal with the PCF: Europe for NATO.

Amid further negotiations between the two leftist parties, and in the context of organizational problems within the FGDS itself that now seemed to be subsiding, Waldeck Rochet signed a very important editorial in the official Communist press organ, \textit{L'Humanite} on December 11, 1967. For the first time, he gave assurance that no consideration of foreign policy could bring the Communist Party to moderate its opposition to Gaullism.\textsuperscript{2}

It was only after this assurance was made that the Working Group was able to prepare a final draft of a common declaration. On February 24, 1968, a common platform representing the two parties of the Left was announced to the French electorate. In itself, it was a monumental event erasing 22 years of bitter enmity. But Waldeck Rochet himself made it clear that it was a common platform and not a common program. The document was divided into three parts, and it basically was a catalogue of varying points of convergence and divergence. Where there was disagreement, \\
\textsuperscript{1}Poperen, \textit{L'unite de la gauche}, p. 80.

\textsuperscript{2}Faucher, \textit{La gauche francaise sous de Gaulle}, p. 241.
Both positions were listed. Not surprisingly, the most disagreement was to be found under the section on foreign policy.

Other than in inconsequential matters or in matters that were out of French control, general agreement was reached on: the abandonment of the French nuclear strike force; general, simultaneous and supervised disarmament; the signature of international treaties on the prevention of nuclear arms; and democratization of the European Economic Community.

Disagreement was voiced in the following areas of foreign policy: Germany, Vietnam, the Middle East, NATO, and Europe.

On Germany, the FGDS called for an economic confederation between the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic, while the Communists called for French recognition of the German Democratic Republic.

The PCF refused the recognition of the South Vietnamese government by claiming that "the Vietnam National Liberation Front was the sole representative for the South Vietnamese people." The Federation considered that the National Liberation Front, "like any other representative formation" should take part in the negotiated peace.

On the Middle East, the FGDS declared that "withdrawal of the Israeli troops . . . can only come about as a result of negotiations between Israel and the Arab states and certainly not as a
prior condition. " The Federation did not accept the necessity to withdraw to the former 1948 boundaries as they did not constitute a "boundary for peace" and needed "negotiated modifications." They did recognize the need to guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people. This was in direct opposition to the PCF's statement declaring "the necessity for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories."

With respect to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Federation, while underlining its commitment to honor present alliances, declared that it was "determined to do everything possible to create the conditions for its replacement by an organization for collective security and peaceful cooperation . . . ." The Communists, however, stated that the "Atlantic Treaty should not be renewed in 1969 and in any case France herself should withdraw from the Treaty at that date. While awaiting the achievement of the simultaneous dissolution of the military blocs--to which all efforts must be devoted--France's interest is to hold herself apart from the blocs."

There was strong disagreement over European policy. The Federation reiterated its former desire to form a European political and economic union. "This European political grouping would be the only one capable of ensuring Europe's independence towards the two great World powers." It constituted "a determining factor
in facilitating the establishment of a new form of collective security capable of taking the place of the present system of military blocs and bridging East and West in a lasting manner." The Federation proposed concrete measures to accelerate the process of European integration—especially by the admission of Britain—among others. The Communist Party, on the other hand, "reaffirmed its hostility to the installation of a supranational authority created and dominated by big capital, which would accentuate the division of Europe, aggravate the harmful consequences of present Common Market policy for the workers, and put the democratic policy desired by the French people at the mercy of foreign governments dominated by reaction."¹

Summary

The first ten years of the Fifth Republic promoted some unity on the Left. Initially, the Left was severely divided over nearly all political questions. The heritage of the Fourth Republic's anti-communist involvement in the Cold War presupposed vehement opposition between those who had participated (the SFIO) and those who had remained isolated (the PCF) in that Republic. Yet almost immediately, signs of a rapprochement began to appear. A

¹Keesing's Contemporary Archives, May 25-June 1, 1968, pp. 22718-22.
fundamental element--not particular to France--was the end of the Cold War and the beginning of detente. Secondly, it has been demonstrated that the new political institutions of the Fifth Republic facilitated this rapprochement. A third element in the early years, 1958-62, was the SFIO's continued decline in party membership and electoral response. In the fourth place, de Gaulle's Algerian policies during the same years consolidated this tendency toward common action. Original hostility to de Gaulle in 1958 on the part of the PCF gave rise to hostility to his Algerian policies. Originally, the SFIO demanded agreement with de Gaulle's Algerian policies. But as the war dragged on, both parties modified their original positions. The PCF began to agree with de Gaulle, and the SFIO began to disagree. The result was a convergence of oppositional tendencies.

By this time, the PCF had become convinced that the permanence of peaceful coexistence, the peaceful road to socialism, and the process of destalinization permitted French Communist initiatives of their own. The elections of 1962, the appeals for cooperation, the acceptance of the principle of democratic pluralism before and during the transition to socialism, and the passage of leadership to Waldeck Rochet were demonstrations of this new evolution. This process of increased French Communist independence from the principle of democratic centralism continued during
the SFIO's desired renovation. The creation of the FGDS as a rejection of overt centrist movement, plus its tactical alliances with the PCF of 1965 and 1967 gave rise to the possibilities of future common leftist unity.

But there were limits to such cooperation. In French economic and social policy, the Socialists and Communists could cooperate almost completely, whereas in matters of foreign policy, there was no indication that the French Communists had rejected the promotion of Soviet objectives. In this context it can be said that General de Gaulle's foreign policy aided the PCF's exit from an isolationist position by moving the entire French political system "to the left" in international politics. The near rupture of the Left created by de Gaulle's withdrawal from NATO, and the PCF's position on the Mideast Six-Day War, its constant reproach of the Socialists for their lack of condemnation of American involvement in Vietnam are all evidence of the points at which the French Communist Party would stand firm. The common platform of 1968 emphasizes this fundamental disagreement over foreign policy.
CHAPTER III

THE MOVEMENT TOWARD UNITY: 1968-72

The year 1968 sounded a temporary death knell for the French Left. As a result of the events of May within France and the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact Troops in August, the entire relationship of political forces that had developed since 1958 was dramatically transformed. Out of this new relationship of forces came the June, 1972, signature of the Common Program of Government.

This chapter will analyze the final stages of the negotiations that led to the Common Program. The events of May and August, 1968, will be described in the first section and an analysis of the reaction of the parties will be made. These reactions form the basis for understanding the foreign policy as it is formulated in the Common Program, which will be analyzed in the following chapter. Thus, they must be dealt with at some length here. In a second section, the actual train of events subsequent to 1968 leading to the final negotiations will be discussed. Central here is the evolution of the Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left into a renovated and dynamic party capable of attracting new membership and new leadership, enabling it to revise its more traditional policies.
Also important is the evolution of the PCF in relation to the post-Gaullist foreign policy. In the final section, there will be a summary and analysis of the major points of the chapter.

The Events of May, 1968

During the month of May, 1968, student riots led to a paralyzing general strike that crippled France and surprised the world. For two weeks, beginning on May 3, violent demonstrations and riots took place in the streets of Paris. On the night of May 3, nearly 600 persons were injured and 600 people were arrested. Again on May 6, another 600 persons were injured. On May 10, 400 people were injured, 32 seriously. Some 500 were arrested and 188 cars were destroyed during an intense battle between police and students. Public opinion was strongly on the side of the students. Upon his return from Afghanistan, Prime Minister Pompidou reopened the Sorbonne, a move which was perceived by some to be giving in to students' demands. On May 14, the revolt spread to other sectors of society. Within a few days, over six million workers were on strike. There was no public transportation, no mail, no gasoline. "Doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineers, researchers, statisticians, journalists, museum curators, actors, film directors, athletes and shopgirls joined in a
general revolt against society."\(^1\)

When President de Gaulle returned from Rumania on May 18, he attempted to gain control as his ministers had failed to do. On May 24, he called for a referendum on university reform, committing himself to resignation if it failed to pass. In the meantime, Pompidou had been trying to negotiate with business and trade unions in order to reach an accord that would set France on its feet again. Both initiatives were unacceptable to the population. The strikes continued, France remained paralyzed. During the last week of May, it became clear that the French army was being consulted and readied to restore order to the French capital. Just when it seemed that the government, including the President was about to be forced to resign, the tide turned, and Gaullist forces were again in control. Public opinion desired a return to normalcy, and the revolt was over.\(^2\)

The revolt in May was a highly ambiguous effort to break out of traditional modes of French behavior. It was directed, as could be expected, against the awesome power of the state which had failed, in the eyes of the protestors, to adequately respond to new forces in society. Traditional patterns of authority did not


\(^2\)Ibid., chapter 1, "The Events of May."
correspond to new aspirations of French citizens, and the result was a spontaneous spree of unrehearsed protest. The precarious equilibrium characteristic of the French society was disturbed by an extended train of events that frustrated an evolutionary societal adjustment. The awkward attempts to reconcile these forces resulted in growing agitation which exploded in areas hardest hit by increased aspirations.

Transformation of post-war France was ultimately the cause of the breakdown in the traditional equilibrium. The state had in fact failed, according to Stanley Hoffmann,\(^1\) to revitalize its inefficient elites, who were competent only in areas which no longer coincided with the requirements of a post-industrial society. The problem of rigid elites added to and aggravated this deficiency by blocking extensive and needed reforms. Factionalism in the levels just below the top of the administration resisted new initiatives. Another underlying cause was in the continued trend toward increased centralization and authoritarianist tactics. "France found herself with disconnected organizations, all of them top-heavy."\(^2\)

What triggered the revolt, however, were insufficiencies in

---

\(^1\) Stanley Hoffmann, *Decline or Renewal: France since the 1930s* (New York: Viking Press, 1974), chapter 6, "Confrontation in May, 1968."

four additional and more immediate areas. Most importantly, the university system could not adjust its educational methods and goals to accommodate the demands placed upon it by the huge influx of students since the 1950's. Secondly, "rising expectations," on the part of the workers, "had led to hopes and demands about better material conditions of work that had not been fulfilled."1 In addition, the voluntary associations were not able to effectively channel justifiable grievances. Finally, the traditional intermediate bodies unconsciously encouraged governmental complacency by not addressing themselves to these pressing issues.

A more detailed awareness of the actual events of the revolt is necessary for a complete understanding of the consequences for the Left's movement toward unity, but cannot be examined in depth here. Yet it must be reemphasized that because the revolt was not instigated, inspired, directed or largely supported by the traditional revolutionary parties, the consequences for them, as for the state, proved disastrous. In fact, throughout the month of May, the FGDS struggled diligently just to keep up with events in an attempt to gain control of the situation and reap any resultant political benefits. On May 14, the FGDS and the PCF together filed a motion of censure which set May 21 and 22 as the dates for

1Ibid., p. 147.
discussion and vote. In the meantime however, the "contagion" had spread to the workers. On May 22, the motion of censure failed to pass. It received only 233 votes, 11 short of a required absolute majority. Within the National Assembly at least, the government was strongly intact.\(^1\) Although both the FGDS and the PCF realized that within the political structures the Gaullist party was still in control, they also realized that these same political structures were not in a position to effectively govern the French people. What is to be remembered though is that both parties interpreted the situation differently and acted accordingly.

The French Communist Party interpreted the May events in a manner that was to support the former status quo. Even before the revolt became nation-wide, Georges Marchais in *L'Humanite* proclaimed it necessary "to combat and isolate every left-wing 'groupuscule' which seeks to jeopardize the democratic movement while covering itself with revolutionary phraseology."\(^2\) The PCF, in accordance with their doctrine of leading the working classes to the revolution, condemned the student rebels as "adventurists" and as an example of "how not to make a revolution."\(^3\) When the revolt

\(^1\) *L'Anne Politique*, 1968, pp. 33-45.


did become nation-wide, the PCF had recourse only to reaction as opposed to their more favored role of leading the masses. When the "contagion" spread to the workers, the PCF assumed its traditional role by "taking charge of the strike movement." After the Grenelle accord had been refused by the workers, the PCF's policy changed once again. Careful not to incur the wrath of the Right-wing forces, they attempted to prevent the Gaullist regime from remaining in power, by force of circumstance.¹

Far from being in agreement with the PCF, the FGDS did not cooperate with these plans. The original demonstrators fit the description of the party's own militants much more than they did the PCF's. The FGDS was much less harsh in its condemnation of the early rioters. But during most of the month of May, the FGDS was also forced to react rather than lead . . . until May 28. On the day before, some 30,000 people attended a rally called by the PSU, the CFDT and UNEF. After that day, Pierre Mendes France, present at the mass rally, was thought to represent the best chances as leader of a new leftist government.² The same day, Waldeck Rochet exchanged correspondence with Francois Mitterand, in an attempt to meet together on the next day.³

¹Ibid., p. 177-83. ²Ibid., p. 22.
³Poperen, L'unite de la gauche, p. 144.
But on May 28, Francois Mitterand, attempting to ride the revolutionary wave that, in his view, seemed to be sweeping the country, announced that after the referendum of June and the subsequent resignation of General de Gaulle ("it goes without saying that republicans will say no at the referendum-plebiscite"), he would become candidate for the presidency and proposed that Pierre Mendes-France become the leader of a "provisional government" which would be formed on the day after the referendum. He explicitly mentioned that this government would not be constrained by the Communist party. Furthermore, these plans were not discussed during the correspondence with the PCF leaders the night before. As a show of force, the PCF and the CGT announced a mass parade through Paris. In a declaration published May 29, the Communist Party insisted that "The people of France require that, in the new regime, the working class and its Communist Party have their rightful place."

These strategies, however, did not produce their desired results. Attention was turned rather to President de Gaulle. On


2 Poperen, L'unite de la gauche, p. 144.

May 29, he "disappeared" from Paris, telling his ministers that he was on a trip to Colombey for some rest. When he returned, it was known that he had gone to Baden-Baden, Germany, to consult with General Jacques Massu, chief of French expeditionary forces. On May 30, de Gaulle, with the assurance that the army was backing him, began his counter-attack. He renounced his projected referendum, dissolved the National Assembly, and called for legislative elections in June. After this speech, a huge crowd demonstrated its support for de Gaulle. It was known that French "troops and armored columns were in movement all over the outskirts of Paris."1 With these acts, General de Gaulle once again took control of the government. From May 30 to June 23, Gaullist forces successfully rallied public opinion by presenting the specter of "totalitarian communism" and opposing the "plotters against the Republic."

The consequences of the May revolt became clear to political observers at the legislative elections of June, 1968. These elections proved a dramatic reversal of the previous progress made toward unity in the 1967 elections. As a reaction to the revolt, voters radically, if temporarily, altered their traditional voting patterns. Following the "revolutionary sweep" of May, came the

---

1Ibid., p. 191.
"reactionary sweep" of June, to the direct benefit of the Gaullists. 1

Although there was severe disagreement within the Left over the interpretation and acts of the May revolt, the PCF and the FGDS did practice withdrawal of candidates in favor of those within other leftist groups who were better placed. In this way, the second ballot reinforced the polarization of political forces that had been occurring since 1962. But in spite of this tactical electoral alliance (based on the December, 1966, electoral accord), the Gaullists won 152 seats on the first ballot. Both groups of the Left, the PCF and the FGDS, lost about 2.5 percent of their electorate. The final result was a loss of 39 seats for the Communists and a loss of 69 seats for the FGDS. The Gaullists gained 121 seats over their representation in the 1967 National Assembly.

The events of May and their consequences for the French Left as shown in the results of the June legislative elections thus provoked a serious reconsideration of both groups' respective positions. But only as the FGDS and the PCF were beginning to recuperate, Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia.

---

1See Table 1, "Legislative Elections of 1967 and 1968 for the National Assembly," p. 92.
Table 1

Legislative Elections of 1967 and 1968 for the National Assembly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st ballot</th>
<th>2nd ballot</th>
<th>seats</th>
<th>1st ballot</th>
<th>2nd ballot</th>
<th>seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(% of vote)</td>
<td>(% of vote)</td>
<td>seats</td>
<td>(% of vote)</td>
<td>(% of vote)</td>
<td>seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Left, PSU</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left Federation</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Left</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Center</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse Moderate</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaullists with Republican</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Right</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Invasion of Czechoslovakia

As a response to increased domestic liberalization of the Czechoslovakian society, troops of the Warsaw Pact invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia on August 20, 1968. Describing the conditions for this invasion would merit a discussion that is understandably beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, a very brief summary of the essential events leading to the Soviet invasion seems necessary.

Destalinization, a serious economic recession in 1962, the resurgence of Czech and Slovak intelligentsia as increasingly vocal opposition, and a Slovak nationalistic sentiment have all been considered primary factors that led to a liberalization in Czechoslovakian society.\(^1\) Another observer simply ascribes changing economic needs and structures as influencing new institutions of society which in turn affect one's international partners.\(^2\) At any rate, with the replacement of Anthonin Novotny by Alexander Dubcek in January, 1968, all controls over the communications media were


Journalists and intellectuals called for economic rationalization, free speech and press, equality for the Slovaks, improvement of political and economic relations with the West (notably the U. S. and West Germany), plus a degree of political opposition which, many hoped and expected, would lead to a genuine multiparty system.¹

The Subsequent "Springtime in Prague," became an international slogan signifying new relationships between member-states of the international communist movement and the Soviet Union. The liberalization movement, however, was short-lived. After considerable hesitance, the Soviet Union directed Warsaw Pact troops to invade Czechoslovakia. The reasons behind this decision are extremely difficult to ascertain. Ostensibly, the Soviet Union feared a "falling dominoes" phenomenon. Destalinization had lead to "separate roads" to socialism. But in Czechoslovakia, this had led to a "national deviation." Were this model to be copied by other states, it may have led to "modern revisionism," which nearly always precedes "social democracy." "Social democracy" then, would have led to "bourgeois democracy" and the "restoration of capitalism," a development the Soviets would never allow.²

¹Griffith, "U. S. Policy and the Invasion of Czechoslovakia."

Had these developments been confined and restricted to Czechoslovakia, the invasion might not have been necessary. There was no indication, however, that developments would be so limited. On the contrary, it was felt that if this movement gained Soviet approval, implicitly acquiring legitimacy as a "correct" interpretation of Marxist-Leninist principles, other states would demand the same privileges.¹ At this point, the decision came. The Warsaw Pact troops invaded Prague.

The consequences of the August invasion must be understood in light of the fact that the PCF too was still a member of the international communist movement that had to be sanctioned. The PCF had been a loyal, and since 1962, an active participant in the French political system while at the same time retaining its allegiance to the international communist movement, and Soviet Union direction. This factor of "dual allegiance" cannot be overemphasized when analyzing the French Communist Party, because the interplay of the two systems determines the policy chosen by the PCF at any given moment.²

¹Ibid., p. 33.

According to Kreigel, the consequences for the PCF came during the period known as "normalization." This process took place in three stages and at different levels. First, the PCF very quickly demonstrated its willingness to remain the most privileged and the most faithful of the non-ruling communist parties. On the day after Roger Garaudy (who until 1968 was the party's leading theoretician) authored the statement expressing "surprise and reprobation," the PCF began backtracking, expressing only "regret and disapproval." Thereafter, though the PCF repeated these same themes in various forms, Kreigel, basing her assertions on statements made during July wherein the PCF "understood" Soviet concerns and needs, maintains that only the military character of the invasion was consistently challenged. That the interests of the international socialist movement had to be protected by the Soviet Union was not contested. On the 27th of August, the PCF publicly disavowed Roger Garaudy's interview with the Czechoslovakian news agency, C. T. K., wherein he called the intervention "unjustified and unjustifiable." The attacks on Roger Garaudy by the PCF continued until his expulsion from the party in 1970. On the 26th of September, the PCF announced its desire to send a high-ranking delegation to meet with Soviet counterparts in Moscow. The PCF was thus the first non-ruling communist party to travel to Moscow in a show of solidarity. Immediately afterward, negotiations began
for the preparation of an international meeting of communist and worker parties. The PCF was "without reserve" in its support for Soviet initiatives.¹

A second stage of the "normalization" was manifested in the PCF's new relationship with the "gauchistes" (leftists). Whereas in May there had been harsh competition within the party, that competition came from the fact that the gauchistes were trying to correct the Leninist strategies. After May, however, the gauchistes were now attempting to replace the Leninist strategy. The PCF did not tolerate this within its ranks.²

A further stage of the "normalization" process came during Waldeck Rochet's replacement as leader of the PCF. The leadership of the PCF passed to Georges Marchais, who had been nurtured in continuous bilateral and international conferences by the Soviets since early 1968. As an expression of Soviet approval, Marchais was allowed to preside over one session of the World Conference of Communist Parties in June, 1969.³


³Ibid.
De Gaulle's Resignation

In 1969, the French Communist Party was not the only political group which changed leadership as a consequence of the events of 1968. Mitterand had been forced to resign the Federation presidency in November, 1968, because his premature call for a provisional government on May 28, 1968, was very poorly received by public opinion.¹ Without his unifying leadership, the Left Federation died a slow death over the winter and spring, 1968-69.

President Charles de Gaulle, in an attempt to strengthen his personal mandate, announced a referendum on regional reform coupled with reform of the Senate. This was only after he had decided against holding the referendum on "workers' participation" in industry, which was not desired by either management, the unions and some of his own supporters.²

Both the Communists and the Socialists advocated a negative vote on the referendum scheduled for April 27, 1969, even though an increasingly severe argument had been developing between them since May and August, 1968. The Socialists could not ignore the developments in the PCF discussed above. Guy Mollet remarked:

¹Sondages, 1974. Nos. 1 and 2, 36th year, p. 36.

Relations with the Communist Party are, in our opinion, more difficult than ever.... Smrkovsky has been eliminated, Dubcek has been eliminated, both from Czechoslovakia. It is absolutely impossible for the French Communists to remain silent.... As long as we are at this point, the idea of the composition of a common government is out of the question....

Thus, when the referendum failed to pass (53 percent no, 47 percent yes), and de Gaulle retired from public office necessitating a presidential election, there was little possibility for agreement between the two leftist parties. There were still no structures within the SFIO for the designation of a presidential candidate. Gaston Deferre, in a manner reminiscent of the 1965 presidential elections claimed to be representing the great "center" forces which he felt were responsible for the defeat of the Left in 1968. But given Deferre's past and continued views on unity with the Communists, it was impossible for the PCF to support him. Instead, the PCF ran its own candidate, Jacques Duclos, in an attempt to reinforce the traditional Communist party vote. Neither did the PSU support Deferre, running its own candidate, Michel Rocard. In fact, even the center forces withheld their support from Deferre. Alain Poher, president of the Senate and interim president

1 Guy Mollet, speaking at the radio station "Europe No. 1" April, 1969, quoted by L'Annee Politique, 1969, p. 36.
2 Ibid., p. 34.
3 See p. 63, chapter 2.
of the Republic, ran on a substantially stronger centrist platform. In addition, two other more radical leftists were candidates. Representing the Gaullist party was Georges Pompidou who had been de Gaulle's prime minister until 1968.

On the first ballot, Deferre received only five percent of the vote, a disastrous showing for the Socialists. And although the leftist candidates totaled 31 percent, almost as many as on the first ballot of 1965, they were helplessly divided between five candidates. None of the five were successful enough on the first ballot to proceed to the second. The PCF came closest, with 21.5 percent compared to Poher's 23.4 percent. On the second ballot, with the choice of candidates being Pompidou (Right) and Poher (Center), the PCF advised its voters to abstain. The amount of abstentions on the second ballot, plus invalid votes set a new record for the Fifth Republic. Fully 35.8 percent of the electorate did not vote. This meant that on the second ballot, even though Pompidou won 57.5 percent of the votes cast, he had the active support of only 37.1 percent of the registered voters.¹

Since 1962, the spirit of renovation had been a dominant theme among the French Socialists, but little progress had been made in this direction. After the presidential election of 1969,

however, the process of change and renovation began in earnest.

Centrist orientations were discredited by two factors evident in the presidential election: Deferre's very poor showing and the PCF's resiliency to weather various political crises. Thus in July, 1969, only three months after the presidential election, the SFIO held a National Congress at Issy-les-Moulineaux. The first point of business was changing the official name of the party to "Parti Socialiste" (PS). This in itself indicated a spirit of reform that was further heightened when, after 23 years as SFIO Secretary General, Guy Mollet stepped down. Even though the new Secretary General, Alain Savary, was favorable to unity with the Communists, the renovation was only partly accomplished because five of the six members of the Party Secretariat were also supported by Mollet.

With regard to the relations with the PCF, the final motion passed by the Congress indicated the basic orientation the new Socialist Party was to take. It proposed union of the Left, including the Communists, and excluded any and all centrist alliances. The party leadership thus openly advocated public debate with the PCF and it also extended invitations of membership to the PSU and the CIR, both of which had chosen not to participate at this Congress.

By the end of 1969, it was clear that the events of May, 1968, and the events of August, 1968, had profoundly transformed French political life. General de Gaulle was no longer president of the
Fifth Republic. Waldeck Rochet was no longer Secretary General of the French Communist Party. Guy Mollet was no longer in direct control of the French Socialists. Both new leaders of the Left were favorably disposed toward unity on the Left. Discussions with the Communists began almost immediately.

The Final Preparations Before Unity: 1969-72

The next two years, 1969-71, were periods of consolidation for all three new leaders. Because of the intense discord that still reigned within the Socialist Party, little progress could be made toward its projected goal of a common program. There were challenges to Alain Savary's leadership from all sides. Pierre Mauroy, who ran against Savary in 1969 for the post of Party Secretary General, continued his efforts to influence the direction of the Party leadership. He was considered more right-wing than Savary. Francois Mitterrand realized that as the head of a small, perhaps insignificant group (the CIR) of 10,000 members, he could not effectively become a national figure without rejoining the larger Socialist Party. During 1969-71, he continuously developed the conditions upon which he would participate. His strategy was to use the municipal elections as forums for inter-party negotiations, always promoting unity therein, and thus appearing as the one person who could reunite the entire French Left. Center forces also
attempted to influence the direction of the Party, based on Pohér's limited centrist success and the fear of the Communists.  

Socialist discord and resultant Communist hesitance were reflected in the approach both parties took to preliminary negotiations with each other. There had been quiet discussions throughout 1970, but these could not be enthusiastically supported given the disorganization within the Socialist Party. Nonetheless, on November 7, 1970, François Mitterrand accepted the proposed merger between the CIR and the PS. A "Congress of Socialist Unity" was called for June, 1971, to ratify this event.

Just after Mitterand announced his intentions, the PCF and the PS published a "First Summary" of preliminary negotiations that repeated the basic party positions listed in the February, 1968, common platform. Again, it was more a catalogue of differences and agreements between the two parties, and the greatest disagreement was still in the area of foreign policy.

The Socialists reiterated their desire to "exploit all possibilities which the existence of the European Economic Community presented," and maintained their desire to "partially abandon sovereignty," in order to proceed to their traditional goal of European

1 Poperen, L'unite de la gauche, chapter 19, "La gauche en hibernation."

2 Ibid.
political unification. The Communists, however, also remained within their former positions. They refused any "supranational institutions," but did for the first time recognize the existence of the EEC by agreeing to give it a "new content." The PCF repeated its demand for French withdrawal from the Atlantic Alliance.¹ Thus, the early negotiations produced little progress in the realm of foreign policy. There was still no catalyst, no fundamental changes in the French political situation that could induce the PCF and the PS to modify their adamant traditional positions.

Two elements combined to produce the final catalyst that was to motivate the PCF and the PS to seriously undertake joint negotiations for the development of a positive governmental program.

In the first place, the renovation of the French Socialist organization after nine years of continuous effort was finally completed in June, 1971. Both socialist groups, the PS and the CIR, presented themselves to a "Congress of Socialist Unity," wherein the delegates had the ultimate power to accept or reject the merger of the CIR and the PS. This Congress was held at Epinay-sur-Seine during June 11-13, 1971. It enthusiastically supported Francois Mitterrand's initiatives and on June 16, he was elected as First Secretary to the French Socialist Party. At the Congress, Mitterand

¹Ibid., pp. 310-11.
insisted that the Socialist party develop and write its own platform before negotiations with the Communists could be resumed. Though there was a commitment made to the theme of leftist unity, the Congress merely "took cognizance" of the First Summary of December, 1970, and did not formally ratify the document. Discussions with the French Communist Party were suspended until the PS governmental program could be written.

The PCF immediately recognized the need to elaborate its own program for the forthcoming negotiations. Mitterand, the PCF knew, was a stringent bargaining partner, and the renewed growth of the PS since 1969 was cause for concern. The PCF needed a strong base from which it could effectively negotiate with the increasingly dynamic Socialist Party.

This desire resulted in the release, during October, 1971, of the proposed Communist program of government. There was little change of doctrine. Antagonism was expressed toward NATO, the Atlantic Alliance, West Germany, and the Common Market. The PCF advocated the "grand and veritable Europe," (as opposed to the "little Europe of the Six"). All of the above foreign policies have distinctly Gaullist overtones. But in addition, the PCF advocated the renunciation of the French nuclear strike force, and called for French participation in all international efforts at
disarmament.\textsuperscript{1} What at first seems to be an extension of Gaullist foreign policies through a larger French presence at international meetings is actually a rejection of the Gaullist policy of national independence. General de Gaulle based his entire foreign policy on the construction of a strong and independent nuclear strike force.

The second element that, combined with the first, produced the catalyst in the final movement toward unity was the French Communist perception of President Pompidou's foreign policy.

French foreign policy was correctly perceived by the PCF as taking an "Atlanticist turn" at the end of 1968. Under de Gaulle, discussions were held in February, 1969, with the British Ambassador to Paris, Christopher Soames on the question of Great Britain's eventual entry into the Common Market. De Gaulle was clearly modifying former policies.

There can be no doubt that from the end of 1968 the French government showed renewed interest in the EEC. Moreover, it has to be recalled that the Soviet Union was not enamored of the Brussels organization, so that the new Gaullist line was, in a sense, an act of defiance of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{2}

De Gaulle's attitude also changed with respect to NATO. One


\textsuperscript{2}Herbert Tint, French Foreign Policy since the Second World War (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1972), p. 158.
of the consequences of the May revolt for the French foreign policy was severe military expenditure reductions. The French Army Chief of Staff, General Fouquet also indicated in Defense Nationale that there was no longer any disagreement between NATO and the French on the strategic issue of "flexible response" versus "massive retaliation." In addition, it was announced that agreements existed concerning the employment of French forces in conjunction with NATO.\(^1\)

The first indication that the PCF began to disagree with the Gaullist line came during the 19th National Congress of the PCF held in February, 1970. It was at this point that the words "'Atlanticist turn'" were coined (glissement vers l'Atlantique).\(^2\) At the end of 1971, Pompidou, it was claimed, not only continued the Atlanticist turn, but transformed French foreign policy into another policy altogether. Following the December, 1971, meeting between President Richard M. Nixon and Pompidou in the Azores, the PCF claimed that the French president had "ceded to and accepted the United States' devaluation of the dollar and the imposition of a 10 percent surcharge on imported goods." This, along with the French government's "dreams of a 25-year alliance with the Americans,"

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 159.

was strongly attacked by Raymond Guyot, a Communist writer, at the end of 1973 in *Cahiers du Communisme*. "Instead of placing itself at the heart of detente in order to accelerate it," he wrote, "the French government retarded the movement, sacrificing French security and the cause of world peace." Guyot, reflecting the official Communist position, also denounced the preliminary explorations of the foreign ministry with regard to European collective security. "Indeed, a government which acts to create a European bloc endowed with nuclear armaments can only oppose the establishment of a system of security and cooperation among all European nations." Foreign Minister Michel Jobert's theme of a "superpower condominium," was also denounced as contradictory to the government's professed desire to remain a member of the Atlantic Alliance.

The increasingly hostile attitude on the part of the French Communists was a fundamental importance to the development of the agreement on foreign policy within the Common Program. Until 1971, the French Communist Party pursued its interests in a manner that was understood as being "in opposition without being an alternative." There was now a necessity to provide such an

---


alternative.

In January, 1972, the political program of the French Socialist Party was also published. Here again, there was little change in traditional foreign policies. Rather, the document must be seen as a negotiating platform from which the Socialist leaders could effectively bargain with the Communists. Three months later, after intense public scrutiny, the National Congress of the PS was called to ratify the document, in its definitive version, on March 12, 1972.

On March 16, President Pompidou introduced a surprise referendum on the question of the entry of Great Britain into the European Economic Community. According to Pierre Viansson-Ponte of Le Monde, 1 Pompidou apparently called the referendum because he wanted to alter the personnel within the government and to open his majority to centrist forces. He also wanted to present himself to the European Summit Conference to be held in September with increased prestige. Finally, he wanted to appear as Pompidou, and no longer as the successor of de Gaulle; he wished to be perceived as "the grand architect of Europe." In addition to these reasons, Ronald Tiersky writes:

Evidently, the Pompidou referendum was conceived

---

with the dual goal of reinforcing the authority of the French government in European councils . . . . and of slowing the momentum of the Left parties toward an agreement on a program, particularly in view of the general elections scheduled for March, 1973. ¹

The French Communist Party had been strongly opposed to the increased construction of Europe. The PCF considered that a renewed unification effort would induce heterodox temptations on the part of some Eastern European States. Another, more fundamental reason for PCF opposition to the EEC is that "while the PCF constitutes 20-25 percent of the French electorate . . . , the combined Communist vote in Western Europe is only about 11 percent."² The socialist Party, however, had been strongly in favor of the Common Market, to the extent of advocating "partial abandonment of sovereignty" for the construction of political and economic unification in the 1970 First Summary.

The referendum did not have such an adverse effect on the Left for two reasons. In the first place, the Communists advocated a negative vote in terms that were close to those used by right-wing Gaullists, thus undercutting Pompidou's support. National independence, in this case, was one element that the right-wing Gaullists and the PCF had in common. The PCF thus advocated a negative vote. In the second place, the "no" vote indicated to the

¹ Tiersky, French Communism, p. 264.
² Ibid.
French Socialists on what ground the PCF was not willing to negotiate. It served as the bottom line from which the Communists were not willing to move. Even though the PCF accepted the existence of the Common Market as a "fait accompli" in 1967, its opposition to renewed European construction was unassailable. Therefore, instead of slowing the Left parties' movement toward unity, the Pompidou referendum forced the Socialists to realize that if unity was to be achieved, the PS would have to move farther to its left than previously. Rather than promoting the political and economic unification of Europe as the PS had done for so many years, the French Socialists advocated abstention, claiming opposition to the domestic implications of the "referendum-plebiscite."¹

The results of the referendum were not encouraging for the Gaullist majority. Forty percent of the electorate did not vote. Of the registered voters, only 36 percent voted yes, and 17 percent voted negatively. Even though the referendum passed (67.86 percent of the votes cast in favor, 32.17 percent opposed), Pompidou's majority was shaken. "The government was unable to mobilize public opinion."²

In light of the government's limited failure to rally the French


²L'Annee Politique, 1972, pp. 31-32.
nation around its European initiative, Kriegel analyzes further:

Far from ruining the chances of an agreement with the Socialist Party, the Communist "non"... appears as the decisive step in the "Long March" that the PCF has confronted since that day in 1962 when it defined and proclaimed its central short-term objective to be to reach a Communist-Socialist Common Program. ¹

Almost immediately after the referendum on the European Economic Community, the Socialists and the Communists resumed their calls for unity through their respective official press organs. On June 8, 1972, delegations from the two parties met together and worked out an agreement on the delicate problem of "alternation in power," wherein the PCF committed itself to respecting the will of the majority of voters. At this point, a full agreement on a common program was finally thought to be forthcoming, and delegates set June 15 and 22 as future meeting dates. On June 22, a summit conference between the two parties produced agreement on "social policy, public liberties, and political institutions," but economic policy and foreign policy remained divergent. These two issues were left to the meeting scheduled for June 26, 1972.

At the end of a lengthy negotiating session, the two parties announced the signature of the Common Program of Government on the morning of June 27, 1972.

Summary

The events of May, 1968, had extensive consequences for the French Left. The French Communists and the French Socialists reacted to the revolt differently, giving evidence of their profound ideological divergence. But the PCF through its actions, showed itself to be sincerely committed to the "peaceful road to socialism," and considered violent revolution unfeasible for France. Since the PCF had not given up aspirations of power, after 1968 the PCF became irrevocably committed to the battle of the ballot-box. Alliance with the Socialists appeared as the only path open to the French Communist Party.

The French Socialists, however, were not ready to enter into such an alliance. The electoral accord of December, 1966, did hold for the June legislative elections. Withdrawal of leftist candidates took place in order to defeat Gaullist candidates. But Gaullist candidates were not defeated. On the contrary, the Left parties suffered a terrible setback. The French Socialists began questioning the wisdom of an alliance policy. The PCF's inconclusive disapprobation of the Soviet invasion into Czechoslovakia made the Socialists more hesitant. It reminded the French Socialists that there had been no disavowal of communist ideology and doctrine on the part of the PCF.
Consequently, the argument between the Socialists and the Communists that had begun in May was aggravated by the June elections, and grew to serious proportions after Prague, prevented serious negotiations necessary to determine a common candidate for the 1969 presidential elections.

The French Socialists' centrist candidate, however, proved even less successful than their previous alliance strategy. In two national elections, 1965 and 1969, the centrist Gaston Deferre was defeated. Yet in 1965, as soon as there was a unique candidate, and in 1967 when an electoral accord significantly aided the French Left, the alliance strategy proved successful. The French Socialist's centrist movement was dead. Now, the Socialists realized an alliance with the Communists was necessary.

By the end of 1969, the PCF had completed the process of "normalization" with Moscow. Waldeck Rochet had been replaced by Georges Marchais. The renovation of the French Socialist Party now began in earnest, and Guy Mollet no longer had direct control of the Party. Just as important for the French Left, General de Gaulle had passed the reigns of the presidency to Georges Pompidou.

From the point of view of foreign policy, this latter event was the most important. In December, 1970, a "first summary" of negotiations was released by the Communists and the Socialists.
Foreign policy still remained a stumbling block. When Pompidou began what the French Communists perceived as an "Atlanticist turn," the French Communists went into serious opposition. The French Communist Party, until 1971, pursued its interests in a manner that was understood as being in opposition without being an alternative. Pompidou's foreign policy provided the necessity to formulate such a foreign policy.

At the same time, the SFIO finally achieved its process of renovation. Both parties set about developing their own programs before meeting in final negotiations. Despite an attempt by Pompidou to slow the Left parties' movement toward unity through a foreign policy issue (the 1972 European expansion referendum), the French Left completed negotiations and signed the Common Program on June 27, 1972.
CHAPTER IV

FOREIGN POLICY IN THE COMMON PROGRAM
OF JUNE 27, 1972

After nine hours of negotiation, which followed 35 years of intense discord between the negotiating partners, the foreign policy of the French Left was elaborated as part of the Common Program of Government and announced on June 27, 1972. A document produced under these conditions is almost necessarily incomplete, ambiguous, and in some places even contradictory. Part Four of the Common Program, entitled "To Contribute to Peace and Develop International Cooperation,"¹ is such a document. More than just a simple electoral alliance, the Common Program's foreign policy was nonetheless devised in the context of forthcoming legislative elections. If the goal was to eventually win those elections, then a document such as this by necessity takes on vague and general characteristics in an attempt to appeal to the widest possible audience. In addition, as an opposition document, there is no guarantee that policies elaborated therein will perforce be put into practice, for the conditions of opposition are distinct from conditions of

government.

This chapter will analyze the Common Program's written foreign policy in an attempt to discern its feasibility as a working outline for future governmental policy. In some cases, certain articles contained within the Common Program have been subject to interpretation by the two main political parties of the Left. Where this applies, a review of respective party clarification will be made. Each section of this chapter will correspond to separate chapter headings as they are listed in the Common Program. Some chapters are longer, contain more substantive and more controversial policy proposals than do others, and thus merit more attention.

French International Relations

The first chapter of Part Four in the Common Program summarily states the general principles upon which the French Left's governmental foreign policy will rest. Among them are: peaceful coexistence, equality of rights, respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, and refusal of all recourse to force or threats of the use of force. The Common Program also places great importance on the development of economic, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation with other states. Litigation and negotiated resolution of international conflicts is advocated.
These principles are distinctly uncontroversial. No political party in France, no sovereign state in the international political system would care to characterize these principles as being unacceptable. On the contrary, the vast majority of countries profess to the very same principles as does the present government of France. There would be little change of policy if they were adopted by the French Left in a majority position at the National Assembly.

The last paragraph of this short chapter, however, is significant.

It (the government) will oppose all interference, pressure or reprisals from foreign sources susceptible to bringing into question the realization of economic and political democracy as described in the governmental program.¹

This can be taken as a warning to all governments having interests in France, against pursuing policies which would run counter to the desires of the French Left's comprehensive governmental policy. Since the concept of "economic democracy" is included as an objective to be protected, presumably this warning is directed against capitalist corporations which could have their French holdings nationalized, and then react in a manner not approved by the government. But other than "opposing" these acts, no specific measures are mentioned for counteracting them. Questions as to

¹Ibid.
whether or not the French Left would consider such measures as economic reprisals against a country which attempted to place "pressure" on France are left open.

If it does contemplate such measures (which as a warning it implies), then the French Left has neglected to probe the implied contradiction in the first chapter of the Common Program's foreign policy. On the one hand, the French Left wants to protect its vital interests. On the other hand, it tells other countries not to. The reality of perceived national interests transcending national borders contradicts ideals such as "equality of rights, and respect for national sovereignty."

Disarmament and National Defense

The Common Program's foreign policy with reference to disarmament begins with the following comprehensive statement:

General, universal and controlled disarmament will be the principal objective of the government.

In order to achieve this goal, specific principles upon which governmental action will be based are listed. The first of these principles is also the most controversial. Upon taking office, the French Left would proceed to the "renunciation of the strategic nuclear strike force in whatever form it may take," and halt immediately, "the manufacture of the French nuclear strike force." It
would also transform this military nuclear industry to peaceful atomic industry, with concern for the workers involved.

With respect to contemporary efforts at disarmament, the French Left would participate in all international efforts. There would be an immediate halt to nuclear testing, signature and adhesion to international treaties and agreements on nuclear disarmament, including participation at the Geneva Conference; in addition, proposals beyond the existing accords would be introduced. Furthermore, there would be strict regulation of future arms sales.

The French Left's national defense policy "will be based on the search for collective security, respect for its alliances and a reorganization of French armed forces." The government would "refuse to reintegrate NATO," meaning it would not rejoin integrated military command headquarters from which de Gaulle withdrew in 1966. New defense alliances, nonaggression treaties, a European collective security system and other agreements concluded by France would receive cooperation from French armed forces.

The French Left's military strategy would "permit the confrontation of all eventual aggressors, whoever they may be."

The rest of the chapter on disarmament and national defense deals with specific policy proposals concerning reorganization of the French armed forces. The armed forces, placed under parliamentary control, would be exempt from domestic or colonialist
missions. Any tendency toward a volunteer professional army would be abandoned. Obligatory military service would be reduced from one year to six months. New and more liberal statutes would be introduced to improve the legal and civil status of armed forces members. Conscientious objectors would be recognized and treated in the same manner, with the same rights as regular members of the armed forces. Educational or professional deferments would be instated based on the individual's desires. There would be no social, political or philosophical discrimination in the selection of and promotion of officers and specialists. The Superior Council of military functions will be the object of a democratic reform.

This chapter on disarmament and national defense contains two inherent contradictions which are subject to interpretation. At a general level, placing disarmament in the same context as national defense seems paradoxical. On the one hand, the French Left declares that "general, universal and controlled disarmament will be the principal objective of the government," while on the other hand, the government's military strategy "will permit the confrontation of all eventual aggressors, whoever they may be."

At another level, there seems to be a contradiction contained in the French Left's approach to disarmament policy. In the Common Program, the Left commits itself to "renunciation" of the
French strategic nuclear strike force. This commitment implies a unilateral approach to disarmament. In terms of its universal disarmament policy, this renunciation seemingly implies that other nuclear powers, once shown the virtue of this path, would follow suit.

At the same time, the term "controlled disarmament" seems to indicate that the French Left, instead of unilaterally destroying its nuclear weapons would rather approach the issue of disarmament more incrementally, regulated at each step by international treaties and accords guaranteeing increased collective security arrangements.

The result of these contradictions is ambiguity. The actual implementation of such policies becomes subject to a wide variety of interpretations as to priorities which are not defined, emphasis which is left vague. Ambiguity produces questions on the part of observers who attempt to examine the document more deeply.

Some clarification has been offered by the French Socialist Party. An article by Jacques Huntzinger, a prominent member of the Commission on Defense for the Socialist Party, treats the questions of disarmament and national defense at length. Yet he must do so in terms that do not contradict the Common Program

itself. As a result, his article is vague in its attempt to clarify contradictions in the Common Program that the Socialist Party does not wish to be considered as such by the Socialist Party.

Huntzinger does define priorities and places emphasis on aspects which the Common Program does not do. In the first place, Huntzinger believes that disarmament is not a unilateral process:

It (Socialism) does not mistake international disarmament for unilateral disarmament. Disarmament does not mean a policy of unilateral abandonment of national defense capacities. The objective of disarmament is a political objective, to be realized in the framework of the international society and not as a manifestation of nonviolence or idealistic pacifism.¹

The Socialist disarmament policy must, "at first, attempt to investigate, instigate and elaborate similar policies among other states." This policy is much different from the original image that simple universal disarmament evokes. Nonetheless, "partial disarmament" which appears to be what the present nuclear powers are engaged in is, according to Huntzinger, insufficient.

The foundation of partial disarmament is the acceptance of atomic dissuasion, the maintenance of nuclear arsenals, and the maintenance of the arms race.²

Huntzinger agrees that this development of partial disarmament constitutes a "veritable progress," but that it has not addressed itself to the essential aspect underlying disarmament: the arms

¹Ibid., p. 24. ²Ibid., p. 27.
race. The failure of partial disarmament is also the failure of "arms control." Both titles imply the acceptance of the arms race without addressing themselves to the more fundamental objective of disarmament.

True disarmament, goes the Socialist policy, is possible today because it is being advocated all over the world, especially within the policies of the nuclear superpowers, which was not the case between the two wars. Detente is the policy which makes greater international security possible. Greater security lessens the risk of war. Security in the international system is the most effective aspect which promotes the possibility of disarmament. Disarmament, in turn, fosters greater relaxation of tension, or detente.

The dialectic must be constant among these three notions: only a certain detente can reinforce international security and security of each power, to permit the embarking upon effective disarmament.  

Thus, when the Socialists speak of disarmament, they are actually advocating two different types. The first deals with the reality of disarmament as it is being practiced in the international system today. This is called "partial disarmament" and is to be welcomed, but not as an answer to the arms race. The second type, "progressive and balanced disarmament" leading to general,  

\[1\text{Ibid., p. 30.}\]
universal and controlled disarmament is a next step, to follow
effective detente and international security. Progressive and
balanced disarmament must be advocated to replace the logic of
arms control which,

\[ \ldots \] rationalizes the arms race. Detente must permit
the effective accomplishment of the first step of dis-
armament \ldots , if each of the principal armed powers
must accomplish this effort \ldots , the essential effort
must come from the two superpowers.\footnote{Ibid., p. 32.}

Since the "essential effort" must come from the USA and the
USSR, all that a Socialist France can do is to make concrete pro-
posals in order to embark seriously on effective disarmament.
Initial measures to be taken would include signature and ratification
of the various international disarmament treaties and agreements
which France has not previously adhered to. Then, Huntzinger
suggests that from "partial disarmament" France must pass to
"regional disarmament," or a European collective security system
which will be discussed in the next section.

Huntzinger does not specify Socialist Party policy with re-
pect to the French strategic nuclear strike force.

The French Communist Party, by and large, maintains its
strict commitment to the Common Program's policies on detente
and does not consider the necessity for revision or clarification
as seriously as do the Socialists. According to the research available, the PCF's foreign policy requirements can be better understood with regard to the next sections on European security and European Community policies. Nonetheless, the Common Program's specific statement on the "renunciation" of the strategic strike force demonstrates, when examined in the context of later clarifications, continued divergence in areas of foreign policy.

The Common Program's policy on the French nuclear strike force is the following:

Renunciation of the strategic nuclear strike force in whatever form it may take; immediate halt of the manufacture of the French nuclear strike force; reconversion, according to a precise schedule of the military nuclear industry to peaceful atomic industry . . . .

There are three key phrases in the above statement which render this objective compatible with the above clarified goals concerning disarmament. "Renunciation" implies denial or refusal, usually by formal declaration of the strategic nuclear strike force. It is less emphatic that denunciation, or destruction. The French Left can renounce the "force de frappe" yet accept its existence as a necessary evil. It has already been demonstrated that the French Socialists do not intend to unilaterally disarm the national defense capacity. Renunciation then is an ambiguous term used to express a traditional abhorrence to the strike force, yet maintain it because of international realities.
Secondly, only the "strategic nuclear strike force" is renounced and there is no mention of "tactical" nuclear weaponry anywhere in the Common Program. 1

The phrase, "according to a precise schedule" also introduces a qualifying factor to the policy on the French strategic nuclear strike force. This schedule essentially points to the definition and schedule of disarmament discussed above. The French cannot take the initiative because, as Huntzinger put it, "the essential effort must come from the two superpowers." 1

Ronald Tiersky reports that consistent Communist opposition to the French strategic nuclear strike force "almost provoked a total miscarriage" of the Common Program during the final hours of its negotiation. 2 Another analyst indicates that from the beginning of 1973, Georges Marchais and the Party have "periodically warned the Socialists against attempting to alter their agreed statement" on the strike force. 3 Nonetheless, a third analyst believes that PCF opinion on this particular issue has evolved,


especially during the presidential campaign of 1974.

The subject (of the strategic nuclear strike force) remained more or less taboo whereas before the presidential elections, the partners of the Left Union have expressed the desire that the problem required further discussion.¹

Nonetheless, even though the PCF has not made its hostility to the strike force an obstacle to participation in government,² its hostility remains.

If the Communists are willing to "concede" on the issue of the strike force, this implies that the French Socialists have a different view of it. The Communists, in effect, comply with the Common Program's stated policy whereas the Socialists have modified their position.

Michael M. Harrison, writing in the Atlantic Community Quarterly on the foreign and defense policies of a Socialist France explains:

There has been a significant shift in the perspective of key figures in the direction of a basically Gaullist concept of an independent defense system based on nuclear weapons. Whereas previously the Socialists had condemned the nuclear force and threatened variously to dismantle it, renounce it, or at least not promote its development, the new attitude towards nuclear weapons reflects growing support for them among Party defense experts . . . . Since 1971 and more

²Ibid.
recently . . . , these advisors adopted a program which foresees a continuing development of France's nuclear arsenal, particularly the submarines, along with the substantial changes in France's conventional force structure.  

The major difficulties, however, in publicly declaring this favorable attitude toward the strike force is traditional reticence within the Socialist Party, hostile attitudes on the part of the French Communists, and the Common Program itself, the basis of the Left Alliance. Nevertheless, the Socialist Party's leader, Francois Mitterrand, has spoken out--ambiguously--on the issue. P. J. Friedrich reviewed an anthology of texts by Mitterand over five years, which served as a sort of presidential program. He claims that the only reference to the French nuclear strike force is in a short passage dating from 1969 "in which Mitterand accepts the developed 'force de frappe' as a political fact which one has to live with,"

I said during my campaign of 1965 that I would forbid the nuclear strike force. I am no longer able to say the same tomorrow. The military policy of General de Gaulle was approved by Frenchmen who re-elected him before electing his successor. Soon our atomic armament will be an irreversible reality. One will not drown it as one would little dogs.  

Clearly there is a conflict over the interpretation of the


"renunciation" policy between the two parties. In their search for a reconciliation with the wording of the Common Program, the French Socialists, to justify acceptance of the strategic nuclear strike force, emphasize the phrase, "... the government will define a military strategy permitting the confrontation of all aggressors, whoever they may be."

The contradictions over national defense policy and renunciation of the "force de frappe," and over discrepancies in the national disarmament policy have not been resolved. Clearly the two parties feel the Common Program is inadequate, but efforts toward negotiated revision have not proved successful.

European Security

The Common Program's foreign policy would encourage the incremental attainment of the "simultaneous dissolution" of both the North Atlantic Treaty and the Treaty of Warsaw. This objective would result in the "complete disappearance" of the existing political military alliances.

Support of the efforts toward the European Cooperation and Security Conference (ECSC) at Helsinki is expressed and would be expanded.

The Common Program's foreign policy would also vigorously promote the initiation of discussions on a new European collective
security organization, with the aim of creating European disarmament, denuclearized zones in Europe, a freeze on armaments in Central Europe, and mutual and balanced force reductions.

The European security policy emphasizes the incremental nature of such policies. "Respect for the present French alliances" is clearly indicated. One point from the Common Program's national defense policy must also be kept in mind. The French Left would "refuse" to rejoin integrated military command headquarters.

These references made to NATO, the Warsaw Pact, and the proposed European collective security system are as ambiguous as the Common Program policies on disarmament and national defense. For example, just how the French Left is to influence the USA and the USSR to the point of agreeing to dissolve their respective political-military alliance systems is not indicated. It is specifically stated, furthermore, that the French Left will remain a member of the Atlantic Alliance and thus be under its protection, yet France will not place its forces under NATO command. Presumably, the present alliances will be replaced by the construction of a European collective security system. But which Europe is the French Left speaking of?

The French Communists have traditionally opposed the "Europe of the Six" or "Nine" and usually refer to a "grand and veritable Europe," which presumably would include all the territory,
to use de Gaulle's phrase, "from the Atlantic to the Urals." As recently as January, 1977, Jean Kanapa, foreign policy expert for the French Communist Party, wrote that "... the Soviet Union is also in Europe." If this is the case, then the simultaneous dissolution of the military and political blocs would have to appear before a new system of European collective security could be constructed, a feat of considerable magnitude. The Socialists, on the other hand, have been and continue to advocate the partial abandonment of sovereignty since the early years of the EEC, at the present moment limited to the "Nine."

The Common Program's statements about the European collective security system contain only limited clarifications as to what kind of defense system will successfully replace the present system. According to the Common Program, the French Left has not modified its "renunciation" of the strategic nuclear strike force. Furthermore, both the French Communists and the French Socialists have consistently opposed the idea of a European defense system based on Anglo-French nuclear cooperation. Huntzinger, in his article on disarmament, considers that progressive mutual and balanced force reductions are the key to the initial efforts to arrive at a new European collective security system. Europe, he implies,

does not have the means to effectively counterbalance the superpower's military strength. His more "realistic" view is that "regional disarmament" is the only solution. Yet this policy implies that by negotiated disarmament, Europe becomes more secure, a dubious assertion in the long run. If, as Huntzinger writes, "arms have become a diplomatic weapon of the greatest importance," then attempting to propose a system of European collective security without specifying proposed organization of security systems becomes quite meaningless.¹

The Common Program's ambivalence with respect to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization reflects a basically Socialist dilemma. Francois Mitterand said in April, 1974, during his presidential campaign:

France belongs to the Western world, to the Atlantic world. She is an active member of an alliance, the Atlantic Alliance. The problem for the French is to know whether or not to separate themselves from this system of security. When I respond to this question, I say yes, on condition that there is another.²

By this statement, there is no question as to where the French Socialists feel safest, at the moment. This attitude reflects traditional Socialist opinions of the NATO organization. The Socialist


Party has regarded the United States as the chief protector of Europe, but this post-war view is no longer held by the leadership of the Party. The Socialists' willingness to leave the Alliance when "another" system of defense replaces it demonstrates a hostile attitude toward the United States. Since the failure of centrist Gaston Deferre in the elections of 1965 and 1969, and the French acceptance of de Gaulle's withdrawal of troops from NATO headquarters, the Socialists have taken an increasingly anti-American position.

Part of this attitude is based on traditional French resistance to American hegemony. But Michael Harrison points out that the part played by Socialist ideology must also be considered. Close relations with the principal defenders of the capitalist socio-economic order now constitute an intrinsic threat to the success of the Socialist experiment in France, at least according to the Socialists. The huge multi-national corporations, based for the most part in the US, are seen as partners in the "international class conflict." Harrison concludes by saying:

The Socialist perspective requires them to not only accept the Gaullist break with Atlanticism but also pursue it to the logical conclusion demanded by ideology. Thus the rejection of domestic class collaboration finds its international complement in a severe hostility to a United States which is viewed as the powerful ally and symbol of the conservative Social order in France.
and Europe.  

Yet the military threat of the Soviet Union, though not thought probable, remains possible. This fear, along with the protection of the American nuclear umbrella, demands that the French Socialists remain part of the Atlantic Alliance while at the same time standing aloof from it.

The French Communists quite naturally do not fear the Soviet Union at all. They cannot believe that the Soviet threat exists for a Socialist France. As chapters 1 and 3 of this paper have demonstrated, the French Communists have consistently opposed the NATO organization. The PCF applauded de Gaulle's withdrawal from NATO command, whereas the Socialists attempted a motion of censure which the PCF did not approve. The words "positive aspects" form the term that the French Communists have used to express their approval of de Gaulle's foreign policy in this area. Again after 1968, when Pompidou began a favorable attitude toward NATO, the PCF attacked with vigor this "atlanticist turn" and denounced it along with American hegemony. The French Communists compromised their intransigence to NATO in order to enter into a political alliance with a more cautious Socialist Party. "The Communists agreed not to make withdrawal from NATO a condition  

---

of joint government.\footnote{Tiersky, "The PCF and Detente," p. 196.}

The French Left and the European Economic Community (EEC)

The Common Program states that with regard to the EEC, the government will have a double objective:

... on the one hand to participate in the construction of the EEC, in its institutions and in its common policies, with the desire to act so as to democratize its institutions...

... on the other hand to preserve within the Common Market its liberty of action to promote the realization of its own political, economic, and social programs.

Concerning the second objective, the French Left will not hesitate to invoke the "safeguard" clauses of the Treaty of Rome in order to protect the socialist experiment in France from EEC cooperative interference, and will be responsible only to the National Assembly for its national policies.

With respect to the first, the French Left desires the "democratization" of the Social and Economic Committee, with a considerably greater share of authority over the European budget and European Social Funds. The Common Program also specifies that it would like the democratization of the FEOGA, or the European Fund for Agricultural Stabilization and Support. Along with
these two reforms, the French Left would also favor greater protection of European workers' rights, including the revision of some articles of the Treaty of Rome.

The French Left's policies toward the EEC, although not entirely unambiguous, contain a significant amount of realism. This is without a doubt due to the preliminary groundwork that has been accomplished in the realm of increased economic cooperation within Europe. Contrary to the vagueness which proposals concerning nonexistent universal disarmament and equally nonexistent independent European collective security systems are forced to express, policies elaborated in the Common Program with regard to the EEC are much more coherent. The phrase "to participate in the construction of the EEC," is a distinct compromise on the part of the French Communists who just two months before the signature of the Common Program refused to approve the expansion of the Common Market to include Great Britain. The degree to which French Communists compromised long-standing hostility toward the EEC raises questions of their sincerity. The PCF has long maintained its hostility to the increased supranationality of the Common Market, and opposes the election of the European parliament by universal suffrage. The PCF has said this implies a "false legitimization of capitalist supranationalism." Nonetheless, the PCF agrees with the Socialists that the European
parliament should control the European budget.¹

As concerns the PCF then, the question becomes, if foreign policy is of such importance to the French Communists, why did the Communists so suddenly adopt European policies which ran seemingly counter to its traditional policy? Kriegel believes there are three essential considerations. First, it is possible that the recognition and the construction of the EEC is a means of "ultimately paralyzing it--from within--in the guise of democratizing it." A second consideration would be that the Communists, by demanding greater and continued nationalization of the French economy, would construct "an obstacle to the insertion of the French economy into the European market and the construction of Europe." Thirdly, there is a desire to promote relations between the "state-administered economy of France and the no less state-administered economies of the East European countries."²

According to Tiersky, Communist action has been waged less as a political party influence than as a promoter of a European trade union alliance. In the Common Program, it is proposed that the EEC's Social and Economic Committee be reformed to increase labor union representation to half the total membership. Since

¹Ibid., p. 198.

1970, attempts have been made to organize relations among various European trade unions into a veritable alliance which would be able to strongly influence European Community institutions "at the base."

The growth of multinational corporations and the creation of a European-wide market implied in themselves that union struggles would seek solidarity superseding national boundaries . . . . The long-term strategy for the PCF is to promote left-wing unity at the European as well as the national level.  

The Communists are not the only ones to modify previous positions with regard to the EEC. The statement, "to liberate it (the EEC) from the domination of capitalist interests," indicates that the Socialists too were willing to compromise.

The French Socialist Party developed its European policy more formally than have the Communists, at the Extraordinary Congress on European Problems held at Bagnolet, December 15 and 16, 1973.  

Basically, the Socialist Party's European policies are an extension of domestic concerns. They contain a high degree of ideology and thus advocate a socialist-oriented Europe. Outmoded nationalism is clearly rejected, and at the same time, so is the creation of a super-state based on neo-capitalist and

1 Tiersky, "The PCF and Detente," p. 199.

technocratic foundations. The EEC of today is severely criticized as not representing a "counter-weight" to international capitalism which is dominated by the United States and their partners, the American and multinational corporations.

Nevertheless, a "delegation of sovereignty" must take place in order to remedy the situation, but this supranational authority "cannot be politically neutral." The EEC should represent all political forces within the Community.

The government will declare at the outset, that the actual state of the Community presents a danger to all member-states. This is because it has partially disarmed the power of the states without having furnished as a counterpart an instrument of collective action on the international scene.\(^1\)

In order to achieve these objectives, Socialist France would advocate continued expansion of the EEC with new relationships developed for states which are not yet candidates for admission, such as Finland and Yugoslavia. In addition, new relationships should be developed with the COMECON group. The Socialist Party will not compromise its program of nationalization of important sectors of French industry. If a conflict develops between the nationalization of an industry and the foreign capitalist owners, the French government would invoke the safeguard clauses of the Treaty of Rome. In the event of a large exit of capital provoked by

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 24.
the change of government, the French Socialists expect the
Community to aid in halting this movement by monetary solidarity.

With respect to exterior economic relations, the French
Socialists propose measures that would control capital movement
outside the Community, and provide for the diminishing influence
of the dollar and gold, to be replaced by an international money.
In addition, the French Socialists would work for the installation
of a middle-term planning process on a European scale. Reforms
of Community institutions would protect the interests of the under-
privileged sectors of the national economies.¹

In essence these themes were reflected in Mitterand's presi-
dential campaign when he called for a Europe which was "open,
independent, and Socialist." As soon as these reforms are carried
out, then the French Socialists would call for the election of a
European parliament to which would be delegated powers similar
to those of a sovereign national assembly.²

The realism expressed in the Common Program's EEC
policies does not automatically mean that these policies are feasi-
ble. In fact, there are considerable difficulties which the French
Left will have to face as a coalition government directing foreign

¹Ibid.

²Harrison, "Foreign and Defense Policies," p. 359 citing
Mitterand during 1974 presidential campaign.
policy. As with the disarmament and national defense policies, much of the success of the Left's EEC policies depend on other states; in this case they depend on the present European Economic Community member-states. The Common Market countries have not adopted positions similar to those of the French Left concerning both the proposed European collective security arrangements, and the prospect of their becoming the French Left's partners against the multinational corporations are slim.

Other Foreign Policy Issues

The foreign policy of the Common Program specifies the French Left's policy toward a number of conflicts then current. On the war in Indochina, the French Left advocated a "total retreat" of US armed forces, and a freely negotiated political settlement within the framework of the Paris Peace Conference.

Concerning the Arab-Israeli Conflict, the French Left desires the reestablishment of peace with respect for the "right of existence and sovereignty of all states in the region." The Communists and the Socialists recognize both the state of Israel and the "national rights of the Palestinian Arab people." The Left clarifies this position by repeating its approval of United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 242, of November 22, 1967.
The Common Program states that the French government will eventually recognize the German Democratic Republic and favors the admission of both German Republics to the United Nations.

The French Left proposes also to recognize North Korea, North Vietnam, and the Royal Government of National Union in Cambodia.

Four of these policy issues have been settled. The American involvement in Vietnam is over, the two German Republics have gained entry to the UN, and France has established diplomatic relations with North Korea, the Republic of Vietnam and Cambodia.

The Socialist-Communist agreement on the Middle East conflict, however, was not strong enough to prevent serious disagreement between the two parties during and after the Yom Kippor War of 1973. This disagreement will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Common Program asserts that the right of democratic self-determination will be recognized for the Overseas departments (D. O. M.) and the Overseas territories (T. O. M.). In the territories of Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique and the Reunion Islands, the populations will democratically elect a representative national assembly to discuss the elaboration of new statutes with the French government.

Under the Common Program's economic cooperation and development aid policy will be accorded "new orientations."
Neo-colonialist spirit and political conditions will not influence the French Left. Development aid will be raised, and directed to the beneficiary countries' national interests, and not to the large corporations operating on their territory. The Common Program's development policy will tend to promote economic modernization, industrialization, diversification of agricultural products, and education.

Peoples who struggle for their independence will be supported by the French Left. International decisions will be followed with respect to Rhodesia and South Africa, and France will make greater use of international organizations, particularly the United Nations. France will also promote stable remuneration of developing countries' goods.

This statement of cooperation and development aid policy is more a list of principles to be followed than specific policies to be implemented. Their importance comes from the tone and outlook they express. The cooperation and development aid policy is distinctly leftist, anti-capitalist, and anti-colonialist, presumably in opposition to not only France's then current foreign policy, but also to the developed world's cooperation and development aid policies. The effort has been, in the Common Program, to give the impression of identifying with the problems and concerns of the Third World. Most notable is the French Left's willingness to
cooperate closely with the United Nations in this area.

Summary

The Common Program's section on foreign policy and international relations could hardly have been expected to formulate clear, unambiguous policies. The history of the relations between the PCF and the PS is too strongly filled with division and discord to have resulted in such clarity. Furthermore, ideological opposition parties must formulate policies on issues which will attract hesitant centrist voters and at the same time satisfy hard-core party militants. For example, Ronald Tiersky reported that Socialist leaders say privately that it would be unimaginable for a Socialist Party not to have a strong commitment to disarmament,¹ and yet Socialist leaders have increasingly accepted the strategic nuclear strike force as a political reality. Still, the Communist opposition to the strike force has not subsided. How can the Left be expected to resolve this important dilemma in office when it has not been able to do so successfully at the pre-election conference table?

The same question is valid for the Left's European policies. The Socialists advocated further political and economic unification of a socialist Europe and yet the Communists disagree with the

¹Tiersky, "The PCF and Detente," p. 196.
proposal for the election of a European parliament by universal suffrage. This disposition again reflects long-standing doctrinal differences. How will the Left resolve this?

In both cases, the Communist Party has not made these doctrinal positions conditional to its signature of the Common Program and its entry to joint government with the Socialists. Presumably then, the PCF is willing to let the Socialists lead in areas of foreign policy. At least, that is, during electoral campaigns. This would be compatible with the structure of the Left thus far. The presumed presidential candidate at the time of the Common Program was Francois Mitterand of the PS and thus, the "reserved domain" of foreign policy would theoretically be under his direction. But this cooperative attitude does not answer the more profound question. How is it possible for the PCF, a highly ideological political party, to take such a conciliatory and reformist position?

Kriegel believes that, simply, the Communists and the Socialists do not have the same relationship to the legitimizing effect of power. In constant and prolonged opposition, the French Socialists have withered and faded from the political scene. The Socialist Party must gain power within the French political system. But the Communist Party remains--be it in French opposition or in French government--at the heart of power in the international
communist movement.\(^1\) The PCF can concede momentarily, yet maintain the strongest traditionally ideological views. It must be remembered that at the time of the signature of the Common Program, the French Communist Party was the larger of the two parties that make up the French Left, yet it was the least trusted among the French political electorate. Another explanation is offered by Ronald Tiersky. Within the French political system, the PCF plays four distinct roles: Vanguard, Counter Community, Tribune, and Government Party.\(^2\) In order to be elected and consolidate its position among the electorate, the PCF must play the government role. Yet there is a strong likelihood that once in a position of power, the PCF will revert to the more ideologically radical vanguard role, especially to counter opposition from its left flank. At this point, pressure would be brought to bear upon the French Socialists by the PCF.

The PCF's relationship to power and the various roles played by the PCF allow "temporary" concessions. What is important is that the historical process which brings the Communist Party to power is, according to doctrine, ultimately irreversible. In the long run, the PCF believes it will have its way, whereas the

\(^{1}\)Krieger, "Le PCF et le Veme Republique," p. 171.

\(^{2}\)Tiersky, "The PCF and Detente," p. 188.
Socialists must concern themselves with shorter term political realities.

In sum, the Common Program's foreign policy is not a list of concessions. It is not a serious effort at political compromise or bargaining. In fact, the Common Program's foreign policy is evidence of continued division between the parties of the Left. In each main policy area: Disarmament, National Defense, European Security, and the European Economic Community, serious divisions still remain.
Election Trends and Unity

National election returns since the signature of the Common Program in 1972 have shown a continued increase for the combined forces of the French Left. If the present trend continues, and if no event of catastrophic proportions effectively precludes its election, it seems likely that the French Left will win a majority of seats in the National Assembly in the elections currently scheduled for March, 1978.

In order to examine this trend and its consequences, comparison must be made to the 1967 legislative elections. The 1968 elections must be considered an aberration because of their close proximity to the events of May, 1968. In 1967, the French Left won 45.0 percent of the votes cast on the first ballot. In 1973 at the legislative elections of March, this figure increased to 46.6 percent. At the presidential elections of May, 1974, Francois Mitterand, as sole candidate of the Left, polled 43.2 percent of the votes cast on the first ballot, and 49.2 percent on the second. He lost to Valerie Giscard d'Estaing who, with 50.8 percent, won
the presidency. In the March, 1976, cantonal elections which were seen as a national test of strength, the combined forces of the French Left polled 56.5 percent of the votes cast, again at the first ballot. At the municipal elections of March, 1977, nationwide results again showed majority support for the Left. ¹

This continued increase, however, is not indicative of increased harmony between the two main parties of the Left. In fact, the increase has benefited the Socialist Party much more than it has benefited the French Communists. The Socialists in 1967 polled 18.9 percent of the first ballot vote whereas in 1973, this figure grew to 20.7 percent. The French Communist Party, on the contrary, actually lost votes between these two elections, from 22.5 percent in 1967 to 21.3 percent in 1973. Mitterand's increased stature as presidential candidate further accentuated the disparate rates of growth among the two parties. The Socialist Party, in the cantonal elections of March, 1976, became the largest representative political party of the Left when it received

26.5 percent of the first ballot votes. At these cantonal elections, the PCF barely improved its 1967 figure to 22.8 percent. French public opinion toward the French Socialist Party and its Secretary General, Francois Mitterand, is rapidly improving, whereas the French Communists have remained within their traditional 20-25 percent of the French electorate.

This Socialist success has caused a great deal of tension between the two main partners of the Left alliance. Clearly, the French Communists have no desire to become subordinate to the Socialists. Yet a "new balance" is what Mitterand had admittedly been trying to promote since the beginning of the renovation of the Socialist Party in 1971. After both the presidential elections and the partial legislative elections in the Fall, 1974, wherein the Socialist Party registered further gains, the French Communist Party called an Extraordinary Congress (21st) at Vitry in October, 1974. The final resolution indicated the Communists' anxiety.

... In particular, we will show public opinion the pernicious and seriously prejudicial character in any attempt to reduce the influence of the French Communist Party.

---

1Ibid.


3Ibid., p. 428
At the same 21st Congress, Georges Marchais announced that the PCF's new electoral goal was to be the same as that of the PS, 25 percent of the vote. The Communist Party was criticizing the Socialist Party for allegedly having relegated the Common Program to the background, implying that the Socialists were using it to further their own aims more than those of the united Left. In reality, however, the PCF was utilizing the age-old maxim, "the best defense is a good offense." In other words, the PCF was attacking the PS because it was coming under attack from within its own ranks.

The Left union that Marchais had supported within a Communist Party, part of which was still reticent, not only did not open the path to power, but actually had shown itself to be baneful to the electoral positions of the Party. The spread between the PCF and PS seemed to be increasing; part of the Communist electorate was moving toward the Socialist Party . . . .1

The French Socialists did little to allay Communist fears. In November, 1974, the Socialists attempted to reassure the Communists of their commitment to the Common Program. Mitterand said, "If the PCF is truly worried, we must reassure it; if it is not, then we can reassure ourselves."2 In the same statement, he also reaffirmed his party's commitment to the

---

1 Ibid., p. 430.

electoral alliances foreseen for forthcoming elections. But the PS was not about to tell its newly gained voters to now vote for the Communists in the interest of an equitable electoral balance.

These maneuvers for the position of leadership within the French Left are crucial to the debate over foreign policy. At the time of the signature of the Common Program, the PCF made concessions in many areas of foreign policy so as to produce a written document which would appeal to French voters, yet it has been demonstrated that the document itself is so ambiguous as to leave the implementation of foreign policy open to interpretation. As long as the PCF was the largest of the two parties, it could hope to maintain a strong degree of "influence" over the foreign ministry. This attitude of the PCF toward the concessions made in the Common Program seems to have been confirmed by the disclosure in the summer of 1975 of a secret report made by Georges Marchais to the Central Committee of the PCF in the latter half of 1972.

It is true that this Common Program is not socialist . . . , that we have no intention of bartering our program against the Common Program . . . , that we are watching over the affirmation of the permanent positions which are particular to our own party, of independence of expression and action, and the reinforcement of our influence and our organization.¹

This is a curious attitude for a Communist leader to have held while accusing the French Socialists of neglecting the Common Program. As the Socialist Party caught up to and then surpassed the PCF in electoral response, the PCF's influential powers diminished. Thus, instead of uniting the Left in areas of foreign policy, the continuous trend of voters toward the Left has actually increased tension by increasing the electoral competition between the Socialists and the Communists.

Indications of Further Foreign Policy Disagreement

Three events since June, 1972, have demonstrated that the French Left has not been able to use the agreement contained in the Common Program to formulate effective common responses to problems as they develop in the area of foreign policy: (1) a nationwide debate over French military policy in 1973, (2) the October Yom Kippor War of 1973, and (3) the Portugese coup d'etat.

On January 20, 1973, the French magazine, Le Point published an opinion poll taken among officers of the French Army. Voicing their opinions were 31 percent for the UDR (Gaullists), 25 percent claimed they would vote for the Republican Independents (Giscard d'Estaing's Party), while 6 percent placed themselves at the Center, and 11 percent said they would vote for the
Reformateur Party (Center-Right). Even though 23 percent of those sampled did not reply, only 4 percent of the officers said they would vote for the French Socialists and none said they would vote for the French Communists.¹

With only 4 percent of the French armed forces officers openly voicing their support for the French Left, the French Communist Party and the French Socialist Party face a problem of important proportions. The French Army, more than in most industrialized nations, has in the past played a very active role in French national politics. In 1956, the kidnapping of Ben Bella without governmental permission proved an embarrassment. In May, 1958, an Army revolt provoked the downfall of the Fourth Republic. In 1960 and 1961, the Army again revolted over Algerian policies. In May, 1968, the Army was consulted and mobilized to stabilize France during a situation of social disorder. In addition to these opinions brought out by the French press, large-scale radical and extreme left demonstrations containing a significant amount of anti-militarism broke out in the spring of 1973 in reaction to the "Debre Law" (June, 1973) whereby student deferments were to be dropped. Later in the same year, international attention was focused on French nuclear testing in the Pacific Ocean, with many

¹Paul J. Friedrich, "Defense and the French Political Left,"
sectors of French society concerned with the utility and credibility of the French nuclear strike force. ¹

In the midst of this national debate, the French Communist Party appealed to the nation for a Left position on military policies. At about the same time, the left wing of the Socialist Party, acting through CERES (Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches, et d'Education Socialiste), attempted the same effort.

Both approaches were animated by the idea that the French military is passing through a profound crisis, and that an alternative military doctrine is a necessary condition for inducing part of the officer corps to join forces with the political Left. . . . Mitterand, however, did not wish to carry on with a discussion which to some extent fed on the assumption that the existing French army operates as a stabilizing factor of the bourgeoisie and so would be a potential danger to the Left in power. ²

When Mitterand put a stop to these common efforts to elaborate a comprehensive military policy of the Left, the result automatically remained ambiguous. Questions on the acceptance or destruction of the French nuclear strike force have not yet been clarified. Writing in L'Annee Politique, J.-B. Duroselle was able to indicate that these questions still had not been resolved by the end of 1975.

The French Communists, still sharing the understandable Soviet opinion, want to call a halt to the French manufacture [of nuclear arms]. The Socialists are divided, but a majority, led by the eminent specialist

¹Ibid., p. 166-68. ²Ibid., p. 168.
Charles Hernu, doesn't seem far from the idea that French security fundamentally requires effective nuclear and thermo-nuclear armaments.¹

Hernu's statement, reflecting Socialist policy, remains vague and noncommittal. Again with reference to defense issues, Jacques Huntzinger wrote that during the Spring of 1975, the PCF began speaking in terms of disengagement from the Atlantic Alliance, while the Socialists responded by invoking the Common Program articles.²

Further clarification on the minor practicalities of the French Left's military policy was elaborated in 1973 in response to popular demonstrations. Socialist Defense expert Charles Hernu and the Party's National Secretary, Jean Chevenement, expressed Socialist policy concerning these practicalities. They include:

(a) reduction of compulsory military service to six months,
(b) modernization of military instruction,
(c) renovation of military barracks,
(d) liberalization of disciplinary codes and military status (including liberty of political expression, liberty of information, association and conscientious objection),
(e) installation of a special civilian mediator for the military,


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
(f) more flexibility in the promotion system, and

(g) more social advantages for members of the military.¹

These "minor practicalities" did not address themselves to French military strategy, defense, or alliances. The questions remained.

And yet the problem of the French Left confronted with an unsympathetic armed forces took on increased importance during the Fall of 1973 when the Chilean military, on September 11, forcibly removed a democratically elected Marxist party from government in Chile. The reaction in France followed strict right-left political cleavage. Many right wing journalists denounced the junta's violence while maintaining that Chilean President Salvador Allende was to blame for the social disorder which provoked the military. Georges Marchais reminded the French nation that an army rebellion founded the Fifth Republic, seemingly alluding to the possibility of future repetition.²

In the midst of this national debate on Chile, however, the Yom Kippor War broke out on October 6, 1973, between Egypt and Israel. The French Communist Party and the Unified Socialist Party (PSU) took a position of solidarity with the Arab nations, but


²L'Année Politique, 1973, p. 78.
the French Socialists did not comply. In fact, there was considerable debate within the PS as to the official Socialist position. On October 11, 1973, the executive committee of the PS announced the elaboration of a text wherein the PS would refuse to place blame on either party, and also recognized the right to security of both the Palestinian Arabs and Israel. In addition, the Socialist text emphasized the necessity of "sure frontiers" for Israel.

Division was apparent within the PS when the CERES group, reputedly more left-wing that the PS itself, refused to approve this text. Finally, the executive committee prevailed and the text was issued on the 14th. Nonetheless, the Paris Socialist Federation, which contains a great concentration of CERES members, adopted its own text on October 17 which expressed solidarity with the Arab struggle. In response to this, the executive committee instructed Socialist federations to forbid the expressing of opinions other than those of the party.¹

The French Communist Party severely criticized the Socialist Party text as not heeding the Common Program's agreed policy with regard to the Middle East. The PCF pointed out that the Common Program recognized the necessity for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories as is stated in the UN Resolution

¹Ibid., pp. 90-91.
In 1967, divergence with regard to Middle East policies threatened to disrupt the progress toward unity that had been made since 1962. It was the speed at which the international crisis passed which prevented further disruption on the Left. In October, 1973, the two parties took great pains to conceal their disagreement. And as in 1967, the end of the war only 16 days after it began prevented further aggravation of a difficult discrepancy.

On April 25, 1974, the Armed Forces Movement in Portugal took control of the Portugese government through a very rapid coup d'etat. This date marked the beginning of another difficult period for the French Left. The PCF resolutely expressed its complete solidarity with the Portugese Communist Party (PCP) throughout its subsequent attempts to win domination over the labor organization, the Portugese media, and the Armed Forces Movement itself. This direct solidarity raised many questions for France, and especially for the French Socialist Party. Alvaro Cunhal, leader of the PCP, said in June, 1975, that "there will be no parliament in Portugal." Is this what was desired by the PCF?

\[1\] Ibid.

The economic and political deterioration in Portugal was not seriously analyzed by the French Socialist Party, according to Jean-Francois Revel. For fifteen months, the PS maintained a position of guarded impartiality, claiming that to criticize the PCP's activities in Lisbon was to advocate a "rightist" position. It must be remembered that events in Portugal closely followed the military coup d'etat in Chile. The Socialists repeatedly warned the United States that it was surveying the situation closely for signs of clandestine American intervention. 1

In April, 1975, however, Mario Soares' Democratic Socialist Party won 38 percent of the vote making it the largest party in Portugal. Another liberal socialist party took 26 percent, a total of 64 percent for the liberal socialists. Only 13 percent voted for the Portuguese Communist Party, with an additional 4 percent for the PCP's allies. When the situation did not improve after these elections, and in fact took a turn for the worse, Mitterand began to reconsider his silence. Portuguese governmental action was repeatedly blocked by social and economic disorder provoked by the PCP, still supported by the PCF. Then in July, 1975, Mario Soares resigned in protest over these obstructionist tactics on the part of the PCP. 2

1 Revel, La tentation totalitaire, pp. 112-13.

In response to the situation in Portugal, a meeting was called on August 13, 1975, by representatives of the French Communist Party, the French Socialist Party and the Left Radical Movement—all three parties which were signatories to the Common Program of 1972. The object of this meeting was to "denounce, in a common text, the anti-communist actions in Portugal." The representatives did meet together, but no agreement was reached. In fact, the Socialist representatives declared at the meeting that the Portuguese Communist Party was responsible for the aggravation of the Portuguese situation. ¹

On the same day, Francois Mitterand addressed a letter to the French Communist Party in which he described, with precision, the paralegal means by which the PCP was attempting to create the conditions necessary for the access to power. He concluded that the PCP was directly responsible for the August events. The French Communist Party and the French Socialist Party appeared to be further apart than ever. ²

The failure of the three political parties that signed the Common Program to elaborate a common policy with respect to
(a) French defense policy,  (b) the Mideast October War, and
(c) the Portugese Revolution, demonstrated the gross inadequacy of the Common Program. On all three of these foreign policy issues that have been raised since 1972, the French Left has not been able to agree.

¹L'Annee Politique, 1975, pp. 45-46. ²Ibid., p. 46.
Summary and Conclusions

From its earliest beginnings, the socialist movement in France has been severely divided over questions of ambition and strategy. The conflict over the definition of the socialist ideal and the methods to attain it has never been resolved. Disunity was apparent in the various schisms that developed during French socialism's first organized years. Had France been totally isolated from the rest of the world, it is quite possible that this ideological struggle could have been surmounted. This, however, was not the case. A large majority of French socialists felt disillusioned by the French "victory" in World War I and were attracted to the successful model of radical and doctrinaire socialism. They created the French Communist Party, but in so doing, rendered the division of the French socialist movement permanent.

From the year 1920, the French Communist Party has had one foreign policy particularly suited to its own ideological needs and organizational characteristics, whereas the French Socialist Party has had another. Both were diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive.

When agreement was reached in the Popular Front period (1934-38), it was based more than any other factor on foreign policy issues. True, the Fascist Leagues constituted a veritable
threat to the French political system, but it was not until the PCF reversed its "class against class" obstructionist tactics (following Moscow's Comintern directives), that the two parties were able to cooperate officially. In other words, the PCF did not reverse its foreign policy of allegiance to the Communist International. Rather, the Comintern changed its policies toward the French Socialists, with the PCF following suit. The same Popular Front dissolved when it was clear that the foreign policies were so disparate as to be irreconcilable. Leon Blum's lack of political resolve in dealing with the Spanish Civil War and the growing German threat enraged the PCF to the point of leaving the Left alliance of the 1930's.

After the signature of the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of August, 1939, the French Communist Party refused to participate in the protection of the French nation itself. The PCF, by its actions from 1939-41 was willing to sacrifice the survival of the French nation for the interests of the Soviet Union and the Communist Workers International. This action provoked Socialist leader Leon Blum into describing, from his prison cell in Nazi Germany, the PCF as a "parti nationaliste étranger" (foreign nationalist party). The relations between the Communists and the Socialists could not have been worse. Later during the war, the Communist participation in the Resistance effort proved to be of the most
valiant, spirited and effective available, but this effort did not begin until the Soviet Union was itself attacked in 1941.

Communist and Socialist participation in the Resistance effort resulted in two years of coalition government (1945-47). In May, 1947, however, Socialist foreign policy dictated the expulsion of Communist ministers from the government and a purge of Communists from administrative positions of influence. The beginning of the Cold War and the division of Europe required that France determine upon which side her vital interests lay. Subsequently, the international climate completely dominated the relations between the Socialists and the Communists.

In the early years of the Fifth Republic, a number of elements converged to modify Communist and Socialist relations. The reformed political institutions were a strong contributing factor; the new electoral system of single-member districts with two ballots promoted alliance strategy, as did the election of the President by universal suffrage. Another factor was President de Gaulle himself. By successfully consolidating a strong rightwing majority in the National Assembly, he created an opposition atmosphere that revived the tendency to speak of the French "Left." Most important of all was the beginning of the end of the Cold War. This allowed de Gaulle, in the name of French grandeur and national independence, to skillfully attack American
hegemony in Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In so doing, de Gaulle was legitimizing, in effect, "certain aspects" of Communist foreign policy. Nonetheless, the Socialists and the Communists, despite repeated efforts, could not agree on a common foreign policy. At no point in time had the French Communists offered convincing evidence that they would support strictly French vital interests over those of the Soviet Union. Thus, foreign policy was one of the largest disagreements that prevented the formulation of a positive governmental program of a Left alliance.

The events of May and August, 1968, had a profound effect on the entire French political system. Each of the main political parties involved, (the Gaullists, the PCF and the SFIO), were forced to reconsider previous traditional modes of behavior. The French Communists were no longer perceived as violent revolutionaries. Their commitment to a Left alliance strategy was now considered sincere. The French Socialists rejected the centrist tendency during the Party's renovation and thus were also more firmly committed to Left unity. But the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia reminded the Socialists of the dangers inherent in such a strategy. No compromise on foreign policy was forthcoming until the very final hours of the Common Program negotiations. The French Communist Party still remained loyal to basically
The Common Program's foreign policy does little to conceal this historic conflict. Its ambiguity, especially in areas directly related to vital French national interests, indicates its infeasibility as even a working outline from which policy objectives could eventually be rendered operable. Furthermore, separate party clarification on many foreign policy issues has made the Common Program's inherent ambiguity even more pronounced. An important case in point is the "renunciation" of the French strategic nuclear strike force. The Common Program's policy is inherently contradictory. The French Left claims that it would like to cease manufacturing the strike force and at the same time assure French security against all eventual aggressors. Then in later clarifications, it appears that the PCF is adamant in its opposition to the strike force. Evidently, its opposition is so stringent that the French Socialists cannot openly voice their acceptance of the nuclear force without risking the rupture of the Left alliance.

If taken to its logical conclusion, this disagreement could, in fact, bring about serious divergence on the French Left. Evidence that the PCF has rejected its advocacy of essentially Soviet foreign policy objectives is so far unconvincing. Given the occasion for abandoning the strategic strike force, will not the PCF go ahead with its plans to reduce the potential threat to the Soviet
Union's security? Thus far, the Socialists realize the necessity of the strike force. Eventually, this problem could split the Left alliance in two.

When examining the history of the two Left parties' relations, it becomes evident that whenever the national interests of France and the Soviet Union are perceived to coincide, an alliance of the Left appears. This was the case in 1934, 1941-47, and more recently in the early 1970's, with the Socialists' leftward movement. History also shows, however, that when these national interests seem to diverge, so too does the French Left alliance as in 1920, 1939, and 1947. At some point in the future, this could conceivably recur. Any of the foreign policy issues mentioned in the Common Program in which there is ambiguity, inconsistencies, or contradictions could suffice to render these differing views of national interest manifest.

The ideological conflict that has separated the French Communists from the French Socialists continues. Consequently, the foreign policies of the two parties have not significantly converged. Each party needs the other and is willing to compromise to the extent that it serves mutual interests. Nevertheless, despite superficial reforms, each party preciously guards its own identity. Kriegl has gone further than any other analyst in explaining the important consequences of this fundamental fact:
The Common Program . . . is not in a position to guarantee durably against any treasonous dreams that the allied parties, after exhaustion of the charms of unity, could reciprocally nourish. In fact, both parties know already that the rupture of their alliance, from the beginning so full of contradictions and reservations, is not only inescapable, but also desirable.¹

The parties' separate identities dictate separate foreign policies. It is for this reason that foreign policy remains a very strong point of divergence for the main parties of the French Left. The numerous attempts to reconcile differences in this area have thus far failed. Factors such as election systems, and converging perceptions of vital national interests can influence the two parties to "agree" at least temporarily on certain aspects of foreign policy. But unity among two separate entities is difficult to maintain. A slight change in any of the factors that brought the two parties together will have serious repercussions for the Left alliance, because the original distinction has not been removed from the foreign policy area. The fundamental question remains; just how strong are the ties between the Paris headquarters of the PCF and Moscow?

It remains to be seen whether as a coalition government the French Socialist Party and the French Communist Party will be able to converge sufficiently to the point of effectively managing

French foreign policy. Historical evidence suggests a negative answer.
APPENDIX

Common Program of Government
Part Four

To Contribute to Peace and Develop International Cooperation

Chapter One

French International Relations

Governmental foreign policy, based on the respect for the Charter of the United Nations, will have as its principles: peaceful coexistence and cooperation with every country, equality of rights, respect for sovereignty and the territorial integrity of states, peaceful resolution of litigation, the active search for disarmament, non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, refusal of all recourse to force or threats of the use of force, including the imposition upon a country of the choice of its alliances or the installation or the maintenance of a political or social system against the will of the majority of its inhabitants.

The government will utilize every possibility in order to develop the largest economic, scientific, technical and cultural

cooperation with all countries and without discrimination of any sort, with respect for equality of rights and for the mutual advantage of all.

It will favor negotiated resolution of international conflicts and litigation on the basis of the right of each people to freely determine their own destiny.

It will oppose all interference, pressure or reprisals from foreign sources susceptible to bringing into question the realization of economic and political democracy as inscribed in the governmental program.
Chapter Two

**Disarmament and National Defense**

General, universal and controlled disarmament will be
the principal objective of the government. The government will
base, for the duration of the legislature, its policies of National
Defense and disarmament on the following principles:

a) Renunciation of the strategic nuclear strike force in
whatever form it may take; immediate halt of the manufacture of
the French nuclear strike force; reconversion, according to a
precise schedule, of the military nuclear industry to peaceful
atomic industry, with concern for preserving the interests of the
workers involved. In no case will the problems posed by this
reconversion serve as a pretext for the maintenance of the military
nuclear industry.

b) Immediate halt to nuclear testing, and adhesion to the
treaties preventing nuclear explosions and non-dissemination of
nuclear armaments.

c) Signature of international treaties concluded on the
limitation and prevention of certain armaments. Initiatives pro-
moting the extension of these treaties. Active participation at the
Geneva Conference, as well as at any other conference on disarmament.
d) Proposals for world negotiation aimed at universal nuclear disarmament, simultaneous and controlled reduction of armaments, armed forces and military budgets.

e) Cessation of all sales of arms and war material to colonialist, racist or fascist governments (South Africa, Portugal, Spain, Greece).

f) Strict regulation of future arms sales to foreign countries.

Anxious to assure French security while keeping in mind the actual state of the European continent, the government will base its policy of National Defense on the search for collective security and disarmament, respect for its alliances and a reorganization of French armed forces.

While refusing to reintegrate NATO, France will not prevent the conclusion, if need be, of defense alliances as well as non-aggression treaties. To the extent that a European collective security system would implicate France, French armed forces will be able to cooperate.

Within the framework of its National Defense tasks, the government will define a military strategy permitting the confrontation of all eventual aggressors, whomever they may be.

As the instrument of National Defense, the army will be exempt from all missions involving the maintenance of domestic
order or foreign intervention of a colonialist or imperialist character.

The ordinance of January 7, 1959, will be abrogated and necessary laws for the organization of National Defense, with reference to the remodeling of the organisms of direction and administration under parliamentary control will be adopted.

Any orientation toward a professional army will be abandoned. Conditions assuring the professional officers their material and moral dignity will be created. The government will institute proceedings for the regional organization of the reserves.

Military service, equal for all, will be of a duration of six months. Within the limits fixed by law, young persons will be able to choose the date of their incorporation according to professional imperatives or education.

A democratic statute for the soldier and the officer will be adopted. Members of the armed forces will be able to freely receive periodicals and newspapers of their choice.

The dispositions relative to deferments will be ameliorated and liberalized.

No obstacle will be formulated in the propagation of the Legal Statute for conscientious objectors. They will be neither penalized nor favorized in relation to other youth.
The recruitment, formation, and promotion of specialists and officers of the active or reserve forces will exclude all social selection and all political or philosophical discrimination.

The Superior Council of military functions will be the object of a democratic reform.

The government will count on the unreserved loyalty of officers and non-commission co-officers. These soldiers will have the benefit, outside the service, of all civil rights; their material and moral interests will be defended. Their eventual reconversion into civil life will be guaranteed.
Chapter Three

European Security

The government will pronounce itself in favor of the simultaneous dissolution of the North Atlantic treaty and the Treaty of Warsaw. It will encourage any measures which will permit the attainment by steps of this objective, which implies the progressive and simultaneous weakening of the existing politico-military alliances, to result in their complete disappearance.

To affect this, the government will multiply all possible initiatives in the realm of effective and controlled reduction of armaments and their manufacture, keeping in mind the necessity to preserve, at each step, the security of the country.

Within this perspective, the government will participate actively in the preparation of a Conference of Nations for Security and Cooperation in Europe, also participating in this will be all European states, as well as the United States and Canada.

The government will propose that included on the agenda of this conference will notably be problems concerning: a general accord on European security implying, among other things, disarmament measures in Europe; economic, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation.
The government will make the necessary initiatives in order to reach a European treaty implying a new security organization, to which all participating states will be engaged, with equality of rights and duties.

It will promote in this area partial measures leading to disarmament in Europe; creation of denuclearized zones, a freeze on armaments in Central Europe, controlled and balanced reductions of forces and armaments in Europe.

The progressive development of these measures will contribute to the creation of a climate of confidence and will promote the overtaking of antagonist blocs.

But the government will not be content just to follow these events. It will demonstrate its willingness to engage the country in the path of independence with regard to all politico-military blocs. The eventual problems France's belonging to the Atlantic Alliance will be resolved in this spirit. While progress is being made toward the creation of a veritable European collective security system, the government will work so that steps can be taken to relieve all countries of Europe, the charges and constraints which result from their belonging to the respective alliances; it will begin to take the first steps in this direction.

It will indicate in its investiture declaration, its willingness
to practice under any circumstances—within the respect for the present French alliances—an independent policy with regard to the military blocs. The government will intervene according to this orientation in international conferences and negotiations.

It will exige that an end be put, without delay, to the aid accorded by NATO to the dictatorships of Spain, Greece and Portugal, and in general to any military aid with these countries as its destination.

As soon as the government esteems it possible, based on an analysis of the progress made toward European collective security, it will take new measures in this direction.
Chapter Four

France and the European Economic Community

With regard to the EEC, the government will have a double objective: On the one hand, to participate in the construction of the EEC and its institutions, in its common policies, with the desire to act so as to liberate it from the domination of capitalist interests, to democratize its institutions, to support the demands of workers, and to orient in the direction of their interests all community projects.

On the other hand, to preserve at the heart of the Common Market, its liberty of action to promote the realization of its political, economic and social program.

In any case, the government will keep the right to invoke the safeguard clauses foreseen by the Treaty of Rome. It will exercise freely the right, as it is not limited by the Treaty, to define and extend the public sector of the economy over its territory. The government will reserve itself to define and to apply its own national credit policy and to utilize any other means to realize national democratic "planification." It will be responsible to the National Assembly, as in all other areas, for its policies and its decisions that the French governmental representatives will make.
within the Community organisms.

The democratization of the Social and Economic Committee implies a more equitable representation of workers and an extension of the Committee's competence. One half should be composed of union representatives, designated by the representative national organizations in proportion to the votes obtained by each one of them in national social elections, and the other half should comprise representatives of other social categories and of personalities designated by the governments. It must manditorily be consulted by the Council or by the Commission during deliberations, on all projects which would have consequences for workers or for the economy, and its members must receive communication on all working documents of the European Social Funds. For the application of the aforementioned measures, the government will ask for the modification of articles 4, 124, and 193 to 198 of the Treaty of Rome.

The democratization of the FEOGA implies that its Committee of administration be composed by at least one half, agricultural representatives, designated as above, and for the other half, representatives of national administrations. This committee must have a right of control over the administration of

FEOGA: European Fund for Agricultural Stabilization and Support.
the FEOGA. The government will ask for the modification of the regulations concerning the FEOGA. The French representatives at the Community parliament will be designated proportionately to their importance in the new National Assembly. It will be the same for the French representatives in the European Council. The Community parliament, called annually to vote on the budget, must be able to control the execution of same. Also, it will have to be more directly associated with the preparation of all decisions within the Community.

The defense of workers' interests calls for amendment of articles 117, 118 and 121 of the Treaty of Rome, with a view to:

- Harmonizing national social legislation in the direction of an alignment with the most favorable dispositions.

- Guaranteeing workers who work outside their country of origin equal remuneration for equal work, as well as the bountitude of existing laws in the realm of employment, housing, social protection and public liberties (notably, unions).

The government will demand also:

- A reorganization of the common agricultural policy in order to guarantee a standard of living and a satisfactory future for farmers and the least privileged by price policy;

- A modification of community aid policies to member
countries with a view to remedying regional imbalances and structural crises affecting some branches of activity.

The progressive definition of measures to struggle effectively against all types of pollution and for the protection of the environment.

The common realization of large industrial or scientific projects the size of which would indicate that they could not be undertaken efficiently at the national level.

The development, on a European scale, of measures for prediction which would promote a middle-term planning process, with respect for each member's own economic and social objectives.

The powers and the means of the Community should be adapted to the responsibilities which would be recognized by the Council of Ministers for the execution of the aforementioned policies.

In each case, appreciated and limited to the area described by the attributions of the Community, the delegations with necessary competence will be decided by the member countries in the common interest by application of article 235 of the Treaty of Rome.

The government will oppose the candidacy to the Community, countries with a dictatorial regime like those in Portugal, Spain or Greece and of privileged regimes in favor of South Africa.

Belonging to the Community cannot be an obstacle to the largest economic and political cooperation with all countries,
without distinction of economic or social regime.

The government will advocate with regard to the countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Aid, the largest reciprocal openings, as much from the point of view of growth and diversification of exchanges, as development in the areas of industrial, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation.

The government will promote a policy of cooperation among member countries of the EEC in order to realize a foreign policy which will conform to the objectives defined in this section.
Chapter Five

Current Conflicts and the Recognition of States

The government will orient its action toward the cessation of the War in Vietnam and in all of Indochina. It will advocate a total retreat of the American armed forces and a political solution--within the framework of the Paris Peace Conference--so as to assure the right of the peoples of Indochina to freely control their destiny, without foreign influence, and that this part of the world become a peaceful and prosperous region.

It will strive to contribute to the reestablishment of peace and security to the Near East, with respect for the right of existence and the sovereignty of all states in the region, notably the state of Israel, as well as the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. It will base its activity in this direction on the resolution of November 22, 1967, at the United Nations' Security Council.

It will pronounce itself in favor of the entry of the two states to the United Nations. It will undertake the establishment of a new relationship with the German Democratic Republic leading to an eventual recognition of this state.
It will recognize the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Popular Democratic Republic of Korea and the Royal Government of National Union in Cambodia.
Chapter Six

The Overseas Departments (D.O.M.) and the Overseas Territories (T.O.M.)

The government will recognize the right of self-determination for the peoples of the D.O.M. and the T.O.M. New statutes will be discussed with the representatives of the concerned populations and must respond to the aspirations of the latter. Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique and the Reunion will be transformed into new collectivities as foreseen in article 72 of the Constitution; the populations of these four territories will be called within the shortest time delay, to elect, each on by universal suffrage--and under conditions assuring the real exercise of democratic liberties--an assembly having for its objective the elaboration of a new statute that it will discuss with the government and which will permit these peoples to administer, themselves, their own affairs.
Chapter Seven

The Policy of Cooperation and Development Aid

The Policy of cooperation and development aid will be conceived according to new orientations.

The government will establish with all developing countries new bonds of cooperation, freely negotiated and exclusionary of neo-colonialist spirit, and any political conditions. It will be based on free choice, respect for independence, non-interference in domestic affairs and reciprocal interest.

France will confront its particular responsibilities with regard to its former colonial holdings. It will strive to progressively develop cooperation with all countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

French public aid to development will be raised. It will aim for the satisfaction of beneficiary countries' national interests, and not for the assurance of profits for the large companies operating in the said countries. It will tend to promote economic modernization, industrialization and diversification of agricultural products, education and professional training that are truly adapted to the expressed needs of the concerned countries.

The institutions charged with the operation of the
cooperation policy will democratized. Parallel organisms acting outside the control of the government or the Parliament, such as the Secretariat to the President of the Republic for African and Malagasy, will be suppressed.

France will support peoples still colonialized who struggle for their independence. It will support efforts of any government which attempts to master or recuperate the totality of their national riches. It will apply international decisions to deal with South Africa and Rhodesia.

France will develop, meanwhile, its action within international organizations and develop aid groups (in particular, those of the United Nations) with a view to orienting their activity so that it truly corresponds to developing countries' needs.

France will promote international exchange resolutions capable of guaranteeing stable prices and remuneration for the developing countries' products so as to relieve the growing deterioration exchange terms.

Taking into consideration the justified demands of the Malagasy and African states, the government will propose the revision of the association convention concluded between these states and the European Economic Community (Yaounde II agreements), as well as the augmentation of the European Development funds credits.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I BOOKS


Blume, Daniel; Bourderon, Roger; Burges, Jean; Charles, Jean; Gacon, Jean; Lagache, Richard; Margairaz, Michel; Martelli, Roger; Scot, Jean-Paul; Wolinkow, Serge. *Histoire de reformisme en France depuis 1920*. Tomes I and II, Paris: Editions Scolaires, 1976.


II ARTICLES


Kriegel, Annie. "Notes sur l'ideologie dans le parti communiste." Contrepoint, No. 3 (Spring, 1971), pp. 95-104.


III NEWSPAPERS, PERIODICALS AND YEARBOOKS


Keesings Contemporary Archives, 1968.

Sondages, 1974.

L'Année Politique, 1960-75.