

THE POSITION OF FRANCE IN WORLD AFFAIRS

13 March 1962

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION--Captain A. H. Castelazo, USN, Member of the Faculty, ICAF . . . . .	1
SPEAKER--Dr. Stanley Hoffmann, Associate Professor of Government, Harvard University . . . . .	1
GENERAL DISCUSSION . . . . .	14

NOTICE

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INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

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CAPTAIN CASTELAZO: Gentlemen, today we continue our study of the countries of Western Europe by taking a good look at France. For centuries, as you know, France has occupied a central position in the affairs of Europe and has had a strong influence on the affairs of the world. France today is one of the key participants in the movement toward the economic integration of Western Europe.

Our speaker this morning, Dr. Stanley Hoffmann, is a native of Austria. He has spent most of his time, and was educated, in France. He is now at Harvard University and comes to us this morning to talk on the subject, "The Position of France in World Affairs."

Dr. Hoffmann, it is a pleasure to welcome you to the Industrial College.

DR. HOFFMANN: I read with interest the little account of French affairs which you have been asked to read. You will not be surprised if I do not agree with everything in it. There aren't two people writing or talking about France who ever agree on very much. I would like to discuss essentially the evolution of France in the last generation or so. The problems of French foreign policy can be understood best if one puts them in perspective and if one looks up what has happened to France, ever since the thirties.

If one looks at French history in the 19th and 20th centuries one has the impression of a major revolution which did start in the 1930's and is not finished yet. There is a sort of 30-year tunnel through which the French have been going. It looks, in many respects, as if light could be seen at the end of the tunnel, but one never really knows, given especially the divagations of French domestic politics. If you looked at France before the 1930's you would have gotten the impression of a fairly balanced or harmonious political and social system, one which had been very stable for very long. There was a

unity of French domestic, economic, and foreign policies until the thirties, which is very striking, retrospectively. It was a society which prided itself on its balance between agriculture and industry; which was proud of being at the same time a major industrial power but also one in which traditional preindustrial values and forces were still very strong. It prided itself on not going all the way in the race to industrialization and mechanization which was sweeping Germany, or England, or the United States. Thus, it was a society which was resisting massive industrialization and in which the peasants still played a very important role.

It was endowed with a political system: that of the Third Republic, which despite all its vices (which were discovered since) seemed to fit the society admirably. You were dealing with a society which had, politically, essentially two characteristics. One was the bulk of the population, practically everybody except the workers, agreed on a desire for the status quo; not too much industrialization, not too much liquidation of what was left of traditional France, and therefore a political system which was organized in such a way that no major social reforms and in particular, no major drives toward industrialization could take place.

Secondly, you were also dealing with a society, which, ever since the revolution, has been split intellectually a number of ways, quite independently of economic position, social class, etc. Now, to accommodate those traditional ideological cleavages, one needed a political system which was so organized that the conflicting ideologies could live in relative peace; could coexist without exterminating one another. This was the system of the Third Republic and it suited the society very well. Only, the price which it had to pay was a price which did not become too noticeable until the thirties. The price it had to pay was the price of a political system in which the dominant element was the legislature and the executive was rather weak.

Now, World War I was fought and won with a political system like this; simply because during World War I there had been enough national unity to cover the defects of the political system. It is only in the thirties that the weaknesses appear. They appeared because of the nature of the challenge. It was a challenge imported from the outside. In the first place, it was the impact of the depression. You were dealing with a society which did not have a very large national income, and in which the groups were used to having a certain share of it. When the cake started to shrink, the battle for the distribution of the cake got much more violent, and many of the difficulties of the thirties

have to be seen in that light. Fights between various groups trying to preserve their standard of life and their share of the national income raged in a nation which was hit late, but very hard, by the depression, not in the form of massive unemployment (there was very little) but in the form of a general decline in the income, in the standard of living, and which was seemingly incapable in capacity to recover swiftly.

The second aspect of the challenge was a division among the French as to how to deal with the new German threat. In one respect, the victory of World War I had been a very dangerous one; the French were left overcommitted, and facing a neighbor which was potentially much stronger than they were. When Hitler came to power the impact of the revival of Germany on the French was a highly divisive one. If the political system had been stronger; if the executive had been more able to handle both the depression and the new threat from Germany, maybe the defeat of 1940 could have been avoided. But the system was too weak and simply collapsed when military defeat came in June 1940.

Now, ever since that defeat a revolution has been taking place. Like many revolutions it has gone unnoticed for a long time because it has been essentially an economic and social one, and also a revolution in foreign policy. What has attracted most of the attention has been the continuity of domestic political difficulties and hence the impression has persisted that not very much has changed.

But behind this troubled facade, a great deal has taken place. It seems to me that the main event which historians are going to pick out (after the act, as usual, and with the benefit of hindsight) is what can only be called a collective decision to industrialize and to modernize, and I have a feeling that Mr. Fox's piece, which you have read, did not pay enough attention to this. The decision came and was enforced in a rather peculiar way. The French system has traditionally been a highly centralized one essentially for historical reasons. Consequently, the whole process of industrialization has been a process from the top.

What happened was that in 1944 to 1946 the direction of the national economy was put in the hands of the government--in the hands of the State--precisely because of a general feeling which grew in the Resistance, that the social and economic weaknesses of prewar France were due to a large extent to the nonintervention of the State; the feeling that those weaknesses were the price of a social and political

synthesis which left the government out of social affairs. The feeling grew that the only way in which one could change the political system of France would be to reverse this and to give the government those powers which it had never had.

The nationalizations of some of the key industries and of banking in 1945-46 and the creation of a high commission for planning, have, been an absolutely decisive factor. The movement or impulse which was thus given from the top was transmitted downward essentially to the leaders of big industries. They had to rely on the State at first because of the absence of resources in 1944, and until 1950 or 1951. Private industry depended almost entirely upon the State for support and the State used this position rather cleverly. There was in France an old tradition of State encouragement to industry and agriculture, but very often, especially under the Third Republic, it had taken the restrictive form of protectionism; tariff protection, the closing of industries against competition, subsidies to shield industries from domestic or foreign competition, etc. After the war, the government continued a policy of aid, but saw to it that this aid instead of serving, so to speak, as wheel-chairs, now play the role as crutches; it gave, particularly to the steel industry, sizable quantities of money, but on condition of modernization, heavy investments, in other words, general change. This proved effective and resulted in turn in a gradual turnover of the leadership of industrial and agricultural groups. The pre-war leaders of agriculture and business were, on the whole, protectionists, restrictionists, and what the French call Malthusians. The present leadership is rather different. It is composed of people who are much more willing to expand, to modernize, to concentrate, to go after markets instead of the reverse, and they have kept the level of investment extremely high; they are much less afraid of competition than before. It has taken about 15 years, but this is not long if one looks at what had happened in the past.

If one looks at the state of the French economy now, the surprising thing is that it becomes less and less different from the economy of any other major industrial society; we find the same growth of the tertiary sectors, the same growth of white-collar middle classes, the same decline in agriculture as everywhere else. The troubles, France had with its peasants in 1961 were not so much the protests of obsolete groups on the way out as the protests of groups who had spent large amounts of money buying machines, tractors, and fertilizers-- in other words, expanding and modernizing, and who found that they were now

in debt and that their income had not increased as much as that of industry. It is a trouble of growth rather than a problem of decline, which does not prevent it from being very serious. What is more serious is the form which those demonstrations have taken. But this is connected to the domestic political situation to which I will come. The French peasant problem is not different from the peasant problem in any other industrial society. In fact, it is less to some extent, serious than farm problems sometimes are in this country. Anyhow, there has been a kind of national decision to change a very cozy but somewhat cramped social system, and to modernize and expand, even if it makes the French look more like Americans, a thing which they have resisted desperately in the past.

We find at the same time and due to the same circumstances, especially the circumstances of the war, a beginning of an adjustment in foreign policy. When I speak of the war, I mean both the impact of the occupation regime, the Vichy regime, and the impact of the resistance forces and of General DeGaulle. Those impacts have converged in a rather paradoxical way: they have both contributed to the reorientation of French foreign policy.

If one wants to characterize traditional French foreign policy, I think one can do it with three key words. Power, rank, and prestige. Prestige has meant pride in the universality of French values. Rank has meant essentially a concern for being among the major powers. And as for power, the traditional French conception was a very Roman one; a notion of power as essentially military and territorial; large quantities of people under one's flag and in one's army. One of the reasons why decolonization has been so difficult has been precisely this territorial conception of power, which made of France's empire both a supreme expression of French power and evidence of this universality of French values to which I have referred. It was a thoroughly uneconomic conception of colonies, and needless to say, if one has a more commercial conception of colonies, disengagement becomes much more easy than if one sees in one's empire one's main condition of grandeur and the main symbol of one's values.

But anyway, even during the war, a need was felt to readjust to the outside world. There arose, in particular, a feeling of European solidarity which found its expression even in the Resistance parties or Resistance Movement's platforms during the war; a feeling that only

in European solidarity could France find again an avenue toward rank after the war. The experience which the French had with the Germans did not even detract from this.

What also emerged from the war was the general realization that the revolution of the French industry and economy was an indispensable prerequisite to a new effective foreign policy. To a very large extent the French have been willing to get away from their past state of economic and social balance, of which they had been extremely proud, and to throw themselves into the cold waters of industrialization, not only because those waters were warmed by the government whose planning and other economic policies made risks relatively easy to take, but also because of an understanding that in the postwar world, the traditional concept of power simply was not enough; that military power itself now depended upon economic and industrial strength. In other words, one of the key reasons for this general acceptance of industrialization has been a desire to play again a significant role in foreign policy in a century in which only a major industrial power can play one. This is an extremely important factor and one which is generally overlooked among foreigners and in the United States in particular.

One of the reasons why decolonization has been so difficult has been precisely that it came at a time when the French felt that they were engaged in a process of domestic rejuvenation, so as to be able to play once again a major role in foreign policy, and therefore those "winds of change" which seemed to be threatening their house were particularly unwelcome at a time when the French were trying to rebuild a better house. The anticolonial tempest was resented as untimely and unfair.

Precisely, on the other hand, the war period had had one fairly disastrous influence. For four years the French in Metropolitan France were cut off from the outside world. They got a sense of European solidarity, but they did not quite realize what was going on in what we now call the underdeveloped parts of the world. And as for those French who were fighting outside, around DeGaulle, in particular, they were so much and so deeply engaged in the battle for maintenance of French power and French rank, that they did not take those winds of change sufficiently into account either. In a way, everything contributed to closing French minds on the issues of colonies; the fact that a million or two million Frenchmen, depending on the period, were away in Germany in Prisoner of War Camps; the fact that the Resistance

people concentrated on the fight against the Germans; the fact that DeGaulle and his Army concentrated on the restoration of French prestige; the fact that many of the Vichyites were not at all collaborators, but old-fashioned nationalists for whom the empire was the one card the French still had; all this didn't make adjustment after the war in the colonial area any less difficult.

Now, if we look at what has been done in foreign policy since the war, we find that many good things have been accomplished, but also that the balance sheet is mixed. All the major crises in French politics after the war have been crises of foreign policy. The purely domestic crises are pretty much forgotten by now. But if you look at the main domestic battles, they were battles over the European Defense Community, over Indo-China, over Algeria, sometimes, in the very beginning, over France's choice between East and West, but not purely domestic issues.

If one looks at the more sunny side one sees the gap between France and the outside world which still existed in 1945 has been closed to a very large extent. The road has certainly not been a very easy one, but it is inconceivable now that anybody would challenge, for instance, France's membership in the Atlantic coalition, even though in the beginning, around 1947 or 1948 there was a fairly strong challenge from either the neutralists on the left, or from ultra-nationalists on the right. What has been accomplished can go under four headings. The first one, of course, is this progress of industrialization which I have mentioned. It has been very important from the point of view of foreign policy because it has cured many of the French over a period of about 15 years, of the sense of failure which had developed in the thirties due to the depression; then in the forties because of the occupation; and then during the postwar financial disorders. To this extent, the sense of failure has been eliminated, and it is very interesting to compare, for instance, the attitude of businessmen toward the European coal and steel community in 1950 and 1951, when they were almost, to a man, opposed to it because they were afraid of German domination, with the very general and sometimes enthusiastic acceptance of the Common Market by the same businessmen 10 years later. They now realized that not only would France not be submerged in the process of economic unification, but also that France had made enough progress to win a considerable amount of new markets and new strength from such an experiment.

The second gain has precisely been a definitive acceptance of a European Community. What was still unclear by 1945 was how Germany would fit into the French picture of cooperation with Western Europe. The first French policy toward Germany was an extremely repressive and restrictive one. But when this policy failed; when it became obvious that France would not be able all by herself to force a dismemberment of Germany, an international occupation of the Ruhr, etc., it appeared that the solution of the Franco-German problem could be found within the context of the Western European policy of integration. The man who defined French foreign policy as it still is, I think, is Robert Schuman, when he said, "Never leave Germany to herself." This has been the policy followed, with different shades and different tones by every French Government since 1950, without any break when DeGaulle came back to power. I sometimes have the feeling that what brought General DeGaulle and Chancellor Adenauer together was exactly the same thing that brought Chancellor Adenauer and Robert Schuman together 10 years earlier; I mean, a common distrust of the Germans! This has been fairly continuous; a feeling that the German problem would be solved only if Germany can be tied so solidly to Western Europe that it would not be tempted to try too independent a foreign policy again.

Now, when I say there has been no break here when General DeGaulle came back to power, this is, perhaps, surprising to some of you, since we read in the paper all the time about the big battles between supranationalists and DeGaulle's much more traditional conception of European integration. Here, distinction has to be made. General DeGaulle and his domestic opponents who would like a swifter political integration of Europe share at least one belief which distinguishes the French position from the British one. It is a belief that the scope of the commitment accepted by the European Six should be as large as possible; that the European Community which is being built should extend not only to economic and commercial matters, but also to military, cultural, and political matters. I think it is on this issue of the scope of the commitment that the differences between Great Britain and the Continental Six have been deep and continue to be deep. Where DeGaulle disagrees with many other political leaders in France is on the institutional enforcement of this commitment. DeGaulle believes that it should all be handled essentially by inter-governmental negotiations. The others have more faith in supranational institutions. I would submit that it does not make very much difference. Even small differences can be blown by the French into major ideological civil wars, but this is part of what anthropologists,

I gather, have now stopped calling national character! I think this is still national character and nothing can be done about it.

On the other hand, if you go behind the mountain's of words, you will find a little mouse. Because, if you look at the way in which the European institutions have developed in the last 10 years you will find the difference between the intergovernmental approach and the supranational is a very small one indeed. The progress of the communities has come by intergovernmental negotiations on proposals made by supranational commissions. There has been a need for both and the only difference between the two theses is that each one puts its emphasis on one side of the picture. But it is perfectly obvious that, for instance in the recent round of negotiations on agriculture in the Common Market, the decisions would not have been reached, the final compromises would not have been made, if the institutions had been only supranational, for, in areas which seem to be matters of life and death, (and as you well know, in every country farmers are a matter of life or death), our final decisions are to be made by representatives of the government. They are not willing to leave those decisions to supranational civil servants. But it is also obvious that if those government representatives in the negotiations had not been able to take as a basis for discussion the hundreds of pages of proposals prepared by supranational experts, they would have taken infinitely longer to reach a final decision.

So, I would be very much surprised if, after General DeGaulle, there were major changes in French foreign policy here. There might be changes in tone; changes in official ideology and propaganda, but I would still believe that progress which will continue, will not be quite as strikingly speedy as some of the committed devotees of supranational institutions would have one think. I believe that there will be a continuing development of those European communities, that the scope of commitment will probably enlarge (except if the number of members should increase suddenly), but that it will remain essentially a compromise between the traditional intergovernmental and the more revolutionary supranational institutions.

This, I think, has been the second area in which very much has been gained. A third one, which is more controversial, perhaps, is the area of the Atlantic Community. What is sure is that both the nationalists' and the neutralists' original dissents from France's role in the Atlantic Community have practically collapsed. On the other hand it is also obvious that General DeGaulle's conception of NATO is

not one which pleases too many American officials. And here again we have to be very careful in distinguishing what is purely General DeGaulle and what is general French foreign policy.

I think that General DeGaulle's critique of the NATO Alliance is a triple one. First of all, he finds that the alliance is geographically insufficient; that the geographical scope is too narrow, because the problems which the Atlantic nations face are not limited to the Atlantic area. Secondly, he finds that the alliance has been too unequal in its structure; the sword has remained essentially an Anglo-American one, and as for the shield he feels that the distribution of commands has been unsatisfactory. Thirdly, he believes that the alliance is generally too demanding, in its emphasis on integration. He does believe that a major element of defense must remain national; that the national authority on military matters and the national military forces must be somehow preserved. Specifically, the decision to use nuclear weapons stationed on French soil must be French.

Now, I would submit that out of those three criticisms two are criticisms which are not limited to General DeGaulle, which were already made by the leaders of the Fourth Republic, and are quite likely to be made again by the leaders of whatever number the regime has after General DeGaulle. The first two criticisms (insufficient geographical scope and inequalities in the structure of NATO) are criticisms which have been made by French leaders long before General DeGaulle. The third one, the belief that even today national defense must remain essentially national; that integration would be bad, even if it would take a less unequal form, and even if it were carried to a larger geographic scale; this is more peculiar to General DeGaulle and is less likely to continue after him.

But all this means is that some of the more extreme positions that General DeGaulle has taken, such as his refusal to accept United States' atomic weapons on French soil, would be revised. I do not think that the French are likely to give up their independent striking force. I do not believe that they are likely to accept quite the amount of integration which the Americans would like them to accept, until and unless on the question of the striking force, the British themselves give up their own deterrent. I would put it this way: at present, if the British Government (in a totally unlikely decision) announced that it was willing to give up their independent British deterrent and merge it entirely with a NATO deterrent somehow along the lines which Mr. Herter hinted at in December of 1960, I think that General

DeGaulle would not do the same. I think that his successors would be more likely to do so. But I am convinced that even General DeGaulle's successors would not give up a French independent strike force if the British do not give theirs up too. It seems to me that the claim for equality with Great Britain has been so much at the root of Franco-American difficulties since the war, and not just under General DeGaulle, that one cannot attribute simply to the stubbornness and general unpleasantness of General DeGaulle, a number of decisions which are quite characteristic of general French attitudes, on the Atlantic Community.

I would also say that whatever the arguments for or against the strike force are, the decision to build one is not to be seen purely as a waste or a disaster. Because, just as in 1914 the French military doctrine of offensive reflected a fairly dynamic prosperous and nationalist country, just as the Maginot Line strategy reflected a stagnant, divided, and essentially defeatist society, the decision to build an independent strike force expresses this new sense of assurance and of economic strength of France since the war.

The fourth area of adaptation or success, is one which is familiar; the decolonization in black Africa, in which France has succeeded both in avoiding major troubles and in maintaining--particularly in the civil service of those countries--a fairly important position.

One comes, of course, to the much more troubled side of adaptation when one reaches the problem of decolonization. I don't have the time here to go into a comparison of the British and French attitudes here, but it would be a very interesting parallel. You have almost perfect symmetry here, the British realized long before the French the need to decolonize, and long after the French the need to, so to speak, merge with Western Europe; the British had their illusions about British autonomy in the matter of Europe, but not when on the subject of colonies; the French had much too long the illusion that they could still maintain their colonial position, while they had lost very early, and largely due to wartime experiences, the illusion that they could remain autonomous and independent from their Western European neighbors.

Thus, the whole process of decolonization has been a tragic one precisely because to lose one's empire at the time when one is refurbishing the nation seemed to be unfair, as I have mentioned. This explains not only the hesitation of the Fourth Republic (in which

practically every party was divided on the subject and since the political system was a very weak one, decisions had a way of being postponed) but also why even a regime as technically or theoretically strong as that of General DeGaulle, who is not plagued by having to take into account parliamentary factions, has had to be so slow and so cautious on Algeria. After all, parliamentary divisions simply reflected the hesitations and divisions of public opinion. And to the extent to which DeGaulle has always wanted to be not only a man who acts by contrast with those parliamentarian pygmies for whom he has so much contempt, but also a man who preserves or restores domestic French unity, he has been obliged to proceed by methods which can only be called the ways of ambiguity, the ways of magic rather than rational discussion; the ways of obscure sentences and devious processes; the procedure of a kind of latter-day Machiavelli; who resorted to Machiavellianism for two good causes; the cause of decolonization and the cause of national unity, but it was Machiavellianism nevertheless. The price he has had to pay for it is very obvious at the present time.

The price he has had to pay for it is, first of all, time, and secondly, the alienation of that part of the French Army which has been fighting in colonial war. This also shows the complexity of leadership; the consensus which matters to a leader is a very subtle one. What General DeGaulle needed was to obtain at the same time, first the consensus of public opinion on Algerian independence and on an FLN Algeria (the two things not being necessarily synonymous) and secondly, the consensus of the Army. Both were needed. And the drama has been that he has not been able to have, at the same time and early enough, in addition to those two forms of consensus the cooperation of the FLN.

The promise of cooperation and the first concessions of the FLN have finally come, at a time when General DeGaulle has been able to get the mass of public opinion behind him in the acceptance of independence and of an FLN Algeria, but when many elements of the Army were not willing to accept this peacefully. The results of this long process are fairly obvious. It has encouraged two groups of people in France: on the one hand the die-hards for whom this long and gradual adaptation to the outside world is synonymous with humiliation, defeat, and decadence, on the other hand people who think that France should really forget about the outside world, forget about grandeur, rank, and power, and simply concentrate on its own development. Both are expressions of frustration.

DeGaulle has wanted to steer the French away from both that Charybdis and that Scylla. He wants neither what he calls the sirens of decadence, nor advocacy, an anachronism, his is a very narrow road, the one which tries to avoid both extremes. I think that he is succeeding, but it is an extremely dangerous kind of exercise. The question, of course, is what will remain of his attempt. Let us assume a fairly peaceable end of the Algerian War--and I think that one can see it now despite the headlines and the surface disorders. Gaullism as a policy has been an effort to adapt France, but to adapt it for what DeGaulle calls its new grandeur, which rules out the two extremes of forgetting about the outside world and of thinking of it only in 19th century terms; two forms of isolationism. He has tried, so to speak to predetermine the future so that his successors would be bound to continue his own foreign policy. They would be bound to renounce anachronism, because he would have finished the task of decolonization, and they would also be bound to forget all thoughts about resignation to minor rank because they would be tied by his atomic force policy, by his own method for building Europe, by the links he has established with overseas territories.

Now, to what extent can he be said to have succeeded? I would say that he probably has succeeded in the "adaptation" part of his enterprise. In other words, nobody is going to want to go back to Louis the XIV or even to 19th century foreign policies. On the other hand, as for the other part: trying to orient France to a new grandeur rather than having the French resign themselves to minor rank, what he has done is not irreversible, especially because of two debatable elements in his policy. One concerns the forms of grandeur which he is seeking: they are not accepted by all. Not everybody shares his assessment that integration, and particularly military integration, is a form of decadence. Here, I suggest, there might be changes after him.

Secondly, there are the costs of grandeur, the costs of a new attempt at finding rank and power, are very high. After all, the policy of massive aid to Algeria and to the former colonies of black Africa, the expenditures for the atomic strike force, all this is extremely costly, especially since France continues at the same time to modernize and industrialize at home. My own conclusion would be that those costs of grandeur will be willingly paid by the French only if the political system after General DeGaulle is efficient enough to distribute French resources in such a way that there is no inflation and that there is no return to the fairly catastrophic payment crises which marred the Fourth Republic.

This brings us, of course, not only to the end of this lecture, but also to the question of the regime after General DeGaulle. And here I think that one simply cannot make predictions because the future is a very open one. The supreme paradox of French postwar evolution is one which I would like to suggest as a conclusion.

It is the paradox of a country which has succeeded fairly largely in reorienting its foreign policy, in performing a major social and economic revolution, but which has not been able to adjust swiftly enough its political system to those changes. Between the level of a very prosperous, industrialized society and the level of the political system there is a complete and baffling gap. The transmission belts; the parties, the parliamentarians, the notables, are in an extraordinarily pitiful condition. Economic and social changes have so far had no visible effect on the political system. The political system lags behind the rest, and until this lag has been overcome the question of France's political future has to be something of a question mark.

At present one can see the political system going in any one of three or four directions--maybe we can talk about it in the discussion--but any predictions at this time would be simply crystal-ball reading, because everything still depends on the events of coming months. One of the great temptations and tendencies of social scientists is to believe that all things are predetermined and inevitable. If you look at French political history you find that much of what happens at the political level is a result of accident and unpredictable events.

And at this stage I would simply like to put this question mark on any discussion of the political regime of the future. Thank you.

QUESTION: Sir, I would like for you to go ahead and look at the crystal ball anyway, if you would. If DeGaulle is successful in settling the Algerian question and if he is able to carry out the rest of his constitutional reforms to solidify the power of the executive, after he goes can we expect some measure of political stability in France with a strong executive?

DR. HOFFMANN: I would say that if he does all that, the answer is yes. But his question is, "Will he be able to do that?" This nobody can say because it depends, essentially, at this stage, on the outcome of the next election. Of course, the procedure one can see; it would be the following. There would be a referendum on the peace in Algeria and there is no doubt that he would win it. He has won every referendum in his life.

Secondly, there would be an election of a new Parliament and this new Parliament would be asked to revise the constitution. If the Gaullist Party wins those elections there is not going to be very much trouble. He is going to get the constitutional revisions, and something like a highly authoritarian Presidential system would emerge. How well it would work is something else again: the French have tried everything under the sun except a Presidential system. The one time they tried it the one who was elected was Napoleon the Third himself, So, if DeGaulle has his way, we do not know how it would work. But if he should not win those elections--which is not totally improbable, because the French nation is an ungrateful lot, like any other nation--then the battle between him and Parliament would be a rather interesting one.

He might, of course, still try to get his constitutional revisions approved by the people over the head of Parliament, because the Constitution is technically complicated enough to allow him to do that, and he might win; but it is also possible that there would be a repetition of the events of 1945, when he won a referendum, lost the election, and had to resign. He really was smoked out of office by the new parliament which simply was not in sympathy with him. At that time he seemed more than half convinced that he would come back soon; at present he could either decide that it wasn't worth fighting (he's old enough and fatalistic enough; he's not a man who enjoys power for power's sake in the first place) or else he might try to fight to the finish, after all, he now has a more powerful office from which to fight than he had then.

But, as you see, this leaves an enormous number of possibilities. I would not be at all surprised if he won the referendum and lost the election, largely because of the general feeling of relief after the Algerian War. There is a desire to return to normalcy, and I am sorry to say that normalcy in France means a parliamentary system of free splintering. If you remove General DeGaulle, the political forces have not changed since 1958, except in one direction; there are now more parties! The only way in which those parties could be curbed and a return to the parliamentary system could be avoided, would be such a drastic constitutional revision that there simply would have to be a one-man executive with fairly authoritarian power, which is exactly what DeGaulle has in mind.

But if this reform does not go through, or if Parliament rejects it, or if the electorate rejects it, or if the parties after DeGaulle's constitutional revision force a return to the older pattern (which is

not impossible either), I think France will go back to the older system. And I would also add that a system in which Cabinets collapse very often is not necessarily disastrous if the problems which the nation has to face are not issues of life and death. It has been disastrous only since the thirties. France had lived extremely well between the 1870's and the 1930's with a system like this. After all, it was under the Third Republic that the French acquired their "Empire," won World War I, solved many of their domestic ideological issues, etc. There was an upset in the thirties because of challenges which came from the outside and which were simply too heavy for the political system to bear. But I would add this; barring international disasters, which, of course, one cannot completely bar, there are no major domestic problems left. In a way this is a horrible thing for the French to face, a future of political dullness, after the excitements of a long period of war. There are no major purely domestic social or ideological problems; the issue between church and state is about as likely to lead to civil war as it is in the State of Massachusetts, shall we say. French foreign policy is not a matter of major debate, so, what is there to fight about? Of course, you can always count on the French to take an issue involving two individuals--or one individual--and turn it into an intellectual civil war. But even so, this is not terribly serious if the life or death of the nation doesn't depend on it.

Therefore, I would say that I personally would dislike to see a return to the Fourth Republic (which is a regime for which I have no sympathy whatsoever) but I don't think it would be an unmitigated disaster if the problems that the French have to face are not problems of the same magnitude as those of the thirties, forties, and fifties.

I am sorry I can't be more clear in my reading of the crystal ball.

QUESTION: Would you please comment on the Communist Party in France, and its future?

DR. HOFFMANN: It's in the same condition as all the other parties. This means that it is still there and it can still count on a number of people to vote for it because, after all, people have to vote some way. Its leadership is completely sclerotic, and is, in fact, one of the oldest of any French party. So, I think it will still gain a large number of votes, because the votes it gets are essentially protest votes. But it has shown no particular initiative, no militancy, and it is much easier to get people to vote on election day than to get people to demonstrate, strike, and agitate. This they have not been able to do for quite awhile.

The only thing which has given them a slightly new lease on life recently has been the OAS. This is one of the admirable things about extremist groups, and the same I think, is true in this country; that each extreme engenders and strengthens the other extreme. If you remove the recent OAS development, the Communist Party in the last few years has been a very sleeping dog indeed.

They were far behind many other political groups on the French political scene when it came to Algeria. The brunt of the battle for decolonization there has been carried first by non-Communist, non-political, intellectual left-wingers, especially Catholic left-wingers, then by General DeGaulle, and the Communists were the last to come out in the open. The Communists were extremely cautious: They advocated negotiating with "those who fight us in Algeria" and carefully avoided the word "independence," largely because many of the French workers are not known as the most rabidly pro-Arab members of the French population, and largely because of what happened to the Communist Party in Algeria, where it was neatly exterminated much more by the FLN than by the French police.

So they have not been in very good shape. I think they are going to continue to receive large numbers of votes as long as the rest of the political system is in the condition in which it is. Somebody who is dissatisfied with his condition is not going to vote for Messr. Guy Mollet's Party--the Socialist Party--because it has become too much a party of management of public affairs and therefore shares the responsibility for whatever the group is discontented about. A discontented group can really only vote for a party which has not been "in," and the only parties which have not been in are the parties of the extreme left and extreme right. Now, any poor farmer or worker who feels underprivileged, is not likely to vote for a party of millionaires and notables, and therefore he has only the Communist Party to go to.

Well, it's interesting--and this is one of the arguments for the Presidential system--that when it came to voting for DeGaulle personally in a referendum, many of the Communist voters simply deserted the party and voted against its instructions, whereas in legislative elections they still vote for the Communist Party candidate. This, of course, is a very strong argument for those who wish to weaken Parliament or to change the electoral system, or to go all the way to the Presidential one.

QUESTION: Doctor, in view of the alternative side of your answer to the first question, if Britain should join the Common Market--and it looks like it has a very good chance to do so--aside from the superficial, what do you think might be the real impact on the Franco-German side?

DR. HOFFMANN: It is not easy to say, because at this stage it is very hard to make out British intentions. Perhaps the British themselves don't know whether they are ready to join not just the Common Market, but the Western European Community. It's not quite the same thing. And I must say that I have mixed feelings about the British entry into the Common Market if their only purpose is to participate in the economic activities and stay out of, or slow down, the more political ones.

As long as the member states are the Six--one can expect what I called the scope of commitment to increase. So far, I think the British are quite willing to enter the Common Market but I don't think they have made any decision to join the Western European construction as such.

Now, the trouble there is that there are in Germany, Belgium, and Holland elements who would be quite happy to use this situation so as to slow down the political construction of Western Europe, saying, "We can't really move ahead in matters of defense or common policy, etc., without the British. If we do it without the British, first of all it's unkind, and secondly, it would be discriminating against them, etc."

The result might very well be to slow down what is, I think, one of the few developments of postwar international politics which have been encouraging and favorable to the West. I am not at all sure that the British decision is not a double-edged one; join, but at the same time prevent those communities from becoming bigger, more tight-knit, because if they became more so, it might not necessarily serve British interest.

I heard recently the man who would be the British Foreign Secretary, if the Labor Party won the next election. The impression that I got from him is that the British would be quite willing to join the Common Market only if it is understood that they join nothing but the Common Market, and as a weapon of preventing the Six from developing their links much further.

This, far more than any particular jealousy, or any of the other more petty reasons which have been mentioned, explains General DeGaulle's rather mixed feelings toward the British entry; it is not just the feeling that by letting the British in one lowers the position of the French in Europe. It is not just the position of the French, but the whole meaning of the community which changes if one lets in a member whose essential interest is economic and commercial. The same thing can be said about expanding the Common Market to some of the Scandinavian or neutral countries.

What makes the whole undertaking so ambiguous is that it is at the same time an economic and commercial enterprise--a common market--and one stage in a political development. Now, if one sees it in this second light, then it does make sense to restrict entry to those who are quite willing to expand their commitments to noncommercial areas. If it's just a common market there is nothing wrong in expanding it, I suppose, to other parts of the universe. But if it's more than that, then very much can be said for limiting it.

Again, to come back to one element in your question, if the French purpose is to tie Germany to the West as closely as possible, then letting the British in, I think, raises all sorts of questions. My own reading of British foreign policy is that they would be only too happy to see the Germans not tied too closely to the West. And to be quite blunt, it strikes me that the general trend of British foreign policy is disastrous. This is the French view, to some extent, also. I think that part of General DeGaulle's lack of pleasantness and cooperation is not so much a desire to be unpleasant--although this, to be sure, is always there--as it is a kind of division of labor, a feeling that with the British having gone so far in the one direction which he judges disastrous, France simply has to go just as far in the opposite direction so as to be sure that the United States will be somewhere in the middle. And particularly, with his eyes fixed very closely on the Germans; he seems to be fearing that if the Germans get the idea that the British and the Americans--or the Americans and the British--might be in Moscow negotiating about Europe's fate over the heads of the Europeans, the Germans will want to be in Moscow first. They have done this in their history a number of times, and, of course, one could not blame them for it. If this is so, I think it becomes much more understandable that DeGaulle would not give France's permission for anybody to go to Moscow at all. You have to read his policy in this light.

QUESTION: Doctor, in view of the answer you gave to the last question and in view of your comment up there a little while ago in comparing France and Great Britain in their attitudes toward the colonies, would you conclude that in the negotiations that France would be extremely difficult toward the British entry if that entry carried with it the Commonwealth countries?

DR. HOFFMANN: Yes. And I think that the French position so far is an extremely difficult one. The French can't say to the British, "we don't want you in." It is impossible because of all sorts of things; in particular, because many of France's partners in the European Community would like to have the British in for various reasons. The French tactic, I think, consists of saying to the British, "We'll accept you in if you'll prove to us that you accept every part of the commitment. We are not ready to give you a special place in this community just because you are Great Britain and have Commonwealth problems."

It consists, in a way, of raising the fee so high that if the British pay it it will mean that they have really accepted the economic and political implications of joining the Six; and it is also a way of smoking out the British intentions. There are a number of people, I think, among the Europeans who are more kindly disposed toward the British and who would not be willing to smoke them out so much. But, personally I think they have to be smoked out, because this creation of the Western European Community is the best thing that has happened to Europe since the war, and I would hate to see it diluted now.

Now, there is no doubt that the British until very recently did not believe that it would succeed. They underestimated the Common Market completely at the outset, and there is no doubt, either, that they are not looking at its success with unmitigated enthusiasm. Therefore, their decision to join is not purely idealistic. No nation's desires are ever idealistic, but I think this very fact makes it necessary to be sure in advance that British egoism is compatible with the egoisms of the others. If it is not, then I think Britain's entry could have very damaging consequences, especially if this European political community is destined to have--whether by international or by supranational means; it really doesn't matter--something like a common foreign policy.

Now, at present it is not too difficult to imagine a common foreign policy of Germany and France. But it would be impossible to have a common foreign policy of France, England, and Germany. If you introduce the British in, then, especially with the situation in Germany being

rather fluid after Adenauer, you might change the whole course of Western policy. So, it is not a simple question to answer.

I think, personally, that French foreign policy is quite fixed; that the succession of DeGaulle is going to affect French foreign policy less than the succession of Chancellor Adenauer may affect Germany's largely because the unknowns in German foreign policy are bigger. German foreign policy continues to be, to a very large extent, I think, a result of what happens in Washington, in London, and in Paris; therefore, every move counts.

**QUESTION:** If the outcome of the present negotiations should be complete independence for Algeria, do you think that the French Army will support DeGaulle?

**DR. HOFFMANN:** The question of the French Army is also one of those intangible ones, for a variety of reasons. Let us assume that everything goes well--nobody can be blamed for hoping--even then the question remains: what to do with the army afterward? General DeGaulle has, of course, been dangling right before their eyes, the vision of a new atomic army; this is fine, but it seems to me that captains and colonels who have fought a guerrilla war for 15 years are not likely to be easily reconverted into atomic technicians.

One might think of a new atomic army--and even that is questionable--but it is hard to turn a set of self-styled specialists in psychological and guerrilla warfare into experts in miniaturization and other such matters. So, there is going to be a fairly complicated problem of what to do with that part of the army which has been fighting those colonial wars. It is not as massive a problem as one sometimes says, because after all, one should not forget that the bulk of the French Army in Algeria has been made up of draftees. Still, there is a problem of what to do with about 150,000 professional people.

As for whether one even will get there; whether the army will accept, here again is a complicated question. There are two elements in this question. One is, are they going to revolt? I think the answer is clearly no. Even disasters sometimes have their good side, and one of the good things about the length of the Algerian War is that most of the army elements which were potentially subversive, have gone out. If you had had a cease-fire a year ago the picture would have been a rather different one. The Salans, Argouds, Gardes, and company, would still have been in the army. I have a feeling that by now everybody who is

against DeGaulle is in the OAS rather than in the regular army, which is a clarification, strange as it seems. Therefore, I don't think that those left in the army now are likely to revolt.

But then, the second question is, will they not just not revolt but will they also be willing to fight against the OAS? Here I simply don't know, in part because it depends, first of all on events, on whether the OAS is clever enough to put itself in the position where the French Army men would have to shoot first, which they would hate to do because, after all, they are all French. And secondly, it would depend on the terms of the agreements with the FLN. If the agreements are such that the French Army can be convinced that more than face has been saved, then I think their willingness to crush the extremists will be a little bit less sluggish than it is at present.

I don't think that it's just for the fun of it and for the pleasure of having 60 or 70 more people killed every day that the bargaining with the FLN has gone on for as long as it has. Even matters which look very secondary, such as who will command the security forces in the interim period are a very important issue in the process of convincing the army that France is not simply selling out, abandoning its friends and its citizens in Algeria, etc. Therefore, I think we must see, first of all, the terms of the agreements and secondly the tactics of the OAS. I think that the OAS is not so much an organization as a conglomeration of little groups; the only thing on which they agree is nihilism; and they are probably likely to be infinitely more of a nuisance if they don't try to seize power, if they don't come out into the open where they can be counted and crushed, than if they tried a coup which would probably fail just as much, if not as easily, as the other coup in 1961. I think this is about where we stand now.

CAPTAIN CASTELAZO: Dr. Hoffmann, our time seems to be up. We thank you very much for a very scholarly and interesting lecture and question period.

(13 Mar 1962--5,600)H/bn:en