Military security under the Fifth Republic: A study in policy making

Dennis Michael Daley

The University of Montana

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/2983

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
MILITARY SECURITY UNDER THE FIFTH REPUBLIC:
A STUDY IN POLICY MAKING

By

Dennis M. Daley
B.A., Montana State University, 1972

Presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
1974

Approved by:

[Signatures]
Chairman, Board of Examiners

[Signatures]
Dean, Graduate School

[Date]
Apr. 5, 1974
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of Government</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World View</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantive Text</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. POLITICAL CULTURE</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Search for Security</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Culture and Charles de Gaulle</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE PATTERNS OF POWER AND INTEREST</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le System</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Military</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Civil Service</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE PATTERN OF POLICY</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cold War</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nuclear Question</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Withdrawal from NATO</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONSEQUENCES</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Policy of Tradition</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Security</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this paper to survey the change that the French military security policy underwent during the years of Charles de Gaulle's presidency. In the years between 1958 and 1969 Charles de Gaulle transformed the French military system. With the evolution of the Force Nucleaire Stratélique the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ceased to be the bulwark of France's security. It is this transformation, its reasons and the phenomena affecting it that this paper undertakes to examine.

PATTERNS OF GOVERNMENT

Political science offers a number of approaches through which information can be processed such that those elements perceived as important can be focused upon. It is through the decision-making process, more specifically the "patterns of government" framework posited by Samuel Beer and Adam Ulam,¹ that this paper analyzes the transformation of France's military security policy. Beer and Ulam view government from

the perspective of four patterns: political culture, power, interests, and policy. Although these patterns each focuses upon a different aspect of decision-making, they are not mutually exclusive or independent. Each relies upon the other patterns in a relationship analogous to that between the various organs within a living body; all are necessary in order to sustain the whole.

Although the pattern of policy is most appropriate for examining France's military security policy, without the inclusion of the other three patterns an understanding of its policy decisions could not be obtained. Policy is the end-product of the "patterns of government" process. The machinery which produces this product is found in a nation's political culture, pattern of power, and pattern of interests. The following paragraphs are briefly devoted to describing each of these patterns of government; their more specific application with regard to the substantive topic of this paper is dealt with in later chapters.

Political culture is the most "unique" of the patterns of government. It alone of the four patterns is not identified by Beer and Ulam as a "pattern of"; this lack of designation is symbolic of its broader scope. If the pattern of policy is the end-product of this process politcal culture represents the "industrial plant" in which
the process takes place. Political culture is the environment of government, the fundamental limits and capabilities of a society. It is a composition of the shared beliefs, attitudes and values of the individuals within a society as they apply towards its political life. The aggregation of these individual beliefs, values, and attitudes can be either direct as in the case of the small, classical democracies or indirect through the use of groups or a democratic centralist concept. The consensus that results from this process provides a society with the purposes which set the scope within which governmental actions take place.

Whereas political culture represents the foundation and framework of the patterns of government, the patterns of power and interests are the internal structure. It is through these two patterns that policy is "worked out." The patterns of power and interests are associated with each other in a "means-ends" relationship. Their application is somewhat based upon the basis of group aggregation; i.e., individuals affect policy through groups. The pattern of power designates the resources or capabilities which groups possess. Power is distributed unequally throughout society; groups vary, as do nations, in what they are capable of doing. Capability studies abound in international relations and serve as an example of what
the pattern of power means within an individual society. The pattern of interests acts with the pattern of power; it represents the intensity of desire for a given course of action. Not all groups are concerned with or desire the same things. Hence, intensity of interest modifies the power relationships. Groups without an interest in a subject do not enter into the process of decision-making regardless of how powerful they may be; in the same vein groups without relative power can exert little affect upon policy formation regardless of their interests. Power and interests are relative to other groups that are involved in the specific decision-making case.

The interaction of the patterns of power and interests result in the pattern of policy, the end-product of the patterns of government. The pattern of policy involves not only what decisions have been made but what the consequences of those decisions are. This is a dialectic process whereby a new policy does not remain isolated but introduces new demands or inputs upon the political structure. A change in policy is a change in a society's environment and leads to further changes. The pattern of policy is the culmination of a specific series of interactions within the polity that is grouped under the label "patterns of government."
WORLD VIEW

Events of interest to political scientists do not take place in vacuums; they occur within a world in which many, many other events are transpiring. The patterns of government approach (and the decision-making process itself) focuses upon one event within this whole multi-event occurrence. It is therefore necessary to relate the specific event being examined within a "world view" perspective. This is essentially a justification for the importance of the matter under study. While dealing only with the military security policy of France, it can be related to the "whole" in general terms of national security. The following paragraphs are devoted to providing perspective for military security policy and are derived from a presentation (there are methods of relating these relationships other than the one presented here) originated by Kenneth Thompson and Roy Macridis.²

Society exists in order for its members to enjoy the economic benefits or material security that the world affords them: the state, as an instrument of society, exists primarily to protect that material security. The modern state recognizes this function as a major factor in its raison d'être. The protection and enhancement of material

security by government has grown with the expansion of government in what is perhaps a causal relation.

The real world is composed neither of independent individuals nor of a world state. The nation-state system represents the instrument by which material security is dealt with. It also introduces a number of sui generis parameters that have to be dealt with, too. While other governmental instruments could perhaps avoid these "problems," they would each give rise to others particular to each. These debates over governmental systems are the subject of political theory and lie outside the scope of this paper. Today, the nation-state system dominates the real world and is what is "pertinent." Military security is a parameter of the nation-state system. As groups within a society are unequal in power, so are nations in the world. Decision-making processes recognize that the clash of groups (patterns of power and interests) is a permanent condition. Since the nation-state system is another group system, conflict can be viewed as permanent. Of course, conflict need not be violent. Military security represents both a concept for violence and the prevention of violence (deterrence strategy).

States that are "better off" may fear other states or desire more; i.e., further better themselves and
perceive an advantage in resorting to violence. Pre-emptive wars and imperialism have roots that lie in a nation's material security. Economic determinism may not be the only motivation for a state's actions; but as long as material security is a primary function of a government, it must be of major significance. However, the violent uses of military security are seen as becoming less and less desirable. As states become industrialized or modernized, the costs of war rise prohibitively. Deterrence strategy which can be seen within the origins of the balance of power concept aims at preventing war. It is interesting that this concept has been most prevalent among the most advanced nations (it has not always worked for them and the consequences have been drastic); i.e., those states that are the best off and have the most to lose.

While material security is perceived as a domestic concern (a perception that with growing economic interdependence is fading), military security is the major element of foreign policy. Military security ("national security" is the term used by the United States government in grouping its various military security agencies together) is composed of what are termed as "defense (military)" and "foreign affairs" elements. Although defense ministries (formerly war ministries) represent
the capability to use force more than foreign ministries, both place great emphasis upon their "protective mission."

A final parameter affecting the relationship between material security and military security is the reappearance of the former as social welfare demands. Since the society (and its instrument, the state) exist in order to protect and enhance the material security of its members, these members have a right to expect to enjoy these material benefits (relabeled as "social welfare" demands). The modern state has been increasingly met with social welfare demands on the part of its citizens. Since the state has traditionally handled a society's military security requirements, this results in the same institution openly having to fund or foster both. Military security and social welfare programs both place demands upon the economic resources of a state and its society. Very few people, if any, possess "enough" material security. The limited resources of a society (and the much more limited resources of the state) are subject to demands to fulfill both functions. Each state must allocate its resources between these two areas. The failure to fund adequately either (in the case of military security this is determined when another state "tests" its security) can be disastrous.

The balance between military security and social welfare is one of the dynamic questions of modern society and
government. This balance determines capabilities: both those of today and those of tomorrow ("capital investment" in social welfare). Hence, the consequences of policies (and the demands for new policies or changes in old policies) arise within the field of this military security-social welfare balance, and like in agriculture this year's crop provides the seed for next year's crop.

METHODOLOGY

Military security policy which falls within the scope of foreign policy studies lends itself readily to the utilization of "descriptive analysis" or "problem analysis." These two methods are essentially the same, although problem analysis is more specifically designed for foreign policy analysis; they will be used as synonyms in this paper. This technique is applicable both to the categorization of interactions and to the delineation of important events. It is, of course, open to subjective conclusions, but this argument is equally applicable to any method. Objectivity is the result of researchers and not of methods per se.

Descriptive analysis is most often questioned because it is essentially non-empirical. While empirical research

---


is a useful tool, it is not universally applicable. Foreign policy areas do not lend themselves to empirical studies; quantification is often impossible and when it is, often meaningless. It can be valuable when used in conjunction with other methods to enhance the "precision" of study. Foreign policy is often made in small groups amidst great secrecy. The mathematical models upon which empiricism rests require larger numbers and the greater availability of data (which is really a requirement for any scholarly research). Statistical methods are designed to be employed with groups and not with individual cases.

A second criticism of descriptive analysis is its normative or subjective character. The material chosen for presentation and the weight given to it are determined by the author. However, this is really no different from what is done in empirical papers. Subjective choices and the introduction of value judgments are inherent in any study dependent upon human beings.

The source material utilized in this paper has been "processed" in conformity with the methods proposed in the previously cited "problem analysis" of David Wilkinson.

---

A combination of documents, memoirs, and scholarly (including both academic and journalistic) articles are utilized. Because this paper focuses upon the pattern of policy, it draws heavily upon the available French governmental sources. The French government, perhaps because it was undertaking a major change in its military security policy, has published (both in French and English) all of the major (by their perception) speeches, press conferences and statements that were issued by Charles de Gaulle and the other important figures of the Fifth Republic. Various journals interested in these specific areas have also provided coverage of the events discussed in this paper. Since Charles de Gaulle played a paramount role in this entire process, the availability of his memoirs is a significant source. However, it should be noted that at the time of his death he had not completed those portions dealing with the latter years of his presidency; those portions completed do, however, provide information on much of what he desired to do and put into motion.

The journal articles (including books) used have primarily served the purpose of "internal criticism." Internal criticism is the checking of the validity of one source by

---

comparing it with other "independent" sources. Since problem analysis relies so heavily upon the use of documents, internal criticism is an essential methodological undertaking. Only those sources that have met this check (a subjective judgment) have been used and the citations are of what is perceived to have been the prevailing attitudes within the French government. The journal articles serve the further related purpose of providing "background" information with regard to the events described in this paper.

SUBSTANTIVE TEXT

The following three chapters (Chapters II-IV) are devoted to the analysis of the French withdrawal from NATO and the concurrent establishment of the French nuclear deterrent within the patterns of government framework. While the major concern of this paper is with the change in policy that occurred, it is necessary to understand the underlying cultural, power and interest relationships that enabled (or failed to prevent) Charles de Gaulle to carry this change out.

Chapter II is devoted to the limitations placed upon the policy-makers by France's political culture. It focuses upon two areas: the search for security and its effect upon Charles de Gaulle. French life has been dominated by the search for security since its defeat in the Franco-Prussian
War and has been re-enforced by two world wars. This his-
torical background and its effects upon French society have
resulted in a paramount concern for military security.
Charles de Gaulle was a product of this development (and,
in fact, experienced most of it). Yet, individuals are
different even though they have been subjected to the same
socialization process. De Gaulle's "personal" political
culture, because of his position and strength, are of salient
interest.

Chapter III is devoted to the patterns of power and
interests. These two categories are "collapsed" together
for the sake of convenience and better presentation. Three
institutional "groups" are dealt with in this chapter:
the "military," the "politicians," and the "administrators."
Although most studies would not accord these groups such
"low" status (they would be included within the decision-
making machinery itself) this presentation more accurately
reflects the "true" relationships that existed. These groups
were hardly "co-equals" with Charles de Gaulle; their in-
clusion within the decision-making machinery (which is
reserved for de Gaulle in this paper) would falsely imply
greater strength and influence than they actually possessed.
Their support for announced policies could be valuable (as
their opposition could be harmful or a hinderance), but that
did not make them partners in the actual decision-making
process.

Chapter IV is devoted to the change in France's military security policy. It is a rather "detailed" account of the reasoning and rationalization behind France's withdrawal from NATO and its decision to rely upon its own nuclear force (which it had to create) as the mainstay of its military security policy. The decision-making apparatus and Charles de Gaulle are considered to be synonymous throughout this presentation. Also included in this chapter are the diplomatic events that transpired within the "Atlantic Community" between France and the United States. This "confrontation" is perhaps better described as being between the United States and Europe because many of the French arguments were shared (in modified form) by many of the other European allies.

The final chapter (Chapter V) examines the events that have transpired since Charles de Gaulle left office (until March, 1973). It focuses upon the implementation (much of which was only in-process by 1969) of de Gaulle's policy and the consequences that have occurred because of the French nuclear force (with respect to NATO and France). It examines what changes have been forced upon de Gaulle's successors because of the growing social welfare demands (evident since 1968). Because of the nature of problems-analysis consequences, much of this chapter will contain
opinions as to what the future holds for France's military security policy.
CHAPTER II

POLITICAL CULTURE

Political culture, like a play, sets the stage and scene upon which the roles of government and society are played out. A skilled and talented actor can bring much breadth and scope to his role; another actor may play the role so differently as to make it appear to be a quite different character. Both, however, are guided in their portrayals by the limits set forth in the script. This chapter attempts to outline the script that bounds French leaders and limits their behavior. For the most part these limits are derived from the socialization process. Since the French leaders are drawn from the population of France (admittedly in a very non-random fashion), they too share the basic beliefs, attitudes and values that compose France's political culture.

This chapter attempts to establish the broad outlines of political culture with respect to military security and to relate it to the development of individual leadership. Specifically, one cannot write of French policy, military or otherwise, during the 1960's without taking into account the character and personality of Charles de Gaulle; the
imprint of Charles de Gaulle is evident everywhere.

THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY

The French Revolution totally disrupted French society. For over 150 years France has struggled through a restructuring process that is even today unfinished. The French people remain unintegrated politically and socially (it is their strong cultural heritage that serves as their bond). A number of fundamental social-political issues divide the French to such an extent that they cannot even achieve a consensus on what form of government they desire. More than once France has passed through the rotation of regimes: monarchy, republic, dictatorship, empire. Instability has ruled the political process because there is no consensus around which a stable system can be constructed.

The Revolutionary Republic was threatened by the entire might of Europe; it was against this background that Napoleon rose to power. The Napoleonic Era left France with a legend that not only inspired Frenchmen but other Europeans as well. The defeat of France by the Fourth Coalition ushered in a new era in European diplomacy, an era of threatened military security for France. Previous European wars had been fought within a classical balance of power system; realignment of allies continually took place. The French Revolution in introducing ideology (nationalism; liberalism) disrupted
this system. No longer did states "rationally" pursue their interests in shifting alliances.

The Fourth Coalition of victorious allies (Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, and Austria) were so shaken by the Napoleonic wars that they feared to restore the old balance of power with its "invisible hand." In the Treaty of Chaumont (March, 1814) the signatory powers (the members of the Fourth Coalition) agreed to unite in a Quadruple Alliance for twenty years and to hold periodic conferences to settle matters of mutual concern. This was a victor's coalition attempting to guarantee its victory (it perhaps served as a precedent for the world war settlements). The major purpose of the Quadruple Alliance was to prevent France from again threatening Europe, either militarily or covertly, through its revolutionary ideas. Although France had faced hostile alliances before, it was not accustomed to the total isolation and helplessness that it experienced following the fall of Napoleon.

The next fifty years were, for France, years of torment. The Napoleonic wars had drained it of strength, and the Industrial Revolution was weakening it relative to other powers such as Great Britain and the United States. However, it retained its reputation as an activist military state. French diplomacy strived, often successfully during the Bourbon and Orleanist monarchies, to overcome this
reputation and the military threat it engendered. With the institution of the Second Empire and another Napoleon the suspicion and distrust with which France had been viewed was revived.

The search for security that epitomizes modern France originated in the collapse of the Second Empire of Louis Napoleon as a result of his defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. All through the middle years of the nineteenth century France's reputation exceeded its military capabilities. Whereas Napoleon I had been able to fight (and almost defeat) a coalition of Europe's mightiest nations, Napoleon III was unable even to "make a decent showing" against what had been the weakest member of the Fourth Coalition. A preoccupation with military security emerged from France's defeat at the hands of Prussia in 1871.

The Third Republic came to life in a different world than the Second Empire had died in. France's borders were no longer "empty"; Germany and Italy had come into nationhood. The creation of two more strong states, states that were not necessarily friendly towards France, heightened the feelings of threatened security. The last decades of the nineteenth century were years of seeking. Driven by the desire for revanche and the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine, France actively sought out the allies for a future war against Germany. War scares appeared with unceasing regularity.
Otto von Bismarck was so successful in guiding German policy between 1870 and 1890 that he was able to keep France virtually isolated. This enabled Europe to remain in a state of relative peace during those years. France, although it feared for its military security, was alone too weak to initiate a war that would have any chance of being won. With the "dropping of the pilot" by Wilhelm II in 1890, the French were given the chance to break out of the isolation that Bismarck had imposed upon them. Bismarck had constructed a tremendous system in order to keep France isolated. He knew that it was from France alone that the German state had anything to fear. He was confident that Germany could defeat France, but if it was allied to any other state the outcome might differ. By minimizing German demands for an overseas colonial empire (he encouraged the French aspirations in this sphere as a means of creating conflicts between France and the other colonial powers) and the kindred demands for a large navy, Bismarck was able to carry on amiable relations with Great Britain.

The masterpiece of the Bismarckian system was his Austro-Russian diplomacy. By deftly playing the "honest broker" and fully utilizing Germany's capabilities to act as a "balance," Bismarck was able to maintain alliances with both Austria and Russia (depriving France of a potential ally), whose competition for supremacy in the Balkans
was a constant threat to the peace.

With the removal of Bismarck, the French were able to exploit the Austro-Russian differences so successfully that within four years they were able to end their enforced isolation. The Franco-Russian Alliance in 1894 greatly enhanced France's military security. By deftly exploiting further German mistakes, France was able to create the Triple Entente. It was through the urging of France that Great Britain and Russia, who were competing for influence and empire in Asia, were brought together. The Triple Entente provided France with the security necessary in order to pursue its policy of revanche.

The balance of power concept is predicated upon the ability of the member states to unite together with such a preponderance of power that the perceived potential aggressor is deterred from his actions. Bismarck's Germany had performed this function with regard to Austria and Russia between 1870 and 1890 extremely well. The alliances that emerged in the early years of the nineteenth century failed in this task. The Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy and the Triple Entente of France, Russia and Great Britain were too rigid and equal in strength to perform a deterrence role upon each other. In fact, deterrence (and, hence, the balance of powers) was not the objective of France. Although France desired protection
from Germany, its goals of *revanche* and the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine were such that they could only be achieved through war.

The effects of World War I transformed France's military security policy from revisionist to defensive. Its goals of *revanche* and the recovery of *irredenta* had been achieved, but the costs had also been tremendous. World War I was fought mainly upon French soil. Coupled with this devastation was the great loss of life the French suffered. Since population is an important factor in the future capabilities (military and economic) of a state, World War I greatly crippled France's future prospects. Although France emerged from World War I among the victors, the war had been so "close" that it was left with a great fear of German revenge. Since France had pursued a similar policy following the Franco-Prussian War, French statesmen readily credited Germany with planning to pursue the same type of policy.

The Versailles Conference met to reorder Europe following World War I, as the Congress of Vienna had following the Napoleonic wars. It was here that the French attempted to obtain a "guarantee" of protection from Germany. At first the French maneuvered to have Germany dismembered. When the attempt to create a new "Confederation of the Rhine" proved unsuccessful, France, driven by the fear of a
united, revenge-seeking Germany, scrambled to guarantee its security. The terms that France had imposed upon Germany at Versailles were so harsh that they are often given credit for creating the spirit of revenge in Germany that France had sought to avoid.

In compensation for the failure to dismember Germany France was promised by the United States and Great Britain a guarantee against any future German aggression. These alliances represented the combination of strength that had defeated Germany in World War I and were perceived as being capable of deterring another, but this security system quickly evaporated. The United States refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty, let alone the alliance with France; Great Britain used the excuse of the United States failure to participate in order to renege on its pledge. As a result France was left without a guarantee of protection against a Germany in which a spirit of revenge was being fostered because of the harsh terms of the "Versailles Diktat."

France had, in the nineteenth century, sought out its security in alliances with major powers. With the collapse of the Versailles guarantees France was again left in isolation, an isolation that could not be broken by the forming of alliances with the great powers. The United States and Great Britain had backed out of their commit-
ments; Russia had fallen under the control of the Bolshevists and was an ideological outcast. The "French Alliance System" that grew up following World War I bound a weakened France with the weak successor states in Eastern Europe. France sought protection against Germany by attempting to encircle it as had been done before World War I; alliances were formed with Poland and Czechoslovakia. However, unlike its diplomatic success in bringing about the Anglo-Russian rapprochement in 1907, France was never able to smooth over the differences that separated the Czechs and Poles. It was this failure which eventually proved the denouement of the French Alliance System.

The Second World War brought France's greatest fears to life. The German armies disposed of the French military establishment with relative ease; the fall of France in 1940 was a crushing experience for the French people. Its military weakness rapidly set off a "chain reaction" that brought down France's always unstable political structure. Following the Franco-Prussian War the Monarchist-dominated Constituent Assembly established what became the Third Republic as a temporary expedient until they could agree upon a candidate for the throne. This temporary compromise continued to exist throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Constantly shaken by scandals, the Third Republic began to disintegrate follow-
ing World War I. The new century brought an increased emphasis upon social welfare questions (re-enforced by the worldwide depression). The French government was incapable of meeting these demands. France combined a multi-party system with a parliamentary structure which, however democratic it may have been, failed to produce governments that could govern. A chronic state of immobilism developed in the inter-war years. Ministeries were formed by coalitions of divergent interests agreed only on narrow, short-range goals; major programs were too divisive to be carried out. The governments of the inter-war years took on the character of a continuous series of revolving caretakers. The defeat of 1940 has been attributed to the failure of French leadership (military and political).

The conclusion of World War II saw France in the same predicament that had been its fate following World War I (only it was worse in 1945); it was defenseless, weak and feared yet another German revival. French diplomacy set out once again on the old paths of alliance and dismemberment. This time it achieved a success in dismembering Germany as that state was partitioned into "zones of occupation." France also found success in the forming of alliances. It quickly concluded agreements with Russia and an Anglo-French alliance signed at Dunkirk. Later in 1948 the Dunkirk Treaty was expanded into the Brussels Pact with the
adherence of the Benelux nations to the original agreement. All of these diplomatic measures were designed to "control" Germany and protect French national security.

The emergence of the Soviet threat to Europe and the creation of NATO in order to meet that threat are dealt with in Chapter IV because of its relationship to France's nuclear strategy and withdrawal from NATO. The brief presentation in the above paragraphs outlines the importance attached to military security by the French nation. Any nation constantly threatened, as has been every French generation since the French Revolution, by military invasion does not lightly ignore its security needs.

POLITICAL CULTURE AND CHARLES DE GAULLE

Political socialization is a "macro" concept in that it envisions a process acting upon an entire society, but it is well known that individuals undergo this process differently. The preceding section dealt with an historical overview that affected the entire French nation; this section deals with the individual character of Charles de Gaulle. All societies, especially one as divergent as France, is composed of numerous individuals whose personal experiences impress upon them beliefs, attitudes and values that may differ markedly from those ascriptive of political culture. Since individuals bring these "macro" belief
systems with them to the roles they fulfill in public service, the personality of an individual decision-maker such as Charles de Gaulle can be of salient interest in understanding the actions undertaken.

Parents and family are one of the strongest elements in the socialization process. The de Gaulle family was politically attuned to the Monarchist Tradition in France. While the restoration of a king (Bourbon-Orleanist) is a primary desire of Monarchists, an underlying belief is that France should be governed by a strong executive. Many writers have compared de Gaulle's presidency in monarchial terms; the label of "Republican Monarchy" has often been ascribed to it. The Monarchist Tradition, taking its fundamental principles (i.e., overlooking its "kingly trait"), has inculcated the belief in a strong executive among those exposed to it. In a French society that enshrined a weak executive this background of Charles de Gaulle helps explain his willingness to set aside the political "norm" and to urge a strong presidency.

An appeal for a strong executive is only one example of wherein de Gaulle differed from the "norms" of French political culture. Twice, in 1940 and in 1958, de Gaulle denied the legitimacy of the "constitutional" government of France. This questioning of legitimacy is another heritage of the Monarchist Tradition. Originally rooted
in the belief that the "Republic" was an unlawful usurpation, in modern times it has devolved into merely a questioning of governmental actions. Perhaps one can view this as an extension of Rousseauian thought; government is only the agency acting in behalf of the sovereign, legitimate people.

De Gaulle was born in 1890 and grew up in the pre-World War I era. He was subject to much of the revanche spirit that ran throughout France. He was trained for a military career and served in both world wars. These major events cannot have left de Gaulle unaffected. During the inter-war period de Gaulle taught at the French military academy, Saint-Cyr. Charles de Gaulle was one of the foremost spokesmen for military modernization, for tactics that were utilized by the Germans when they defeated France in 1940. De Gaulle had not been committed to "fighting the last war" and was able to clearly perceive the changes that necessitated readjustment of military security policy. He brought this specialty with him when he returned to power in 1958 and many of his actions can be traced to these abilities.
CHAPTER III

THE PATTERNS OF POWER AND INTERESTS

Le system, the military, and the civil service compose the three institutional groups most concerned with France's military security policy. These groups are not only the instruments by which France's military security policy is carried out, but they also are pressure groups which endeavor to help formulate that policy. Traditional administration theory makes a distinction between policy and administration, but that distinction is now recognized as an artificial "academic" tool. Those who carry out policies are not opinionless, beliefless creatures. They are highly involved and concerned with the policies they "administer." Only in nations where loyalty to the "rules of the game" are so strong (Great Britain during the labor government of 1945-1951) can one see "little" interference with policy by those who administer it.

Beer and Ulam's patterns of power and interests were designed primarily to deal with pressure groups; governmental institutions were categorized with the decision-making apparatus within the pattern of policy. However, the realities of French politics (and perhaps all political structures)
mitigate against such an approach. A group that is institutionally accorded recognition differs from an "ordinary" pressure group (which may be functionally represented in advisory committees) only in the degree of its power. It, of course, is charged with the administration of the particular policy, but often governments have charged private groups with this responsibility (the broadcast media and utilities in the United States). A second consideration is the relationships between these groups and Charles de Gaulle. Although the military did challenge de Gaulle, for the most part he was paramount within the decision-making arena. These relationships reflect more of a pressure group style than that of a co-equal partnership which inclusion within the decision-making process would imply.

Attitudes towards pressure groups are an element of a nation's political culture. Discussion of them has been postponed until now in order to directly relate them to the events described in this chapter. From Rousseau can be traced a political philosophy that places great distrust in the activities of pressure groups as expressions only of "particular wills" and not of the "general will." This is essentially the public interest versus private interest argument that is fundamental in the study of pressure group politics. The connotations are such that the pursuance of particular wills are viewed as in conflict with the good of
the whole. What occurs is that groups cloak their private interests with the formal trappings of public interest in another case of "vice paying tribute to virtue."

This rationalization of private interests (claiming that they are national or public interests) is an important element in the events described in this chapter. The instability of the French political structure enhanced this problem in that an "authoritative" institution (i.e., an agency that could in judge-like fashion decree what were public interests and what were private) did not exist. Although these were a French government, many of France's people did not accord it this authoritative role. The military especially questioned the government's attempt to do this and, in fact, challenged it for supremacy. It is this competition for supremacy in the authoritative role (usually considered the role of the government or state) that is the main thrust of this chapter. Power struggles for the control of a state by individuals are familiar (perhaps because of historical methodology), but similar struggles among institutional groups are not. Extensive governmental institutional groups (going beyond what political party terminology refer to as the "cadre" stage of development to a "branch" or "mass" structure) are a phenomenon of the modern state.

This paper deals with the three institutional groups (le system, the military, and the civil service) as if they
were unified. This is obviously an academic "fiction" that is utilized because of the convenience it affords. Groups are almost always divisible into sub-groups or factions that compete with one another. When, in the course of this paper, the group name is used, it is as a shortened title for the dominate faction within the group (e.g., instead of saying the "Revolutionary Warfare Faction within the Army portion of the military," the term "the military" is used). Often the defeat of a "group" is attributable more to the combination of its non-dominate factions (in alliance with outside "groups") than of the strength of other groups. Wherever this is the case it is noted. Confusion, of course, arises because factions within groups like groups within a society tend to claim to represent the "general will."

**LE SYSTEM**

The term "*le system*" is applied to the elected officials who held power during the Fourth Republic. It also includes the functionaries or courtiers that attached themselves to this political core. The Fourth Republic, like the Third Republic, was structured within a parliamentary framework. The legislature was the center of power with the president being a ceremonial position without much real power and the "Government" or Ministries being responsible to the Chamber of Deputies. Although this framework "parallels" that in
Great Britain, it was far more weaker in fact due to the operation of a multi-party system within France. The diversity that was described in the chapter on political culture has lead France to develop an electoral system in which a half dozen or more "major" political parties compete for legislative seats.

French voters actively supported the myriad of political parties and were so "evenly" distributed in their support that no one of them could ever achieve a majority as the result of an election. This meant that governments had to be formed from coalitions worked out within the legislature and were not "ready-made" as in Great Britain (the election entrusting a party with a majority). The multi-party system further complicated this task in that the parties were often committed to many divergent policies. Because no party could obtain a majority electorally (and, therefore, be expected to carry out its program), "rash" and "irresponsible" promises were often made in order to attract voters. Once these positions were taken, it was hard (especially in that fiercely competitive atmosphere) to back down from them. Since they were often made in order to distinguish the party from parties with similar ideological beliefs, this made it difficult for stable coalitions to be formed. It is easy to imagine the difficulty of coalition formation among parties of competing ideologies. Yet, the same process applied with
parties that were ideologically similar (Left, Right, Workers, etc.). Other cleavages often divided these parties.

The result was that the Fourth Republic was a republic of immobilism. Coalitions were formed to deal with specific problems. When new problems arose, the coalitions often dissolved because the parties were in disagreement over how to solve it. This would necessitate a new coalition being formed that could agree on how to solve the new problem. It, in turn, would come apart when another problem arose. Because the coalitions were also "responsible" for the political direction of the government, the rapid turnover resulted in an abdication of leadership. During the twelve years of the Fourth Republic twenty-three premiers held office,¹ (tenure in other ministries was often of longer duration). These governments seldom stayed in office long enough to get a "handle" on things and were subsequently caretaker in nature.

Another element of the immobilism that affected the Fourth Republic was the personal ambition of many of the politicians involved. The multi-party legislature made it easy for pressure groups to wield influence. The Third Republic (with a similar political structure) was repeatedly rocked with scandals involving the seedy side of lobbying

and influence peddling. This reputation was carried over into the Fourth Republic. Whether or not it went as far as it had during the Third Republic (or to the extent in the Fifth Republic) is not that important; the major point is that the French National Assembly because of the democratic nature of the electoral system, was prone to represent and respond to pressure groups. The French deputies were also relatively secure in their offices; this enabled them to engage in much "politicking." Governments were often overthrown for no other reason than that a group of ambitious politicians wanted to have office (or improve their position). A cabalistic atmosphere pervaded the Fourth Republic. Getting into office and staying in became objectives in themselves.

Because of these reasons the Fourth Republic acquired the opprobrium of the French people, and it was with such connotations that the term "le system" was used. The Fourth Republic's beginning had not been propitious to start with. The first attempt at approving a constitution had been defeated. The second constitution, which passed, received only 9,120,576 votes to 7,980,333 while 7,938,884 voters abstained.\(^2\) The Fourth Republic began without the confidence of a majority of the French people and its actions did nothing to change that.

\(^2\)Thomson, p. 237.
The immobilism resulted in the other institutions of government (technically responsible to the political government) such as the military and the civil service taking over the direction of policy that had been abdicated by *le system*. The Fourth Republic was brought to an end when one of the political leaders attempted (actually only an implied threat) to regain control of the decision-making process. Although *le system* was generally despised, there were "within" it reformist factions. *Le system* had deftly avoided the Algerian crisis for a number of years (actually a few governments had collapsed over their inability to solve it). Actual power with concern to Algerian policy had been allowed to flow to the military (which will be dealt with more fully in the next section of this chapter). In May, 1958, Pierre Pflimlin, upon becoming premier, set out to settle the Algerian problem. He was invested with the premiership on May 13, 1958; the army in Algeria revolted on the same day.³ The French generals in control of the Algerian policy did not favor negotiating with the Algerian rebels because they thought this would lead to an independent Algeria; a situation which they opposed. Pierre Pflimlin was willing to open negotiations with the rebels; it was for this reason that the revolt was staged.

The army in Algeria (dealt with in the next section under the term "Revolutionary Warfare" faction) dominated the military establishment even though it was numerically a minority even within the army. It was able to achieve its aims by "neutralizing" the other elements of coercive force. It appealed to the "unity of the army." Its success was not as much due to the support the Revolution Warfare doctrine held within the army as to the lack of support for the Fourth Republic and le system.

Pflimlin's government discovered that the military units in metropolitan France and West Germany were not prepared to use force or even demonstrations of force to bar the insurrection from the mainland . . . . Most units, it was feared only awaited some sign that the rebels would succeed before they helped to pull down the rickety political structure. The invasion of Corsica, publicized plans for paratroop drops around Paris, and De Gaulle's announcement that he was beginning the process of forming a government therefore provided sufficient motivation for the Fourth Republic to commit suicide.4

The unpopularity of le system combined with the emergence of an alternative (Charles de Gaulle) in which to invest France's legitimacy enabled the military to pull off its coup d'état.

---

The Revolutionary Warfare faction had been able to initiate the coup d'grâce of the Fourth Republic because of its unpopularity. Yet the Revolutionary Warfare faction lacked the support itself to assume control of the government and set up a military junta. If it had tried, a civil war may have been the result. For this reason it accepted Charles de Gaulle's assumption of power believing that he shared their Algerian views.

The constitution of the Fifth Republic transferred the center of power from the National Assembly to the presidency. The creation of a strong presidency enabled the Fifth Republic to survive its own confrontation with the military three years later. Although the elected officials under the Fifth Republic were concerned with the issues of foreign and defense policy (in fact, for the most part they were the "same" individuals that had held office under the Fourth Republic), the transference of decision-making power to the presidency reduced the affect that they could have upon it.

The members of the National Assembly were never able to recover this power during Charles de Gaulle's presidency. The reputation of le system clung to them. Fears of immobilism and chaos were levied against them whenever they attempted to reclaim powers. De Gaulle identified the National Assembly with the particular interests and deputies
of Rousseau's thought. He had nothing but contempt for them (although he was forced to put up with them) and preferred, perhaps reflecting a combination of Rousseauian and Monarchist Traditions, to rule through plebiscites. He expressed this belief in his *Memoirs of Hope*:

Now, while I was convinced that sovereignty belongs to the people, provided they express themselves directly and as a whole, I refuse to accept that it could be parcelled out among the different interests represented by the parties . . . . But in order that the State should be, as it must be, the instrument of French unity, of the higher interests of the country, of continuity in national policy, I considered it necessary for the government to derive not from parliament, in other words the parties, but, over and above them, from a leader directly mandated by the nation as a whole and empowered to choose, to decide and to act.  

De Gaulle utilized the plebiscite throughout his presidency to give substance to this belief. His success in doing so (until April, 1969) enabled him to relegate the National Assembly (the location of *le system*) to a secondary role.

The National Assembly provided de Gaulle with support through most of his presidency; it was not a rampant center of opposition. Yet, it was within the National Assembly that the members of the Fourth Republic's *le system* congregated and where opposition did voice itself to de Gaulle's policies.

---

THE MILITARY

The military establishment of a nation is the instrument of its defense. With its civil service counterpart it administers the totality of government policy. The problem that arises is due to the fact that policy-administration dichotomy is an academic tool for separating facts and values in issues that are dealt with by single individuals. Administrators have beliefs, values, and attitudes too; they cannot be expected not to (they can be expected to place the enforcement of legitimate directives above these personal beliefs). When administrators "forget" their role and ignore the legitimate societal policy-making apparatus, a "conflict of interests" arises. This is what occurred with the military during the Fourth Republic. The military not only was the instrument for the French Algerian policy but a major advocate of a specific Algerian policy (continued union with France).

The French army has had a traditional role in the administration of colonies. It played a major role in the creation of the French overseas empire following the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. The military provided many of the colonial administrators and thereby acquired a heritage of solving political problems. The colonial wars fought to preserve this empire increased the importance of the military as political administrators.\(^6\) The French army's

major mission was not combative but administrative. This predominance of the administrative function led "the Army (to acquire) psychological, paternalistic and political interests in the French Empire." When the "winds of change" began to sweep that empire away, the French army became more desperate in its futile efforts to preserve what remained.

Algeria became a symbol of that empire (it was the first area that had been conquered) at the same time as the Fourth Republic was sinking deeper and deeper into its immobilism. With the government's reluctance or inability to solve the Algerian problem the military eagerly took over direction of policy. The army's initial military activities were soon superceded as the war in Algeria became more intense. Committed to the victory of its own policy, the army assumed total control of French policy towards Algeria.

The counterpart to its efforts to predetermine what single policy would emerge from the political process was the army's practice of interpreting, even reconstructing, decisions taken by the government so that they would mean what supporters of French Algeria wanted them to mean. Favorable pieces were taken out of context and construed to be the whole policy. Negative elements, qualifications, nuances were ignored.

It was the weakness and uncertainty of the political leaders

---

8 Furniss, p. 82.
in Paris that made the assumption of policy-making powers by the army in Algeria so easy. It was because of this weakness that the political leaders failed in their confrontation with the military and brought on the demise of the Fourth Republic.

The French army continued to aggregate authority to itself. It extended the scope of its concerns beyond the realm of military affairs and into social and political questions.

With the autonomy of decision and its expanded role in Indochina as a precedent, the army cast itself upon the Algerian people and sought to mold them into a contented, peaceful, prosperous society controlled by France. So weak were the institutions of the Fourth Republic, so divided the counsels of its leaders, that the army, in its fantastic endeavor, had come by 1958 to assume for the most part full powers, untrammeled by civilian direction, not responsible to political authority.9

An "ideological" content emerged within the army's goals for Algeria.

As has been previously mentioned, the French military was dominated by the Revolutionary Warfare faction. This group of officers and enlisted men, mainly within the conventional combat forces of the army, subscribed to a doctrine that coupled military strategy with social action. The vast

bulk of the French military establishment did not share these beliefs, but because those who did occupied the key combat, staff and training positions, Revolutionary Warfare dominated French military thinking. The French army underwent a drastic transformation following World War II. Thrown into a series of disastrous colonial wars, especially the one in Indochina, many officers arrived at the conclusion that the only way in which the French Empire could be preserved was if the army directly assumed political powers.\textsuperscript{10} This doctrine appealed greatly to the army's combat elements who viewed their own position vis-à-vis other elements of the military and their continued existence as dependent upon the preservation of the French Empire. The empire justified the maintenance of a large conventional force.

The French defeat in Indochina was a tremendous shock, especially for the military leaders who were confident in their technical superiority. The military underwent a process of introspection from which the Revolutionary Warfare doctrine (so called because it was meant to be counter-revolutionary) emerged as an explanation of France's defeat. France's military capabilities were not faulted; Revolutionary Warfare posited that France's defeat had stemmed from political

factors beyond the control of the military. Ho Chi Minh's success in Indochina was attributed to the strong appeal that "his Marxist-Leninist ideology" had because of its social welfare considerations. The failure of the French government to meet the socio-economic needs of the Indochinese peoples provided the vehicle by which Ho Chi Minh was enabled to ride to power.

Social action is a basic function of modern governments. The determination of social welfare policy is a political function and in the Western democracies is a task carried out by the elected representatives of the people. The Revolutionary Warfare faction claimed that the army should possess this function if it was to preserve the French Empire. Attached to the fundamental decision to assume the political function was the ordering of specific policies by which the social welfare demands of France's colonial people's were to be met. Revolutionary Warfare combined within the military's authoritarian structure a program of socio-economic reforms much akin to those advocated by various socialist groups. (Yet, it was actively anti-communist politically.)

It was the Revolutionary Warfare group which lead the army into assuming political authority in Algeria. It was composed not only of France's elite combat troops (who were fighting the war in Algeria) but of most of the "general staff." It was this domination of the "general staff" (and
the military schools, such as Saint-Cyr) which enabled the Revolutionary Warfare faction to speak authoritatively in the name of the army and of the whole military. Opposition to the doctrine could be and was considered a threat to the "unity of the army" and to the legitimate military institution (and, interestingly, to the government itself). By imposing itself between the government and the rest of the bulk of the military, the Revolutionary Warfare faction was able to sever the legitimate channel of communications connecting these two groups. Since most of the army was dissatisfied with le system, the government was unable to elicit any support from them when the crisis came in May, 1958.

The Revolutionary Warfare faction, in de facto control of French Algerian policy, rebelled when Pierre Pflimlin posed a challenge to their continued exercise of authority.

. . . since the Army saw itself as the embodiment of the national will, it believed that any persons or groups disagreeing with its ideological interpretation of the national and international scenes were necessarily traitors or communist agents. It felt that it had to have power to make its voice heard at all levels, to carry out its national defense mission, and to look after the nation's destiny.11

It not only removed Pflimlin but the Fourth Republic as well;

11Stupak, p. 593.
it hoped by this means to guarantee its continued control over Algerian policy.

Charles de Gaulle's assumption of power, although the result of the coup d'état carried out by the Revolutionary Warfare faction, was not as a spokesman (or leader) for that group. De Gaulle's supporters had urged his acceptance upon the disparate elements within the military as a means of avoiding a civil war. The last days of May, 1958 were filled with the tension of crisis. While the overthrow of the Fourth Republic by the Revolutionary Warfare faction was readily accepted, the attempt by that group to establish a military junta (if it had desired to do so) would have met with opposition. De Gaulle, whose beliefs concerning Algeria were in conjunction with the Revolutionary Warfare faction's at that time, offered an alternative to chaos and civil war. By turning to him the impasse created by the coup d'état was overcome. Charles de Gaulle, possessing great personal prestige, could unify the various groups behind his government.

De Gaulle represented a compromise similar to that which had resulted in the adoption of the Third Republic; he divided France the least. De Gaulle assumed office believing in a French Algeria; his experiences in office lead him to change that viewpoint. De Gaulle came to accept the necessity of negotiating with the Algerian rebels
(and, by implication, the independence of Algeria) as the only solution to the Algerian problem. This is precisely the reason for which the army had overthrown the Fourth Republic.

... there is little evidence that De Gaulle deliberately set out to fight the Algerian army which had placed him in power. De Gaulle's ambiguities, shifts, and retreats are more logically explained as reactions to unanticipated obduragy encountered in his dealings with both the Moslem nationalists and the military-European alliance in Algeria. 12

The reaction of the Revolutionary Warfare faction was shock. As de Gaulle's policy unfolded they turned from disbelief and anger to opposition.

... it was De Gaulle's consummate ability to out-maneuver the army that most aroused military anger. The army had thought it was installing an effective and willing prompter of its Algerian policy. What it got was a President who, behind a smoke-screen of public contradiction and ambiguity, sidled down the very path of "abandonment" from which the army had barred the Fourth Republic. 13

The Revolutionary Warfare faction proposed to settle this problem in the same manner as it had dealt with the Fourth Republic--by coup d'état.

12 Furniss, pp. 177-178.
13 Ibid., p. 69.
The General's Revolt in 1961 was essentially a repetition of the May, 1958 coup d'état except that it failed. The strength of the Revolutionary Warfare faction was unable to dispose of the Fifth Republic as it had of the Fourth Republic. The strength of the Revolutionary Warfare faction had not changed since 1958; it was due to "external" changes that it failed. Instead of opposing a weak, vacillating Fourth Republic, it confronted a revitalized Fifth Republic lead by Charles de Gaulle. The massive passivity that had been shown over the fate of the Fourth Republic by the French people was no longer a condition favoring the Revolutionary Warfare faction.

De Gaulle, on assuming office in 1958, undertook to "modernize" the French military; it is this modernization policy represented by the creation of the Force Nucleaire Stratégique that is at the heart of this paper. It was undertaken not only to revitalize the French military but to re-direct it into safe channels away from the Revolutionary Warfare doctrine.\footnote{Elizabeth Stabler, "French Military Policy," Current History, L, 296 (April, 1966), p. 233.} While France maintained its empire, there was a need for a large conventional force. This force, as the events of 1958 clearly demonstrated, also posed as a potential threat to civilian governmental authority. Although the French Empire served as the main justification
for the maintenance of a large field army, France's security needs because of NATO and the Soviet "threat" also played an important role. The loss of its empire did not necessarily mean the reduction of its military forces and of the domestic threat that they composed. The Force Nucléaire Stratégique was designed to accomplish this task. By providing a technical alternative to France's security needs, de Gaulle was able to reduce the size of the army from the 820,000 men that had been required while the Algerian problem remained unsolved to a force of 330,000 men at the time he left office.15 These reductions occurred among the conventional combat forces.

The reduction of the French army (and its conversion to modernization) did not begin until after 1962. These reductions did not affect the strength of the Revolutionary Warfare faction during its struggle with de Gaulle. They only occurred after it had been vanquished and were designed to prevent a future recurrence of a challenge to civilian authority. Since most of France's generals had derived their experiences (and promotions) from the colonial wars, the reduction of the size of the army enabled de Gaulle to remove many of these men who were tainted by the Revolutionary Warfare doctrine.16 Coupled with the reduction of conven-

16 Furniss, pp. 178-179.
tional forces this broke up a major center of opposition to de Gaulle's policies.

These events occurred after the failure of the Revolutionary Warfare faction to destroy the Fifth Republic and Charles de Gaulle and were designed to protect the government from future threats. What enabled de Gaulle to defeat the Revolutionary Warfare faction in the first place was his winning over of important elements within the army, air force, and navy to his modernization policy. Neither the air force nor the navy suffered a decline in numerical strength during de Gaulle's presidency. The restructuring of France's military security policy around the **Force Nucléaire Stratégique** gave a central role to these two services. France utilized both surface-to-surface missiles and sea-to-surface missiles within its nuclear force. The navy, air force, and younger army officer with technical backgrounds achieved new prominence and prestige under de Gaulle. These men were engineers, administrators and technicians more than they were military men. Their commitment to Charles de Gaulle and the Fifth Republic foredoomed the Generals' Revolt in 1961. The Revolutionary Warfare faction based in Algeria could not threaten metropolitan France without the service support (transportation, transportation,

---

17Domenach, p. 193.
communication, supply, etc.) controlled by the air force and the navy.

THE CIVIL SERVICE

The role of the civil service throughout the process was highly invisible. As the civilian counterpart of the military, it is possessed with great strength. Its invisibility was perhaps due to the fact that the policies being followed by de Gaulle were essentially their policies. It was the civil service that had initiated the French nuclear program following the disaster of Suez in 1956. De Gaulle's endorsement of it helped win them over to the Fifth Republic. The civil service had shared the general distrust and disgust with the Fourth Republic's le system. The governments of the Fifth Republic were more to its liking because they were composed of men drawn from the civil service. An examination of the three offices of premier, foreign minister, and defense minister (those concerned with military security policy) shows that between 1959 and 1969 these offices were occupied by men with administrative or civil service backgrounds.\(^{18}\) Jacques Chaban-Delmas, Michel Debré, Georges Pompidou, Maurice Couve de Murville, Pierre Messmer and Pierre Guillaumat all came from technical or administra-

tive careers. The other ministries, to a lesser extent, drew upon the civil service to fill their top level positions. The civil service's role within the Fifth Republic has obviously been salient, but its congruence with the policies of Charles de Gaulle makes the necessity for a lengthy discussion of its activities superfluous.
CHAPTER IV

THE PATTERN OF POLICY

Policy, its formulation and implementation, is the culmination of the patterns of government. Policies emerge from the play of powers and interests upon the decision-making instruments of the society. This paper focuses upon the change in military security policy undertaken during the years of Charles de Gaulle's presidency. The institutional groups most concerned with the national security (described in the preceding chapter) were either in agreement (e.g., the civil service, the air force, and the navy) with the creation of the Force Nucléaire Stratégique or else were thwarted in their opposition (e.g., the Revolutionary Warfare faction and le system). With the establishment of the Fifth Republic Charles de Gaulle declared the areas of foreign policy and defense policy were matters exclusively within the domaine reserve of the French president. French policy became the expression of Charles de Gaulle's beliefs. Although he was supported quite actively by the civil service in his endeavors, the principal role in decision-making was his. That there was so "little" disagreement over this is

probably due to two factors. First, de Gaulle provided stability to the French government. The civil service valued this highly because it is essential for the efficient administration of the state. As long as the only alternative to de Gaulle was chaos and possible civil war, very few men were reluctant to challenge his authority. Second, de Gaulle's actions can be said to have been derived from the deductive premises of his background and professional training. Since the deductive process is dependent upon the initial premises, the civil service and military reformists differed little from de Gaulle because he was "one of them."

THE COLD WAR

The Second World War left Europe in shambles. The powerless, weakened states of Western Europe were faced with an ambitious Soviet state. The Western European nations lacked the military strength to stop a massive Soviet attack, but overt aggression was not the only thing that produced fear in the West. The Soviet actions throughout Eastern Europe alarmed them to the threats of covert Soviet pressure.\(^2\) The Atlantic Alliance was created to

bolster the Western European states and, if necessary, to defend them. It was offered as a visible symbol of the West's determination to remain free.³

Events elsewhere in the world soon began to transform the Atlantic Alliance. The Communist invasion of South Korea resulted in demands for more "concrete" measures of defense to be undertaken by the Atlantic Alliance's members. The heightened fear of Soviet aggression made the Atlantic Alliance's mutual guarantees appear as an insufficient deterrent. In September, 1950, in a protocol to the Atlantic Alliance the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was established.⁴

De Gaulle later described NATO as the symbol of the American protectorate exercised over Western Europe.⁵ In retrospect the terms "protectorate" and "sphere of influence" probably best reflect the reality and flavor of the Cold War years with regard to Western Europe. The Western European states had yet to recover from the effects of the Second World War. Their conventional military establishment


⁴Fox and Fox, pp. 14-15.

suffered from too great an imbalance vis-à-vis the Soviet Union to have any hope of stopping a Soviet attack; only nuclear weapons could do that. A Soviet attack on Western Europe was deterred by the American threat of "massive retaliation." This threat in no way emanated from NATO; America's nuclear forces were all outside of the NATO system. The United States directly protected Western Europe. The role reserved for NATO (besides the symbolism of allied troop contributions) was that of "controlling" Western Europe; i.e., for preventing any of the Western European nations from "triggering" a Soviet-American war. NATO was the formal notice of the United States assumption of "responsibility" for Western Europe analogous to the assumption of responsibility for Latin America exercised by the United States in the late nineteenth century.

THE NUCLEAR QUESTION

As long as the Western European states perceived the Soviet Union as a threat and the United States as capable and willing to deter that threat, NATO with its implications of "protectorate" was accepted by them. The Soviet Union was incapable of attacking the United States with either

---

conventional or nuclear weapons while the United States could attack the Soviet Union. This arrangement, which entailed little risk for the United States, made the American nuclear guarantee an effective deterrent. The Western European states accepted their client-state status in exchange for the protection afforded them by the United States. That a real belief in the commonality of their interests during these years existed does not distract (although it does tend to make it more palatable) from this relationship.

The late 1950's saw the American nuclear guarantee first dissipated and finally broken. America's willingness to defend Western Europe (and the belief in a commonality of interests) was first challenged by the Suez crisis in 1956. Great Britain and France undertook the invasion of Egypt with the assumption that the United States was in "support" of their action. When this proved not to be the case, Great Britain and France found themselves outside the "perimeter" of American defense. Although the Soviet Union possessed a nuclear capability at this time, its delivery system was not sufficient for it to threaten the United States. However, it could rain down nuclear destruction anywhere in Western Europe. The Russian role in the Suez crisis was minimal and secondary at most, but taken in conjunction with American actions it provides a significant
premonition of what the future held. The Soviet Union blandished the threat of nuclear attack at Great Britain and France if they did not withdraw from Egypt. The United States, also desiring an Anglo-French withdrawal from Egypt, did not come to the defense of its allies; it did not counter the Soviet threat with its own threat of massive retaliation.\(^7\) The shock occasioned by the knowledge that their interests could differ so substantially (and result in the withdrawal of the American nuclear guarantee) served as a catalyst for the construction of the French Force Nucléaire Stratélique.\(^8\) The French (and British) came to realize that their interests and American interests were not entirely identical. The realization that the American guarantee was dependent upon French "good behavior" or subservience to American interests set in motion the events that culminated in France's nuclear force and in its reassertion of independence under Charles de Gaulle.

Within a few years of Suez the American guarantee was broken by the Soviet deployment of a missile delivery system capable of striking the United States itself. Suez demonstrated that the United States could willfully deny

---


the protection of its nuclear weapons; the Soviet intercontinental strike capability raised the question as to whether or not the United States could now willfully extend its protection to any other nation. The vulnerability of the United States transformed the realities of world politics.\(^9\) The premises upon which the American nuclear guarantee had been based were no longer applicable.

De Gaulle's return to power occurred shortly after these events had transpired. Firmly intending upon governing France, he readily perceived that the conditions affecting world politics had changed. These new conditions dictated that France undertake a major reappraisal and readjustment of its military security policy. France's defense, like that of the other Western European states, had been based upon the unconditional, absolute American nuclear guarantee. This situation no longer existed. Although France could rely upon American protection whenever the United States deemed its own paramount interests at stake, for those instances when this was not the case some other means had to be found in order to provide France with the necessary guarantee of security. This other means was the **Force Nucléaire Stratégique**. The French nuclear force was justified as the replacement

---

for the "failed" American guarantee. This "failure" of the American nuclear deterrent was a constant theme presented by de Gaulle in his statements on France's nuclear program.

But at the same time as the alarms were dying down, there was also a reduction in the guarantee of security—one might say absolute—that the possession of the nuclear weapon by America alone gave to the Old Continent, and in the certainty that America would employ it, without reservation, in the event of aggression. For Soviet Russia has since that time equipped itself with a nuclear power capable of striking the United States directly, which has made the decisions of the Americans as to the eventual use of their bombs at least indeterminate . . . .

The loss of the American nuclear guarantee was not something which was perceived merely by the supporters of Charles de Gaulle. The realization of this occurrence permeated the entire French "elite." René Pleven, who had been one of the Fourth Republic's premiers, is an example of the pervasiveness of this understanding (Pleven, it should be noted, later held office within the Gaullist ministries); he wrote early in de Gaulle's presidency that:

Some of those who realized the gravity of the threat which the Soviets now held over the free world began to wonder if there was not a risk that the guarantee of nuclear intervention hitherto so generously offered by the United

---

States to all the free peoples might not one day be limited to the stakes which the American public considered most essential to its own security.11

De Gaulle was not faced with the task of convincing the French that they were indeed faced with a security problem; this was already widely accepted. By the time he returned to power, the argument had devolved from the stage of definition to that of seeking out a possible solution. The Force Nucleaire Stratégique was offered as a solution to a recognized and well understood problem.

De Gaulle adopted the nuclear program as the best means by which to address France's military security problem. Consequently he accelerated the development of France's nuclear weapons program.12 His actions, when taken in conjunction with the subsequent withdrawal of France from NATO, have often been described as rash and inappropriate. A careful examination of the situation reveals that this is not the case. De Gaulle, through his life's work, had demonstrated his loyalty to France and its security. His early career had been that of a "military intellectual" devoted to the study of military strategy. Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville in a speech before the National Assembly enunciated on this reputation. He said:

12Hartley, p. 197.
everyone is well aware, consciously or unconsciously, that the quarrel is not military, but political. The best proof of this is that no one, either in France or abroad, has sincerely felt that our Government, in doing what it has just decided, was endangering its own defense or that of its allies. Who, moreover, would imagine that General de Gaulle himself would at any time assume responsibility for anything that would be likely to jeopardize the nation's security?  

The political nature of this question is more evident when the military considerations are analyzed.

French security is ultimately guaranteed by the United States. The strategic importance of France is such that it would benefit from the protection afforded the United States to its other European allies. The loss of France due to aggression (not as the result of retaliation for actions it had taken elsewhere) would not be in the national interests of the United States. In such a case (unprovoked aggression) the United States would, regardless of treaty delegations, be forced to protect France. The Force Nucléaire Stratégique's function was to fill the gap between American interests and French interests. The nuclear striking force's purpose was to guarantee France the ability to pursue an active policy without the fear of "nuclear blackmail." It was the memory

---


14 Kissinger, p. 17.
of Suez and not of the Fall of France which provided the
motivation behind France's nuclear program.

The French military security policy is defensively
orientated; with the liquidation of its empire this has
become even more so. France has suffered two great invasions
in this century alone. The World Wars wrecked great destruc-
tion upon France. The desire for military security is aimed
primarily at preserving France from yet another invasion.
The post-World War II era introduced the threat of nuclear
"invasion" to the fears that play upon the minds of French
statesmen. The American nuclear guarantee, while it had
been operative, had protected France from the threat of
invasion. It was this security that was sought in seeking
a replacement for the no longer operative American guarantee.
Premier Georges Pompidou said that:

Our basic effort is the deterrent force, be-
cause we consider that above all we must save
peace, our peace, and not be attacked. The
only way not to be attacked is to have a suf-
ficiently powerful atomic arsenal; the day we
have a sufficient atomic arsenal, including
the hydrogen bomb, well, France will never be
attacked again. This is what is fundamental.  

Defense was the primary military function envisioned for the

15 France, Ambassade de France, New York, French Foreign
Policy: 1966, "Televised Interview of M. Pompidou (excerpts):
September 26, 1966," p. 117.
Force Nucléaire Stratégique. It would prevent France from being "sold out" in a confrontation between the superpowers by giving it something to "bargain" with.

The Force Nucléaire Stratégique also served a number of non-defensive interests. Its use to convert the army away from the Revolutionary Warfare doctrine has already been described in the preceding chapter. Another important aspect that de Gaulle felt could be derived from the nuclear program was the stimulation of the French economy from scientific "spin-offs." The modern technology ancillary to a nuclear weapons program (communications, computer systems, etc.) is adaptable to the needs of civilian industries. It was also associated with France's mystique of glory and honor. The possession of nuclear weapons was viewed as a symbol of Great Power status; a status de Gaulle felt that France rightfully possessed.

... a French atomic deterrent force is coming into existence and is going to grow continuously. It is a relatively modest force, it is true, but one which is changing and will completely change, the conditions of our own defense, those of our intervention in faraway lands and those of the contribution that we would be able to make to the safeguard of our allies.16

These subsidiary reasons added depth to the Force Nucléaire Stratégique's military purpose.

An important military question was whether or not France was capable of constructing a credible deterrent force. The effectiveness of a deterrent is an unmeasurable quality for it is unknown when not used and a failure when it has to be. It was readily admitted that a force similar in scope to that of either the United States or the Soviet Union was beyond the economic capabilities of France, but such a force was not required in order to provide France with a credible deterrent. France did not require the arsenal of a superpower; the adopting of a "porcupine strategy" adequately satisfied its needs. The porcupine is a small, weak, slow animal that could easily be overwhelmed by any of a number of much larger predators, but the porcupine is able to deter its potential predators. The porcupine's quills protect it from being eaten not because they represent a superior strength but because they make the effort too "costly." It was this strategy that France adopted. Defense Minister Michel Debré enunciated this view in explaining why France did not need to achieve parity with the superpowers.

For it is clear that to deter a would-be aggressor does not require parity of nuclear armament, but simply the ability to bring to bear on him a threat proportionate to the
Whenever French and American interests coincided, France could be assured of the support of the United States nuclear might. When their interests differed, the Force Nucléaire Stratégique could protect France.

THE WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO

The establishment of the strategic nuclear force and the French withdrawal from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were directly related. By the 1960's the conditions that had given rise to NATO had underwent substantial changes. The call for reform was not limited only to the French Government of Charles de Gaulle. The recovery of the European states in the 1950's lead them to advocate reforms that would adequately reflect within NATO their new strength. While any French government would have pressed for these reforms, only de Gaulle would have proposed withdrawal as an alternative if the reforms were not acceded to.18

De Gaulle's policies were motivated by a mystical, nationalism that exalted France's glory and its historic role as a Great Power. NATO was viewed as the symbol and

instrument of the American protectorate over Western Europe. Its unreformed existence was anathema to Charles de Gaulle who viewed the role of protectorate as an impediment to French independence. The conditions of the 1950's had been such that it had been necessary for France to accept this subservience; the 1960's were different. In reviewing the policies of those years Premier Georges Pompidou stated: "You know that our action over the past nine years has been aimed at restoring the independence of our policy. Today this independence is acquiesced."\(^{19}\)

One of the main motivations behind the French withdrawal from NATO was this desire to re-assert France's independence. NATO, because of its American domination, was viewed as an obstacle to this goal. Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville spoke of this relationship between defense and independence. He said:

\[
\ldots \text{its disadvantages are that first it strips us French—whether the Government or the citizens are concerned—of the feeling of our responsibilities in defense matters and, consequently, to a very large degree, of the will to defend ourselves. Defense has become a somewhat anonymous thing in which we do not feel we are truly participating. And as soon as a country is no}
\]

longer interested in its defense, it is not far—it must be said—from losing its independence.20

Independence carried with it the connotations of societal integrity and cultural heritage. The threat to French independence posed by the lack of interest in defense did not merely endanger a state but the entire essence of nationality.

That France's actions represented a positive concern with its own problems and not an attempt to disparage the United States is evident by the distinction that was made between NATO and the Atlantic Alliance per se. Although American officials tended to perceive these as the same thing, the French associated the Atlantic Alliance with Western interests and NATO with American interests. De Gaulle never contemplated withdrawing from the Atlantic Alliance; he intended upon honoring France's commitments to it.

The Atlantic Alliance exists. So long as the Soviets threaten the world, this alliance must be maintained. France is an integral part of it. If the free world were attacked, or the old or the new continent, France would take part in the common defense of the coasts of her allies

and with all the means that she has.\textsuperscript{21}

That this commitment implied a more "active" role than the United States anticipated for its "client" states is the origin of the Franco-American dispute that eventually lead de Gaulle to withdraw France from NATO. The \textit{Force Nucléaire Stratélique} was the means chosen by de Gaulle to achieve this aim.

\ldots within the Atlantic Alliance--indispensable so long as the ambitions and the threats of the Soviets are raised--our country, while combining its defense with that of its allies, intends to remain the master and, if necessary, contribute to the common effort something quite different from the soulless and powerless assistance of a people that would no longer be responsible for themselves. This leads us to provide ourselves with the modern means of ensuring our security, in other words, with the means for deterring any country whatsoever from attacking ours, at the risk of subjecting itself to frightful destruction. I mean, of course, atomic weapons.\textsuperscript{22}

These actions were not designed to weaken the Atlantic Alliance but, in a sense, to strengthen it. There was, however, an intention upon weakening American control over


Western Europe and France in particular. The actual steps taken in the withdrawal were structured such that no real military damage was done to the Atlantic Alliance. Although France "officially" withdrew from NATO on March 7, 1966, it had been slowly withdrawing the forces that it had committed to the NATO commands ever since March 7, 1959 (when it withdrew its Mediterranean naval units). By spreading out its withdrawal over a number of years, de Gaulle gave his allies time to readjust their military postures.

By the 1960's the Soviet threat was perceived as diminishing. This factor was fundamental in explaining why de Gaulle was able and willing to cut France's ties with NATO. NATO had been accepted by France originally because of the Soviet military threat. As that threat lessened so did the justification for NATO. Other changes also affected the relationship of the European states vis-à-vis the United States. As Europe recovered in the post-World War II world, it focused its attention to its own problems. Separated from their empires (sometimes by violence), the European states no longer had true global interests. However, the United States did. The United States involvement in world affairs brought it into "conflict" with the Soviet Union. These conflicts, because of Europe's treaty commitments, made it subject to threats of war over matters that it had no concern for. The reform movement, lead by France, desired
to change NATO in order to minimize the chances of the United States leading them into an unwanted war.

Western defense was dependent upon nuclear weapons. NATO, without any nuclear forces within its command structure, was not in the mainstream. As the American guarantee weakened, NATO proved inadequate to cope with the problem. NATO strategy was unilaterally decided by the United States; the European "allies" were expected to comply. The European states did not possess a voice in the making of decisions. As long as the United States had been invulnerable and its nuclear protection could be "relied" upon, this relationship gave rise to little concern. When, in the 1960's, this was no longer the case, this became a matter of contention between the United States and its Western European allies. Now that the United States was vulnerable to attack itself, the European states were afraid the United States might, under the threat of nuclear retaliation, abandon them. However, it was felt that if these states shared in the control of nuclear weapons this abandonment would not occur. It was for this reason that the European states wanted a voice in the critical decisions that affected them.24

23 Kissinger, pp. 94-95.

The United States opposed any changes (through the NATO system) along this line. It did not want other nations having a voice in its fate. Decisions that were critical to the United States were deemed as inappropriate for other, less "responsible" states to have a voice in. These were the same fears that motivated the European states in their demands for a greater role within NATO. The United States unwillingness to accord to the European states the same protection that it demanded for itself further damaged the credibility of its nuclear guarantee (already under serious questioning). France, unable to achieve reforms within NATO, opted for an "independent" status similar to that claimed by the United States.

The NATO structure gave the United States practical control over the forces committed to it. This condition met with strenuous opposition on the part of French military leaders. Army Chief of Staff Charles Ailleret expressed the essence of this situation when he said:

> The defense of France was therefore in effect to be entrusted entirely to the United States and French forces were liable to be brought into action on the decision of American generals and not that of French leaders acting in accordance with directives from our gov-

---

De Gaulle took issue with this organizational structure from the moment he returned to power in France. In accelerating the development of the force de frappe he realized that there would be demands for its integration within the NATO command structure. The French desired to be allies and not a dependent client state. A speech by Premier Pompidou before the National Assembly voiced France's intention of retaining control of its own destiny.

We refuse, it is true, to allow our armed forces, and especially our deterrent force, to be lost in an organization which necessarily results in stripping us of any decision-making power of our own. But it is not necessary for us to give up our existence in order to be a good ally, it is doubtless just the opposite.27

It was the inability to reform this arrangement that necessitated France's withdrawal from NATO under de Gaulle.

The affect that the NATO structure had upon the conventional forces of France was itself sufficient cause for de Gaulle to contemplate withdrawal; the affect that it would have on the Force Nucléaire Stratégique made withdrawal


necessary. In his *Memoirs of Hope* de Gaulle expressed this opinion in the following passage:

Hence, while continuing to belong to the alliance formed by the Treaty of Washington for mutual assistance in case of aggression, she planned to leave NATO sooner or later, the more so as she intended to equip herself with nuclear weapons which there could be no question of integrating into the system. More than anything else, political independence commensurate with my country's position and aims was essential to its survival in the future.  

De Gaulle's beliefs slowly gained wider and wider acceptance among the French leaders as his contentions were time and time again proved true.

Immediately upon assuming office de Gaulle set out to demonstrate that the United States would never allow NATO to undergo any meaningful reform. The "Tri-Directorate Proposal," the subject of a secret memorandum sent to Great Britain and the United States in September, 1958, posited that the three powers jointly control the West's nuclear arsenal (and the formulation of policy). De Gaulle in his *Memoirs of Hope* discussed the rationale behind this gambit.

France's accession to this summit would be all the more appropriate because the Western monopoly of atomic weapons would very soon

---

cease to belong exclusively to the Anglo-Saxons, now that we were about to acquire them. I therefore proposed that the alliance should henceforth be placed under a triple rather than a dual direction, failing which France would take no further part in NATO developments and would reserve the right, under Article 12 of the treaty which had inaugurated the system, either to demand its reform or to leave it. As I expected, the two recipients of my memorandum replied evasively. So there was nothing to prevent us from taking action.29

De Gaulle had been convinced that the United States (and its junior partner, Great Britain) would not take up his offer because it entailed a loss of independence and flexibility. The tri-directorate proposal had been designed "to put its recipients in the wrong in the eyes of French opinion," and this is precisely what it did.30 Because it had been included in a secret memorandum, the French were aware only of the Anglo-American refusals and not of the nature of the "reforms" that de Gaulle had proposed. The tri-directorate proposal ended any thoughts within the French Government about integrating the striking force into the NATO structure. Within NATO the Force Nucleaire Strategique would have been removed from French control.

Events over the next few years tended to re-enforce these impressions of America. The activities that transpired during

29De Gaulle, pp. 202-203.
30Hartley, p. 211.
the Kennedy Administration were the most flagrant afronts to French sensibilities. Under the Kennedy Administration the United States unilaterally abandoned the policy of massive retaliation for one of "flexible response." Flexible response represented precisely the fear that had motivated the European states into demanding a voice in NATO policy. The flexible response doctrine removed the threat of retaliation from the barricades thrown up to defend Western Europe against the Soviet Union. Premier Pompidou challenged this turn of events before the National Assembly.

Within NATO itself, we have seen the replacement, gradual and without our agreement, of the initial strategy that was based on deterrence and, consequently, on the immediate use of atomic reprisals, by a strategy called "flexible" which, under the pretext of lessening the risk of total war, actually consists in enabling the United States to limit the field of the initial operations by sparing the territory of the main potential aggressor. 31

Flexible response was the abandonment of Western Europe by the United States. It was designed to spare American soil from nuclear holocaust but at the cost of Western Europe.

The Cuban Missile Crisis gave the fears that had been roaming around Europe reality. Although the actions taken

by President Kennedy were unilateral, there was little if any disagreement over their appropriateness. The lesson of October was that the United States, because of interests (and adventures) for which Western Europe had no concern, could bring them all to the brink of war. As the differences between American and European interests increased, this fear of unwanted war grew. De Gaulle cited this as a salient determinant in France's decision to withdraw from NATO.

... while the prospects of a world war breaking out on account of Europe are dissipating, conflicts in which America engages in other parts of the world—as the day before yesterday in Korea, yesterday in Cuba, today in Vietnam—risk, by virtue of that famous escalation, being extended so that the result could be a general conflagration. In that case Europe—who's strategy is, within NATO, that of America—would be automatically involved in the struggle, even when it would not have so desired.32

This fear prompted de Gaulle to "hurriedly" separate France from NATO and the hegemony of American policy.

Throughout this period the United States engaged in a constant effort to have the French striking force integrated into NATO. This would have meant that the United States would exercise control over it; since there was no reciprocity

---

to these proposals (i.e., the United States was unwilling to lose total control over its own nuclear forces) de Gaulle opposed them. To have done otherwise would have forfeited the security obtained by their own nuclear deterrent. Because NATO was so controlled by the United States, any nuclear forces within it would have been subject to the same disadvantages inherent in the American force; i.e., the fear of the United States sacrificing Europe would have still existed. Since this is what the force de frappe had been created to remedy, integration was totally out of the question.

The tri-dictorate proposal had demonstrated that the United States would not consent to having its own forces merged into any integrated command. The various multinational proposals (disguised as "integrated commands") that were offered by the United States in the early 1960's all entailed, ultimately, American control of all nuclear weapons--its own which were not to be "integrated" and those of its allies which were.

Stopgap plans for sharing our nuclear weaponry--multi-lateral, multi-national, inter-allied mixed crews, or whatever name--turn out to be form without substance. Each has a built in trigger guard, some gimmick to make certain that ultimate control remains in our hands.33

---
Not only were those schemes designed to leave the United States in control of its own missiles but to gain control of those of its allies--particularly the French force. Premier Pompidou outlined the differences that were the intended result of the American schemes.

If the President of the United States considers that nuclear forces must be engaged, he has 95 per cent of the American atomic weapons at his disposal for that and does not need to ask anyone's advice. What good would it be for the European nations to be able, in theory, to veto the engagement of the remaining 5 per cent? If on the contrary, the American President refuses, against the advice of the European nations to engage the nuclear forces, his veto is enough to paralyze everything. Who can therefore dispute that our deterrent force, modest but real, would lose all but the semblance of meaning if it were "integrated"?

By avoiding the dangers inherently associated with integration, France hoped to re-assert its independence.

---

34 Pompidou, p. 328.
CHAPTER V

CONSEQUENCES

Politics do not occur in a vacuum. The creation of the Force Nucléaire Stratégique was affected by the milieu of French politics. In the Beer-Ulam approach the creation of a new policy sets into motion the agents of change that begin the patterns of government process anew. The three sections of this chapter examine the advantages to France of its independent nuclear force, its disadvantages, and what the "future" holds in store for the Force Nucléaire Stratégique.

THE POLICY OF TRADITION

The Force Nucléaire Stratégique is accepted as the optimum defense policy by those who hold power in France. It was the expression and instrument of France's drive under de Gaulle to reassert its independence. Although de Gaulle's personality and style cannot be discounted, it cannot be overlooked that he pursued a policy rooted in France's tradition. De Gaulle desired to re-assert France's role of independence in world affairs.¹ His

¹ Roy Macridis (ed.), Modern European Governments:
policy was also concerned with France's perennial search for security. These two objectives have been traditional elements of French policy. The major thrust of the Force Nucléaire Stratégique was to provide France with the capabilities to pursue other, more specific policies. As such it is apolitical; the nuclear force can serve the purposes of any French government. This flexibility provides it with an advantage that would mitigate against any drastic changes. The economic considerations (sunk costs, alternate program funding, etc.) are dealt with in the following section. It should be noted, however, that any change in France's military security policy (which would entail an alternative program and not merely the cessation of any program) would be extremely costly.

The question of France's relations with NATO are perhaps more perplexing. Although de Gaulle's withdrawal of France from NATO appears drastic when compared with the policies of the Fourth Republic, an examination of larger scope reveals that it was the Fourth Republic's actions which were drastic. The Fourth Republic had been too weak following World War II to re-assert France's independence;


it had to settle for the "abnormal" protectorate relationship offered by NATO in order to secure France's borders.\(^3\) When France recovered its strength, it was able, under de Gaulle, to throw off the NATO "yoke."

It is important to remember the differences that de Gaulle saw between the Atlantic Alliance and NATO. An alliance composed of "co-equal" member states was never objected to; it was only to the organizational structure that transformed the European states into clients that de Gaulle objected to. The Pompidou government has cooperated with the European NATO members under a number of circumstances. As far as French readmittance to NATO is concerned, this would be dependent upon its reform (essentially involving the end of American control).

De Gaulle wanted to restore France to its "rightful" role in the world. Although specific policies in the realm of international relations are beyond the scope of this paper, it should be noted that the nuclear force (in giving France the capabilities, real and psychological, to maintain its independence) has enabled France to pursue a more activist role in world affairs. The prestige associated with the possession of nuclear weapons has given France a greater voice in the arena of nations. Its policy of

---

independence vis-à-vis both the United States and the Soviet Union has served as a rallying point for those Western nations not in agreement with the superpowers.

MATERIAL SECURITY

The nation de Gaulle inherited in 1958 was well on its way to economic recovery. The immobilism of the Fourth Republic tended to hide this development. It is an important occurrence in that de Gaulle would not have been able to construct the costly Force Nucléaire Stratégique otherwise. The initial costs necessary for a nuclear program are so horrendous that unless a nation is "prosperous" it cannot afford to undertake such a project without totally endangering its economy. De Gaulle was able to meet these costs both through France's economic growth and the transference of funds from other programs (the NATO commitment and the 500,000-man reduction within the army). But the nuclear force did suffer setbacks due to economic factors.

With the expansion of the French economy the workers and other lower class groups expected to share in the new prosperity. As their expectations failed to be met, they became more and more dissatisfied with France's domestic

---


policy until they erupted in the "Spirit of May." The riots and strikes carried on by the students and workers in May, 1968, forced the government of Charles de Gaulle to pay more attention to the growing social welfare demands of the French people. The money to fulfill these demands was drawn, in part, from the defense budget. Although the modernization of the military was not halted, it was delayed and in some instances forced to modify its plans (for instance, mechanized, armour divisions ceased to be mentioned). These delays in the nuclear force were eventually made up and the program completed. The costs that affect the Force Nucleaire Strategique are now mainly those of upkeep. For this reason it is unlikely that any French government would scrap it and start from scratch building another defense apparatus, especially since the credibility (effectiveness) of the nuclear force has not been questioned.

CONCLUSIONS

The question of après de Gaulle intrigued the scholars of the Fifth Republic throughout de Gaulle's presidency. That the presidential system of the Fifth Republic functioned

---


with de Gaulle was no proof that it would under the leadership of a "lesser" man. With the removal of de Gaulle from its presidency, it was posited that the Fifth Republic would experience an entropy of power. To some extent this redistribution has occurred under President Pompidou, but he, although stylistically different from de Gaulle, has been able to provide the presidency with another strong leader.

The Pompidou presidency has been Gaullist in spirit and fact. It was under President Pompidou that the Force Nucléaire Stratégique's deployment was completed. The costs of this, although delayed by the need to meet France's social welfare demands, were met. The immediate post-de Gaulle years have been a continuation of de Gaulle's policies (although the loss of de Gaulle has greatly affected the unity and direction of the Gaullists). This is not too startling when one compares the governments under President Pompidou with those under de Gaulle. The key personnel in both are the same; Pompidou, Chaban-Delmas, Messmer and Debré were all ministers under de Gaulle (Chaban-Delmas was President of the National Assembly). These men had supported de Gaulle in his modernization policy and after 1969 continued to support that policy.

A change has and is occurring with regard to the nature of the post-de Gaulle governments. Whereas de Gaulle
relied heavily upon administrative personnel, President Pompidou (for the years 1969-1973) has used fewer civil servants in his cabinets. The number of elected officials within the governments has markedly increased since de Gaulle left office in April, 1969. Although it is too early to predict anything with a great degree of accuracy, this trend "bodes ill" for the Fifth Republic. A perennial question in French politics has been ministerial responsibility: is the government responsible to the head of state or to the legislature? It has been on this question that France's previous attempts at presidentialism have foundered. The Fifth Republic will eventually have to face and answer this question.

It is unlikely that the Gaullists would endeavor to change France's military security policy (as long as it fulfilled its function). Not only were they instrumental in completing the Force Nucléaire Stratégique but the costs that a new program would entail militate against such a course of action (unless, of course, it was deemed absolutely necessary because of obsolescence). An examination of the most likely "alternative" to Gaullist leadership leads to the same conclusion. The Socialist-Communist coalition that proved a viable contender in the March, 1973 legisla-

---

tive elections is mainly concerned with meeting the social welfare demands of the workers and other lower class groups. They would be less likely to favor the funding of a new system than the Gaullists. With regard to foreign affairs, Francois Mitterand, the coalition's "leader," foresaw "no objective change" if they were to come to power.9

The Force Nucleaire Stratégique represents a return to France's traditional policy of independence. It was designed to meet the security needs left exposed by the failure of the American nuclear guarantee and, as long as it does this, it will continue to be supported. The possession of nuclear weapons provides France with the flexibility (derived from the security of deterrence) to pursue other policies on a global scale. Of course, a government that reputiated this role would not need a nuclear force but in a nation that is ever so conscious of its prestige and historic role this is unlikely. The civil service and the military have become "attached" to the nuclear program as a guarantee of France's independence. This symbolic attachment is also prevalent among the general population which, with France's tradition of insecurity, makes the nuclear force a valuable bulwark to the government.

9"Approaching a Crucial Vote," Time, March 5, 1973, p. 22.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS:


DOCUMENTS:


JOURNAL ARTICLES:


... "The Last Year of De Gaulle's Foreign Policy." International Affairs, XXXV, 3 (July, 1969), 424-435.


Adapted from an address delivered at the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale, October 19, 1971, printed in The Atlantic Community Quarterly, X, 1 (Spring, 1972), 71-83.


Kohn, Hans. "Nationalism in the Atlantic Community." The Atlantic Community Quarterly, III, 3 (Fall, 1965), 293-313.


---. Reprinted from NATO's Fifteen Nations in *The Atlantic Community Quarterly*, VII, 3 (Fall, 1969), 393-400.


---

Excerpts from an article in Orbis, Summer, 1966, printed in The Atlantic Community Quarterly, IV, 2 (Summer, 1966), 189-196.
