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# West Europe Report

(FOUO 62/81)



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## WEST EUROPE REPORT

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### CONTENTS

#### ECONOMIC

##### SPAIN

- Some Europeans See No Linkage Between Entry to NATO, EEC  
(Peru Egurbide; CAMBIO 16, 5 Oct 81)..... 1

#### POLITICAL

##### FRANCE

- Economy, Media, Government: Potential Benefits, Dangers  
(Alain Peyrefitte; L'EXPRESS, 20-26 Oct 81)..... 7

- Causes of CFDT-CGT 'Permanent' Rivalry Reviewed  
(Frederic Pons; VALEURS ACTUELLES, 26 Oct 81)..... 17

##### UNITED KINGDOM

- Labor Party Leader's Performance Reviewed  
(Editorial; THE TIMES, 10 Nov 81)..... 19

#### GENERAL

##### FRANCE

- Credit Bank's Leveque Sees Nationalization as 'Tragedy'  
(Jean Maxime Leveque Interview; PARIS MATCH, 4 Sep 81)..... 21

- Writer Shows CGT Aims To Dominate in Industries To Be  
Nationalized  
(Jean Francois Jacquier; L'EXPRESS, 25 Sep 81)..... 24

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ECONOMIC

SPAIN

SOME EUROPEANS SEE NO LINKAGE BETWEEN ENTRY TO NATO, EEC

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 5 Oct 81 pp 58, 59, 61

[Article by Peru Egurbide (Brussels); "Headfirst Into Europe."]

[Text] The government considers that joining NATO is already an accomplished fact. Its objective now is the plunge into the European Economic Community, that group of interests which is much more closed and select than the Atlantic military alliance, and against which Spain appears determined to smash itself once and again. No one, starting with the Spanish leaders themselves, is interested in joining the EEC under pressure, and the urgency of the government arises almost exclusively from its wanting to protect its back in view of the parliamentary debate on NATO.

But the only backs the French are inclined to protect are those of their farmers, who are unable to compete in quality, price and even terms of payment. They consider Spanish interests to be an internal affair of Spain; while they try to prove that French interests are the same as those of the European Economic Community. And so they use the veto on Spain as they please.

The secretary of state for relations with the Communities, Raimundo Bassols, returned from the recent meeting of the EEC in Brussels with the conviction that France had finally tilted toward the side of Spain. "France has definitely undergone a favorable change in attitude, although later on in the negotiations they defended their interests." But the former Spanish ambassador to the EEC did not take into account the voluble French temperament and only hours after his optimistic statements the French minister of agriculture, Edith Cresson, was announcing that the socialist majority would veto the entrance of Spain into the EEC.

A French Government spokesman would later tone down her statements, but the gallic Ministry of Agriculture left it very clear at the same time that admission was linked to the protection of French agricultural products.

This was repeated almost word for word by the French president in his first presidential statements regarding Spain last 24 September. "I am in favor of the negotiations," stated Mitterand. "But Spain must realize that as far as France is concerned this negotiation is based on a certain number of economic, agricultural, industrial and regional realities; and that it is not possible for the problem to be resolved by the simple decision of the other nine members of the Community." With these words the French president throws out a warning to Spain, and at the same time deauthorizes the support which the Spanish cause has received recently from countries such as England and Germany.

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In any case, the positive results for Spain coming out of the Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community which took place on the 14th and 15th of last month in Brussels could come to be transformed into a new "spirit," more healthy than the one that ravaged Spanish political life in the early days of the transition.

What was characterized in Brussels as a "formal unblocking," a "moderate opening," or a "tactical gesture" gave rise in Madrid to lofty statements like the one that said, "France has lifted the veto that it held over Spain."

Not that the Spanish negotiators have lost their heads, because it is a known fact that political "spirits" only circulate in relation to public opinion. Raimundo Bassols reverted to diplomatic language last 21 September when he made a stopover in Brussels on the way to London.

His statements were along the line of "the negotiation has become unblocked as far as principles go," or "the fact is that in principle the EEC has cancelled some mortgages."

After meeting with the president of the European Commission, the liberal Luxembourgier Gaston Thorn, and with Vice President Lorenzo Natali, the Italian Christian Democrat who is directly in charge of the negotiation with Spain, Bassols admitted, "I myself was not sure, and am not sure now how far this opening goes."

It seems clear that we are faced with an "opening in principle," "moderate," which has no other result than a "formal unblocking" of the Spanish negotiation.

Domestic Politicizing

Any emphatic assertion about the importance of the September Council, and the perspectives which it opens for Spain, will have to be weighed, meanwhile, in the balance of the campaign which the government is carrying on with a view to the parliamentary debate on Spain's joining NATO. The inclusion of the topic of the EEC in this campaign can not be a simple supposition at the point, and even less if one takes into account that it was Bassols himself who was in charge of placing it on the table.

During the morning following the meeting of the Community ministers it was the secretary of state who established the sound relationship between the negotiations with the EEC and the decision of the government to enter NATO. His first genuinely affirmative response to the question of a journalist was later reduced to the level of this official version: "The negotiations with NATO and the EEC are parallel and separate topics, but they mutually influence each other."

The secretary said, at another point, that although the news had not been published in any newspaper or mentioned in any speech, "it evidently is floating around in the atmosphere," that the project of joining NATO had had an influence on the Community's opening. He added, "A Western decision, like the one the Spanish Government is proposing and will submit to Parliament, evidently has an influence on the decisions which the Western world must take towards us, for example, on the topic of the EEC."

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Bassols statements were atypical, because they contradict both the doctrine officially maintained by the Community, which Ireland belongs to, although it is not a member of NATO; and the ones which the Spanish authorities themselves had been upholding. Indeed, Community circles very closely linked to the negotiations with Spain were caught by surprise.

What the secretary of state said, however, tallies perfectly with the political project which Calvo Sotelo suggested, rather than formulated, during the visit which he made to Bonn last spring, on the occasion of his first appearance as president of the government. The stress on German support for Spain's joining the alliance, and the conviction expressed by Schmidt that the agricultural negotiations with Spain could be unblocked even before the reform of the Community was completed, made it clear that the new cabinet was reversing the order of the foreign policy priorities held by Adolfo Suarez and his minister Oreja: join NATO, yes, but from the EEC. For Calvo Sotelo, the road to the EEC lies through NATO.

The new project was shaped into a plan of attack during the Wagnerian party and the Mediterranean cruise that served as a pretext for Calvo Sotelo's meeting this summer with the German minister of foreign affairs, Hans Dietrich Genscher, and with President Thorn, both liberals, who took leading roles in this new scenario. It was, in fact, the Germans who were the best defenders of the Spanish cause on the 14th, and they even introduced a document to unblock the agricultural negotiations. Thorn, on his part, has announced that next November he will make an official visit to Spain.

Community Opening

It seems clear that there has been an opening, and even that it has been brought about through a change of opinion promoted by the countries most interested in Spain's joining NATO. Great Britain is also supporting the Spanish cause, although its actions are less visible because Gibraltar requires them to keep their distance. But it is more difficult to evaluate what the consequences of these circumstances could be.

The inclusion of the Spanish dossier on the agenda of the first meeting which the Council held after the summer--together with topics as important to the EEC as that of its own reform--was already a notable event. The negotiations with Spain were blocked on the 14th by what was called the double lock: the one Giscard brandished during the French elections, and the one which Andre Chandernagor, Mitterand's new secretary for Community affairs, presented in a none too friendly way to Perez Llorca when the Spanish minister visited Brussels in July of this year.

The "Giscard blow," as is known, prevents the EEC and Spain from talking about the agricultural subject and about the budget--the most important topics of the negotiation, which have hardly been touched upon--until the Community has cleared up the internal disorder which Thatcher produced when, in the Council of Europe meeting which took place in Dublin in 1979, she declared herself almost in suspension of payments.

It was an election weapon which the former French president used in confronting his farmers, but it was based on a real problem, upon which the majority of the

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countries of the Community were in agreement. The agricultural and budgetary negotiations with Spain, as Britain's Lord Carrington said when he acceded to the presidency of the Council of Ministers in July for 6 months, would not be able to be completed until the uncertain process of the internal reform of the EEC was well on the track.

What Chandernagor did was more serious, because he put up a barrier against the present Spanish tax system, which began by blocking the negotiations on the subject of the customs union, and ended, in successive statements by the Frenchman, in becoming a brake on any possibilities of conversation--in short, the door was slammed shut. But, as in the case of the reform of agricultural policy, the complaints about the Spanish tax system do not come only from the French, and there is substantial agreement on the subject among all Europeans. These are complaints which have developed as Community unrest has grown because of the tax adjustments which the Spanish authorities make at the frontier on products which cross the Pyrenees, with the investment of the commercial consequences of the 1970 framework agreement favorable to Spain.

This unrest resulted in a demand, which is a firm position of the Community: Spain must apply a Value Added Tax on the very same day that it is admitted to the EEC. It is a point on which the Community will allow no concessions, and which the Spanish authorities are refraining from confronting as non-negotiable for two reasons: the rejection which tax reform encounters among the managers, and the advantages which Spain can extract from the present situation if the final negotiations are dealt with in a comprehensive way.

Differences of Opinion

It is known that the Spanish side upholds the official position that the period of transition--or of gradual application of the contents of the agreement--should be the same for all the subjects and sectors (dismantling of industrial and agricultural tariffs, common foreign tariffs, free movement of workers, etc.); but there are suspicions that the EEC, which still has not expressed an explicit position, would like to adjust the transition by subjects, and probably to allot 5 or perhaps 3 years for the free movement of industrial products, 10 for that of agricultural products, and 7 for that of workers, besides other regulations.

In contrast to this focus on sectors, which favors Community products, Madrid proposes the final negotiation of one single package of major questions, in which, obviously, any concession on the IVA [Value Added Tax] could be used to balance other subjects.

The next in-depth "round" in the EEC is set for 26 October, but the Spaniards want to postpone it until November, for tactical reasons. As seen from here, the Spanish appointment with the EEC appears irrevocably linked to the imprecise calendar of Community reform itself, whose next milestone will be the December Council of Europe.

Vice President Natali said recently that the EEC is still maintaining that 1 January 1984 is the day set for the admission of Spain. It is not a bad omen, because they were already beginning to talk about January 1985.

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EEC and NATO Are Separate Topics

"If you want to see them as parallel, well, that's one view. But parallels are lines which do not touch each other, and the fact is that Spain's negotiations with the EEC and NATO do not influence each other, and will not influence each other." This was the comment from a Community source who is very directly linked to the negotiations with Spain, when he heard about the statement in which Rajmundo Bassols established a relationship between the two subjects.

Game of Interests

It was not a denial, and to the extent to which it reflects the official position of the EEC, the comment in no way proves that that influence does not exist. Indeed, it probably did exist in the case of the September decision, but the experience of Spain over the last few years demonstrates up to what point national interests--especially economic ones--influence other types of considerations in Community negotiations.

Francois Mitterand, for example, would like Spain to join NATO, as did Giscard d'Estaing; however he only consents reluctantly to the lowering of some barriers. Then, his minister of agriculture, Edith Craisson, apparently thought it advisable to use the case of Spain to put pressure on the Commission in approving the three new agricultural regulations; she must have also confused the European Parliament with the French Assembly, and she definitely kicked up a fuss. Looking at it from more purely economic perspectives, there is the case of England, who, while it supports the negotiations with Spain, wants to freeze our textiles in the Customs Union basket.

To Each His Own

Even the great German mentor has its weaknesses: the FRG has kept the social topic blocked, because it has to do with the movement of emigrants. It, together with Great Britain, is the country which is most opposed to the new regulation on fats and oils, which would facilitate Spanish integration to the degree that it would contribute toward reducing the almost structural surpluses of olive oil. It is true, on the other hand, that the regulation would harm the soybean multinationals, for that is the oil the Germans use for cooking.

The Points of Disagreement

Agriculture: Pending negotiation

Fishing: Pending negotiation.

Special Resources: Pending negotiation.

Tax Coordination: IVA, taxes on tobacco, tax monopolies.

Customs Union: Textiles, steel, Canary Islands.

European Coal and Steel Community (UCSC): Steel and scrap iron.



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EURATOM: Spanish guarantee of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Foreign Relations: Transition in generalized preferences.

Social: Free movement of labor force.

Transportation: Combined railroad-highway transportation.

Legislative Coordination: Chemical and pharmaceutical patents.

Institutional: Final Negotiation.

Regional Policy: Spanish statement lacking

Movement of Capital: Closed

Freedom of Establishment: Closed

Note: The first two points have hardly been dealt with, and depend respectively on reforms of the common agricultural policy and on the Community budget. Spain has presented a document on fishing, but the subject is still awaiting the EEC's resolution of the internal conflict which was created by the admission of Great Britain.

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POLITICAL

FRANCE

ECONOMY, MEDIA, GOVERNMENT: POTENTIAL BENEFITS, DANGERS

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 20-26 Oct 81 pp 152-166

[Article by Alain Peyrefitte: "Benefits and Dangers in the Change of Government"]

[Text] Was Francois Mitterrand elected to establish a socialist society or to manage the same society with other leaders and another style? Is he going to follow the social-democratic path carefully or break with capitalism in an irreversible way? Which of the two scenarios is the more probable? What could the consequences be of these two hypotheses for the Left, for the opposition, and above all for France and the French people? Here is the answer by Alain Peyrefitte.

#### The Chances of a Consensus

In a classical democracy a change in government puts the ideas of the former opposition to the test of the facts: it purges the fantasies entertained by a group of the voters who had remained on the sidelines of power. Honesty requires us to recognize that when men so long in the opposition take the levers of command into their hands, this could have positive aspects.

1. The democratic character of the Fifth Republic is established. Beyond a doubt, democracy is defined by the renewal of authority at regular intervals. Since 1958 our voters have developed habits which have become a kind of collective second nature. The voters would not easily allow interference to the rules of the game. Customs count for more than the laws. The best criterion of a democratic regime is the uncertainty about the results of an election. Francois Mitterrand had tirelessly denounced the previous government as "Caesarian" or "Bonapartist." In fact, the results of the 1958 elections were somewhat overwhelming in character. However, uncertainty made its appearance, beginning with the elections of 1962. This increased in 1965, 1967, 1968, and 1969. In 1973 the Union of the Left seemed about to win. In 1974 Valery Giscard d'Estaing was only elected by a narrow margin. In 1978 most forecasts predicted the defeat of the government in power. On 10 May, until 8:00 pm more than half of the French believed that the president in office was going to be re-elected.

We live in a true democracy. On the electoral scales the people as sovereign have the power to place weights whose size no one knows in advance. The balance is

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even so sensitive that one cannot play with it: with 1 percent of the vote shifted, the government changes hands.

As sovereign judges, the French people are not bound by anything: not by recognition for services rendered or even by their recent decisions. Their ability to forget should inspire some feelings of fear among those who hold power and some hope among those who aspire to it.

The majority of the voters thought that most French, having become "legitimists," would vote again for the man who possessed legitimacy. However, at the end of his term of office, he no longer possessed legitimacy. This was an initial error on the nature of the regime, believing in the "advantage of the government in power." The advantage exists for local elections. For the presidential election, on the contrary, it is necessary to speak of the "handicap of the government in power." A terrible handicap! The French people respect the legitimacy of their elected representative for the duration of his term of office. However, they do not give him power; they lend it to him.

Many supporters of Jacques Chirac believed, inversely, that if the president was defeated, the French people would turn to Chirac in the legislative elections, out of fear of the Left. This was a second error regarding the spirit of our institutions. The voters admirably accepted their own logic: it was necessary to give the new president a National Assembly which would make it possible for him to govern.

2. The solidity of the system was put to the test. It came out of it strengthened: a posthumous victory by its founder. The change of administrations took place in an atmosphere of exemplary calm. We live in a country of laws. Francois Mitterrand was elected in a regular fashion. The continuity of the state was assured. This government, which its opponents of yesterday depicted as unable to change democratically, lent itself to the change easily.

A half-presidential, half-parliamentary system, it seemed to the Left that it had a vague, evil spell about it, which was an obstacle to the opposition's coming to power. In reality, there are two ways for the opposition to take power. The first way is to win the legislative elections: the president is then obliged to call on a government which conforms to the wishes of the voters. However, he retains the possibility either to dissolve the new Assembly or to put his own position up for election. In either case, if he loses again, he must retire from the scene for good. This experiment has not yet been attempted. It is desirable that this happen some day, and it is in no way impossible that it will happen in the next 5 years. The second way, and the most decisive, is to win the presidential election. The legislative elections, which take place following the presidential elections, amplify the success achieved. The voters offer the new president the majority he needs.

It was unhealthy, over the long term, that half of the population should feel eternally excluded from power; that a majority of the workers, the salaried employees, the government officials, the young people should imagine themselves camped out at the gates of the city; that three-quarters of the teachers, researchers, artists, and other intellectuals should become embittered in a kind of ill-tempered opposition. A climate of dull revolt resulted from this, as well as the

complete rejection of almost everything which the administration in office did or said. We can hope that at least some of those who have the task of molding public sentiment will stop questioning the legitimacy of the government, the state, and even the nation.

3. The Left opposition, by becoming the majority in the country, has joined company with our institutions. The Fifth Republic was born in 1958; it went through its baptism by fire in 1981; it is now recognized by everyone.

Francois Mitterrand seems at ease as guarantor of this Constitution which he fought against with such tenacity. He seems to wish to respect its spirit. The prime minister contents himself with playing the music whose score the president writes. It is impossible to see how a future president, after four predecessors who all will have carefully made the preeminence of their position prevail, could again become a nonentity. Some people had predicted that, if Francois Mitterrand was elected, that would be the end of the Fifth Republic. However, 5 months after his election everything leads one to think that the new president will decline to deprive himself of so efficient an instrument provided him by a Constitution adopted despite him.

We have therefore just observed an event of primary importance. Until 1958 France had /never/ [in italics] known a regime which was both strong and democratic at the same time. The victory of Francois Mitterrand can sanctify and strengthen the first regime which has given France stability, while respecting public freedoms.

4. The president, who has become responsible for all the French, has the duty and the means to tear himself free from the pressure of his supporters, from the dogma of the "class struggle," even from his own promises, in order to take into account the interests of the nation and to unite it. That was the wager of General de Gaulle on the presidential function. Will this bet win?

After the struggle over the institutions of the country, what were the other great battles waged by the opposition? There you see that the thermonuclear experiments have been resumed, the "anti-city" strategy has been confirmed, a new atomic submarine has been launched with fanfare, the development of the neutron bomb has been continued. For a supranational Europe and against French ambitions, charged with "narrow nationalism," with using a veto right for the protection of our essential interests? Thus former practices were perpetuated. Against the policy of independence regarding the two power blocs? Against our withdrawal from NATO, following which Francois Mitterrand carried on the assault, moving a motion of censure against the government? And here he is concurring with it. Against the ambitious program of construction of nuclear plants to generate electricity? To the anger of the ecologists, whom the PS [Socialist Party] had promised to block the program, the new government has accepted the program, by a two-thirds majority. Did the opposition denounce the impotence of the previous government in dealing with unemployment and the increase in prices and attack the bad excuse offered of the present world crises? Now these two plagues are rapidly getting worse, and the government blames...the world crisis.

Of course, the new government, out of fear that its acceptance of the positions of the previous government will be considered denials of its previous stands, must

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mask these changes of position by the use of spectacular symbols, which are reassuring for the make-believe world of its militant supporters: the halting of construction at the Plogoff center, the abandonment of construction of the Larzac center. However, reality imposes its implacable kind of logic, which they had hardly thought of in the idle conversation in the opposition committees.

There is where the principal virtue of the change of government lies. Only the Left has the capacity, either by its conversion to the real world or by its failure, to detoxicate its own supporters from the poisons which they had swallowed, whose results were little by little contaminating the entire body of the French nation.

If the various acts of acceptance of the policy followed since 1958 increase in the coming months (without covering them up by means of a few, expiatory sacrifices as props), it would not be impossible for France to come to resemble a society where the extremes are reduced to nearly nothing and where the majority of the French are in agreement on everything that counts. We could then see in the future a periodic change in government between a "center left" and a "center right." A very slight difference in the votes, as in the stable democracies, would be enough to make the majority turn toward one or the other of the two large political formations which converged on the essentials, beginning with the kind of regime and society. Is this plausible or hopeless?

The Temptations of the Irreversible

What can favor, today, the establishment of a national consensus, which has been tragically lacking? It would be sufficient that the new government would choose to be "socialist," as, for example, the Bonn government is, and not like the countries which have "broken with capitalism," that is, up to now, the communist countries and only them. All the polls suggest that two-thirds of the French people would like to see capitalism of production (market economy, private initiative, freedom to enter into contracts), moderated by a socialism of redistribution (intervention by the government, highly progressive taxation).

That is the orientation which General de Gaulle, as well as his successors, had chosen: that is, the "third way," between uncontrolled capitalism, which the French people would not like, and collectivism, whose failure no longer needs to be demonstrated. France, under a regime where the "socialists" were in the opposition, thus became clearly more "socialist" than a country like the Federal Republic of Germany, where the "socialists" are in power. In our country the various forms of taxes amount to 43 percent of Gross National Product, while they remain below 36 percent on the other side of the Rhine River. The French social budget is more than one-quarter of the general budget, while in the Federal Republic of Germany it is less than one-quarter. The social costs paid by companies represent one-third of the salary structure in France, while in Germany they only amount to one-fourth. In France the productive public sector, at the beginning of 1981, accounted for 13 percent of gross domestic product, while in Germany it only provided 6 percent.

We can therefore say that the Fifth Republic completed a social-democratic program, but without deriving the psychological benefit from it, and in the midst of

great political difficulties. In effect, these reforms collided with a Left which rejected them, because it saw in them so many "alibis" protecting capitalism.

The Left could therefore march boldly along the very road where the first three presidents only moved uneasily, because of the fact that the Left was the obstacle. It would be enough for the Left to convert to capitalism without a second thought in production and trade; for it to content itself with introducing socialism in the distribution of revenue; for it to renounce the dogmas of the "class struggle" and the "break with capitalism."

Is this dreaming? Well, it is the turnabout to which the German Socialist Party committed itself at the Bad-Godesberg Congress in 1959. The German socialists understood that they would have no call to lead a Germany deeply integrated with the capitalist West and whose "miracle"--capitalist--was the object of admiration of the world, if they did not repudiate the Marxist catechism. In France the activists and many of the leaders of the PCF [Communist Party], the PS [Socialist Party], the CGT [General Confederation of Labor], and of the CFTD [French Democratic Confederation of Labor] remain prisoners of an archaic and dangerously unreal system of thought. Only the exercise of the responsibilities and the pedagogy which the president of the Republic could use with them might make the scales fall from their eyes. In this respect two possibilities open themselves to analysis.

In the first scenario Francois Mitterrand would espouse capitalism and would move along the "social-democratic" path. He would do this either on his own initiative or under the pressure of events.

In the case of a voluntary conversion: Francois Mitterrand would have secretly chosen the "social-democratic" path. However, he would be under the tactical obligation to assume responsibility for the various Marxist obsessions. How could he make his allies accept the laws of a liberal economy? He could do this by ostensibly making a sacrifice to some of their myths, by gestures appropriate to maintaining appearances.

In the case of an involuntary conversion: Francois Mitterrand has not made this choice; events will choose for him. He will quickly understand that reality is not in accordance with his dreams. One cannot at the same time proclaim European and Atlantic solidarity and place oneself in complete contradiction to the letter and spirit of the commitments made by France to the EEC, the European Monetary System, the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development]. It will be impossible for France to remain in the Common Market, if it is the only member to "break with capitalism," when all the mechanisms of the Treaty of Rome are the very mechanisms of capitalism. Many French who voted for Mitterrand did not think of "breaking with capitalism." On 26 April 1981 the five candidates of the "Left" together only received 46.79 percent of the vote. And many among them did not ask to "change society." Opposite them, the four candidates of the government parties, quite determined to maintain a capitalist system, together received 49.34 percent of the vote. The ecologists, who made up the difference, were fighting against pollution, not against the mechanisms of a liberal economy.

Let us go farther along this line. When we compare the elections of 1978 and of 1981 (in the decisive round, when each deputy was elected), we note that those who

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voted for the Left, in terms of /valid/ [in italics] votes, went up from 48.57 percent to 55.30 percent. From that it has been concluded that the wave which elected Mitterrand by 51.75 percent of the votes was turned into a landslide, 5 weeks later.

However if, like Francois Goguel, you look at the percentages in terms of the /registered/ [in italics] voters, you see that from March 1978 to June 1981 those who voted for the Left only went up from 40.05 percent to 40.08 percent. In other words, the socialist and communist votes did not change. "The spirit of the people of the Left," which has been so much talked about, was not shown at all. It was the votes of the moderates which were missing, falling from 42.10 percent of the votes in 1978 to 32.18 percent in 1981. This abstentionism was the unique factor in the great socialist victory in June. Were the moderate voters discouraged by the divisions within the outgoing government coalition and equally so by their sudden reconciliation? Did they prefer to abstain in order not to be involved in committing an act which would block our institutions? The wave which, since 1958, had carried the government majority on its crest had fallen away under it and left it on the sands. The wave bearing the Left to power remained at exactly the same point as in the past. The voters did not give the Left a mandate to change society: no more in 1981 than in 1978. The voters only allowed the Left the power to do so, by the silence of one-quarter of the moderate voters.

The new power was elected by means of numerous ambiguities which, knowingly maintained for a long time, resulted in a more and more unhealthy climate. They are going to be dissipated little by little by the test of events, thanks to the change in government.

Must it be ruled out that Francois Mitterrand will give up tampering with the delicate capitalist mechanisms, when he understands that he was elected not to carry out a Marxist program but to manage the same society with other leaders and another style? Hasn't he given instructions, as soon as the constraints of our trade balance were explained to him, to continue the sales of arms, which he denounced with indignation when he was in the opposition? Hasn't he stepped back from the proposal to give the right to vote to the immigrants, when he has seen a poll in which the French people massively rejected this proposal?

Certainly, it would have been better for the Socialists to find their own road to Damascus before entering into power. Each new defeat had led them to question their beliefs. If Francois Mitterrand had been defeated again in 1981, a party of the Left would probably have abandoned Marxism, as it had successively foresworn its other utopias. This adaptation to reality would have avoided a lot of damage. But is it too late?

This first scenario would be the best for France--and the worst for the opposition. It would assure the Socialists a life span which could reach, as in Sweden or in Norway, several decades. However, over the long term, the first scenario would permit the easy change in government of a "center right" and a "center left" in a pacified democracy.

The second scenario presupposes that Francois Mitterrand persists in seeking to "break with capitalism," and to "succeed where Allende failed." Won't he persevere in his purpose of making France "the first country which will establish a socialist

regime in freedom," thus creating a unique model in the world? Only the idea he has of himself is developing in view of this noble mission: until March he seemed to place himself in position as the third great French Socialist of this century after Jaures and Blum. After March, the messianic spirit went up one level. Francois Mitterrand, catching a glimpse of and then savoring victory, renewed his ties with 1789 and began a revolution as historic as the first one, although not bloody. He would be "a de Gaulle of the Left"; de Gaulle would then be no more than a Mitterrand of the Right.

If the president continues along this path, will he avoid the obstacles? France is such that it cannot be governed for very long without a majority. If the real country stops being confused with the legal country, the president will feel his legitimacy slip away from under him, like a rug suddenly pulled away. Once the first serious difficulties are encountered, a cleavage will develop within the Left, between the supporters of the minimum program, who will probably protest: "We are going too far; the voters did not want that; we are no longer inspiring confidence in our European partners"; and the supporters of the maximum program, who will probably clamor: "Things are going bad because we are not going far enough."

It will be difficult for the president to stand still on the slopes. The socialist-labor-communist movement will establish its fiefdoms everywhere. The neutrality of the civil service, the impartial authority of the state, will be destroyed. To explain this bound forward, the official propaganda will try to find scapegoats: the incompetence of preceding governments, the dollar (concerning which it will be asked if it is more pernicious when it goes up or when it goes down), the wall of silver (of which it is forgotten that it is made of millions and millions of bricks), the 200,000 big taxpayers--the modern version of the 200 families--the multinational firms, the PME [small and medium-sized enterprises], the merchants, the craftsmen, the high government officials, the Council of State, the Constitutional Council. The powerful means which the Constitution gives to the state will sometimes aggravate the damage done. That is, until the day when a strike either by doctors or by police officers or by prison guards or by truck drivers (like in Chile) will serve to reveal the nation's loss of confidence in the government. Some ministers, some socialist and radical deputies will refuse to stand for an inflation rate which has become intolerable, the level of 2 million unemployed workers will be considerably exceeded, and existing policies will be seen to be incapable of resolving the problems of the time. The government will implode.

This second scenario is the best for the opposition. It should prepare itself to take over when the 3 or 4 percent of the French people who made the decision in the presidential election of 10 May will have recovered from their illusions. And their about face--perceptible even now--will cease to be compensated (and even beyond that point) by the "technical supporters of legitimacy" (older persons, women living alone), who are led by instinct to vote for the government in office. However, this is the worst scenario for France.

A series of disturbing measures taken, which go far beyond the social-democratic option, even when seasoned with symbolic gestures, seems to indicate that this second scenario is being put in place.



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1. The nationalization of prosperous industrial enterprises has not always had solid economic justification. It will constitute a heavier burden on public finances than in any other Western country. The nationalization of almost all the credit institutions will estrange France from its partners in the Common Market and will bring it several giant steps closer to the people's democracies. The European countries where credit is nationalized are the countries of Eastern Europe, including Albania and Yugoslavia. There is a single country like this in all of the Americas, North, Central, and South: Cuba.

As a whole these nationalizations can lead in our economy to the leukemia of bureaucratization and irresponsibility, which for the decision-makers involves the absence of economic sanctions. International confidence will be undermined. The economy lives on anticipation: future nationalizations, instead of favoring dynamism, already seem to be paralyzing it. The "recovery plan" adopted by the new government hasn't made anything recover since it was approved. On the contrary, stagnation has appeared. It is unlikely that the establishment of new controls (to watch over prices or search out gold) and devaluation (which, it is feared, will soon be followed by further devaluation) will re-establish confidence.

2. The trade unions of the Left will use their power to support these nationalizations, of which they are no doubt the only real justification. Already, they are infiltrating everywhere. In the ranks of the police, the courts, among teachers, the universities, the government ministries, they are taking the key posts; perhaps they are waiting to do the same thing one day in the army. The government is not really socialist; it is socialist-trade union-communist.

3. Four important ministries have been conceded to be the full property of the PCF. The Party knows in detail the techniques of infiltration. Some 35 years afterwards we are still suffering from the consequences of the passage of Maurice Thorez through the civil service or of Marcel Paul through EDF [French Electric Company]. It is worrying, for example, that the president of the RATP [Independent Parisian Transport System] has been appointed with sovereign power by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party. It is even more worrisome that this practice, which was not even seen during the Fourth Republic, has not aroused any protest. A long time after the socialist wave will have receded, the communist mussels will remain attached to the rocks.

4. They have applied the American "spoils system" to an area in which it is never applied in the United States, since there all the organs of information are independent of the government. The witch hunt in the mass media, the taking of command by faithful henchman of the new government, the silence and terror imposed on those who could provide another point of view are perhaps even more disquieting than the economic problems. The damage which bad management causes, good management can make good. However, the lethargy in which the French people seem to be in the course of being plunged can have serious consequences on our liberties themselves.

Until 10 May, in the different radio and television networks, a balance had been established. A majority of the journalists, producers, directors, cameramen, and technicians felt themselves close to the Left. However, the management, appointed by the government, had the role of creating, more or less, a "gentlemen's agreement." Today, without any control by administrative councils or by any body

established by law, instructions to maintain silence or to amplify given stories are transmitted by hidden channels. "One must not talk" about the worsening of unemployment, of the attacks that have taken place in Corsica, nor of the repeated refusal of the court in Pontoise to install Bidalou in office. "One must talk" at length about the favorable reception of official statements--or about crises overseas, etc. The minority of journalists who do not feel themselves to be and do not claim to be "of the Left" are lying low or censor themselves, when they are not censored. Disinformation is taking root.

Beyond even the television networks and the state radio, the fears about information in France are legitimate. The radio stations in the area outside of Paris, the NOUVELLES MESSAGERIES in Paris, LE POINT, LES DERNIERES NOUVELLES D'ALSACE, LE JOURNAL DU DIMANCHE, etc--will they fall under the influence of the government?

5. The assumption of control by the state of the media of culture worsens the danger. The televised programs (serials, dramatic presentations, choices of films "with a message") were often oriented in the direction of a philosophy "of the Left." In the future this will be more and more the case. Here is the state, in the process of controlling Hachette, Laffont, Nathan, Bordas. Won't editors of books be required to work through the Hachette distribution center? Georges Marchais, whom a journalist asked if Solzhenitsyn could be published in France, after a victory of the Union of the Left, made this remark from his heart: "Yes, if he finds an editor." In a mood of general indifference French book publishing risks resembling, little by little, book publishing in the Eastern European countries.

The logic of a socialism much more radical than social democracy is beginning, and it wants to be irreversible. However, we must be on guard against two temptations. One is believing that the failure of this experiment is inevitable "in 2 years." The other is to believe that the new government majority cannot be turned out of office in less than several decades.

If the previous government had not committed suicide by its divisions on 10 May, it would probably have been kept in office until 1988. That is, it would have retained office for the previous 30 years (at least). The solidity of our institutions and the respect for "legitimacy" on the part of the French people could permit a socialist government to carry out its experiments for a long time, if it is clever enough not to impose on the French people a society which they do not want. However, we should not rule out the possibility that the new government majority "will make stupid mistakes," nor that the former majority will one day be missed.

The change in power which has worked in one direction could work in the other, and without waiting for so long a time. Warning signs--jokes and rumors, departmental, municipal, regional, and European elections--will make themselves heard quickly. The euphoria of some, the bewilderment of others will come to an end. The new majority should not think it is eternal. The new opposition should have the courage to commit itself to the long process of regaining positions on the periphery of government. However, a turnabout will take place inevitably, when the new teams are worn out or quarrel among themselves. Of course, this is on condition that the democratic game continues to be respected. However, we can

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believe that two institutions not yet conquered by the socialist-trade union-communist government, the Senate and the Constitutional Council, will be opposed to changing the Constitution. And our people are sufficiently devoted to their liberties as not to tolerate their being taken away.

Let the former government majority silence its quarrels. Let it know how to recognize its mistakes. Let it put the national interest before any personal animosity. Let it regain confidence in itself. Let it inspire new confidence. Let it develop a doctrine and a strategy. Let it denounce any decision of the government which is filled with threats for the future, with the vigilance and energy of Cato and Elder who repeated, "Carthage must be destroyed." Above all, let it find again and in depth the values which we expect to see it embody. Let it know how to express them and to promote them. And the flowing tide which it missed last spring, for the first time since 1958, will bring it again to the responsibilities of power.

Will the socialist experiment last for a long time, due to a clever correction of its path, which will bring it toward social democracy? Or, following on toward the utopia of fundamental socialism, will it end by a sudden implosion, when it encounters the shock of reality? In either case it will have had the great merit of letting a good number of the French who put their trust in it to disabuse themselves of their illusions.

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5170

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POLITICAL

FRANCE

CAUSES OF CFDT-CGT 'PERMANENT' RIVALRY REVIEWED

Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 26 Oct 81 pp 35-36

[Article by Frederic Pons: "The Double Bid"]

[Text] The left is marching ahead, united, the band playing in front: the image is Pierre Mauroy's. But here we have the CGT [General Confederation of Labor] and the CFDT [French Democratic Labor Confederation] playing lots of wrong notes. Two explanations: the internal difficulties of the two confederations and their rivalry over the territory; the repercussions of a political game in which the unions are playing the roles of both the relay and the outlet.

On 15 October, at France-Inter, Edmond Maire delivered a vigorous criticism of the Mauroy government. A three-point disagreement: an energy policy that is deemed too "productivist," and a dispute as to the recent government decisions regarding nuclear energy; the system of administering nationalized companies, which will lead to "nationalization"; and finally, the delay in working out the "new rights of workers." Asking the government to "rectify the priorities", particularly on this last point, Edmond Maire stated: "The expression of trade unionism, far from being an obstacle to government action, is one of the conditions of change. I have sounded the alarm."

"Edmond Maire wants to walk faster than the music," replied Mr Mauroy.

On 19 October, the two men dined together at the Hotel Matignon. But scarcely had he left the table, when Mr Maire repeated, "We will not agree to march to the prime minister's pace, no matter how good it is."

By this move, the CFDT leadership intends to break away from its wholehearted support of the government for the past 5 months, and to reappear in the eyes of the rank-and-file as a fighting organization. At Renault, lately, unrest has been evident among the CFDT members, who have been "trapped" by the higher bids made by the CGT. At the meeting of the national office of the CFDT on 8 October, some members alerted their leaders to the feelings in the workshops. CFDT and government reports were discussed again at the national council of the trade union confederations which met at the end of the week.

The struggle for influence within the Socialist party, echoed in the Valence congress of the past few days, also explains Mr Maire's outburst. Within the CFDT

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Michel Rocard has many friends. Throughout the remarks of Mr Maire (who was represented in Valence by Jacques Chereque, assistant secretary general of the CFDT), one can find what could have been the motion for the Rocard faction, if Mr Rocard had chosen to present himself in an autonomous manner. One indication: Mr Maire's sentence, wishing that in congress "they would discuss serious matters, that is to say, in what situation the government will find itself a year from now."

Mr Maire's speech must also be analyzed in the light of the internal unrest in the CGT. The CGT's last confederal committee meeting, at the beginning of the month, was marked by the official announcement of the replacement of Georges Seguy by Henri Krasucki at next June's congress, and by the display of disagreements within the confederation.

In addition to the alarmist report by the treasurer, Ernest Beiss, on the fall in membership in the last 4 years, the committee heard two of its members, Jean-Louis Moinot and Mrs Christiane Gilles, both communist members, speak out against the policy of the CGT leaders, especially with regard to the refusal for union unity of action. A refusal that was followed by their resignation on 15 October.

These troubles naturally lead to extravagant promises, in order to remobilize the rank-and-file: thus the strike movements at Renault or at the SNCF /French National Railroad Company/, which also mean that the communist party is holding its union lever under pressure until the day it ceases to consider its collaboration with the socialist government useful. These troubles are also leading Mr Maire into raising his voice: in such a way as to remind people that the CFDT is a welcoming structure for workers which could be rejected by a trade unionism that is too closely linked to a political party.

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POLITICAL

UNITED KINGDOM

LABOR PARTY LEADER'S PERFORMANCE REVIEWED

PM101257 London THE TIMES in English 10 Nov 81 p 11

[Editorial: "Mr Foot's Leadership"]

[Text] The serious question concerning Mr Michael Foot today, the anniversary of his election as leader of the labor party, is not sartorial but political. It is not a matter of whether at the Cenotaph he looked like an out of work navvy, as cruelly suggested by one of his backbenchers, but whether he begins to look like an ex-party leader. Making every allowance for the horrendous difficulties which he inherited, Mr Foot's record so far is disappointing to his supporters and his prospects are bleak. While the prime minister and her government are less popular with the electorate than any cabinet predecessors in polling history, Mr Foot and her majesty's opposition are totally failing to capitalize on this opportunity; he is personally even less popular than Mrs Thatcher.

During his brief reign--though with origins and causes long before it--the Labour Party has begun to disintegrate electorally and internally. So recently a mighty political force, having won four in the last six general elections and governed Britain for 11 of the past 17 years, it now trails far behind the alliance, and in some polls behind the conservatives, the flow of defections from labour shows no sign of diminishing; were the left to triumph at next year's conference this flow would become a flood. Throughout this calamitous year, from his personal humiliation at the Wembley conference through the formation of the SDP to his party's humiliation last month at Crydon, Mr Foot has never given any indication that he grasped the true nature of the crisis facing him and the Labour Party. He seems to believe that a leadership stance and rhetoric somewhat to the left of centre--a weak mixture of George Lansbury and early Harold Wilson--is sufficient to hold the party together. This alone can explain why he recently used his casting vote to defend the left's control of the key committees covering home policy and party organization with such predictable results last night; why he is positively promoting Mr Benn's membership of the shadow cabinet, and why he has been so reluctant to fight extremist organizations such as the militant tendency which operate independently within and against the official party organization, presented as a strategy for unifying the whole party, it is in fact mere appeasement of the left.

Mr Foot seems rooted in his own experience of 20 years ago when he led a minority left wing which was firmly within the democratic socialist mainstream of labour ideals. Now the left is sectarian, intolerant, anti-parliamentary. It would prefer to drive out the moderates in order to control a smaller Marxist Party than to share power in a bigger broad church party. It is well advanced in securing that control changes in the rules for electing the leadership and for re-selecting MPS

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have shifted power to party activists on the left. These latter number no more than 50,000 over the country as a whole and do not pretend to represent the views of millions of moderate labour voters, but they have been able to take over the party's organization because it is in fact rotten. Its individual membership has declined precipitately to barely a quarter of a million--the worst ratio of members to voters in any major party in Western Europe. Its network of full-time agents has withered to only a few dozen--ironically little more than the full-time network run by the militant tendency. Indeed the stage has almost been reached when it is unfair to imply that the various sects of the far left are insidiously infiltrating the Labour Party: They are now openly joining it as their natural and convivial base of operations. Moderate MPS are being squeezed out or leave the party just before they are pushed; some others will get the message of intimidation which was the true purpose of reselection and will, sadly, play the left wing game to keep their place at Westminster. Thus the PLP is itself slipping leftwards and the forces which from enthusiasm or cynical calculation support Mr Benn renew their advance after temporary setback at the Brighton conference.

Mr Foot presides over this depressing state of affairs rather like a pilot on the flight deck of his plane who has not been told that a hi-jack is taking place. He should pause a while from marching and declaiming against the sins of the prime minister to take note that the most immediate threat comes in fact from his enemies to the left. They may well destroy his hopes of winning the next election. If he does win with them in control, he will be forced to govern--assuming, unlike in the GLC, they condescend to allow him to continue as leader--on principles and with priorities far removed from those which have guided his own distinguished political life.

Mr Foot is not young at 68 and if he does not feel the urgency he is unaware or if to rescue his party and his reputation, he should hand over to another. Mr Hattersley, Mr Healey, Mr Shore and Mr Varley (in alphabetical order) have each shown the necessary courage.

If he is prepared to fight, he has perhaps one more year, until the next conference at the latest, in which to roll back the tide of extremism. He should launch and vigorously pursue a full enquiry into the activity of the militant tendency. Prior to the conclusions of that inquiry he should oppose the endorsement as a parliamentary candidate of Mr Patrick Wall or anyone else from that or similar organization. He should campaign for greater participation by the membership in the affairs of their constituency parties, including the operation of the principle of one man one vote to which Mr Healey has become a belated supporter. He should openly join with those in the party and especially in the trade unions who are working to secure a moderate majority on the national executive committee. He should aggressively defend the parliamentary party from all its detractors on the left. He should announce now his total support for Mr Denis Healey as deputy leader and make it clear that if Mr Benn successfully contests for this post next year he will himself resign.

It may be tactless in view of past history to ask Mr Foot to emulate Mr Gaitskell 20 years ago by fighting and fighting again to save the party which he and many British citizens love, or once loved. But it is not too much to suggest that he avoids the role and mantle of Mr Kerensky.

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GENERAL

FRANCE

CREDIT BANK'S LEVEQUE SEES NATIONALIZATION AS 'TRAGEDY'

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 4 Sep 81 p 47

Interview with Jean Maxime Leveque, president of Credit Commercial de France, by Liliane Gallifet; date and place not specified

Text/Question What real change will nationalization bring to your bank, since credit distribution and private banks are already largely controlled by the state?

Answer For us, nationalization is a tragedy. One must realize the difference between private and nationalized banks. Power is not one of our trump cards. As a medium size bank, we must rank 110th in the world, 6th in France. We are 10 times smaller than the Credit Agricole, 8 times smaller than each of the nationalized banks. Our survival, and our prosperity, we owe solely to the quality of service we offer.

Question Would not a nationalized bank offer the same service?

Answer An innovative and competitive spirit is stimulated by the feeling that you can rely only on yourself, and that no one will help you. That is the key to our success. In recent years we have created jobs. Not so the nationalized banks, which by contrast have reduced their personnel, and we have brought in \$90 million in receipts. A private bank must perform better than a nationalized bank. If in the last few years the two systems have behaved similarly, that is because private banks drove nationalized banks to play the game of competition. To pour everyone into the same mold would be most harmful. The day we are nationalized, we shall lose our soul, and the day after, when the state--having nationalized 150 or 200 banks--amalgamates them, as is inevitable, the CCF will disappear. We are fighting for our life.

Question Is it not too late? The principle of nationalization seems definitively established.

Answer The principle has been announced, but since then an ever growing number of people in administration and, I hope, in government, have been

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able to realize the faults in that principle. We are told, for example, that better control of credit is desired. Why not then nationalize all banks? Why spare the Credit Agricole, mutual banks, local banks, and foreign banks? Have we a particular taint which makes our destruction necessary? Credit control, money creation--nothing will be settled.

The problem is much more complex than is imagined by the authors of the project.

The Present Nationalization Project is Incoherent and Inapplicable

Question In what respects will your activities abroad be affected?

Answer I do not ask myself that question, but rather another: by what right could the French government take control of our affiliates? Our activities abroad are carried on by foreign personnel, in foreign currencies. That has nothing to do with control of credit in France. To take them into the project would risk ending up in litigious proceedings dangerous for France.

Question You still hope to avoid nationalization?

Answer Yes. I must pay tribute to Messrs Mauroy and Delors for designating a representative before each private banking group to gather further information on the nature of the problems. Today, the government is fully aware of the realities concerning our bank, what we are, and what we have achieved. I am hopeful that such understanding will lead it to modify the project. There is no shame in retreating when a measure is ill-conceived, and considering alternative solutions. The present project is so incoherent that it is becoming inapplicable owing to the complications it entails. I wish to believe in the goodwill and objectivity of those who are working on it.

Question Is nationalization of the banking system, in your view, a response to technical, or to political considerations?

Answer Certainly not technical. Possibly political. In any case, there is no justification whatever. The government has often cited the need for alternatives. But that aim must be curbed the moment it incites the commission of an irreparable blunder such as destroying an enterprise useful to the country. Reference has also been made to the precedent of 1945. That was a very special time when the economy had been destroyed by the war. There was no constitution, no balance of powers, no foreign trade. Today, France is integrated into a complex world economy, in which private banks in no way constitute a political power. Let not our rulers in 1981 emulate the military who in 1939 were preparing for the 1914 war.

Question Regarding compensation of your shareholders, do you fear they will be robbed?

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Answer There is great risk. You should be aware that for a number of years France has developed principles of operation for the stock market. If a group seeks to take control of another, it must offer a price much higher than market quotations, and a method of payment acceptable to the shareholders. The compensation plans now circulating do not respect these principles. So the state would be the only entity not subject to the law it imposes on others.

Question The trend seems to be towards a form of securities redeemable in a maximum period of 15 years?

Answer That is unacceptable. It would be repaying the shareholders in spurious coin.

Question Will you still be on the job 6 months from now?

Answer Surely not, if the bank is nationalized. It is heartbreaking for me to imagine that all we have built in 18 years could be annihilated.

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GENERAL

FRANCE

WRITER SHOWS CGT AIMS TO DOMINATE IN INDUSTRIES TO BE NATIONALIZED

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 25 Sep 81 p 106

Article by Jean Francois Jacquier: "Jackpot Tactics"

Text With the pretext of putting its "muscle" at the service of the government, the CGT is attempting conquest of "nationalizable" firms.

"The Socialists' power comes from the ballot box. But since the election they no longer have any force in the field. We, in the factories, have the needed muscle to make change go forward." That reflection by Georges Gay, CGT leader in the Pechiney plant at Gardanne (Bouches-du-Rhone) and Communist town councillor as well as deputy mayor, tells much about the intentions of Georges Seguy's union.

With the pretext of putting its strength at the service of the new government, the massive CGT machine is starting up again. At its initiative, most everywhere in France, we see an outbreak of localized conflicts with no apparent connection except that they occur, essentially, in nationalized or nationalizable firms. Though its leaders deny it, the CGT pattern in this sector appears systematic. Matra, Renault, Alsthom-Atlantique (an affiliate of CGE [General Electric, Cie]), Dassault, ANPE [expansion unknown], Charbonnages de France, Rhone-Poulenc: on all fronts the battle is joined.

At Alsthom "the management's union-breaking plan" is denounced as "a real provocation." At Matra, where the CGT is in the minority, the issue is to obtain total nationalization of the group. At Dassault, owner compensation is refused. The miners, for their part, demand dismissal of General Manager Jacques Petitmengin, accused of "sabotaging" the revival of coal production. At Renault, semi-skilled workers at Sandouville (Seine-Maritime) harass the management by work stoppages to obtain an assembly line slowdown. But they also demand the right to participate in decision making, and an unprecedented shop council has been elected.

The scenario is everywhere the same: a pretext, a mobilization of the base, and an appeal to the minister concerned, to force him to take a stand.

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All these actions, pursued with great fanfare, aim at a double objective: to strengthen the position of the CGT, which is declining in the face of CFDT inroads, and to occupy the terrain while awaiting final passage of the nationalizations law and the promised definition of new workers' rights. They are a means of obtaining in fact what the law has not as yet defined: that is, a right to union oversight in the choice of managers and in management.

Thus, while Georges Marchais and the PCF approve the government's policy "without reservation" (see Jacques Roure article), the CGT offensive seeks to expand the limits of nationalization.

The conflict which broke out 15 September at the Aluminium-Pechiney plant in Gardanne, Europe's largest aluminum oxide production center, is quite revealing as to the tactics employed. "A few weeks before the launching of the offensive," a worker relates, "CGT militants undertook a kind of indoctrination of the personnel, by plying it with tracts on nationalization."

Then the news began to circulate of a 30,000 ton reduction in aluminum oxide production decided on by the management of Pechiney-Ugine-Kuhlmann. But the work force base hardly reacted, and nothing indicated a conflict. On Monday 14 September the CGT, having the majority vote, asked the Force Ouvriere--which had a majority of seats on the worker-management committee--for its agreement in organizing a meeting with management. The FO agreed. But the very next day, entirely on its own initiative, without informing the FO--and thus forestalling the Socialist group which was just then beginning to learn of the production cut--the CGT called a general workers' meeting for 10:30, during working hours and in violation of internal regulations. Management's reaction was inevitable: it padlocked union premises. CGT delegates, who had foreseen everything, then produced a motion calling for token occupation of the plant and had it adopted by the 60-odd workers present. In the hubbub, they carried a motion of no confidence in management, which they accused of wishing to impede nationalization. They created a provisional vigilance committee composed exclusively of CGT members, all of them also PCF members (a soviet?). They asked Jean Le Garrec, secretary of state for public sector expansion, to create a commission to investigate the machinations of Pechiney-Ugine-Kuhlmann, and demanded a freeze on all decisions pending nationalizations. And that in the presence of the regional press (FR 3, AFP, LA MARSEILLAISE), which had been advised.

Taken by surprise, the Socialist group--not wishing to be left behind--won the support of the Bouches-du-Rhone Socialist Federation, and likewise appealed to Le Garrec, who in the end gave his backing. The noose was closed. The CGT appeared the lone defender of workers' rights, and succeeded in halting decisions by management, though the latter is not yet nationalized and can boast of having the government's support. It had hit the jackpot.

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"The Gardanne example has symbolic value," Georges Gay comments with satisfaction. "In nationalizable firms, there is a power vacuum. We must occupy it." That, at least, is frank.

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