The Religious Origins and Modern Resurgence of French Anarchism with Particular Reference to Three Political Clubs: the Jacobin Club, Club Jean Moulin, Club Citoyens 60.

- Le christianisme a été longtemps en France la maison mère des idées politiques.
  
  (Albert Thibaudet, *Les Idées Politiques en France*, p 81)

- Il est surprenant qu'au fond de notre politique, nous trouvions toujours la théologie.
  

by

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of Ph.D., University of Edinburgh, 1973.
For my Mother.
Abstract.

This thesis aims to relate the French political clubs of the post-war period to two developments which began in the 1930's: a practical movement to change and modernise French political society and the resurgence of traditional anarchist ideas - ideas whose source will be traced back to seventeenth century religious dissent.

Since the main target of both reformers and anarchists has been the form of the French State, the relationship between the State and the individual became the leitmotif, if by no means the sole preoccupation of the thesis. It will be argued that the 1930's was a vital watershed in this respect: for it was then that the modern movement to reverse negative attitudes towards the State in a more positive direction arose. However, as political clubs were originally treated in isolation, these long-term trends emerged only gradually. How they emerged helps to explain why it was thought necessary to cover such a very wide field to elucidate such a seemingly narrow subject as the post-war clubs.

A number of studies of French political clubs already existed when this one was started. However, virtually all of them treated only the general topography of the subject; none attempted to deal in detail with the ideology, inner working and membership of any single club. (1) The picture that emerged was certainly comprehensive but it was also indistinct and it cannot be said to have provided a satisfactory answer to the fundamental question: were clubs so much froth on the surface of political life, or did they attest to the existence of important new currents under the surface of French politics? Clubs, after all, had been extinct for almost a century when they reappeared after the Second World War and so it was almost universally assumed, in academic as well as journalistic circles, that their resurgence was probably charged with political
significance. The original aim of this thesis was to examine this assumption by analysing three of the most important clubs in depth. This approach was based on the calculation that if a small part of the club movement were brought into closer focus, the principal features of the whole might become more easily identifiable.

This approach was successful to a certain degree, for some features of the clubs - their libertarian ideology and modernising enthusiasm, and the attitude of their members towards politics - immediately took on sharper contours. However, it was only as a result of stumbling on the extra-party reform movement of the 1930's that a more definite pattern began to take shape. The pre-war reform movement and the post-war clubs, like two parts of a jig-saw puzzle, clearly fitted together. But one part was still missing: the source of the anti-political bias characteristic of both. In the post-war clubs the denigration and even condemnation of politics in the sense of formally organised political action hovered like the smile of the Cheshire cat. Among the reformers of the 1930's it was a good deal less disembodied and elusive. They repeatedly and vigorously expressed the view that politics and power were the work of the Devil himself. This kind of outlook went a long way to explain why new currents of ideas that had made a considerable impact on important and dynamic sectors of opinion had had so little influence on the formal institutions of French society. The anti-political theme, therefore, seemed worth exploring further.

The main clues on this trail evidently were Proudhon and Péguy. As both bore a striking resemblance to non-conformist puritans in character and ideas, religious dissent seemed the most promising line of research. In fact, their relation - as that of Alain - to Jansenism, a powerful libertarian current in seventeenth century French Catholicism
did eventually appear. And it is a primary aim of this thesis to show that Jansenism was the source of the libertarian strand in French Republicanism as represented by Proudhon and Alain.

Jansenism had a number of unusual theological characteristics which were transposed into equally unusual political features. One such characteristic was the refusal to separate religious from social life. This, in conjunction with an absolutist caste of mind, led Jansenism to substitute morals for politics. Absolutism — and other factors — also imprinted French religious libertarianism with its peculiarly negative bias: it was right and proper to obey authority externally while judging and resisting it externally. Politically, this formula can also be recognised in the characteristic form of the French State, centralised and authoritarian because outwardly unchallenged, but weak because chronically lacking in legitimacy.

At the same time, Jansenism contained within itself the seeds of its own future transformation: the uncompromising demand for the autonomy of the whole human personality (arising from the substitution of morals for politics) and the semi-mystical belief in the mission of humanity to dominate the material environment. The germination of these ideas, in time, produced Proudhon's anarchist doctrine which reversed the negative bent of Jansenism and gave the system of values derived from it a more positive and constructive formulation. Practically, however, the anarchist current in France was halted by the Commune and did not reappear as a significant political force until the 1930's.

It is necessary to bear this evolution in mind in order to understand how and why different intellectual elements crystallised as they did during this period. The centre of the pattern, around which all else fell into place, was the dawn of industrial and technological society in its modern interventionist form. In France the development of this
new type of society was, of course, much less advanced than in many other western countries. But it became an irritant and a source of profound unease more quickly here than elsewhere because it conflicted violently with a deeply ingrained set of values as also with the actual forms and practices of political life. With the growth of the modern State the traditional negative attitudes towards power had finally lost their protective value. Frenchmen were thus compelled to think in more positive terms of the relationship of the individual to the State.

It is true that the French State was itself interventionist. It was, in fact, over-centralised. French citizens were unused to participate in the affairs of the community and were, on the whole, hostile to change. Yet the modern industrial State, as the reformers of the 1930's clearly saw, needed the active co-operation of all social groups and entailed constant change. It was, therefore, urgent for France to modify her authoritarian Statist traditions, in the direction of greater popular participation. At the same time, it became necessary for the individual Frenchman to look beyond his traditional suspicion of the State and politics to ensure that State interference in his personal life, now inevitable, should be controlled by positive action rather than by negative resistance.

The practical arguments for a changed relationship between the individual and the State, arising from the nature of a modern industrial economy, were reinforced by ideological considerations. For some of the most fundamental values of Republicanism (more to the fore in the 1930's than for decades past as a result of certain intellectual and religious developments) were profoundly at variance with the modern political world. The ancient aspiration for personal autonomy clashed with the activity of the all-embracing, interventionist State and the belief that man should control his material environment was threatened by the domination of an impersonal
machine technology. Paradoxically, it was the country that was the most protected from modern pressures which was the least prepared to tolerate them. There was also another contradiction of political consequence, namely between the mediocre realities of French national life and the elevated vision of France's position in the world inculcated into Frenchmen. From this contradiction sprang a deep sense of unease that from the 1930's onwards provided a driving force for the reformist movement that had sprung up at that time.

This movement was composed, broadly, of three elements: an ideological protest of an anarchist nature against the modern State and society; a purely pragmatic awareness of the need for change; and a particular modernising style, rationalist and optimistic. Sometimes these strands were interwoven, sometimes they remained strictly separate from each other. But the essential new development was that henceforth in French society a body of libertarian ideas of a universal character interacted with the practical impulse for change. These ideas often had a decisive influence on the direction taken by the reformist movement. And their existence explains the sporadic bursts of intellectual fireworks - at their most spectacular and colourful in May 1968 - that have accompanied it.

The creation of clubs - or at least some of them - was another episode along the same line; a variation, quieter and more decorous, on the same theme. The Events of May 1968 began as a practical demand for reform, but turned into one of those great French moral gestures for the deliverance of the human race - no doubt because certain ideas were 'in the air'. In the clubs, this humanist preoccupation was also present. But it was accompanied by a determination to master the tedious technicalities of how a freer and more humane society could be achieved in practice. The clubs were by no means as glamorous as the glorious days of May. On the contrary, their style of expression was often dull and repetitive, their
caution tiresome and their moralising tone distinctly irritating. But because of their greater intellectual rigour, their history is more interesting and much more instructive than the Events of May.

The accidental development of this thesis has inevitably led to a certain imbalance in its structure. If clubs are taken as the head, then the body and tail, like those of a dinosaur may seem over-sized. The only justification that can be offered is that this imbalance was dictated by the nature of the subject. To have dealt with clubs in isolation would have made it impossible to answer the fundamental questions they posed. The process of clarification, once begun, was potentially limitless. The problem was where to set the boundaries.

With respect to the introductory part on doctrine, however the aim is strictly limited. It is to outline Jansenist ideas in so far as they had political consequences and to offer evidence that religious dissent is a major source of the libertarian strand in French Republicanism. The main problem encountered here was that the secondary sources on the historical aspect of the question were usually of extremely poor quality, biassed and badly documented. Primary sources, on the other hand, were not easily available and their full pursuit would have taken this thesis well beyond the material limits imposed on it. It has thus been impossible to explore fully the interaction of the ideas in question and actual historical development, although a certain number of tentative hypotheses have been advanced.

In the modern club period, the problems were different. There was no real difficulty in obtaining access to primary sources. However, unlike their American counterparts, French clubs are not legalistic, and procedures and constitutions were of very little help in indicating their true nature, so that interviews had to be relied on to a very large extent. The information obtained in these interviews was cross-checked as far as
possible, but the interpretation of this material is sometimes inevitably subjective.

Finally, no attempt has been made to measure the degree of influence of the modernising and anarchist ideas that are the subject of this thesis. For the time being, at any rate, the question is probably unanswerable and could not anyway be examined within the very narrow limits imposed on this thesis. As for the clubs themselves, they can only indicate the direction in which the winds of change are blowing, but not their actual force.
This is to certify that this work has been composed and written by myself.
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Introduction

'La politique' writes Thibautet, 'ce sont les idées.' (1) But in France as he points out, the flow of ideas does not necessarily follow the channels of official parties or parliamentary groups. Instead it is often determined by an underlying and long-term ideological geography whose features are like river-beds within which the stream may be a trickle or a flood, depending on the season, but whose direction changes only slowly.

This continuity of political currents in France is strikingly illustrated by the way in which the anarchist tradition of French socialism has re-emerged, irregularly but with constantly increasing impact, within this century and particularly since the 1930's. Surprisingly perhaps, the renewed interest for traditional values has been innovatory rather than reactionary in its political effect. Whilst anarchist ideas generally are all too often suffused with romantic nostalgia for the rural, artisanal communities of the pre-industrial past, French anarchist doctrine over recent decades has gone beyond a merely negative and facile condemnation of industrialism and capitalism and shown a persistent determination to come to grips with the practical problems posed by modern society. Anarchism - at least in its moderate Proudhonist form - has proved a rich source of modernising inspiration in the most sophisticated phase, technically and industrially, of French national existence. But because of its inherent distrust of large-scale organisation, anarchist ideology is not easily expressed through political and social institutions. And even today its influence is felt less strongly in the functioning of public institutions and the shaping of government policy - although both have been affected in some measure - than at a cultural level, in the way French people think about change in society and the values they hold in relation to it. In fact at this level, libertarian ideas have become so
powerfully entrenched that the France of the early 1970's may no longer be understood without taking them into account.

Pre-Marxist French socialism was not, of course, exclusively libertarian. It was a movement of great imaginative power and variety, at once utopian and scientific, communitarian, individualistic - and authoritarian. But before 1870 it was dominated by the ideal of Proudhon's social and economic democracy, a political system which, although decentralising and anti-authoritarian, was also scornful of the mechanisms of representative parliamentary democracy. Then the Commune, like a landslide, abruptly halted the old creative ferment within French socialism and diverted its mainstream along the narrow course traced by Jules Guesde. Jean Jaurès, in the decade before his death in 1914, tried to bring about a synthesis between Marxism and the earlier humanist tradition, but it was eventually Guesdism which won the battle for the Left. And over the half-century between the Commune and the First World War, the now virtually dried-up river-bed - to continue Thibaudet's metaphor - of libertarian and humanitarian socialism was fed only by small isolated springs such as Charles Péguy and Georges Sorel, both of them resolutely anti-materialist.

It was only later, in the 1930's, that the trickle - in the form of intellectual reviews and non-party groups - began to turn into a stream, albeit a very modest one. Moreover, these reviews and groups not only rediscovered but also recast and up-dated traditional doctrine. Their lives were, however, shortened by the advent of the Popular Front and few of them existed for longer than six years. But their ideas exerted considerable influence both on the Vichy regime and direction taken by the political thinking of the Resistance movement.

After the Second World War, the left-wing libertarian current surged up once again. It gained in vigour particularly after the Russian
invasion of Hungary in 1956, for this event marked the beginning of the
divorce between a new generation of left-wing sympathisers and the
Communist Party. By now the ideology of the new Left was no longer
confined principally to Parisian intellectual circles. It had acquired
influence in the provinces, prestige among some sections of the middle
class and even marginal respectability in the working class. But still
it lacked a mass following and intellectual momentum. The new-style
socialists were dispersed and their ideas ill-defined.

The clubs could not back the by now rapidly reviving current of
humanist socialism with mass support. In the first place, they numbered
only a few thousand members in all. Secondly, a considerable section
even of these were reformists without necessarily being socialists. How¬
ever, the clubs did provide the new mouvement with intellectual momentum
in crystallising ideas which, by the early 1960's, had been 'in the air'
for some time. The significance of the clubs lies in the fact that they
furnished a landmark and a temporary point of reference by which particular
political ideas, the form they took and the clientele which supported them
may be judged. But if they can be seen as a landmark, clubs were never a
sign-post: they could give no indication of the future development of the
ideas they propagated.

Clubs did not, then, point to the Events of May 1968. But, retro¬
spectively, they offer an insight into some at least of the many aspects
of the revolt: the demand for modernisation and participation; the anti¬
materialism; the libertarian, creative - in short, the anarchist - aspira¬
tions. In particular, they explain why the sudden appearance of Proudhon's
effigy in the courtyard of the Sorbonne was more than the momentary materiali¬
sation of a hoary old ghost inexplicably resuscitated from the remote past,
but instead like the arrival on stage of some key character whose entrance
into a play has been carefully built up. Also, it may be that in the
future, the Events of May will be seen to mark the point at which the authoritarian current of socialism which gathered strength after the Commune began to be reversed.

If politics are about ideas, they are also about feelings. And emotionally, France has been living with a fundamental, painful contradiction for at least the past century - from the Franco-Prussian War onwards. This contradiction has been between the image that French people have had of their country and the actual realities of the French situation. The state of national self-esteem has played a role of considerable political importance in that it has contributed to the rise and character of dissident movements; the resurgence of the ideological currents examined here has been inextricably bound up with the morale of the French nation.

The image of France imprinted on the minds of succeeding generations of young French men has been heroic, epic and moral. France, in school text-books and official speeches, has continued to be portrayed as a first-class power and a leading cultural centre, the guardian of universal values which it has been her privileged mission to contribute to humanity. Like Michelet's phrase - 'France glorieuse mère qui n'est pas seulement la nôtre et qui devez enfanter toute nation à la liberté' (2) - much of this elevated patriotism was derived from the humanism of the 1789 Revolution. Yet even those who believed that the Revolution transformed an incomparable country into a madhouse have shown the same tendency to think that France has a special gift for civilisation and merits to be singled out from the common run of mankind:
Whatever its origins, a certain idea of France has lurked consistently in Frenchmen. Summarily defined, it appears to be a cross between Péguy's conviction that France has a special mission from God and General de Gaulle's sonorous assertion that France cannot be herself without grandeur.

Yet for the past hundred years the reality Frenchmen have known has been radically at odds with their national image. Three invasions in under a century have permanently tarnished the ideas of France's epic role in history. The rout of 1940, in particular, when France fell in a few weeks, was a bitter confrontation with her diminished position in the world. For this declining power status, internal development - at least until the late 1950's - offered no compensation. Up to the Second World War, French industry was backward and agriculture stagnant. Although sometimes stirred by scandal or sudden violence, the political life of the country consisted mainly of slightly varying cabinets lined up regularly on the steps of the Elysée Palace for the new government photograph to be taken. To many Frenchmen who still saw France as a powerful prestigious nation, the Third Republic was a patched-up affair without verve or style. And in its wake the Fourth Republic, despite all the bright hopes initially placed in it, stumbled along until its final crisis in 1958, seemingly no more successful internally or respected internationally than the regime which had preceded it.

The theme of national decline, linked often with anxious self-interrogation, appeared after the Franco-Prussian War. It became increasingly perceptible as time wore on. 'Jeune homme, la France se meurt, ne
troubler pas son agonie' Renan observed gloomily as early as the 1860's. (4) French 'décadence' now began to stimulate a line of literature which was to prove vigorous and enduring. Around the turn of the century one worried author, representative of many others, devoted an entire book to the question of whether the French were really morally decadent. By the end he had reassured himself that the situation was perhaps not quite so bad as it might be. But he still felt bound to issue the solemn warning that unless the French limited their consumption of alcohol, they were in dire danger of meeting the same fate as American Indians. (5) Another book on the same theme which appeared in 1905 was entitled: A quoi tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons? It concluded that the English home and school gave a better preparation for life, that the English were more accessible to moral considerations and that English patriotism was rooted in individualism and not in the worship of the State. (6) Not all Frenchmen, of course, or even the majority, have been by any means so respectful of Anglo-Saxon values or so unsure of French ones. But the theme of French inadequacy, often contrasted with the greater competence and political aptitude of Anglo-Saxons, became unhappily recurrent like some latent depressive affliction. Periodically the subject would be disinterred, dragged into the open and solemnly debated. In the early 1960's, for instance, in an effort to find out what made Britain so politically workable while France was not, the Club Jean Moulin - which included some of the country's leading administrators - speculated seriously on the role of cricket. (7)

Leaving aside the problem of how far French pessimism was justified - for it is questionable whether the French were worse off, relatively speaking, than other nations - it can fairly be maintained that French self-doubt, while varying according to period and to milieu, has remained a constant of political life over the past century: '... on décèle un
trouble, une anxiété, un malaise persistants.' (8)

Each of the three wars France has been through since 1870 has provoked a protest movement against the established order. And these movements have provided the dynamic to carry new ideological currents forward. The impact of national disaster allied with a mood of uncertainty has on three occasions produced an emotional reaction and a sudden upsurge of intellectual creativity among those likely to feel most acutely the gap between image and reality, namely youth and especially educated, intellectual youth. Since the established order after 1870 was the centralised Jacobin Republic 'une et indivisible', the young dissidents on the periphery of official political life concentrated their fire on it, together with its ruling class and dominant values.

The protest movement on the Right was negative in that the only remedy it had to offer for the failings of the Republic was a return to Monarchy. Charles Maurras and Maurice Barrès, leaders of the extreme right-wing movements that flourished until the thirties, had both been permanently scarred psychologically by the defeat of the Franco-Prussian War; throughout the rest of their lives they sought a means of regenerating France. Yet when they called for the restoration of local liberties and customs, this was in order that the aristocracy might reassert its power; and when they argued for decentralisation, it was not on libertarian grounds but in the belief that, if pruned of some of its functions, the state would find a greater sense of unity and purpose and consequently greater strength.
The dissenters on the Left also considered that the Republic's habit of concentrating all political power and initiative in Paris was harmful; it stifled local liberties and limited personal freedom. Some found inspiration for their criticism of the Third Republic either directly or indirectly in the doctrines of early nineteenth century libertarian socialism. Others - and these were often concerned with the economic and political modernisation of the country - were quite simply dissatisfied with centralisation and critical of the mental habits it had bred, such as the lack of personal initiative. While the first set of critics attacked capitalism on ideological grounds, the second group were dissatisfied with the practical performance of the system. From the 1930's onwards, these two currents - the one pragmatic and modernising and the other left-wing and libertarian - often joined forces since they had the same enemy and similar aims. Both demanded greater liberty for individuals and groups against all authority, but in particular against the burdensome and crushing weight of the over-centralised State. Both considered that the renovation of the country hinged on one crucial issue: the role of the State and the relationship of the individual to it. Both were interested in social and economic reforms.

These preoccupations separated the non-conformists, as they are referred to (9), from the orthodox Left. As Marxists, both the Communist and Socialist parties regarded the transformation of the State apparatus or of the economy within the context of the existing system as irrelevant. For them one bourgeois State was very much like another, and they considered that this one might as well be tolerated until it could be taken over and eventually abolished; mere economic reforms, as opposed to wage claims, were a diversion and a waste of time. Also, despite the decentralising current in pre-1870 Republicanism, the Radical Party upheld the Jacobin tradition. Besides, its position as pivot of Republican governments attached it to the status quo in practice as well as in theory. It was,
moreover, bored by financial and economic matters.

Consequently the only potential ally of the non-conformists was the extreme Right. Its motives were suspect and its definitions different; it certainly did not support the whole-sale democratization of public life which the non-conformist considered as indispensable. But partly on account of similar religious origins and partly due to the ambiguities that existed in both camps, the extreme Right and extreme or non-marxist Left co-existed and intermingled sporadically until the Second World War. Thereafter, the modernisers and the new Left - or rather their intellectual heirs - continued to propagate their ideas outside the established left-wing parties but without further contact with the extreme Right.

Both pre- and post-War movements will now be outlined briefly in turn so as to clarify the focus of this study and to define the themes on which it will concentrate.

The First World War was not, like the Franco-Prussian War, a defeat. Ostensibly it was a victory. Only, the price paid had been exorbitant. Most of the population either did not see or chose not to see the darker sides of this so-called victory. Patriotic and complacent, most French people basked in the economic well-being of the twenties, imagining before them an endless era of peace and prosperity.

In the generation which had been too young to fight and which reached manhood in the late 1920's, there persisted few illusions about the war and the real state of France. One of the first books to be brought out by the political protest movement this generation eventually gave rise to was significantly entitled: La Décadence de la Nation Française. For
many of the young non-conformists, this decadence consisted not only of the economic inefficiency, the paralysing over-centralisation of the State machine, the mediocrity of political life and the selfishness of the ruling class. It was also a result of the false and superficial values held by society. Money seemed to exert depressing dominance over all other human considerations and the individual was becoming de-personalised in an uncontrolled technological environment. They set out, therefore, both to attack the rot which they believed had eaten deeply into French society and to work constructively to find 'new solutions'. They were, in short, more concerned to change the rules of the game than to win a round.

The feeling that France somehow was not 'herself' played a vital role in stimulating the political consciousness of the young post-World War I generation. But other factors were also involved. There was the economic crisis sparked off by the Wall Street Crash which began to affect France seriously from 1931. There were important new spiritual developments both within Catholicism and in secular circles and new intellectual currents were flowing in the academic and university world. Affected by these new ideological currents and unable to share what they considered as the delusions of older generations, the non-conformists thought of themselves as totally cut off from the mainstream of national political life:

Pensez que les Anciens Combattants réclamaient pour eux les places, les honneurs, les récompenses, la gloire, les femmes, tout en jetant dans la balance, avec leurs titres de souffrances, le plus borné des patriotismes et le plus ridicule des conformismes. Notre haine... ne connaissait pas de bornes... la génération qui précède a fait faillite, radicalement. Rien à y prendre, rien à faire avec eux.

Although they came from widely different points of the political horizon, the young intellectuals of the 1930's felt united by the fact
of belonging to the same generation and of opposing the same system. They collected principally around reviews, the most celebrated being *Esprit* and *Ordre Nouveau*, some of which had active political groups collaborating with them. They gathered in the economic group *X-Crise* or in Christian Pineau's heterogeneous political Club de Février. Mostly they tended to remain outside of the parties, but this was not always the case: members of the Christian Democratic *Jeune République* Party were often linked with these non-conformist circles, while both the Socialist and Radical parties had their own internal protest movements whose ideas were sometimes parallel with and sometimes complimentary to those of the non-party groups.

For the limited purposes of this study, the non-party reformers of the 1930's may be divided into two broad, if overlapping, categories. There were those whose reactions to the particular problems of France and to the general economic crisis were governed chiefly by ideological, philosophical and even religious considerations. For them the economic collapse tended to be secondary to what they saw as a deeper crisis of Western civilisation. Perhaps half of these were Catholics and many of them subscribed to the Personalist philosophy associated with Emmanuel Mounier - which was, in fact, Proudhonism. The second categories were more practical than philosophical. They were motivated mainly by the effects of the economic crisis and included, among others, a fair number of civil servants. These distinctions, if broadly justified, were not absolute. *Ordre Nouveau*, for instance, had attached to it a number of technically competent working parties which tackled problems of urbanization. And the eminently pragmatic economic group, *X-Crise*, was led by Jean Coutrot, a visionary of the Saint-Simonist school.

The pragmatists were interested in wider problems than mere economic adjustments and advocated both economic planning and State reform. But
they had no thoughts of totally transforming the political and social order. On the other hand, the more ideologically-minded intellectuals set themselves an ambitious goal: to create a new political system which, in the jargon of the time, would go beyond - 'dépasser' - liberal democracy, communism and fascism. These systems were sweepingly condemned as inadequate. The first because it created a false notion of the individual as separate and independent of society and the last two because they crushed the individual. On these grounds, the non-conformists claimed to be neither on the Left nor on the Right. They were characterised also by a strange combination of wounded national pride and its opposite; an optimistic patriotism, with a strong humanist and universalist flavour, which led them to believe that France was uniquely equipped to find solutions to the problems of Western industrial society.

The 'system' - in so far as it was one - that eventually emerged from the writings of these non-conformists was not really new. In essence it amounted to the resurrection, partly through Sorel and Péguy, of such of the pre-Marxist currents of French socialism as accorded either with their anti-capitalism or anti-statism - or both. This meant mainly the doctrines of Proudhon and Saint-Simon, the most coherent and modern-minded of the early French socialists.

Despite the fact that their intellectual inspiration was often derived from traditional sources, the non-conformist groups of the thirties were, in the last resort, innovatory. But this was so less in the particular ideas they expressed than in the way they combined them. By far the most interesting aspect of the intellectual speculation of this period was the attempt to reconcile such of the older values of rural Catholic France as still seemed relevant in the modern world with new developments in science, industry and technology. Nostalgia for the virtues of poverty and of the old handicraft system was never entirely absent from the thoughts of
the young intellectuals, but far more prevalent was a new consciousness of the possibilities of modern technology and even of affluence.

Industrialisation and modernisation were seen as evils only in so far as they were uncontrolled or harnessed to a selfish economic ethic ascribed to protestant individualism. (Hence the violent language with which most of the intellectuals criticised the United States.) France, on the other hand, was thought to be able to provide the new values that were needed. These counter-values, as defined in the 1930's, were a concern, inherited from a rural past, to keep political and administrative units down to manageable and human proportions; and second, a Catholic emphasis on social solidarity rather than on individualism and on the progress, moral and material, of the community as a whole rather than the success or profit of its individual members. Saint-Simonism, the first French doctrine of industrialism, had been founded on a communitarian basis and it was to this economic tradition that the generation of the 1930's now reverted.

At the same time, the framework of Catholic values adopted by the non-conformists - or at least by a section of them - contained one important ambiguity. While Catholicism - in contrast to Protestantism - is communitarian, it is also authoritarian. Yet the doctrines of those who claimed that their political thinking was directly inspired by Catholicism revolved around two opposite poles: authority and quasi-anarchism. Why it was that a section of Catholics in the 1930's should have by-passed Christian Democracy to move directly to the extreme Left is a question of particular interest, for there was a similar evolution of far wider Catholic circles, after the Second World War, an evolution which began slowly in the 1950's and then gathered speed during the 1960's after the decline of the MRP.

Ultimately, the political thinking of the non-conformists leaves an odd, incomplete and, at times, contradictory impression. It is both
reactionary and modern, both precise and vague, coherent and fringed with loose ends. Yet the source of its inspiration remained constant: this was a profound consciousness of the alienations of industrial society and of the inadequacy of existing values and structures.

This consciousness led sometimes to archaic rhetoric of a corporatist character on 'natural communities'. At the same time it stimulated a continuing exploration of the means of maintaining human values in the state, in industry and in cities. As for the duality of vagueness and precision, this is best illustrated by the treatment of economic planning. While X-crise was laboriously and, not, it must be said, very successfully working out whether planning was at all possible in a democratic context, Ordre Nouveau was quite carried away by a generous sweeping vision of economic planning as a social, political, economic, cultural and metaphysical panacea. Nor, for all the interest this subject aroused, did any single closely defined doctrine of the State and its reform emerge. All shades of non-conformist opinion rejected the Republican model of a centralised and authoritarian but economically weak and ineffective State. But their own complimentary visions never came to terms. The concept of a strong, interventionist State limited by a measure of decentralisation existed side by side with a quasi-anarchist doctrine that grudgingly conceded a minimum right of existence to the State while remaining profoundly uninterested in its machinery.

In conclusion, it may be said that the non-conformists created a political and theoretical rapprochement between old values and new realities without, however, achieving any practical synthesis. Their movement bore no fruit in the sense of obtaining concrete results or of exerting any immediate influence within the conventional political structures. But, like a tree in spring, it cast its seeds to the wind. These took root, it has already been observed, both in the Vichy regime and in the war-time
Resistance Movement. Sometimes they were carried by individuals; by the members of X-crise who struggled against the Malthusian attitudes of industry and the administration and by the leaders of Ordre Nouveau who founded federalist groups after 1945.

More generally, the ideas of the thirties and also the political consciousness that went with them - that is to say the sense of doubt and unease about the values and direction of industrial society - became at least partially absorbed into the French cultural system. By means which will be briefly touched on, the main themes of the 1930's - decentralisation, economic planning, effective executive power, industrial democracy and participation in various forms - grew to become part of the cultural and political inheritance of certain limited circles and in particular of Catholic circles to the left of the MRP. If the real impact of these doctrines on French society is still unpredictable the ferment of the 1930's has already been responsible for the fact that development in France since the Second World War has often been accompanied by a systematic intellectual effort to design a social, economic and political framework for its control.

Like the First, the Second World War produced a disillusioned generation in France. The invasion of 1940 had come as a staggering shock to most French people. The politicians had assured them confidently that France was fully prepared to meet and repulse the enemy. Yet within only a matter of weeks the army had totally collapsed and the institutions of the State were disintegrating. In the face of events Parliament partially abdicated. The administration, the ruling class and, not least,
the Church not only failed to defend the Republic, but actively collaborated with the enemy.

Consequently, the almost obsessive preoccupation of the Resistance groups and those in exile in London and Algiers was, beyond all thought of reprisal and revenge, the total political reconstruction of France. This meant a total break with the past; a break with the Third Republic, its parties, its clientele and even its most cherished principles, such as centralisation and the omnipotence of the legislature. Why this break did not in the end occur after the Liberation, it is impossible to discuss within the limits of this study. Suffice it to say that the rapidity with which the Fourth Republic reverted to the much reviled habits of the Third left a bitter sense of betrayal and lost opportunity among a minority of the population. This minority tended to consist in large part of the active and dynamic elements of French youth, either those who had fought in the Resistance or those who, being younger, had admired it from afar and expected much from post-Liberation France.

Himself part of this new 'sacrificed generation', Claude Nicolet has contributed the most evocative descriptions of their disillusionment and sense of abandonment:

La 'Révolution', promise aux adolescents que nous étions, en 44, en 45, était remise jour après jour. Nous étions en somme une génération abandonnée par l'histoire. Nous pensions très sérieusement que rien n'avait existé avant nous, puisque nous n'avions qu'un souvenir très vague et pour tout dire incrédule de cet âge d'or, objet des regrets incompréhensibles de nos aînés: l'avant-guerre. L'histoire nous avait rejeté sur la rive des temps modernes, en compagnie de M Sartre et l'absurdité du monde. A cette jeunesse le régime politique des années 1945-53 paraissait un désert d'ennui. Des vieillards sans imagination ne proposaient que de médiocres perspectives. (11)

The first post-war political club, the Club des Jacobins, was created in 1951 as a direct result of the gulf between the anxious patriotic pride of a young generation who believed that France could and must modernise and moralise her political and social life - in a word live up to her own
image of her elevated position in the world - and the unstimulating realities of the Fourth Republic. The club existed on the periphery of the Radical Party, in opposition to its leadership and hoping, by its pressure, to force the pace of change in the party.

But, on the whole, the pattern of intellectual and political involvement set by the First World War generation was not followed by the generation of the Liberation - at least not immediately. With the exception of a brief period in 1955 when some 40-50,000 people - most of them young - flocked to join Mendès-France (backed by the Jacobin Club) in his attempt to take over the Radical Party, the trend under the Fourth Republic was towards political disengagement. The immediate effect of the successive colonial conflicts of the 1950's was to drive French people and the young in particular to abandon politics rather than to undertake some new and challenging political endeavour.

The crisis of May 1958 brutally halted this drift. Faced with the disintegration of the Fourth Republic and the danger of invasion from Algeria by parachutists, the country turned to General de Gaulle. For French opinion the call to de Gaulle was not just a way - the only way - of solving the intractable Algerian problem, it was also a means of reviving national morale by a traditional method: a return to the past.

A minority of Frenchmen were differently affected. Emotionally, the events of May 1958 reopened the old scar of May 1940. Also there was an extra poignancy in their feelings about the situation, for this time France was being threatened not by a foreign invasion but by civil war. Politically and intellectually, the fall of the Republic brought about a final, unavoidable confrontation with a process of decay in the State which had been building up over decades. Morally, the Algerian War was repellent by any standards and distaste for both its means and ends provoked an overall increase of political involvement in the
population generally. But for left-wing Catholics, in particular, opposition to the Algerian War was no less than a crusade. Having stood for a decade poised awkwardly on the verge of political commitment, ever uneasy about the prospect of dirtying their hands, the Catholic Left now took the plunge enthusiastically, overjoyed at having discovered an issue at once political - and moral. For them the War virtually became the equivalent of what the Dreyfus Affair had meant for Republicans over half a century before: a trial by fire of both personal democratic faith and general democratic principles.

These, then, were the main factors which, either singly or in combination, led the generation of the Liberation, now aged roughly between 30 and 40, (together with others) to seek an active political commitment with a strong moral slant and a predominantly intellectual content. The circumstances of the Algerian War had often provided the context for such people to meet, but it was the theme of modernising reform which held them together and gave impetus to the early club movement. Those who joined the clubs tended to belong to those social categories which, for different reasons, were most interested in modernisation. Left-wing Catholics joined partly because they lacked a political tradition of their own, partly out of evangelical duty to meet the challenges of the modern world. Medium and high grade civil servants became involved because they were closest to and most aware of the process of modernisation which had already taken place under the Fourth Republic. Then there were innovating Mendesists and Mendesist Radicals and some of the professional middle class, but more often the technically-minded cadres of the private as well as the public sector. Their aims were the opposite of de Gaulle's: not a return to past grandeur but the quest for new values and for a realistic role for France in a new, industrial phase of her national existence.

But, as with the non-conformists of the 1930's, the reverse side of their
troubled sense of national crisis was a belief - optimistic, patriotic and universalist - that France would be the first to find the solutions to the problems of industrial civilisation.

The first series of political clubs which appeared around 1958 deliberately, even ostentatiously, adopted a low-key pragmatic style, a clipped and concrete language and a taste for facts, figures and files that soon earned them a reputation for being technocratic. In fact, their style was in part determined by a certain mood - the post-Hungary mood of disillusionment with 'Revolution' - and in part was a reaction against the persistent habit of the Marxist Parties/dealing with every issue through dogmatic slogans or theoretical references. And it should not be allowed to obscure the fact that far from merely advocating minor technocratic adjustment in society, the clubs were essentially concerned with long-term structural and valuable transformations.

Under the double impact of the long and painful decolonisation process and the Algerian War French self-doubt had reached a climax; for the minority in the clubs this self-doubt was the motor which drove forward the ideas already current among them. Hence the radical temper of the clubs' criticisms of the State and society even when they were couched in restrained semi-sociological terms; the somewhat naive assumption that a totally fresh start must be made politically - 'tout est probablement à repenser' wrote the Club Jean Moulin - and the impatient activism, determinedly concrete and creative rather than abstract and theoretical.

As for the ideas advanced by the clubs, these, in most cases, had developed out of themes tentatively explored in the 1930's. The seam of political ideas exploited by the clubs had been initially discovered - or rediscovered - by the non-conformists. While decentralisation and economic planning, for instance, were often discussed in the 1930's in the most airy and ill-defined terms, the Club Jean Moulin set out to discover the
possibilities, limits and precise implications of each. And while the critics of the 1930's had warned of man's spiritual unease in an advanced technological and industrial society, the Club Citoyen 60 proposed constructive ways of dealing with the problems created by urbanization, pollution and transport and defined in minute detail the deteriorating quality of life under the external appearance of affluence. At the same time, it should be stressed that reflection on the themes outlined was not always directly or even indirectly inspired by the example of the 1930's. In the 1950's and 1960's, as earlier, people arrived at the same conclusions for different reasons. Nevertheless, the continuity existed and cannot be ignored.

As a political form, clubs were adopted by different people for a variety of motives at separate periods. And without a fairly detailed study of the ideas, aims, style and membership of individual clubs, categorisation remains either artificial or partial. At the same time, clubs were too small and too limited in membership for a detailed examination of their themes to be of much significance had these been confined to clubs alone. Even given the strategic positions held by many of its civil servant members, the fact that the Club Jean Moulin by itself or in conjunction with a handful of other intellectual circles had advocated decentralisation, for instance, would be of no more than passing interest. Ultimately, the main justification for a more detailed study of clubs rests on the hypothesis that they were merely the tip of a more widely significant socio-political iceberg.

Three clubs were chosen here for study in depth: the Jacobin Club, the Club Jean Moulin and the Club Citoyens 60. These were selected largely on the principle that, despite being themselves limited in impact and numbers, each of them overlapped and interacted with larger circles. The Jacobin Club was closely linked with the reformist groups around
Mendès-France and a main support in his move to try to take over and renovate the Radical Party in the mid-1950's. The parent organisation of Citoyens 60 was the Vie Nouvelle, an unorthodox and dynamic movement within progressive middle-class Catholicism - through which no less than 25,000 people passed roughly between the end of the war and 1965. The Club was also enmeshed in a fairly extensive web of left and centre-left Catholic organisations and reviews. The Club Jean Moulin had close contacts, at an informal level, with the main Catholic unions - the CFTC-DT, the CNJA and the CJP; - but its principal sphere of influence lay within the uppermost ranges of the administration and, in particular, in planning circles. Moreover, these three Clubs included all the major elements involved in the modernising movement of the 1950's and 1960's; they were among the largest in terms of membership and produced the most interesting and influential publications.

But why clubs? The French, to say the least, have never suffered from a shortage of political parties. One element in the situation, no doubt, was the lack of dynamism and intellectual attraction of existing parties: it was hardly an inspiring prospect for the modern-minded reformers of the post-war period to join either the neo-Stalinist Communist Party or Guy Mollet's SFIO. However, it will be shown that just as important factor as the mediocrity of the parties in explaining why French reformers should have wished to join clubs was their attitude towards and perception of politics in general and political parties in particular.

James Q. Wilson has defined the two main strands within the American political clubs which appeared almost concurrently with the French clubs
as progressive and populist respectively. While the former were modernists resolved to clean up city politics and not afraid to resort to a strong executive, the latter were moved by the belief traditionally strong among American agrarian reformers, that the cure for democracy is more democracy. French clubs were composed of two similar groups, pragmatic as well as more ideologically-minded reformers who were inspired by anarchist ideas. These ideas, it seems evident, have been a major factor inhibiting a considerable section of French people from venturing into a mass-organised political party and leading them instead to seek refuge in a political club. Because of physical limits, it cannot be the aim of this thesis to undertake an extensive study of the relations between political clubs and political parties; however, a few tentative suggestions on the subject will be put forward.
PART I.
Chapter 1.

Jansenism and the Tradition of Puritan Libertarianism in French Political Thought.

Ils sont toujours pour les jugements des hommes assemblés; tout ce qui a l'air de république les enchanté; tout ce qui vient de l'autorité d'un seul leur déplait, ils ne peuvent s'y soumettre... Dans le temps qu'ils ont de la religion le libre arbitre, ils nourrissent les peuples dans un esprit de liberté; liberté, vérité, voilà leur cri de guerre. Les Pères de l'Oratoire sont très instruits de la politique du peuple; ils rapportent tout au peuple, excellents personnages dans une République, mais mauvais sujets des rois. (1)

Père Tellier, Jesuit confessor to Louis XIV.

The spirit of the Réformation was characterised by two fundamental aspirations: to renew Christianity by a return to the original purity of the Gospel and to bring it to sanction the direct communication between each Man and his Maker. These basic ideals were differently interpreted in Germany by Luther, peasant and mystical monk, and in Switzerland by Calvin, a hard-headed lawyer. In France, the idealism and mysticism of the first was combined with coherence and rationalism of the second by Blaise Pascal, who besides being a metaphysician, philosopher and scientist was also among the leading theoreticians of Jansenism, a powerful dissident movement that arose within French Catholicism in the seventeenth century. Yet Jansenism - in its sophisticated Pascalian version - was not just another presentation from a different angle of the same themes that preoccupied Luther and Calvin. Between him and them there was a difference in kind as between early abstract and late impressionist paintings; the level of conceptualisation was no longer the same. This was less because Pascal joined the reformist current lower down
the stream when the waters were running clearer than because, as a
scientist, he was able to relate the post Renaissance developments in
science and astronomy - the anxious, new reappraisal of Man's place
in the cosmos and of his significance as species - to a new Christian
concern for the salvation of the individual soul. While Luther and
Calvin thought as theologians in narrow terms of Man in his relation
to God, Pascal - without losing sight of the individual soul - in-
cluded in his metaphysical doctrine the dimension of humanity and its
place in the universe, thereby broadening theology into an almost
existential morality and smoothing the sharp edges of individualism
by a universalist approach to humanity that transcended but did not
deny the individual. Jansenism has been justly defined as: '...\(\textit{cette espèce de presbytérianisme, teinté philosophie, ce mélange de}
religion et de philosophie}.' (2)

If Luther, Calvin and Pascal were all puritans who believed in
individual responsibility and sought to define the good life, all
stressed different ways by which it might be approached. For
Calvin and the English Puritans to live morally and in accordance
with the laws of God meant essentially to practise the qualities of
will and discipline, externalised through action and works. Luther
and Pascal, on the contrary, looked to more exclusively internal
moral qualities: Luther to faith and Pascal to moral purity and
thought. The Calvinist Puritan, even when he viewed the world as a
vale of tears, still considered it as his duty to moralise society
and its institutions and to ensure that these, in turn, would aid the
individual to perfect himself. Luther and Pascal saw all attempts
to externalise religion by subjecting it to rules and regulations as
degrading. Both drew a sharp antithesis between the external order
of society and the life of the spirit. However, at this point they
diverged fundamentally. Luther, unlike Pascal, did not think through - or rather shied away from - the radical implications of his own religious thought. While admitting the right to religious conscience, he devised an unambiguously servile political doctrine which held that temporal authority, being sanctioned by God, must be obeyed at all times - irrespective of morality.

Pascal saw that the logical consequence of the new relationship of Man to God was the right to conscience and the equality of all Men, but he did not confine his thinking on these new rights to the narrow bounds of theology. In line with the medieval Gnostic heresies which habitually took a total view of the world, Pascal did not compartmentalise the religious and social aspects of human existence but instead included both in an all-embracing philosophico-metaphysical doctrine. Man, according to this doctrine, is defined by his capacity for thought and conscience and by the quality of seeking exclusively absolute values in a world in which only partial values may be realised because God is hidden to and absent from it. Man, thus, is alienated from the material world. However, this alienation is both the condition of and the first step to spiritual salvation since it is by refusing to compromise with the relativity of the material world, that Man safeguards human values and makes possible - even if he cannot secure - God's grace. The only possible attitude of moral Man towards the valueless world is one of denial. This denial consists of a conscious refusal to participate in its imperfection and a moral and intellectual rejection of its conformism and shabby compromises. Habit and intellectual sloth were seen as falls from grace by the Jansenists since Man, in succumbing to them, looses his privileged position in relation to the material world and, consequently, his hope of salvation. The ultimate end of alienation
may only be achieved through totality — that is in the synthesis of the material and spiritual worlds—which will occur only at the end of time.

In the meantime, Man's moral duty is to remain between the absolute and reality: to continue to seek the absolute — is totality — despite the knowledge that it cannot be attained. Philosophically, this leads to a position between idealism and empiricism. Personally and morally, it means a persistent, self-surpassing effort to realise an impossibly perfectionist ideal of purity — an effort that is also and essentially self-regulating since the only acceptable criterion of morality is intention. As for the material world, it must be judged but it may never be participated in.

On the basis of this dualistic humanism according to which the material world is valueless and only Man is moral, Pascal reached some extremely radical political conclusions. He maintained that since they are entirely without moral foundation, all attributes of the material world — all social institutions, property and privilege — are therefore illegitimate. His doctrine of power is reminiscent of the Hans Anderson fairy tale of the king with no clothes; only, in the extended Pascalian version not only the king but also the courtiers, the ecclesiastics, the wealthy and privileged are all politically naked in the sense of lacking moral and hence political legitimacy.

Politics, Pascal refused to consider as a serious occupation. Nor would he allow that political activity constitutes a relatively autonomous domain with its own rules, potentialities and limits. He suppressed the Aristotilian distinction between the good man and the good citizen, holding that the only yardstick by which an individual may be judged is ethical rather than civic virtue. In effect, he substituted morality for politics; a morality, moreover, of uncompro-
missing purity, which took a severe and disdainful view of politics, considering it as innately opportunistic and unworthy of the attentions of honest men. If, in the last resort, Pascal, unlike the little boy in the fairy tale, omitted to challenge authority with its nakedness, this is because: 1) such a course would be dangerous; 2) practical egalitarianism is fraught with difficulties; 3) the world is not sufficiently important. Pascal finally advocated external obedience to temporal as to ecclesiastical authority, but he did so in a totally different spirit from Luther. For his final political counsel - to obey authority externally while internally resisting its pretensions, impositions and encroachments - was the direct transposition of absolutist Jansenist world-disdain, as expressed by the moral formula of judging the world without participating in it, into politics.

In practice, however, Jansenism might have partially lapsed into a particularly disillusioned and negative form of quietism - but for the theological twist of the Hidden God. Pascalian Man, uncertain of salvation and abandoned to a valueless world by a God who remains ever concealed takes a tragic pride in the grandeur of humanity locked in eternal, solitary struggle against its own and the world's imperfection: Man may be impotent before God, human institutions may be worthless and individual men weak and puny but mankind, in the last resort, is greater than Man or his institutions. It was this austere and anti-determinist humanism which took pride in the superiority of the human spirit over nature and the material world, and, in the absence of God, derived some comfort from this superiority, that ultimately raised Jansenism over the social conservatism of Lutheranism.

Within the God-centred seventeenth century itself, Jansenism sheathed its sharp claws, counselled the avoidance of politics and preached the virtues of a pure and withdrawn internal spiritual life.
But once the old static concept of society gave way to a new vision of progress, the radical undercurrents in Jansenism - denial of the legitimacy of all authority, respect only for personal merit, recognition only of equality - could no longer be damned up by a puritan disdain for the world.

The libertarian political thinkers who followed directly in the footsteps of Pascal, while preoccupied now to moralise the world, took over from him three general concepts which determined the whole shape and bias of their own doctrines. These were: a dualistic humanism, austerely optimistic with respect to humanity but radically pessimistic about human institutions; a puritan moral code, at once libertarian, internal and intellectual; and a notion of the alienation or the estrangement of Man from a material world at odds with his own values.

Proudhon and Alain both conceived of Man, a creature capable of creating values, as alienated from the material world. Values versus interests was the new nineteenth century version of the old dualism of Man versus nature and Republicans were inclined, like Lamartine, to talk of 'vils intérêts matériels'.(3) Progress, consequently, came to be seen as the betterment not just of material but also of moral conditions: it was the advance of each individual in liberty, purification and enlightenment which, in turn, would lead to an ever juster society. There were, however, certain problems about moralising society on the basis of Pascalian principles. In the first place, all the formal attributes of society - the law, institutions, property - were all without intrinsic moral value in Pascal's eyes and thus constituted part of Man's alienating environment, to be transcended rather than reformed. Secondly, because it entailed the free choice of each individual to decide whether to open himself to grace, a choice that
was never definitive but had to be eternally renewed, Pascalian morality was incompatible with authority as with all institutional mechanisms limiting the free exercise of individual conscience and judgment. And thirdly, because political activity and institutions were rejected essentially in the name of puritan absolutism, personal ethics became the basis of political society.

Libertarian political thinkers in the moralist tradition thus separated the state and its institutions from society, condemned the former as immoral and anti-human and then proceeded to regulate the latter by means of the strictly libertarian and intellectual ethical code of Jansenism. In this society self-regulating moral obligation takes the place of law and rational persuasion, backed by education, replaces force. Poverty and equality - both covered by the Republican epithet 'petit' - rank as virtues, while riches and power are personal and social vices. In general, as religious conscience and political liberty are identified, the main aspects of personal morality - intellectual non-conformism and anti-determinism, heroic self-surpassing individualism - are carried over and incorporated within the political value system. (André Siegfried, for instance, claimed that the French civic sense is expressed not by monetary contributions as in Anglo-Saxon countries but in the readiness to defend the country (4)). Progress towards social perfection is continuing, never final, in so far as Man is imperfect and the heroic combat of Man against moral and intellectual inertia must be endlessly renewed. It is probable, moreover, that what Thibaudet has termed the 'sinistrisme immanent' of the nineteenth century Republican movement - '...l'évolution vers la gauche répond à une sorte de mouvement pur, de racine schématique, où il est entendu qu'on va à gauche, d'une marche irrésistible et nécessaire de glacier..' he wrote (5) - was the direct transposition of puritan Jansenist morality into politics. According to Thibaudet, the Republic
as seen by Republicans consisted of a process of continuous and continuing creation:

Le seul arrêt de ce mouvement, la République consolidée, réduite à une administration d'intérêts, cela seul, pense obscurément le peuple, détruit la République: la cessation de l'action est réaction — la réaction. Un conservateur est encore réactionnaire quand il conserve la République telle qu'elle est. (6)

Both P-J Proudhon and Alain subscribed to this general body of politico-moral beliefs. The difference between them was that while Proudhon was a creative political thinker, Alain was a gifted observer whose doctrine of Radicalism was essentially a description of the mentality of left-wing Republicans under the Third Republic. And where Proudhon devised a political theory which in its final formulation consisted of a kind of corrected anarchism — of a balance between the absolute and reality, between liberty and authority — in Alain it was the Radical individual who stood between the absolute doctrine of anarchism and the reality of the centralised state. Pascal, in maintaining that humanity's duty, is to remain in a half-way position between two opposing poles, was consciously moderating his absolutism — a kind of intellectual correction of a temperamental trait — rather than compromising with reality. In the same way, Proudhon and Alain both tempered their anarchism without really compromising with the political reality of liberal parliamentary democracy. (W)

Proudhon and Alain rank among the most significant thinkers in the libertarian tradition of the French Left. Péguy, although he has exerted considerable influence on left-wing Catholics within this century, is a more marginal figure. He is considered here essentially for three reasons. In the first place, because his initial political aspiration to realise total anarchism in society seems to indicate that a deviation from the austere morality of Pascal had occurred
somewhere along the historical line and that, by the late nineteenth century, there existed alongside the doctrines of Proudhon a more optimistic and absolutist form of anarchism which considered Man and society - but not the state - as perfectable. Secondly, Péguy, within limits, exemplifies a type of character and mentality which not infrequently go hand in hand with French puritanism, while the inter-action of his personality and his political and religious beliefs offers an interesting and concrete insight into the latter-day workings of Jansenist morality. And finally, Péguy - together with Proudhon, himself, of course, - was a major intellectual and moral influence on the young generation who in the 1930's revived and revitalised the Proudhonian strand of anarchism, a political phenomenon which, in turn, appears to be at least partially linked to the libertarian religious leanings of some of them. Jansenism, it will be demonstrated, was not a spent force even in the twentieth century.

In general, it may be said that if libertarian political theory modified some aspects of Jansenism as interpreted by Pascal - notably its denial of free will - and diverged from the spirit of Jansenist religiosity although scarcely from its puritanism, it remained remarkably faithful to its central moral concepts. This is no doubt because it was never a devised intellectual system but rather a reflexion of grass-roots beliefs and attitudes. Proudhon, Péguy and Alain derived their political ideas in the first instance neither from Sorbonne academics nor from foreign intellectuals but from the popular provincial circles in which they grew up; their anarchism, consequently, was a truly indigenous growth.
The apparent contradiction between Catholicism and political liberty has often been offered as an explanation for the dominance of authoritarianism in French society and the equivocal attitude to liberty in French politics. In Catholicism, as Soltau observes, the notion of truth has traditionally been an appeal not to individual conscience but to the authority of the infallible Church. 'Catholicism being the national religion, how can modern liberty be built up on a religious principle that denies it? That is the crux... it crops up everywhere.' The limited scope for personal liberties in the French Revolution, its emphasis on the sanctity of State rights and on national unity, Soltau attributes directly to the lack of any clear statement in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the rights of individuals or groups against the State.

While French puritan libertarianism has often had a peculiarly ambiguous character, its influence - which can be traced back well beyond the seventeenth century - in reality has been deep and enduring. From the early Middle Ages when the Albigensians defied the Catholic Church for over two centuries before being brought to heel by a bloody crusade led by the State, through the Vaudois and Cevenoles to the sixteenth century when the country almost became Protestant (ll), French history is riven with heresies. Owing to the identification of Church and State, they came to be seen as and were, in effect, a challenge to political as well as ecclesiastical authority.

Politically, the most important of French religious protest movements was undoubtedly Jansenism. It dominated the Church during the century and a half prior to the Revolution when relations between spiritual and temporal power were changing. Moreover, it was able to survive - persecuted but not, like Protestantism, almost exterminated - by remaining within the Catholic Church rather than breaking away. Louis XIV always thought of the Jansenists as identical to the Huguenots.
and detested them accordingly. The Huguenots considered them as semi-Protestants. But the Jansenists themselves, while refusing to compromise their beliefs, stubbornly proclaimed that they were Catholic. They consistently rejected the charges of heresy raised against them and during the Fronde protested their loyalty to the Crown. (13)

Sainte-Beuve, the leading historian of the movement, while defending the Jansenists against accusations of inconsistent behaviour, has at the same time admitted that the leaders in particular — namely Jansenius, Saint-Cyran and Pascal — were in a highly precarious and uncomfortable position:

.. ils ne sont pas allés jusqu'au bout, voilà tout ce qu'on peut dire. Mais sur leur chemin ils ont toujours marché ferme et droit; à un certain moment, tout au bord, ils se sont arrêtés. Quelques instants de plus, et qu'auraient-ils fait? Seraient-ils restés campés obstinément en cette position escarpée, et l'auraient-ils pu? ... Nul ne peut le dire, car la mort (coïncidence singulière) les prit juste tous les trois sur le temps de cette extrémité. (14)

Jansenists had a sovereign disdain for the world and this goes a long way to explain the ambiguities of their position. But neither should one forget the historical circumstances of the time. In seventeenth century France, open opposition to the Church involved great risk and the memory of the virtual annihilation of Protestantism was still very much alive. Later in the century — from 1665 to 1715 — the Edict of Nantes was even revoked. In addition, the country had already suffered a civil war in the Fronde. This conflict left Pascal, in particular, with a lasting fear of disorder and anarchy. (15) It may be also that the Jansenists, realising that religious revolt might once again threaten national unity, unconsciously introverted their libertarian aspirations for this reason. (16) However, the factors which prevented Pascal and other
Jansenists from clashing directly with Church and State appear to have been primarily theological.

If it is inexact to claim, as Cognet does (17), that Jansenism had no specific intellectual content, it is certainly true that the movement was never monolithic, not always coherent theologically and frequently uncompromising in spirit. In its widest sense it simply denoted a rigorously puritan and personal religion with a tendency to reject the world as radically evil. As such it falls into the pattern of personal spiritual religions that had flourished sporadically especially in the south. (18)

Formally, Jansenist inspiration was derived from three broad, but over-lapping, circles. First, there was Jansenius himself, a theologian principally preoccupied with the problems of grace and predestination and author of the work *Augustinus*, eventually to be condemned by Rome. Then there was Saint-Cyran, a great preacher and moralist rather than writer or theologian, who acted as spiritual counsellor to the nuns living at the convent of Port-Royal. While the two men were closely linked by personal friendship, their spiritual aims were slightly different: Jansenius was concerned to restore religion theoretically; Saint-Cyran to revive it practically. Both he and the nuns at Port-Royal were absorbed essentially in living a pure spiritual life and never accorded primary importance to religious dogma. Finally, came the 'gentlemen' or 'solitaries' who either lived at Port-Royal or, like Pascal, were permanently connected with it. Most of the main theorists of Jansenism had a secular rather than a clerical status and maintained it even when they decided to withdraw totally from the world. Owing to an absolutism that spurned degrees and nuances and bred disdain for the honours of the world, Jansenism never encouraged its followers to take up a religious vocation and converted priests often took great pride in their definitive abandonment of the
altar. (19) Port-Royal, as Thibaudet has observed, is the source of
the secular and quasi anti-clerical bent particular to French Catholic-
ism. (20)

The originality of Port-Royal, it has been said, lay less in any
single one of its personalities or writings than in :’... leur en-
semble même et dans l’esprit qui les forma.’(21) For all the Catholic
loyalism of the Jansenists, they were essentially religious reformists
in their nostalgia for the original purity of Christianity. Like the
Huguenots, they were puritans who denounced the morals of the Church,
the formality and casuistry of Christian legalism and the excessive
distance between clergy and laity. Again like the Huguenots they
valued extreme simplicity over ecclesiastical ceremonial and spiritual
community over hierarchy. Both religious groups stressed the primary
importance of individual salvation and both supported the theory of
predestination. In addition, they had in common a tendency - which
rarely became excessive - towards spiritual mysticism and a marked
inclination to see every problem as a moral problem. (22) Their only
serious point of difference appears to have been on the question of
sacraments. (23)

In view of these striking similarities between French Protestantism
and Jansenism, it is no doubt significant - even if rarely revealed -
that the Arnauld family who initially provoked the spiritual revolution
at Port-Royal in the first decade of the seventeenth century had Huguenot
ancestors. Some of them were not reconverted to Catholicism until
after the celebrated massacre of Protestants at Saint Barthélemy. (24)

During the seventeenth century Jansenists were called 'republic¬
ans' and Saint-Simon referred to them as such in his famous memoirs.
By this term he meant to indicate a style of life rather than political
ideas. (25) In fact, Port-Royal really was a kind of spiritual Republic,
egalitarian, self-governing and independent. The abbesses were elected.
Property was shared. A school attached to the convent educated children along libertarian lines designed to allow them to develop their own personalities freely and without fear of punishment. In the educational methods they favoured as in the rigidly aesthetic lives they lived, the Jansenists differed fundamentally from the Jesuits. And very soon they diverged sharply in their outlook on religion. The religion of the Jansenists was internal, sober, undemonstrative, virtually unmediated - and absolutist. They were ever prompt to detect evil motives behind nominally good actions. This conviction that intention constituted the only yardstick by which to judge morality inevitably brought them into conflict with the Jesuits who preached what seemed to Jansenists a highly opportunistic creed of salvation through works alone and who, moreover, refused to envisage direct communication between Man and God without a priestly intermediary.

However, Jansenists were never aggressive evangelisers and had they been left in peace, they would have devoted themselves to living a pure internal life at Port-Royal. Their suspect theology and the implicit threat they constituted to Louis XIV's doctrines of 'raison d'état' and religious unity made this impossible. Increasingly, as time went on - and especially after Augustinus was condemned by Rome in 1656 - the Jansenists found themselves driven to temporal commitment and to defend the rights of conscience by the politics of Louis, Mazarin and Richelieu. The quarrels between Jansenists and Jesuits now created furious public controversy in the Church. And by means of the Provinciales, broadsheets written secretly by Pascal to defend Jansenist theological principles as well as to demolish Jesuit morality, these disputes spread like a forest fire to the furthest flung towns in the Kingdom.

Ultimately, of course, Port-Royal - like Protestantism before it - was crushed. In the first decade of the eighteenth century, the
persecution of Jansenists reached a climax and the nuns—all of whom refused to recant—were finally expelled from their convent, maltreated and dispersed. This was not the end of Jansenism for Jansenists continued to defy the Church throughout the length of the eighteenth century, but it was the end of Port-Royal: amid general indignation it was razed to the ground. Thereafter, for well over a decade, it became a place of pilgrimage, in homage to the lone and brave gesture of defiance against royal and ecclesiastical authority of the Jansenist nuns. Renan later claimed: 'Les religieuses de Port-Royal ont plus fait que les évêques, plus fait que l'église gallicane, plus fait que le peuple: elles ont sauvé la conscience.' (29)

Jansenist theorists varied widely in their attitudes towards ecclesiastical and temporal authority. But they all subscribed to two basic premises on which they constructed their differing theories. First, they maintained that Man, in spite of being corrupted by original sin, seeks exclusively to discover perfect truth and absolute values. Second, they believed that in a world from which God is absent, moral confusion reigns and no true values, but only relative ones, can ever be known. On this basis they condemned the world since they could see no hope of changing it historically. The world, the Jansenists concluded, cannot be made good before the Final Judgment. But at this point the centrists and the extremists, as the two principal theoretical streams within Jansenism have been termed, parted company. The centrists—Arnauld and Nicole—compromised their absolutism: secular and temporal authority are justified by God and the Christian should participate in the world and obey as a citizen even if not expecting his condition to improve. (30) For all the pessimistic sting in its tail, this doctrine was scarcely different from the orthodox religious
and political thinking of the seventeenth century.

The real innovators were the extremists. Only they went so far as to draw the radical political conclusions that flowed logically from their radical religious principles. However, since they tended to withdraw totally from the world and since it was seriously questioned at Port-Royal whether it was moral to write a book, there were few Jansenists of this school either available or willing to formulate a comprehensive religious, moral and - above all - political doctrine. Baroos, one of the leading extremists, deliberately avoided the subject of the State as he was afraid of sliding towards the opposition.\(^{(31)}\) The world hatred of the Jansenists habitually acted as a brake on their fundamental anti-authoritarianism and potential political radicalism. It was, consequently, no coincidence that the task of theoretical formulation should have fallen finally to Pascal. For, besides the fact of being a philosopher and writer, he was less a stranger to the world than some of the solitaries and he never really withdrew from it totally until just before his death. Pascal only reached his ultimate, extreme position after a life-time of passionate and continuous search for perfect truth in the world itself, first through science and then through the Church.\(^{(32)}\)

Pascal defined Man as a thinking being, capable of reason and understanding, who demands to know and will never be content with less than absolute truth: "L'homme est visiblement fait pour penser; c'est toute sa dignité et tout son mérite; et son devoir est de penser comme il faut."\(^{(33)}\) But this man is placed in a paradoxical and, ultimately, tragic position. On the one hand, he has to live in the absence and silence of a God whose will can never be known and who remains hidden to Man and to the universe. On the other hand, he is condemned to be part of a world of paradoxes where all truths mutually contradict each other and no right and moral rules of conduct can ever be known.\(^{(34)}\)
The world is the domain of eternal relativity where good and bad will always be inextricably mingled. Man's dilemma, therefore, is that while his nature forces him to search relentlessly for clear, unequivocal and absolute values, he can only do so in a world where, by definition, perfection is unobtainable. His tragedy is that as a sinner, whose reason has been corrupted, he is puny and limited and will never find real truth and justice. His grandeur lies in his continuing, ceaseless quest. Always great in his potentialities, Man is always limited in his capacity to fulfil them: 'l'homme passe l'homme' - mankind transcends Man. The human condition consists of achieving and maintaining a taut equilibrium between the two opposite poles of the absolute and of reality, since total spiritual understanding - the synthesis of the extremes - can be attained only in God. But Man's recognition of his weakness and limitation is no complacent acceptance of the status quo. It is his ultimate gesture of defiance before a valueless world and a silent God. To continue to seek the absolute and to know that it can never be attained - in this lay the essence of Man's tragic grandeur for Pascal.

Starting from this analysis of Man's position in relation to God and the world, it becomes possible to chart exactly the contours of Pascal's metaphysical and moral doctrine. The transcendence of Man towards the absolute allows him to justify himself before God - to invoke the presence of an absent God. But it also places him on dominating heights over a world which lacks his own unique qualities of thought and his aspiration towards absolute values. Man is always greater than nature. If it can break him effortlessly, Man at least is conscious of his death while nature knows nothing, Pascal once wrote. (35) There are thus two reasons why Man cannot participate in the world and endow it with moral values: such a course would mean
the inevitable compromise of his striving towards perfection and it would imply the renunciation of his position between the opposing poles of absolute values and reality. To the perfectionist Jansenist mind which refuses to accept gradations of good and bad, a world in which good and bad are mixed indistinguishably is lastly immoral and Man is bound - if he is to remain true to himself - to resist its impure encroachments. (36)

In the end, there is only one moral solution for Pascal's solitary, suffering Man tragically abandoned to a hostile world by a silent God and that is to abandon all hope of material victory, to safeguard moral and spiritual values and so preserve the prospect of eternity. At the same time he cannot flee entirely to the City of God. For Pascal, although he believed in God, considered that faith was a bet. (37) Pascalian Man, therefore, finds himself trapped between Heaven and Earth, neither of which provide the certainties he seeks or responds to his needs. (38) Thrown back on himself, he asserts both his dignity and despair by choosing consciously not to compromise with the world: '... il choisit librement cette fin en refusant un compromis qui le permettrait de vivre.' (39) By his rejection he deserves the attention of God and preserves the integrity of human values. And by his consciousness he acquires some clarity and control in the midst of his own confusion and of the world's incongruity and anarchy.

Lastly, then, Pascal allowed Man to rise above his own impotence in the face of God and the world/nature. Man transcends his human limitation before God by the conscious and willed acceptance of suffering and death. (40) But over nature he gains a negative kind of ascendancy: by his clear-sighted knowledge of its insufficiencies, by the refusal to entertain the slightest illusions about it and by an untiring quest to know the truth behind its facades. (41) Pascal,
one must conclude, if he was not the first existentialist - he did, after all, believe in God - was certainly the direct forerunner of Existentialism.

Pascal's political formula, arrived at during the final phase of his short life, combining external submission to ecclesiastical as to temporal authority with internal judgment of them, was only the practical conclusion of his fundamental metaphysical premises. (42) The only possible way to lead a moral life, in Pascal's view, was to live in the world without participating in or deriving pleasure from it and at the same time to remain vigilantly cynical with regard to its external trappings - therefore, obey and judge... In politics as in religion, not that he recognised that there could be a real distinction between them, Pascal sacrificed the body to the spirit.

He himself acted in perfect accordance with his own formula in his dealings with the Catholic Church just before his death. Once Augustinus was condemned, Pascal had to decide how to react. Resistance, besides safeguarding his own beliefs, would mean open conflict with authority - it would also mean that he valued what happened in the world. Obedience, as he saw it, would amount to a total, radical refusal to compromise with the world, a disdainful denial that it had any authentic reality or that progress was possible within it. Given this thinking, Pascal's behaviour towards Catholicism which at first sight appears contradictory, was in reality perfectly consistent with his convictions: he declared his submission to the Church but refused to sign a particular document which would have entailed abjuring Augustinus. He thereby saved his conscience and avoided compromising with the world. But Pascal died before he could be faced with the more brutal choice, that faced so many others, of signing or perishing - or, at the very least, of losing their livelihood and liberty. And so the question remains suspended as to
whether Pascal would have considered that his personal integrity and conscience could, in the last resort, be safeguarded by internal judgment alone.

Not all of Pascal's theorising was as subtly elusive as his final formulation. During his life he introduced a number of perfectly straight-forward subversive elements into the official Church. On the point of personal conscience, for instance, Pascal throughout his life was less hesitant than many Jansenists. It is better to obey God than Man, he declared unambiguously. And both before and after his 'conversion' he showed little inclination to submit to his director of conscience. (43) In the Pensees he openly opposed the authority of Rome - 'Si mes lettres sont condamnées à Rome, ce que j'y condamne est condamné dans le Ciel.' (44) And at the time of the condemnation of Augustinus, according to Sainte-Beuve, he quite simply asserted that the Pope was mistaken. (45) Finding himself finally in conflict with the Church - 'le déplaisir de se voir entre Dieu et le Pape' - he submitted to it with the same disdain he reserved for all human institutions. (46)

More immediately damaging, perhaps, to the Church's influence was Pascal's contribution towards the secularisation of morality. Since God is hidden and his will and designs cannot be known to Man, the Church, argued Pascal, cannot justify scholastic morality by divine authority. For how can it prove that its laws are backed by God's will? Believing further that faith should not be founded on authority, he produced a 'humanised' justification for religion which has had a lasting impact on French Catholicism. But to understand it fully, the context in which it arose should first be explained.

The new post-Renaissance scientific and astronomic discoveries - in particular those of Copernicus - deepened the metaphysical anguish Pascal suffered at the silence of God. They also made religious
faith all the more necessary in his eyes. 'Combien de royaumes nous ignorant' he wrote, tormented by the vistas of infinity now opened up to Man.(47) But in the Cartesian world in which he lived, it was considered that nature and the cosmos, when mechanised and objectivised, could be grasped and dominated by the rational mind. Pascal was to some extent a Cartesian himself: he supported the new desanctified view of nature, believed Man's value to lie at least partially in thought and consciousness and did not deny that the universe could be explained in scientific detail. Where he differed from the rationalists was over the role he assigned to reason. While it is possible to understand the parts of the universe, neither its meaning nor its end can be known by the intelligence, argued Pascal. All that reason can measure with certainty is its own limits. If its evidence is relied upon the universe becomes terrifying, derisory - or absurd. The only alternative to absurdity, as he saw it, was in creation. And to be able to comprehend creation other qualities than intelligence are needed, such as 'coeur' - heart. The human spirit looks for assurance which science and reason cannot give, maintained Pascal: only through qualities of heart can real understanding of a higher order be reached.(48)

Pascal, then, never offered theoretical proof for God's existence since, in his view, there could be none. Although his own faith was probing and anguished rather than serene, and all his life he was on intimate terms with militant atheist circles (49), Pascal, like Kant, saw practical grounds for believing in God. It was in this sense that his faith, as he once said, was a bet. The practical grounds he gave for faith were lastly human, arising from the feelings of solidarity for mankind aroused in him by the vastness of the cosmos, the silence of God, Man's own irresistible drive towards truth and justice, his solitude and suffering. (50) Pascal justified
Christianity by Man's own needs - contrary to the Church which demanded obedience of Christians because God had invested it with His divine authority. He explained to Christians not only their suffering and misery but also the grandeur of humanity. So that although he never brutally upset the Church on the question of individual conscience, Pascal left to it as a heritage a concept of faith which has continued to work as an anti-authoritarian heaven in the twentieth century.

However, it is arguable that the French State rather than the Church has borne the brunt of Pascal's contempt for all institutional and established authority. In the earlier Provinciales, Pascal sometimes appeared to concede that natural law accessible to human reason does exist even if Man, as a sinner whose reason has been corrupted, cannot understand it.(51) In the Pensées he was categorical: natural law does not exist and God is hidden to the world. There can thus be no moral justification for the rational organisation of society; all institutions are bad. However, society has solved this problem by substituting force for justice: '.. ne pouvant fortifier la justice, on a justifié la force, afin que le fort et le juste fussent ensemble et que la paix fut, qui est le souverain bien'.(52) This should not be allowed to obscure the fact that while laws may be based on force or on custom, they are never and can never be sanctioned by divine or natural law. 'Rien n'est si fautif que les lois qui redressent les fautes; qui leur obéit parce qu'elles sont justes, obéit à la justice qu'il imagine, mais non pas à l'essence de la loi; elle est toute ramassée en soi; elle est loi et rien davantage'.(53) Not only laws and justice but other features of organised society such as property (54) and privilege may be accepted because they exist or because it is prudent not to dispute them. But they are entirely illegitimate.
In his Jansenist disdain for degrees as for external trappings, Pascal was passionately egalitarian and without regard for the noble, the rich or the powerful. It is just as well, he remarked, that men are distinguished by their exterior rather than by their internal qualities: 'Qui passera de nous deux? qui donc cèdera la place à l'autre? Le moins habile? Mais je suis aussi habile que lui; il faudra se battre sur cela. Il a quatre laquais et je n'en ai qu'un cela est visible...'(55) Yet Pascal did not advocate open revolt. A rational assessment of the resources of power and a horror of anarchy combined with religious humility and the lack of value he placed in the world led Pascal to support civil obedience - but in a manner that was in no sense civic.

There are two fundamental orders of greatness, observed Pascal. First natural greatness which consists of the real internal qualities which make any person respected or admired. Second, recognised greatness - 'les grandeurs d'établissement' - to which esteem is owed for external reasons unconnected with internal worth. Political power he defined as being automatically of the latter order. Although he neither explained nor justified this judgment, it accorded perfectly with his view of the unchanging moral worthlessness of the material world. Consequently, he concluded that while political power should be obeyed externally it should never be respected internally. It should simply be accorded '... respects d'établissement', as Taveneaux puts it 'c'est à dire extérieurs, à l'exclusion de l'adhésion du coeur.' (56) Pascal's political doctrine may thus be defined as the toleration of power without legitimacy, the concession of authority without control and the definition of liberty as freedom of thought severed from freedom of action. This was altogether in line with his general conclusions and, in particular, with his critique of politics as being an inane and worthless occupation. Plato and Aristotle, in his
opinion, could only have written their political treatises to amuse themselves: 'C'étaient d'honnêtes gens qui riaient comme les autres avec leurs amis; et, quand ils ont fait leurs lois et leurs traités de politique, ç'a été en se jouant et pour se divertir.' (57)

While Pascal's moral doctrine was never exclusively focussed on the individual, it was highly individualistic nonetheless. Its core consisted essentially of the notion that the only valid judge of his own actions as of society as a whole is the individual freely exercising his powers of thought and conscience in an imperfect and imperfectible world. Practically, thus, the first duty of the moral being concerned to purify and perfect himself is to exercise his mind against the world in much the same way as one might sharpen a knife against a stone: to use his critical faculties to scrutinise pitilessly its mediocrity and delusions, to resist in it all that is systematic and doctrinaire - in a word, to resist reality. This radical internal liberty is scarcely softened by fraternity, for the relation of the individual to other members of society is ambiguous. He hopes to save them by preventing them from accepting the world uncritically; yet, at the same time, feeling his own solitude and the gulf between himself and others, he is also inclined to leave them to their collective unconsciousness and the world. (58) Pascalian puritan individualism, in sum, rejected all forms of established authority, whether political, moral or intellectual, and thought in terms, not of moralising politics, but of substituting morality for politics since the only moral agent in society is the individual acting in accordance with his personal judgment.

At the same time, Jansenist radicalism was held in check by a number of factors. Theologically, the Jansenists rejected the concept of free will and saw Man as totally subservient to God's authority. Conversion for them meant the total renovation of the
individual through the gift of God's grace. (59) Metaphysically and morally, they subordinated the individual person to humanity as a whole. And practically, in the circumstances of the God-centred seventeenth century world, their tendency was rather to ignore politics than to apply to it the criteria of their sceptical individualism.

In conclusion it may be said that three characteristics in particular gave Jansenism its distinctive flavour: its secularity, the value it placed on consciousness and thought and its theological doctrine of the Hidden God. The common denominator of all of these factors appears to be a temperamental absolutism, a refusal to make concessions or to accept degrees and nuances. Jansenism was predominantly secular because it was absolutely egalitarian. It defined Man as seeking absolute values alone. In practice, although not in theory, it posited an absolute separation between God and the material world, between good and bad.

In this latter respect, as in its general absolutism, Jansenism is curiously reminiscent of the old Albigensian heresy which flourished for centuries and was still alive in the south of France as late as the fourteenth century. (60) The Albigensians were Cathars who believed that the world evolved around two separate principles: Good and Bad - spirit and matter. God was in Heaven and Satan had created the world. It followed, since all creation was in God, that the earth had no authentic existence. It was a void created without God and life was merely a burden and a trial. Like the Jansenists, the Albigensians were ascetics, passionate and absolutist, who displayed their disdain for this world by flinging themselves into the fires of the Inquisition. Pascal did not himself uphold the old dualism strictly, since he allowed that there was some good in the world and that it had been created by God. However, other Jansenist extremists sometimes saw the dualism
of Good and Bad, God and material world in much more distinct and antithetical terms than he did. Barcos, for instance, only just avoided the conclusion that Man in the world is, in effect, a justified sinner. But apart from dualism and the distinction between matter and spirit it partially retained, Jansenism also had other important characteristics in common with Catharism. One was its anti-clericalism: Cathars, for instance, held meetings informally, had no real clergy and considered the Roman Church as the work of the Devil. Both sects gave up all their worldly goods and lived a chaste and pure life. Since the principal hallmark of the Gnostic heresies such as Catharism was their condemnation of the world as totally corrupt and their disregard for all accepted values, it is certainly arguable that this was the source of Jansenism's own austere, if mitigated, total vision of the world beyond narrowly religious horizons.

Pascalian morality strangely straddled the old and the new, the pre and post Renaissance worlds. From pre-Renaissance thought it inherited a profound pessimism with regard to the material world: the static view that the world is and will ever be unalterably imperfect. It carried over also the sense of communalism and unity of early Christianity. In a number of essential respects, however, Pascal was fully part of the new world: in his acceptance of a mechanised notion of nature; in his recognition of the rights of conscience, his optimism - guarded and relative but nonetheless real - on Man's moral and intellectual potentialities and, above all, his belief in human dignity: '... nous avons une si grande idée de l'âme de l'homme que nous ne pouvons souffrir d'en être méprisés, et toute la félicité des hommes consiste dans cette estime.' In one respect in particular Pascal was entirely modern: that is in his cosmological anguish and his haunting fear of nothingness. Finally, Pascal combined his metaphysical and philosophical concepts
in a unique way. Communalism he completed by conscience. His basic pessimism he modified by placing Man within the double context of nothingness and nature. So that in Pascal's view of Man - as a thinking and moral being abandoned by God in a limitless cosmos to struggle alone against the blind forces of nature - there is a rigorous humanism and an almost lyrical note of heroism which allowed his doctrine to transcend its static vision of the world and its pessimism, but at the cost of eternally opposing spirit and world and thus dividing Man's nature.

Briefly, how influential was Jansenism in its own historical context? As a religious movement it indisputably permeated seventeenth century France, influencing even the Jesuits. Moreover, it is clear from recent research that the combination of social distress and revolt against Rome that Germany experienced in the sixteenth century repeated itself in France one century later. However, how the two were linked is less evident.

Porchnev provides evidence of two great cycles of popular movements before and after the Fronde: from 1623-48 and from 1653-1676. His interpretation of this phenomenon - which was urban as well as rural - is Marxist and orthodox: the revolts were directed exclusively against the crushing tax burden imposed by the monarchy and totally unrelated to religion despite what Porchnev terms the 'unusual' participation of priests in the movement. He admits that the 'Nu-pieds' or bare-foot jacquerie in Normandy, which in 1639 mobilised an army of 20,000 peasants, had numerous priests among its leaders - he even postulates the hypothesis that 'Nu-pied' was the pseudonym of a priest who may have been the original leader of the revolt. He notes that their standard bore the picture of John the Baptist.
He admits that the local authorities at Rouen took care to conceal the death of two Calvinists for fear of the movement's reaction. And then he claims categorically that the movement was not religious on the grounds that it was anti-ecclesiastical.\(^{(66)}\) This is a rather summary dismissal of very provocative evidence — especially as current religious protest was Jansenist, and as such profoundly anticlerical. Furthermore, it is a fact that by the time Augustinus was condemned, a very considerable part of the clergy in Normandy had become Jansenist.\(^{(67)}\) This does not, of course, prove that the 'Nu-pieds' movement was religious. But it does seriously raise the possibility that it might either have been partially inspired by Jansenism or else have adopted Jansenist ideology. Either way, the question deserves closer attention than Porchnev gives it.

In the eighteenth century Jansenism entered into a new, openly political phase in alliance with the parliamentarians. This union was mainly provoked by the Papal Bull *Unigenitus* of 1713. The Bull not only condemned the Jansenists but supported ultramontanism, to which the parliamentarians as Gallican sympathisers objected. Jansenism now began to produce parliamentary theorists and gradually, in the course of the century, it became integrated into the parliamentary opposition against the Monarch's claim to divine right.\(^{(68)}\) And parliament, backed by public opinion, in turn supported the still unrepentant Jansenists by ordering recalcitrant priests to administer the sacraments to them.\(^{(69)}\)

Sainte-Beuve, in particular, has stressed the popularity of Jansenism in the circle of the middle and upper magistrature and among the higher levels of the Third Estate. André Goldmann, the Marxist historian of Jansenism, has gone so far as to define it as the expression of a bourgeoisie embittered by the appointment of royal bureaucratic agents to undertake certain important economic
No doubt Jansenism suited the old style French bourgeoisie: 'imprégnée de humanisme, croyante, cultivée, portée à la méditation et introspection, héritière d'une longue tradition d'austérité morale' for whom money had never been of over-riding importance; but, as another Marxist has pointed out, Jansenism preceeded the social disillusionment - such as it was - of the 'noblesse de robe' and not vice versa.

While it is obvious that Jansenism cannot be understood through one social class, the extent of its influence on the population in general is not clear. Mury claims that Jansenism had a 'real if limited' impact on the popular classes. At the same time a recent study maintains that hatred of Jesuits and Rome combined with popular reaction to the violent persecution to which Jansenists were subjected had transformed Jansenism into a mass movement by around 1700. Adam quotes a commentator of the period to the effect that in 1717 the Parisian adversaries of the Bull included three-quarters of the parish priests, the Third Estate and all the people. Another contemporary commentator observed that in 1727 even the women and people were Jansenist. Thereafter - from 1726 until after the Revolution - Jansenism penetrated the population through the Nouvelles Eclesiastiques, a paper combining religious and parliamentary news which was printed in secret in towns and villages all over France.

While the ecclesiastical hierarchy on the whole remained loyal to the Church, parish priests tended to be Jansenist. In the diocese of Paris, for instance, 385 out of 450 priests were openly against Unigenitus. No doubt this fact is partially linked with the economic distress of the lower clergy in the eighteenth century. On the other hand Jansenism also exalted low clergy over hierarchy in the same way as it did people over princes. Père de la Borde, a member of the Oratoire, was in line with the general trend of Jansenist
thought when he suggested that not the bishops but the people should make all decisions in matters of faith. (79)

Jansenism, as Taveneaux observed, became transposed from a theological doctrine into a new kind of mentality in the eighteenth century. The question remains: what kind of mentality? That Jansenism started the process of religious and political disaffection which the Enlightenment carried on is clear. That it stimulated a general aspiration for liberty seems evident. 'La France jansénienne', wrote a priest in 1703 'deviendra aristocratie ou république'. (80) On the first point - the creation of an aristocratic France - it is probably significant that the class most thoroughly penetrated by Jansenism, the aristocracy of the Third Estate, also produced the most liberal and moderate element in the Revolution; the Girondins. But who - if anyone - represented the radical Pascalian current in the eighteenth century?

Obviously, no very precise answer to this question can be provided within the narrow limits of this study. But a crucial figure in this respect was clearly Rousseau. Since those who were impressed by Rousseau also read Pascal when he was revived by French universities at the end of the nineteenth century (81), it is not unreasonable to suggest that Rousseau was all the more acceptable to eighteenth century France for having been preceded by Pascal. In fact Rousseau himself wrote: 'The writings of Port-Royal and the Oratory, being my most frequent reading, had made me half a Jansenist.....'(82) They had in common a similar romantic mysticism and the belief that Man is corrupted by society. On the other hand, Rousseau's concept of nature, his optimism on human perfectibility and his political theory of the social contract all separated him from Pascal.

So far as the three thinkers whose ideas will be outlined here are concerned - Proudhon, Péguy and Alain - Rousseau's influence appears to be virtually negligible. Possibly Alain's comment that one has a duty to be optimistic about humanity while one's natural tendencies
would lead one to be pessimistic might be traced to Rousseau. It should be remembered that Volterian optimism was partly a reaction to Pascalian pessimism (83) and it may be that Rousseau and the Enlightenment in general gave rise to a new concept that was both a combination of and a deviation from Pascal and Rousseau: namely that Man is perfectible once political institutions have been abolished. There is a good deal of evidence, as will appear in a later chapter on the nineteenth century political clubs, that this kind of outlook was not uncommon. Hypothetically, it might be accounted for by the interaction of Jansenist political theory with the type of mentality and moral outlook bred by orthodox Catholicism. That Jansenism undermined the legitimacy of social and political structures and theories in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is an undisputed fact. At the same time, by no means all Frenchmen were burdened by an internal, puritan sense of sin. Sin within Catholicism is instantaneously washed away in the confessional, a process that creates a psychological climate of optimism and the expectation of immediate release. On the political plane this type of mentality might expect to see a perfect new society - with or without institutions, depending on the impact of Pascal or Rousseau - realised all at once. In view of the historical lack of separation between the spiritual and temporal domains, this kind of reaction seems all the more plausible. Alternatively, another cause for the dualism between good and bad, Man and his social institutions, might lie in the survival of Cathar ideas. For the Cathars it was primarily the world that was bad, while Man after death became part of the spiritual world and thus was made good. Given the length of time the Albigensian heresy lasted in the south and south-west of France - the same areas, it should be noted, where Protestantism and later Republicanism flourished - it would scarcely be surprising if Cathar
dualism had not left its mark.

On the other hand the fact that quietism by the end of the seventeenth century had developed its own optimistic strand is illustrated by the case of a priest in Normandy by the name of Deville. Deville, briefly, was led by a Jesuit to reveal his quietist religious tendencies and as a result lost his priesthood. But it is the link between these religious tendencies and his political ideas that most merits attention. Deville, (like the Jansenists) a disciple of Saint Augustin, aspired to internal perfection above all else. In the course of his spiritual quest, he underwent great internal anguish and trials. As a result, Deville rejected all that was established, social as well as religious habit - the bourgeoisie as well as the moral rules of the Church. It was this aspect of his mysticism - the fact of acting according to instinct and inclination and not authority - that most worried the Jesuit. Where this mysticism diverged from Jansenism and moved closer to Rousseau was in the belief that human nature, once penetrated totally by God, becomes good. Deville sincerely believed that the Kingdom of God was about to appear on earth. (84) Seventeenth century quietism, thus, was both linked to romantic socialism and inspired a more austere current of anarchism.

The impact of religious dissent on the political ideas of the eighteenth century is a domain practically untouched by research. But one significant point emerges when French history is reviewed in the light of Jansenism. And that is that the Revolution of 1789 was much less of a major divide than is generally allowed. There was much continuity in ideas before and after it. Absolute egalitarianism, ambiguity on political liberty, anti-clericalism, a belief in the purity of the people as in the inherent corruption of all authority - these political ideas and attitudes, habitually regarded
as derived from the Enlightenment, in fact pre-dated it by a full century.

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In Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, puritan, Church-hater, God-baiter, semi-lay preacher and theological political theorist, born just a century after the destruction of Port-Royal, the powerful subversive force that the radical Jansenists had held in tight rein by their contempt for the world was finally unleashed.

Proudhon's republicanism was not the republicanism of Rousseau whom he abhorred, but of the seventeenth century. Rigorous and austere rather than optimistic, it denoted a puritan style of life as much as a libertarian political ideology. Proudhon never paused to disentangle the old mêlée of religion and politics in Pascal, but directly adopted a definition of liberty that unavoidably dragged the skeleton of Jansenism along in its wake. His entire political endeavour was directed at realising a network of spiritual, self-governing, egalitarian 'republics', a series of Port-Royals geared to the social and economic conditions of the nineteenth century.

On a theoretical level, Proudhonian anarchism can clearly be seen as the transposition of an absolutist, libertarian and egalitarian seventeenth century religious movement into an absolutist, libertarian and egalitarian nineteenth century political movement. And until the Commune, it was the predominant force in French socialism. It is tempting to discern in this predominance a brief moment of resurgence of France's old internal, puritan religious tradition, suppressed century after century by the combined might of divine right and revealed religion - a brief moment, before an ultimate martyrdom. But despite considerable evidence suggesting a religious inspiration for Proudhonian influence, whether such a
direct connection existed in practice cannot be proved. And so the question as to whether the Jansenist skeleton was in fact dragged out of its cupboard for sub or semi-conscious religious motives remains unanswered.

The refined intellectual apparatus constructed by Pascal to scan infinity and other celestial regions, was swung down sharply by Proudhon for use in the mundane here-and-now. For even if he kept one eye on infinity himself, Proudhon remained first and foremost a political activist dedicated to bringing about a transformation of society. At the same time, Proudhon was much less of a political mystic than the majority of early French socialists. In fact, his major contribution to French socialism was to shake it out of what Halevy calls its reverie and utopianism by his insistence on the need for rigorous social and economic analysis and his own contributions in these fields.(35) Well before Marx, Proudhon had discerned the economic contradictions of capitalism.

But only the basic structure of Proudhon's thought can be examined here. It will be treated in its evolution through two phases. In the first, Proudhon substituted morality for politics on the same grounds as Pascal and then, on the basis of an eminently Pascalian definition of morality, proceeded to build a political system. In the second phase, he modified his initial extremism — once again by the use of Pascal's methodology and metaphysics. He even completed Pascalian doctrine theologically by grafting on to it free will which he then integrated into his political theory. Proudhon, in every sense, belonged to the secular tradition of Jansenism — but how?

Proudhon once admitted that before the age of thirty he had spent all his time reading metaphysics, languages and theology and had scarcely concerned himself with politics. This interest in metaphysics,
already discernible in his adolescence, may have been increased as the result of his employment as a printer for some years in a publishing house in Besançon specialising in theology. In any event, he was well acquainted with the religious classics of the seventeenth century as with the Bible. (86)

In his concept of faith and in his religious temperament, Proudhon was profoundly Pascalian. Sin and evil perpetually haunted his mind: men were fallen angels, in his view, and sometimes they were 'vers nés dans la fange'. (87) He had a mystical side and would sometimes talk of mortification but, as with the majority of Jansenists, it never assumed over-riding importance in his religious outlook. It seemed rather to balance and moderate his strongly critical, rationalist and absolutist tendencies - for Proudhon too was obsessed by the absolute. (88) Above all, Proudhon's God was the silent, hidden God of the Jansenists, incomprehensible to reason but tormenting to the spirit. The anguished passages in which Proudhon invokes the presence and proof of God are among the most lyrical he ever wrote. (89) Yet, in other passages, the menacing tones in which he reprimands God for not revealing himself (90), his stubborn desire to know, lead one to suspect that for him, as for Pascal, religion was at least partially the continuation of intellectual speculation by other means and that faith was provoked less by a burning belief in the hereafter than by a burning disbelief in present reality. Even after Proudhon had abandoned the Church and turned against God, he still claimed: 'On a jamais fini de se débattre contre Dieu' (91) for he could never accept Man as an end in himself nor give up the struggle to know the unknowable. He maintained his internal debate with God throughout his life as he continued to shuffle his religious and political cards indiscriminately as though they belonged to the same pack: his treatise on the economic contradictions of capitalism was prefaced by a thirty-
six page prologue on the problem of God; and between a chapter on taxes and the balance of payments he inserted twenty-five pages on Providence. (92)

Proudhon, it seems reasonable to conclude, came by his Pascalian principles through a combination of direct theological reading and his own personal religious temperament. Where Proudhon differed from Pascal was principally in the way he applied these principles. For a start, Proudhon openly and bitterly attacked the Catholic Church. No doubt the Church's reactionary social position reinforced his opposition to it, but the real issue at stake for him was the right to individual conscience. Catholicism was still denouncing personal conscience as 'Protestant' and 'individualist'. (93) Proudhon, who held no brief for Protestantism himself (94), was nevertheless as much obsessed by conscience as by the absolute and wound up condemning not only the Church but Christianity as a whole for violating human dignity by the imposition of revealed authority: 'Ce christianisme, par son principe, par toute sa théologie est la condamnation du moi humain, le mépris de la personne, le viol de la conscience.' (95) In addition, he insisted on Man's right to free moral will. On this point he went further than Pascal who had believed in predestination and in the corruption of the will by original sin. Curiously, Proudhon appears to have been reacting to Jansenism and not the official Church, which accepted free will, when he maintained that if Man took himself seriously he was bound to reject God as bad and harmful in so far as God imposed himself on the human will: 'Il sacrifie sa propre éternité, afin d'être pendant un instant, quelque chose, et le pouvoir d'affirmer lui-même.' (96)

Having established these metaphysical principles, Proudhon proceeded to construct his political system around them. However, it is not immediately apparent why he should have reasoned as he did -
why he should have substituted morality for politics — since his metaphysical assumptions are scattered in a disjointed fashion throughout his works rather than assembled behind his political theory as in Marx, like the blast-off projector behind a rocket. Hence the particular interest of the *Boutteville Papers* written by Proudhon shortly before his death in 1864 and only recently discovered: they measure out, with great precision, his first theoretical political steps. (97)

As usual, Proudhon starts with God. And God, as usual, proves unprovable. Therefore, concluded Proudhon, divine law can scarcely be the foundation of morality in society. As for natural law, it is difficult to see how anyone could feel morally bound by it. Good and bad are simply unknowable: 'Ainsi point de morale, point de crime, ni de vertu, nulle distinction du bien et du mal'. What is commonly regarded as morality amounts to self-preservation and self-interest or else governmental manipulation. The legal and institutional framework of society, justice, laws and property, all this is morally indefensible — and thus illegitimate. 'Qu'est-ce que la propriété? l'a-t-on prouvée légitime? Non.'

Is the conclusion to be drawn from this that moral society is an impossibility? No, maintained Proudhon. Man, because of his innate qualities of conscience and will, can establish morality even without divine support:

Mettons en effet, à la place de Dieu la conscience de l'homme, qu'arrive-t-il? ... elle veut la loi, même gratuitement, même sans preuves, même contre notre intérêt... j'affirme la Justice, je la veux, c'est à dire je veux certains préceptes de la morale, parce qu'en dernière analyse telle est la volonté de ma conscience; parce que l'accomplissement de cette volonté est en moi irrésistible.

The conscience of Man freely willed and independent of God, is, then,
Proudhon's mental process in this passage, strangely echoing Pascal across two hundred years, can be summed up as follows. Organised human society cannot be justified morally either by divine intervention or by reason and is, consequently, totally illegitimate. But Man's conscience, irrepressibly seeking the good, is moral. At this point, the seventeenth century Pascalian moral Man simply turns away from the life of the community to cultivate his garden. Proudhon, however, lived in a nineteenth century society which believed in progress. And so his moral individual does not abandon the community but seeks to make his own personal moral qualities the basis of a new, just society: 'Ma conscience est la mienne, ma justice est la mienne, et ma liberté est souveraine'.

Proudhon, like Pascal, identified the external authority of the Church with that of the State and defined liberty as internal - this is clear from the Boutteville papers. The effect of this type of reasoning on his political theory is spelled out in a passage quoted by Guy-Grand. Here Proudhon, by applying to politics the religious principles of transcendence and immanence, ends up with two laws that oppose each other. These he calls: 'droit divin' and 'droit humain'. The former is a system based on revelation which is characterised by authority, police, administration, censorship, discipline. The second is a theory of immanence where morality is the product of conscience and everyone, in the last resort, judges himself. Political liberty and authority, according to this definition, are thus contradictory and not co-relative. On the basis of such religious reasoning, Proudhon could only build a moral political
system by abolishing power - which is what he did initially. It is little wonder that he should have thought that politics in France is always, at bottom, theology.

One other aspect of Proudhonian morality, not touched on in the Boutteville papers but essential to understanding anarchism, should be mentioned. Proudhon's moral man, like Pascal's, is defined by thought as well as conscience: 'L'homme ne reconnaît en dernière analyse d'autre loi que celle annoncée par sa raison et sa conscience; toute obéissance de sa part, fondée sur d'autres considérations, est un commencement d'immoralité.'(100) Conscience and understanding signify the unity of the spirit. On this point Proudhon repeated Pascal's rather odd identification between Spirit and liberty - as between Nature and authority. The principle of liberty Proudhon conceived as: '... supérieur à la Nature dont il se sert, à la fatalité qu'il domine.'(101) These metaphysical notions, moreover, directly determined his view of political progress.

Proudhon never believed that humanity was marching forward to perfection or to any definitive state. He saw Man rather as carried along by the flux and change in the universe which, in turn, Man might influence for the better by developing his own intelligence and morality. Progress was the double process of moralising - that is of enlightening and purifying - oneself and the world. The progress of thought would lead to the decline of God, authority and government (102): spirit, in time, would triumph over nature. Characteristically, Proudhon defined progress not in material terms - for he considered poverty to be a virtue - but as the law of his soul.(103) This approach probably holds the key to his curiously violent God-hatred. By thought and conscience, Proudhon reasoned, Man combats an immoral material world and achieves progress within it. He also maintained that without God there would be no property owners, thereby indicating that God was responsible
for the iniquities of Nature. Therefore, Proudhon appears to have concluded, Man is up against an anti-human, anti-liberal God who is ever on the side of priests and princes against all efforts to realise progress, liberty and fraternity: '... chacun de nos progrès est une victoire dans laquelle nous écrasons la divinité.' (104) At the same time, Proudhon's social optimism was only superimposed on and never replaced a basic metaphysical pessimism. For while he thought that humanity could advance, he also appears to have measured this advance in relative rather than absolute terms:

L'Humanité, dans sa marche oscillatoire, tourne incessamment sur elle-même: ses progrès ne sont que le rajeunissement de ses traditions; ses systèmes, si opposés en apparence, présentent toujours le même fond, vu de côtés différents. (105)

Proudhon frequently reproached other nineteenth century French socialists for defining revolution in mystical and political terms. He conceived the real revolution that would usher in anarchism as being scientific, economic and moral. (106) In effect, he was still wielding his habitual intellectual weapons - conscience and understanding, purity and thought - but adapted, so to speak, to modern political warfare. Anarchism, as founded on Proudhonian morality, consisted of two essential first principles. First, the true judge of every man being only his own conscience, no one should obey a law unless he has consented to it himself. Second, government is a matter of free discussion - based on knowledge. Proudhon firmly maintained that all legislative or administrative questions should be treated 'objectively', that is judged on knowledge and not on opinion. (107)

Consequently, Proudhon had a low opinion of parliamentary democracy. It was neither libertarian nor egalitarian since it did not allow citizens to make and execute their own decisions. And Proudhon was scathing on the subject of majority voting which he
described as: 'La merveille des temps modernes, le vote par assis et levé sur les questions qui ne peuvent se résoudre que par la science et l'étude.'(108) The people voted because, having had mental blinkers imposed on them by inequality, they had become incapable of perceiving either their own interests or the deceit of the candidates. In reality, parliamentary democracy was a mere form of middle-class domination, a useful instrument for creating confidence placed at the disposal of a bourgeoisie exclusively concerned with making money.(109)

It was an altogether inferior form of government, in Proudhon's view, because it was based on voting and not scientific examination. Beyond that it was also immoral since it kept in being a system of power and social relations which was debasing to human nature, breeding servility and materialism. Therefore, concluded Proudhon, representative democracy with all its trappings, in particular political parties, should simply be abolished: 'Plus de Partis; Plus d'autorite; Liberté absolue de l'homme et du citoyen: En trois mots, voilà notre profession de foi politique et sociale.'(110) Proudhon's general attitude to the democratic political game is best summed up by his own pungent declaration: 'Faire de la politique c'est se laver les mains dans la crotte.'(111)

Anarchism, on the other hand, put the accent where it should go—on social and economic rather than political democracy. As Proudhon himself claimed, this meant the identification of government and society. (112) His emphasis on social and economic questions was the reverse side of his negation of politics.

Anarchism would free mankind from the unnatural domination of authority by replacing laws and courts by a system of personal obligation and contract. However, Proudhon had no faith in spontaneous social harmony. He was far more inclined to believe that once control was removed from society a Hobbesian state of nature would arise. How
then could society function in the absence of an imposed legal settlement? Unlike Marx, Proudhon never envisaged that harmony could be achieved in society. On the contrary, he saw great creative potential in conflict - so long, of course, as it was contained within the system's basic principles. Besides, a qualified defence of conflict was entirely in keeping with his vision of the good society as based on bargaining and discussion. As a mode of social regulation, he was thus forced to fall back on what Ritter calls an especially pure kind of education which would have a psychologically compelling effect without, however, being backed by any form of compulsion. (113) Stimulate, warn, inform, instruct but do not incalculcate was Proudhon's political prescription. (114) His first, radical formulation of anarchism envisaged a framework of mutually dependent regional and professional units and the total abolition of all government and all authority.

However, Proudhon evolved away from his initial extremism. By 1864, the year of his death, he had accepted universal suffrage as the corollary of his own federal system as the 'base du droit public des français'(115), and had gone a long way towards modifying his views on the State and property. While it would be interesting to know the exact process of Proudhon's development, all that can be examined here are his intellectual instruments, which were strikingly Pascalian, and briefly, his final political conclusion.

Where Marx's social end was the classless society, Proudhon's was to arrive at what he called 'Justice'. Although he was never very explicit as to what exactly he meant by justice, it seems reasonable to deduce from the Boutteville papers that Proudhon's just society was one which permitted the maximum development of the moral qualities of the individual: conscience, will and thought. But what was this maximum development?

Like Pascal, Proudhon claimed to have arrived by observation at
the conclusion that Man is naturally impelled towards the Good. Both thinkers rejected idealism as a philosophical system on the ground that Man's reason is too limited to be able to posit first principles. (116) Instead, they adopted a phenomenological approach to knowledge. And on this basis they maintained that the world is riddled with paradoxes. So that although both started by attempting to realise some form of the absolute in the world, both ended - unlike Hegel and Descartes - by deducing that although the absolute must always be sought it can never be discovered or attained in the world. Finally, Proudhon, having tried to create a system of absolute truth in society - i.e. anarchism - came to see that only a limited truth was possible. Previously he had seen society as the inter-action of absolute individuals who by means of their contact with each other succeeded both in subordinating their own subjective desires and at the same time participated actively in creating what Proudhon called 'la raison collective'. (117) Now he defined social truth in the same terms as Pascal had used to define the limits of personal morality: it was a balance between the absolute and reality - between liberty and authority.

Whatever the personal process that led Proudhon to this metaphysical conclusion, he used a particular methodology to reach it conceptually. Proudhon is frequently derided by Marxists for having misunderstood the Hegelian dialectic. In fact, all the evidence indicates that he was really using an adapted form of the Pascalian paradox, even if momentarily he was also influenced by Hegel:

L'antinomie ne se résout pas... les deux termes dont elles se composent se balancent, soit entre eux, soit avec d'autres termes antinomiques... Une balance n'est point une synthèse telle que l'entendait Hegel et que je l'avais supposé après lui. (118)

While Pascal's contradictions had led to a static situation, Proudhon's developed into a dynamic system that only rarely resorted to synthesis.
and instead employed the notions of tense balance and equilibrium. The moral and material world, as Proudhon saw it, was composed of a plurality of irreducible elements, at once contradictory and complementary and in their opposition lay the key to both liberty and society: '.. ce qui rend la société possible est, à mes yeux, la même chose que ce qui rend la liberté possible: l'opposition des puissances.' (119)

At the same time progress and order is ensured in this chaos of contradictions by what Proudhon terms the theory of series. A series is simply a general organic law derived from particular concrete elements: war or work, for instance. Its distinguishing characteristic is that it is discovered by induction - it is real. From his own observation of economic reality, as from current research in botany and zoology, Proudhon concluded that within diversity there is also unity and that general laws may thus be discerned. This was the reasoning behind his definition of the dialectic as: '.. la marche de l'esprit d'une idée à l'autre, à travers une idée supérieure, une série.' (120)

The problem was not to find the point of fusion between the opposing forces of a dialectical process, but their point of unstable balance. (121)

Proudhon's intellectual methodology - that is his preference for tense equilibrium over synthesis - had three important implications for his revised political theory. One, that perfection is impossible on earth and in society. Two, that all systematic doctrine is: 'le plus damné mensonge que l'on puisse présenter aux hommes.' (122) And three, that change is the only law of society:

Rien ne subsiste... tout change, tout coule, tout devient. Par conséquent, tout se teint et s'enchaîne; par conséquent encore tout est opposition, balancement, équilibre dans l'univers. Il n'y a rien, ni en dehors, ni en dedans de cette danse éternelle. (123)

By using the concept of equilibrium, Proudhon arrived at a theory of property very different from his original one. Property is theft,
was his first and notorious declaration on the subject. And,
initially, he advocated public ownership as the most moral solution
to the problem of private property. Then he realised that when
power is concentrated instead of divided, equilibrium becomes im-
possible and liberty, consequently, is threatened. To leave all
property in the hands of the government, Proudhon noted, would simply
accentuate its ready tyrannical tendencies. (124) Besides, for
Proudhon, the real problem of wealth in society was less who owned it
than how it was used. Nothing was changed, in his opinion, by sub-
stituting government for private ownership except the stockholders
and management. He doubted that values would be automatically trans-
formed. (125) As for the position of the workers — that would cer-
tainly be no different. Only economic democracy could alter their
situation. Finally, therefore, Proudhon rehabilitated private
property — albeit circumscribed by mutual credit schemes and taxes —
so as to back up individual liberty with material support. But he
did so without enthusiasm: 'ma raison... peut admettre la propriétée:
mon coeur ne sera jamais à elle.' (126)

Proudhon performed a similar, if less radical, about-turn on the
role of the State. Anarchism, he believed, was the most perfect
political system that could be devised. But since perfection was
impossible in society, it could only be approached and not attained.
Du Prinipe Fédératif, Proudhon's retraction of anarchism appeared in
1863. The Federation was a contract, mutual, reciprocal and advantag-
eous to all, which meant that on entering the state the individual
received from it as much as he gave up. He kept his freedom, sover-
eignty and initiative — minus what specifically related to the content
of the contract which the State would be asked to guarantee. In
practice, this meant that as much power as possible would be delegated
to local, regional, municipal authorities. The State itself would be
entrusted only with such functions that could not be performed by smaller groups. The essence of the Federal Contract, in Proudhon's eyes, was to keep more power in the hands of the citizens than of the State; what it envisaged was an extreme form of decentralisation. The State would be called on to execute as little as possible. Instead it would legislate, create, initiate, encourage and set an example. (127)

Proudhon, who suitably defined society as a 'méthaphysique en action'(128), quite clearly owed as much to Pascal as Marx did to Hegel. And when Marx and Proudhon quarrelled, the real issues at stake were less political tactics than metaphysical doctrine: Pascal versus Hegel. Proudhon rejected Hegel essentially because he did not believe that good and evil could ever be known absolutely.(129) Nor, as he made eminently clear to the Marxist envoy Grun, would he ever consent to the deification of humanity.

L'ordre dans la société, si parfait qu'on l'envisage, ne chassera jamais entièrement l'amertume et l'ennui; le bonheur en ce monde est un idéal que nous sommes condamnés à poursuivre toujours, mais que l'antagonisme infranchissable de la nature et de l'esprit tient hors de notre portée... Nous pensons plus loin qu'il nous est donné d'atteindre..(130)

Moreover, he viewed the German tendency to dogmatise and schematize with a disapproving eye. And to Marx he addressed a moving plea (in the name of God) not to follow in the footsteps of his compatriot Luther and substitute one dogmatism for another, not to found a new religion of intolerance - be it a religion of reason and logic.(131)

Like Pascal, Proudhon judged reason and logic as fallible and inadequate instruments, optimism as banal, idealism and dogmatism as both false and dangerous. But Proudhon was perhaps at his most Pascalian in his vision of the misery and grandeur of the human condition. And on this point he clashed irreconcilably with dialectical
materialism. It is paradoxical that Proudhon who savagely decried humanity as burdened with sin and evil and remained adamant in his refusal to sanctify it, should have opposed the humanist Marxists for human reasons. Intellectually, their materialism was not strictly incompatible with his own sense of Man's grandeur. But some emotional — or mystical — core in Proudhon made it impossible for him to accept the limited role accorded by Marx to Man as compared with the influence of his material conditions — even although it was Proudhon, more than anyone, who forced French socialists to take these material conditions into account. For one of the few articles of faith in the strange, almost existential religion of Pascal, which was Proudhon's also, was that even if Man is impotent before God, tragically abandoned, solitary and a sinner, he is nonetheless still master of the material world and his tragic grandeur consists precisely in his refusal to bow to its fatalities. "Je suis homme" wrote Proudhon, "et ce que j'aime le plus dans l'homme est encore cette humeur belliqueuse qui le place au-dessus de toute autorité, de tout amour, comme de tout fatalisme, et par laquelle il se révèle à la terre comme son légitime souverain."

Unlike Proudhon, an autodidact steeped in theology and the Bible, Emile Chartier — better known by his pseudonym Alain — was a moderately anti-clerical intellectual, a teacher of philosophy who refrained from dragging God perpetually into his politics and instead alluded to Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Descartes. Alain was not an original political theorist but an essayist whose writings on Radicalism, even if they never actually influenced any Radicals (133), are widely regarded as significant and authentically representative of the Radical mentality.
But why or how his articles in Normandy newspapers which appeared regularly for many years after the First World War could succeed in pinning down such an elusive phenomenon, Alain himself never made clear. Radicalism, as he defined it, did not necessarily mean membership of the Radical Party or support for the Radical political programme; it signified the intention of each sovereign individual to subject the words and actions of the holders of political power to his own free, untrammelled judgment and personal scrutiny. As Alain himself admitted, his formulation hardly amounted to a political doctrine: 'Il ne semble que le radicalisme existe comme doctrine politique; il a pour principe le gouvernement aussi réel, aussi direct que possible, du peuple par le peuple.'(134) It was, in fact, a concept of Man with certain political implications and not, as one might expect, a theory of politics backed by particular moral concepts.

Significantly, Alain always meant to write a magnum opus on morality but never did. In his writings it is not difficult to discover the moralist who, like Pascal and Proudhon, was seeking not so much pure platonic ideas as an operative morality. And on one level Alain's morality with its list of virtues - courage, temperance, sincerity, justice etc. - may be seen as a practical aid to living the Good Life. What is more difficult to discover is why Alain's and Radicalism's quest for truth should have journeyed down the old beaten track of Pascalian metaphysics and moral philosophy, to end inevitably by substituting morality for politics. In itself it is strange enough that after two and a half centuries Alain should have come to repeat Pascal's political formula of external obedience combined with internal resistance to authority. What is even stranger is that he should have proceeded on metaphysical assumptions identical with those of Pascal. Were these his own philosophical inductions or were they as much a part of the radical mentality as the belief in the innate corruption
of all power? De Tocqueville once said that radicals were profoundly ignorant of political science, an observation amply illustrated by Alain. But even assuming that radicals adopted Pascalian morality as the model for their own humanism, a fact which appears evident, it still remains to discover on what level — religious, anti-religious, metaphysical, moral? — they did so. The question is really, whether Pascalian morality had become not just a substitute for politics but also for religion. At one point this is what Alain almost appears to be saying:

L'esprit égalitaire va contre la nature, où tout est inégal, où les forces se composent; l'esprit égalitaire veut l'égalité malgré tout, le droit malgré tout. Si on lui objecte que cela n'est pas, il répond avec une espèce de foi illuminée, que cela doit être et que cela sera. C'est une religion véritable. Et ceux-là n'acceptent pas un roi. (135)

Alain never used contradictions with the same verve and aplomb as Pascal and Proudhon. Yet one familiar Pascalian dissociation and two oppositions constituted the groundwork of his morality and consequently formed the basis of his political approach: Man without God; Man against the universe — that is Spirit against Nature; conscience against authority. Starting out from the metaphysical and religious dualism of Spirit versus Nature and conscience versus revealed authority, Alain eventually concluded with the political dualisms of individual against society and internal liberty against external authority.

Without explanation or justification, Alain affirmed that nature has no value and that the only value resides in the human spirit. (136) But the human spirit also has a duty to oppose nature: 'L'Esprit est ce qui distingue l'homme de la nature, et ce qui, par la voie morale, le sauve de la nature; c'est une puissance de refus.' (137) Here Alain is plainly repeating Pascal: since nature — i.e. the material
world is without value the only way that Man can safeguard the values in himself is by resisting the world's impure pressures and encroachments. This necessity for the moral being to prove himself against the world - that is to attain his own salvation - is all the more urgent since Man cannot count on God to save him.(138) Besides, in Alain's view, dependence on God would amount to human slavery. On this point he was closer to Proudhon than to Pascal; for while the latter coupled independent human conscience with predestination, the former added free will to conscience and thereafter doubted whether the existence of God was compatible with human dignity - a question Alain also asks himself.(139) How Alain saw God is lastly uncertain. But his conception of Man is clear: human grandeur lies in Man's capacity to find morality for himself and to work his own way to salvation. The problem of morality is between Man and himself, he claimed.(140) The essential conclusion of Alain's metaphysics was that since no truth can be ascertained through God or the external world, Man is thrown back on his own resources: 'Telle est la position de l'homme, à la fois instable et stable: se croire libre, au moins par la pensée, et ne croire rien d'autre.'(141)

The human spirit is capable of morality because it is endowed with conscience. But morality, in Alain's definition, went beyond conscience and included also thought and will. The examination of conscience is always: 'une opération intellectuelle, une lumière.'(142) Moreover, it must always be accompanied by the belief that Man can act, can shape his own destiny - unaided: 'La seule valeur en lui c'est cela même qui refuse direction et même conseil.'(143) When Alain described conscience and thought as the duty to: 'résister, examiner, douter, gouverner'(144) he was not only defining morality in the same terms as Pascal, he was also drawing identical practical conclusions from it. Man is moral in so far as he purifies and enlightens himself.
The world, which is the domain of passion, ambition, habit, threatens his moral purity and tempts him to suspend his personal judgment: it must, therefore, be resisted. (145) Man, as a creator of values, can only adopt a negative and critical attitude towards a universe which is essentially valueless. In effect, Alain's puritanism amounts to a permanent moral revolution, a resolution to seek justice that is duly renewed internally in each person and only in each person since the individual alone is capable of judging the real morality of his thought and actions since he only is aware of the intention behind them. (146)

In this respect, the similarity between Alain's moralism and Jansenism is striking. Jansenists believed that the morality of an act could only be judged by knowing the intention behind it. They also went through numerous conversions, none of which they considered definitive since salvation could never be assured in the face of God's silence. "Je vois un progrès qui se fait et qui se défait d'instant en instant" wrote Alain; and he added in terms that are interesting and probably significant: '... dès que l'on s'endort, on est théologien'. (147)

Alain's use of religious terminology resembles Proudhon's references to God: both, that is, are persistent enough to suggest some kind of mental preoccupation. But in what sense could Alain be preoccupied by religion? His various comments on the subject point to a certain nostalgia for a personal, libertarian religion, without institutions as without theology. Towards what he considered as the essence of Christianity, even of Catholicism, Alain was never hostile. On the contrary, he quite often expressed his admiration for it:

Le christianisme est une révolution étonnante où l'on trouve de tout, une règle d'action et même de pensée, une coïncidence des pouvoirs, le spirituel et le temporel, et même souvent une confusion. Mais d'un autre côté c'est une pensée...
continue, une réflexion suivie sur le péché, la tentation, le repentir, la pénitence, la récompense. Cette pensée, toujours menacée par la politique (il faut des règles), les actions importantes, les institutions importantes), néanmoins s'est sauve comme mystique. (148)

At the same time, Alain also reproached the Catholic Church for found- ing religion on authority and force instead of simply providing moral leadership, freely given and freely taken. (149) He himself maintained that conscience constitutes the foundation of all religion and gave a series of lectures on the subject. The great popular revolution of Christianity is founded on truth, he once observed (150), and this is no doubt the closest definition that can be made of his concept of religion: it was essentially an ethical code.

In his last lectures on conscience, Alain refers directly to Jesuits and Jansenists, identifying the former with institutional Christianity and the latter with its true spirit. (151) Jesuits see no necessity to attain impossible perfection, they value institutions and temper virtue with customary morality. Jansenists — and his sympathy with them is evident — have a 'secret religion' depending neither on rites, ceremonies nor theology. And because God is hidden, he is accessory to their morality which is based on the promptings of the individual conscience of each person. Curiously, or perhaps predictably, Alain makes a distinction elsewhere between two kinds of political spirit — which he identifies as republican and monarchical respectively — that is exactly parallel with what he refers to in this passage as the eternal opposition between moral conscience and common morality. The monarchical spirit is credulous, full of confidence, follows the opinion of others and refuses to use its own powers of judgment. The republican spirit, on the other hand, is reflective and determined to exercise judgment itself. (152)

It is obvious that Alain is here transposing his highly individualistic, intellectual and rigorous form of puritanism directly into
politics. No doubt the Enlightenment also called for reason and demanded the right of personal judgment. But if it were without doubt the source of an important strand of Radicalism, the Enlightenment lies only lightly on Alain. In his view, one ought to be optimistic, but pessimism comes more naturally. (153) Nor did his attitude towards nature and humanity have much in common with that of Rousseau. He could be quite as savage about Man's sinfulness as Pascal and Proudhon: humanity, as he put it, was "souillée de fureur et de sang". (154) In Pascal, the reverse side of Man's miserable condition as a solitary abandoned sinner consisted of a heroic and stoic glorification of the minute area of liberty left to mankind, that is the liberty to understand its condition and the liberty to reject all that is mechanistic, established, accepted and thus to triumph over nature. Alain, while less given to lyrical outbursts, shared Pascal's pride in Man's solitary freedom. At times he appears almost to revel in the intractability of the human environment and condition, for it is in grappling with these difficulties that Man finds a meaning for the universe and for himself:

L'univers humain nous guette, nous voit venir, voit venir le moraliste, se ferme, s'alarme, se blesse, se durcit. Qui ne voit dans cette obstacle une chose sublime, la prétention d'être libre, de ne pas subir même le bienfait, même la justice, d'être traité en égal. La question ouvrière est toute là. Un salaire sera injuste tant qu'il sera fixé par l'employeur. La résistance ici est ressource; et c'est la difficulté qui doit donner l'espoir... si l'homme devient meilleur, c'est selon nos principes mêmes, par sa propre action sur lui-même, par sa propre liberté...

Two possible hypotheses may be advanced as to the sense in which Pascalian moralism became the model for Radicalism. The first is straight-forward and Jansenist: it consists of the deliberate puritan rejection of the world and of politics as being relative and thus unworthy of Man who must consequently postpone his hopes of finding
and knowing the absolute to the hereafter. The other possibility is that Radicalism took over Pascalian morality without God. Since God was in any case only an accessory, this would change the spirit rather than the form of the humanism the Radicals derived from it: in other words the almost existential puritan faith of Pascal would have been replaced by a puritan and humanist form of existential metaphysics. Brought down from Heaven to Earth, Pascalian moralism would transfer the location of the absolute from God to self: there being no absolute ascertainable truth in Heaven or Earth then the self becomes the only judge of truth and reality and the absolute and conscious liberty of the self exercised concurrently with that of others against nature is that which gives reality to a meaningless and valueless universe in which there is no God. Politics in this case would remain as repulsive as before, if not more so, since it would now tend to rob the individual of the one thing not only on Earth but also in the Heavens that gives him value: the personal capacity and consciously exercised will to judge his environment morally and intellectually. On the other hand, liberty and equality become a kind of substitute religion. For, as Alain once said, since both go against nature they cannot be maintained except by a constant effort of will - an effort of will presumably that secures Man's secular salvation by giving the world significance.\(^{(156)}\) That this second existential version is the one favoured personally by Alain is partially indicated by his observation that God would probably violate humanity if he existed by destroying human freedom. Pascal had evolved his humanism in the first place by reason of God being hidden from the world which, to him, proved that Man sought the good by himself. Alain applied the same rigorous logic and scepticism to his thinking about Man and God - but backwards from Pascal: that is if Man proves his value and humanity its significance by their freedom of choice, then if God exists they
would lose it all for all action would become fatalistic.

Whether the motivation of Radicals was at a religious or metaphysical level the practical political result was in the end the same: the replacement of politics by a morality that was violently pessimistic on power, politics and society and at the same time moderately optimistic as to the intellectual and moral potentialities of the individual. As Alain put it: "L'individu qui pense contre la société qui dort, voilà l'histoire éternelle."

Political society, in so far as it is also moral, consists of single individuals following the dictates of their own conscience, for obedience to external rulings violates morality since there is no way of knowing the motivation behind it. At the same time, of course, these separate individuals must act together, maintained Alain (158), thereby completing the absolute liberty and equality of Jansenism politically by means of fraternity. Since conscience cannot anyway delegate its authority - and in particular not Alain's puritanical, internal definition of it - radical morality led logically to self-government. However, unlike Proudhon, Alain was not a creative political thinker. He was describing and analysing the Radical mentality within a Republic which had been forced to centralise to survive and in which the conditions required for anarchism did not exist, so that other means of protecting the individual against the abuses of power had to be contrived. This much Alain admitted himself:

Paris n'est pas juge, et j'aimerais un parlement à Tours ou à Chateauroux. Mais, comme cela n'est pas possible, il faut prévoir l'assaut perfide mené par toutes les Élegances ...(159)

He therefore employed the first principle of Republicanism - 'l'individu toujours libre et toujours juge' - not like Proudhon as the basis of a new, just society but as a ruler to rap the present one over the knuckles with - in such a way as to avoid taking the consequences.
Alain's formula of political liberty was identical to Pascal's: external submission combined with internal resistance to authority. Like Pascal, Alain greatly feared anarchy and chaos and believed that if power did not exist to enforce order, a state of war would break out. But while external obedience was counselled by Pascal also and perhaps mainly out of disdain for the world, in Alain there appears to be an extra twist of cynicism and calculation. Why disobey, when disobedience simply accentuates tyranny? And Alain frequently alluded to the guile by which the governed may deflect the intentions of government without incurring the excessive risks of revolt: I give way because I must, but..(160) Besides which, as he observed, the tyranny exercised by political power is scarcely very intimidating: '.. si l'esprit n'adore point.' (161)

The passage in which Alain formulated the attitude of Radicalism towards political authority is especially interesting because of the unusual distinction he made between spiritual and temporal power. Since all power is theocratic by nature, wrote Alain, heresy is always the greatest sin. Against the tyrant's desire to be respected and loved: '.. il faut maintenir la séparation des pouvoirs et garder le Pouvoir spirituel indépendant de l'autre... Céder absolument, et en même temps résister absolument. Vertusrarement pratiques... Un mépris obéissant est roi.' (162) With his habitual disregard for the terminology and autonomy of political science, Alain is here equating spiritual and temporal power not with the Church and State respectively, but with internal liberty and external authority. Elsewhere he made the point even more explicitly: all authority is of the flesh and all liberty of the spirit. (163) Alain's definition of temporal and spiritual authority may thus be equated with Proudhon's 'droit divin' and 'droit humain'. Temporal authority and divine law are based on the principle of revelation and are decreed by nature; spiritual
authority and human law are founded on conscience and have as their source the spirit. The conclusion is inescapable that Alain's mind, like Proudhon's, was dominated by an irreconcilable conflict of opposites, with the metaphysical contradiction of spirit and nature reinforcing the religious contradiction of conscience and revealed authority. Practically and politically, for neither Alain nor Proudhon ever distinguished the spiritual and temporal domains in an orthodox sense, this meant dividing the nation into two separate, opposing camps. On one side of the barrier were ranged all those with power of money - the priests, the princes and the rich. (164)

On the other side were the ordinary people, the 'petits' - and it is very tempting to see this symbolic French republican expression as originating in Jansenist puritanism. Their main defence was internal and intellectual - in incredulity: 'Dès que le citoyen est incrédule, tous les droits sont comme abolis. Il ne faut point croire.' (165)

As the direct consequence of these moral assumptions, Alain condemned the whole realm of political organisation - government, political parties and administration. His immediate reasons for this were principally two: the inherent authoritarianism and moral impurity of political activity. Like Proudhon, Alain believed that government should not use force but should rely instead on moral and rational persuasion: 'Le vrai Pouvoir Spirituel, selon notre philosophie, est seulement spirituel; il agit en éclairant l'opinion, c'est à dire par la parole et l'écriture seulement.' (166) Obviously, the civil servants in the Third Republic did not behave in this hyper-democratic manner and as a result they incurred his deepest disapproval. Besides, their moral integrity was permanently threatened, in his view, by their having at their disposal the means to punish and reward: 'La...cause qui corrompt le Pouvoir Spirituel, c'est la puissance Temporelle.' (167)

All government officials, in the last resort, fall into the same
category of doubtful morality as the Bourgeoisie who are unlikely to
damage their careers in the interest of 'truth'.(168)

With respect to the Dreyfus case, Alain noted that the abdication
of moral conscience was 'une sorte de loi de la politique'.(169)
Republicanism, as defined by him, is designed as a sort of moral
antidote to the necessary evil of political power. The Radical,
following a familiar pattern of disdain combined with a deep inner
refusal to compromise, simply applies his own rules to politics while
observing surface proprieties at the same time. Starting out from
the premises that all power is corrupting and bad and that parties
are necessarily blind because dominated by the desire to conserve
themselves (170), he judges politicians on personal character rather
than on party programme. A Radical, therefore, is not someone who
supports the Radical party programme but is defined instead by the
value he places on equality and justice.(171) The deputy should be
tightly controlled by and even become the slave of the electorate.
His duty is simply to pass on to public powers the opinion of the
electorate. People do not want tyrants, only legislators. For
since they are really the masters, why should they hand over their
power to politicians? By means of the deputy, the people sit in
parliament, inspect the budget and control bureaucrats and ministers:
'dévolution vraie celle-là, qui est de tous les jours, et qui ne
fait que commencer.'(172) But this permanent political revolution —
which is no more than the extension of Alain's permanent moral
revolution — is above all critical and negative: electors can resist
and control power but they cannot undertake positive reforming action.
(173) Having removed the sting from the tail of the scorpion — as
suitable symbol as any of the Radical's concept of the State — they
leave it virtually impotent.

All in the political system, as Alain readily admitted, is not
as it should be already: labels and programmes have come to replace men. This is the result of party congresses - 'ces évangiles de partis' - so that the elector nowadays, instead of having a deputy at his service, has a party congress as his master. If Alain ever wrote a kind word about political parties, it is not easy to find. His most consistent attitude towards parties was one of high-minded repugnance: 'Justice des partis, autre forme de la guerre des partis'; 'Les Partis auraient laissé Dreyfus à l'Île du Diable'; 'Or, avec les Partis et la Haute Politique, je suis assuré que les riches gouvernent'.

(174) If the people are sovereign, why should they bother to organise democracy formally since this clearly means the end of popular control?

Alain's deepest conviction was that there are always two forms of a political idea: the popular and the institutional as devised by politicians. (175) When an idea finds direct expression through the people, it remains pure. For Alain also subscribed to Pascal's austere but heroic humanism: 'L'homme', he wrote 'est le lieu des miracles.'

(176) Politics, on the other hand, was in Alain's view - and here he once more faithfully echoed Pascal - at best a waste of time or a form of entertainment: 'Vous avez vu comment le roi de France a changé ses conseillers et ses ministres. Cette révolution du palais n'est heureusement qu'un jeu, mais qui peut instruire le spectateur.' (177) At worse, an idea when taken over by politicians becomes as inherently immoral as the material world was in the eyes of Jansenists:

... toute mystique produit une politique, qui n'est que la même opinion, seulement fondée alors sur les intérêts, sur l'ambition, sur les calculs prudents en somme. Toute politique est opportuniste..." (178)

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The antithetical use of the terms, 'mystique' and 'politique', made fairly frequently and with evident approval by Alain, as by many of his generation, was, in fact, borrowed by him from Charles Péguy. (179) Péguy, a highly individualistic and in many ways uniquely French personality, stands at a point of intersection, no less uniquely French, between literature, politics and mystical religion. His life and writings provide an interesting and perhaps significant example of how a certain French cultural pattern - moralist, puritan, libertarian, absolutist and more or less mystical - seems often to be accompanied by a troubled, ambiguous and elusive attitude towards politics as to religion. This is not to say that Péguy's life offers any definite answer as to how these cultural characteristics find political and religious outlets; but it does provide a concrete case of how one man dealt in his own life with the politico-religious entanglements that have been examined in this chapter so far on a theoretical level.

Moreover, Péguy was a personality who was known and influential. In his own personal life he ended as a solitary and isolated figure since his temperamental absolutism caused him to quarrel with most of his friends. At the same time the impact of his personality, his life and his writings continued to be felt and even increased after his death in the First World War. (180) And if his claim: 'Une renaissance Catholique se fait par moi'(181) is an over-statement, it is certainly true that he contributed significantly to preparing the way for the religious, intellectual and political revival that gathered force in French Catholicism after World War I. Catholics, in particular of the Left, who suddenly found themselves parachuted from their spiritual heights into what appeared to them as the barbaric jungle of politics felt less lost for being able to follow the markings left by Péguy. Consequently, his unorthodox politics cannot be viewed
in the same light as the isolated eccentricities of, say, a G. K. Chesterton. Furthermore, Pégyu's political gospel — with the eminently quotable and poetic formula of mystique and politique as its first article of faith — was, one suspects, all the more acceptable and influential for bestowing moral, literary and political sanction on a popularly held opinion. For the distinction between mystique and politique, although it has been repeated unto two and even three generations of Frenchmen as if it enshrines one of the eternal truths of political science, amounts to no less than the familiar, total condemnation in the name of traditional puritan absolutism of all organised and institutionalised forms of political activity.

Soltau describes Pégyu as being a figure altogether in the tradition of English non-conformist puritanism. In fact, Pégyu — whose favourite reading as a schoolboy was the Pensées (163), who wrote a book on Pascal and was probably reconverted back to Catholicism after a long period of atheism by Pascalian metaphysics — was profoundly Jansenist in temperament and belief. And it is likely that his difficulties with the Catholic Church, with religion itself and even with politics all sprang from this source.

Like Proudhon, Pégyu was a puritan of peasant stock who believed in poverty and work, in personal dignity and truth. But Pégyu's truth was the pure, uncompromising, internal truth of Jansenism, to be eternally conquered afresh against the forces of moral inertia and blind habit both in oneself and in the world. His morality was practical, perfectionist and pessimistic in the sense of being haunted by the significance of sin and evil. In the years around the turn of the century, such a moral and intellectual outlook, at once libertarian and questioning, was radically at odds with current academic and religious orthodoxy. And Pégyu, who never waited to be attacked, unleashed the full force of the picturesque and poetic abuse that he
wielded in such a masterly fashion against such primary enemies of mankind as philosophical rationalism and optimism; idealisation and intellectual schematisation; the theology, dogmatic and legalistic, of the Roman Catholic Church. Next to Sorbonne intellectuals (185), Péguy's pet hate, even in his moments of faith, were the cure's; he died an unrepentant anti-clerical. (186) Of faith and prayer, he would assert fiercely, priests knew less than nothing. They cared only for the administration of the sacraments. True to the lay tradition of Jansenism, he saw the people as the only source of true religion. As for the cure's, they merely prevented the essence of religion from being realised. (187)

One of Péguy's sons eventually turned Protestant. But such a solution did not appeal to Péguy who saw himself as a medieval, pre-Reformation Christian and referred to Christianity rather than to Catholicism. (188) Practically, the distinction between Protestantism and Péguy's brand of Catholicism appears to centre on the question of individualism which Péguy always regarded as some sort of social crime. Like Pascal and Proudhon, Péguy's notion of faith was permeated by the communalism of early Christianity and it seems that he deeply regretted and wanted to restore original pre-Reformation unity. (189) When, after a long phase of atheism and conflict with the Church, Péguy finally returned to Catholicism, he did so for reasons of human solidarity. "He had gone back", observes Adereth, "not to a set of dogmas or to a comforting and respectable philosophy, but to the revolutionary spirit of the Gospels. Christianity put an end to his feelings of isolation and taught him the value of communion with others." (190) Yet, in the last resort, Péguy's passionate support of the rights of conscience could never be fully reconciled with Catholic authoritarianism any more than his revolutionary morality could find satisfaction in politics; and he never fully made his peace with the institutional
Church as he never came to terms with the orthodox political parties.

For all his own fluctuations between faith and atheism, socialist commitment and political renunciation, Péguy was profoundly convinced that Socialism and Christianity were identical. (191) And from the beginning, even in his atheistic period, his political thinking was theological in spirit. Péguy's socialism was both integral and as absolute as religious faith: '... on ne peut se convertir sérieusement au socialisme sans que la philosophie et la vie et les sentiments les plus profonds soient rafraîchis, revoulvérés et pour garder le mot, convertis.' (192) For Péguy socialism meant the economic and spiritual liberation of Man from all servitude: the end of alienation. More exactly, it signified the satisfaction of Man's basic material needs so as to leave him free to conquer his spiritual liberty. And, following faithfully in the footsteps of such other notable libertarian moralists as Proudhon and Alain, Péguy used the first principle of his morality - the primacy of the individual conscience not to be reduced to a false creed or dogma (193) - to provide the form and not just the spirit of his socialism. Proudhon and Alain may sometimes leave the impression that they consider voting as bad for the soul. Péguy actually said so openly: '... les âmes citoyennes ne connaissent pas la mise en balance des suffrages.' (194) Universal suffrage, in his eyes, constituted: '... l'abaissement d'un grand amour humain.' (195) He could be as violently abusive of representative, parliamentary democracy as the reactionary right:

... en fait il est impossible de nier que l'exercice du suffrage universel en France est devenu .. un débordement de vice inouï. Exactement comme le nationalisme barbare, exactement comme l'alcoolisme, exactement comme l'antisémitisme barbare, exactement comme un certain colonialisme, comme l'africanisme, comme le surmenage industriel, comme la prostitution, comme la syphilis, comme les courses, comme et autant que tous les parlementarismes, le parlementarisme électorale est une maladie. (196)
Although he was initially linked to the Socialist Party through the intellectual party review he edited and as a friend of Jean Jaurès, Péguy had all the political reflexes of anarchism. He could never get along with any doctrine nor would he accept more than a minimum of organisation. Socialism, as he saw it, was a trend: a federation of groups co-operating but not united by common membership of one party. The only classical socialist formula he ever used was anarchistic: the replacement of the government of men by the administration of things.\(^{(197)}\) Dialectical materialism which constituted the opposite pole to his own heroic individualism, he abhorred. Yet, despite his distaste for dogma or high-flown idealism, Péguy was no political pragmatist. He was an absolutist who saw in every concession the seeds of moral and intellectual degeneracy. And he broke finally with the Socialist Party and with Jaurès over the latter's attempt to create a synthesis between Marxism and the older humanist tradition of French socialism.\(^{(199)}\) To Péguy this seemed an intolerable compromise because, in reality, any compromise was intolerable to him. Péguy has been defended on the grounds that the Socialist Party was riven with internal contradictions.\(^{(200)}\) But the French Socialist Party was hardly more disunited, immoral or ineffectual than other socialist parties of the period. The truth is that Péguy was incapable of being a member of any organised party; his criticism of the whole apparatus of representative democracy, parties included, speaks for itself.\(^{(201)}\) Besides, when accused of anarchism by the socialist Lucien Herr, Péguy never denied it.\(^{(202)}\)

Péguy's socialism was of the home-grown Proudhonian variety with insurrectionism grafted on. Apparently, he believed for some time that the social revolution would break out any day.\(^{(203)}\) The social revolution itself was, of course, always accompanied in his mind by a moral revolution. "La révolution sera morale ou elle ne
"sera pas" (204) is another of these catch phrases launched into political orbit by Péguy and still circulating two and three generations later. But the essential core of Péguy's socialism was conscience. Truth is the sole revolutionary force, he used to maintain. (205) And truth in his moral code could only be judged internally and independently by each individual. Péguy's socialism has been summed up with perfect accuracy as 'une véritable promotion de la conscience morale.' (206)

The reasoning behind Péguy's perpetual tendency to pit conscience against politics, like David against Goliath, is most clearly illustrated by the formula of the mystique and politique. (207) This formula arose à propos the Dreyfus Affair during which Péguy campaigned actively to defend what, for him, constituted the basis of Republicanism: priority for the rights of the individual over the temporal interests of the State. He was greatly disillusioned to observe that the supporters of Dreyfus, including Jaurès, were bent on making political capital out of the case afterwards, thereby sullying the purity of their initial idealism. He could never forgive Jaurès for mingling with worldly powers and concerning himself with temporal and material interests - and at the same time appealing to the money of the poor and to idealism - to mystique. (208)

The conclusion that Péguy drew from his experience of the Dreyfus case was that all movements may be divided into two phases. The first, the stage of the mystique, corresponds to the hour of birth of a vision or ideal in all its initial purity, creativity and spontaneity. Then there follows a process whereby the ideal collapses as gradually but as inevitably as a soufflé: habit replaces heroism and conformism takes over from creativity. This is the stage of the politique. The politique and mystique are mutually exclusive, since the second springs from the decomposition of the first:
Une politique est le produit de la décomposition d'une mystique. La transformation ne se fait pas par une trahison soudaine de la pensée en faveur des préoccupations serviles. La déchéance commence au sein même de la mystique par une lourdeur qui s'introduit en elle dès le premier moment où la vie spirituelle s'est laissée gagner aux durcissements de la pensée toute faite.

What this means, quite simply, is that the individual conscience has the continuous duty to remain watchful every moment of each day and to make its own truth, moral and intellectual, prevail against all forces either from within or from without that tempt it to surrender. Politics, on the other hand, means the end of morality. Péguy would have agreed with Alain that the abdication of conscience was a 'sort of rule of politics.'

What, then, are the political implications of the mystique and politique? First of all, since the two are incompatible, all organised and institutionalised politics are condemned a priori. The converse of this anti-organisational emphasis is a double preoccupation to preserve the purity of ideas and the integrity of a heroic, individual morality. Consequently, according to Péguy's concept of politics, material interests are largely separated from ideas: better that an idea should remain pure than that it should be applied in such a way as to adulterate it. Nor may ends ever justify means: better not to act at all than to have dirty hands. The truth that Péguy demanded to be made known regarding the Dreyfus Affair was the first and last rule of his politics: 'Nous demandons simplement qu'on dise la vérité. Dire la vérité, toute la vérité, rien que la vérité: dire bêtement la vérité bête, ennuyeusement la vérité ennuyeuse, tristement la vérité triste.'

Péguy's attitude towards politics undoubtedly had some admirable aspects. The refusal to ignore any truth simply because it happens not to fit with a dogma or doctrine is certainly one. Péguy was
bewildered and upset - and finally aggressive - when he met with the refusal of the Socialist Party to publish an account of the misery and poverty of a schoolteacher's family because teachers were not considered part of the proletariat.\(^{(213)}\) Nor was his own unshakable faith in personal dignity and individual rights always shared by the rest of the Left. Initially, part of the Socialist Party, like part of the Radical Party, had been inclined to treat Dreyfus as just another bourgeois and abandon him to his fate. Peguy himself played a valuable role as a stimulator of sluggish consciences and as a watchdog over public liberties.

However, the overall effect of Peguy's moralit\(\acute{\text{e}}\) was little less than a recipe for political paralysis. To begin with, it ruled out membership of a political party, since the level of commitment this necessarily involves is strictly incompatible with a permanent moral revolution which requires that every single individual should decide the course of his thought and action on every single issue - and then make his will prevail. Characteristically, Peguy distinguished between socialism and the Socialist Party. The aim of socialism was to realise "du nouveau dans l'histoire du monde", an end unlikely to be achieved, he thought, by a "parti dévot".\(^{(214)}\) Yet Peguy did not advocate the abandonment of political activity. On the contrary, during the Dreyfus Affair he maintained that ideals ought to be brought into the political arena to purify it. But political commitment, as understood by Peguy, had a particular meaning: it meant the naked confrontation - the mediating role of institutional politics having been brushed aside - of each individual with the values of society; it meant direct, personal responsibility for these values rather than responsibility to take into account the views and values of others. Essentially, it meant the refusal to compromise. This type of commitment might be expressed through small, anarchistic groups in which spontaneity and heroic action are at a
premium and each individual is able to put forward his own ideas, or else by the internal readiness to declare oneself - to bear witness - as during the Dreyfus Affair or, for a later generation, during the Algerian war. But such a personal, internal interpretation of the good of the community, irrespective of the views of others, can scarcely be expressed within an orthodox, organised political party which operates generally by majority votes and by a greater or lesser degree of oligarchical leadership. Péguy, who was perfectly aware of this, reacted by showering abuse on parties and politicians and politics in general. It is just as well, he would say, to distrust: "nos ennemis, les amis politiques." \(^{(215)}\)

On the other hand, it is perhaps worse when one is supported by politicians: "... quand ils vous soutiennent, c'est peut-être pire, car ils vous soutiennent, ils vous adoptent en language politique sur le plan politique." \(^{(216)}\)

Given what Péguy thought of priests, his stigmatisation of them as politicians of spiritual life \(^{(217)}\) expresses plainly how he regarded politicians.

Péguy, who began by concentrating on temporal salvation and rejecting faith - as a young man he was an anti-clerical atheist - passed through a middle period of political disillusionment and ended as a fervent patriot and religious mystic. In 1889 his socialism was a political reality; ten years later he still discussed but no longer believed in politics. \(^{(218)}\)

He followed his socialist vision of the end of human alienation by various means at different phases of his life: through mystical socialism, patriotic poetry, poetic politics. But he constantly found his path blocked: poetry could not satisfy his need for practical action nor his sense of responsibility for his contemporaries; politics was always at odds with his absolutism; Catholicism could never really accord with his libertarianism. In the end, he found emotional refuge in a weird personal faith: a combination of mystical religion and patriotism presided over by Joan
of Arc. The question is: does this evolution offer any insight into Péguy’s mentality and consequently into the operation of Pascalian morality? To attempt fully to disentangle Péguy’s political, metaphysical and religious evolution is obviously beyond the scope of this chapter; however, it is possible to advance one tentative hypothesis on the interaction of politics and religion in Péguy’s thinking - if purely on a speculative basis.

The key to Péguy, it has been suggested, is the poet. (219) A vision of totality combined with liberty and a preoccupation with sin leading to the possibility of damnation - these were Péguy’s main poetic themes. In his longest poem, Eve, Péguy defined the tragedy of mankind as the loss of the feeling of complete human unity and complete union with God. He portrayed a Golden Age when every moment of life is an indissoluble whole and no private property exists and compared it to the neatly classified and isolated categories of modern existence. Yet it is possible to remedy this situation and to find real unity with God by an effort to be reborn spiritually. The path that leads to Christianity is one of freedom: ‘... it is the complete man, the pagan soul, which is free, and in that freedom, open to grace.’ (220)

Eve was written in 1913 by which time Péguy had been reconverted and had rediscovered hope. But when he wrote the first version of his poem on Joan of Arc as a student in 1896-7, he was an atheist deeply troubled by the problem of evil and the possibility of damnation. In her last night on earth Joan asks herself in anguish:

Je voudrais bien savoir O mon Dieu, s'il est vrai, que Je me sois damnée...

And Péguy dedicated his poem in particular to those:

..... qui seront morts de leur mort humaine pour tâcher de porter remède au mal universel humain; ....
A toutes celles et à tous ceux qui seront morts de leur mort humaine
Pour l'établissement de la République socialiste universelle. (221)

Even when not a Christian, Féguy, it seems clear, was a puritan moralist whose mind was dominated by a vision of the absolute which he hoped at first, like Pascal and Proudhon, to see realised on earth. At the same time he was also aware of the sin and imperfection of the world. This problem he seems to have resolved initially by attributing evil to social organisation: in his *Cité Socialiste* the administration of things replaces the government of men and the harmonious organisation of material life by means of the common ownership of the means of production ensures the free development of spiritual life. (222) Spiritual salvation may thus be attained in the world. However, by the time that Féguy was thirty, two events had overshadowed this optimism. One was simply a bad attack of influenza which made him aware of death and caused him to reflect, with the aid of Pascal, on life, damnation and eternity. But at this point, Féguy, although less hopeful and more pessimistic than before, had still not decided whether to place his bet on Heaven or Earth. His reaction to damnation which he seriously envisaged was, on the one hand, a heroic and socialist declaration of human solidarity: 'Debout, les damnés de la terre'; at the same time, Féguy was clearly beginning to feel doubts about socialism: 'L'imagination d'un exil est celle qui repugne le plus à tout socialisme.' (223) Once pessimism had begun to set in, Féguy, it seems (224), was face to face with the old Pascalian paradox that Man seeks absolute values in a world in which only partial ones are realisable - hence, no doubt, the onset of scepticism with regard to a socialism which he saw in terms of the end of human alienation, i.e. as the means of human salvation. If Man seeks the absolute and the world turns out to be the domain of sin, where is one to turn? Because Féguy identified the spiritual with the
temporal, one possible escape route was cut off for him to compromise in the political sphere and postpone the absolute for the next world. On account of his confusion between spiritual and temporal domains, Péguy as a moral absolutist had to choose between Heaven and Earth.

This choice appears to have been made finally as a result of Péguy's involvement in the tragic case of the schoolmaster Jean Coste. Seized by a sudden, acute pessimism on human nature and the human condition, Péguy asked himself:

Faut-il croire que par une loi de fatalité, religieuse ou métaphysique tout effort humain est damné? Faut-il croire que tous les biens de ce monde, bons à prendre, sont mauvais à garder? Tout cela n'est-il qu'un immense divertissement? (225)

This eminently Pascalian political declaration, Péguy then followed up by a long quotation directly from Pascal to the effect that Man always avoids the essential to escape by indulging and amusing himself. The most powerful of human beings, the King, surrounds himself with friends whose purpose it is to entertain him. The republican people, descendants of Kings, have inherited the same kind of company with the difference that candidates have replaced courtesans. 'Les vieilles paroles de Pascal', remarked Péguy, 'reçoivent une anticipation prodigieuse.' (226) And it was on this note of parting that he abandoned politics.

Péguy's puritan moral code was characterised and its political effects determined by two fundamental features: the identification of the spiritual with the temporal domain and the inability or refusal to compromise on his absolutist conception of good and evil. Initially, this resulted in the involvement of Péguy's entire personality in politics and in the effort to attain spiritual salvation through it. When Péguy became aware of the fallibility of human nature itself and, consequently, of the impossibility of realising the absolute in the world, he withdrew as totally from politics as he had formerly been immersed in it. However,
that this was only one possible effect of Pascalian morality and not the inevitable result is illustrated by Proudhon who finally compromised his absolutism on earth and substituted an extreme form of decentralisation for anarchism.

Yet in the last analysis Péguy did not totally abandon the temporal for the spiritual plane; he shifted his emphasis from the first to the second with emotional patriotism taking the place of political activism — perhaps a transfer of the old impulse towards totality and unity (227) — and merging with his mysticism in the person of Joan of Arc. Péguy's mysticism was never shrouded in Teutonic mists but firmly anchored in the soil of France. Joan in her heroism, tragedy and mystery, in her role as envoy of God and the people and symbol of national unity, fittingly represented both his Jansenist religiousity and mystical patriotism. For another Pascalian paradox that Péguy inherited was his love-hatred of the world: hatred of its imperfection combined with a deep sense of involvement with it — even when he rejected it.

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Paradoxically, for a religious sect with so sovereign a disdain for politics, the maximum impact of Jansenism seems to have hit the political plane. France in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries narrowly avoided turning puritan and the Catholic Church maintained its institutional predominance. Yet the uncompleted reformation of puritanism has dogged libertarian thought like a shadow, all the while remaining quite as elusive.

Altogether, both in itself as in its impact, Jansenism has been a strangely paradoxical phenomenon. Theologically, it combined
extreme radicalism with a strong sense of the traditional; intellectually it allied pragmatism with the most absolute form of idealism; while emotionally and temperamentally it often balanced mysticism and romanticism with reason. In political terms, the tragic grandeur - to borrow its own phraseology - of the Jansenist philosophico-moralist tradition lies essentially in the absolutism that nerved it to follow through its ideas and lent it an enriching universalist concern for the whole of humanity; at the same time, absolutism also tended to cancel out the positive and creative effects of its pragmatic bent.

Practically speaking, the Jansenists in the seventeenth century were virtually alone in giving children a concrete and libertarian education; yet the benefits of this were off-set by the doubt that many of them felt as to the moral righteousness of opening a book at all and the general tendency of most of them to deny the world. Then there was the contradiction between the Jansenists' quietist and passive religious and political doctrine and their own lively, spirited and proud characters. Port-Royal, for instance, included a remarkable number of strong and striking personalities. But perhaps the greatest paradox of all is the fact that Jansenism endowed a society that has remained almost medieval socially and economically until very recent times with a highly sophisticated political ideology as early as the seventeenth century.

It is also tempting to see the imprint of Jansenism on the stop-go rhythm of French history: in these periodic, violent upsurges of political radicalism that seem, like sudden squalls, to be followed inevitably by the dead calm of rigid authoritarian rule - until the next squall. Jansenism itself halted on the threshold of libertarian religious revolt largely on account of an absolutism that made it recoil from the fallibility of human institutions. The Revolution of 1789, brandishing the slogan 'Liberty, Equality, Unity' (228) - and its link with Jansenism is apparent - did not, of course, stop at the threshold. But neither
the Great Revolution, nor those that followed in the course of the
nineteenth century even down to the Events of May 1968 really carried
through their revolt in the sense of consolidating gains and carrying
them further by means of an institutional framework. Therein lay the
germs of the next explosion. The question is whether the same absolu-
tutism that led seventeenth century Jansenists to refuse to take the
Church seriously also led later Republican and Socialist revolution-
aries to reject political institutions as all moderate, intermediary
compromise solutions: whether they preferred to achieve nothing if they
could not achieve all - all being the essentially anarchist ideal of
total liberty and absolute equality. (229)

This perfectionist pattern was particularly in evidence towards
the end of the Events of May 1968. The extremists - and they were
often the leaders - would disrupt the constructive work going on behind
the scenes to change the university on the grounds that so long as all
was not changed, all meaning frequently not just French capitalist
society but international capitalism as a whole, then there was no
point in changing the university. The extremists were, of course, only
a minority. Their role, however, was crucial and this less because the
majority were either silent or passive - some were but many were not -
than because of a kind of moral embarrassment many of them felt in
driving through compromises against the purists. (230) This all-or-
nothing spirit combined with the allergic distaste of both leaders and
rank and file for political institutions - beyond the fractionalism of
small, independent groups - were among the principal reasons why May 1968,
like so many political explosions before it, did not really bring about
revolutionary changes but remained finally a revolt.
In Protestant Anglo-Saxon countries the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were characterised by a tremendous flowering of religious sects. In France, moral and metaphysical diversity of a similar but not identical order also existed - for France, equally, had a long historical background of religious dissent - but this diversity, it is arguable, was carried over into politics.

The overlap - even the identification - in France of metaphysics and morals with politics has a considerable number of reasons. In the first place, Gnostic heresies had deep roots in medieval France and a principal feature of these heresies lay in their refusal to separate the spiritual and the temporal: all the values of the temporal world were rejected because they did not accord with spiritual criteria. Secondly, the persistent persecution of Protestants and the failure of the Jansenists to break away from the Catholic Church prevented the formation of religious sects. Moreover, the tendency within Jansenism itself to combine philosophy, morals and metaphysics was continued by the Enlightenment: religious and anti-religious ideas, were regarded not as a matter of private opinion but as part of the philosophical and intellectual framework of society.

When, finally, the French came to discuss politics towards the end of the eighteenth century, their thinking on politics was not distinguished from but permeated with current metaphysical and philosophical controversy. This tendency continued down the nineteenth century, in part because Church and State were neither separated formally nor by the intrusion of capitalist interests; in part too, no doubt, because French puritanism in its Jansenist form resolutely denied the distinction between personal ethics and politics. With respect to those thinkers whose criteria of morality was derived from Pascal, the different political solutions they arrived at may be explained rather clinically by the way they combined Pascalian morality and an absolutist
caste of mind with such essentially metaphysical and philosophical variables as sin, mysticism, reason, belief in an independent human moral conscience and a sceptical agnosticism or atheism.

In Pascal, the absolutist demand for a totally intelligible world allied with scepticism in the power of reason and a deep sense of human sin and imperfection led to a mystical denial of the world and the condemnation of politics in the name of puritan absolutism. On the other hand, his belief in human dignity and that Man seeks the good even in the absence of God was, in essence, humanistic.

Later, in an age that accepted the idea of progress, the aspiration towards the absolute led Proudhon to formulate a theory of political anarchism; then the realisation that human imperfection made social perfection impossible made him reformulate this political theory and replace anarchism with extreme decentralisation. And because the mystical and pessimistic side of his nature was also balanced by a more optimistic belief in the power – but equally the limits – of human reason, Proudhon was among the first of the early Utopian Socialists to insist that social and economic conditions be taken into account.

In Alain, the element of mysticism to be found in Proudhon was lacking. Instead there was a general scepticism with respect to heaven, earth and the perfectibility of human nature and reason, a scepticism that might easily have led to moral and social nihilism. What prevented this was Alain's non-transcendental and universalist puritanism: his belief that Man as species of himself seeks perfection in a meaningless world. Given this intellectual approach it becomes Man's duty to humanise the world, rather than the individual's duty to moralise social and political institutions. In struggling constantly for the unobtainable absolute of liberty and equality against the refractory forces in himself and in nature, Man gives himself and the universe a meaning. Instead of suffering his condition, he assumes and transcends it, thereby
snatching a kind of victory out of the void of a universe without God.

Péguy, on the other hand, started out by believing all evil to lie within social institutions and that once these could be abolished perfection — i.e. anarchism — could be realised on earth. When, however, Péguy came to realise that imperfection was also part of human nature, he turned his back both on all hope of social progress and politics — without, it should be said, renouncing his humanist faith. As Péguy was really a mystic with very little belief in reason, one is tempted to conclude that, in France, puritanism allied with mysticism and pessimism is liable to lead to a tendency to see political institutions, as probably also ecclesiastical ones, as the work of Satan.

Such neat categorisation may be, but is not necessarily, an oversimplification and over-systematisation. The most striking feature of Pascalian morality, despite its tendency to mysticism, is really its uncompromising demand for logic and the persistence of reason within its very anti-rationalism. The radical Jansenist, Barcois, who lived the life of a hermit and world-denying mystic, only narrowly avoided the conclusion that Man in the world is a justified sinner.

Even Pascal's mystical rejection of the world had a partially rational justification in that it was based on human lack of self-sufficiency. Unlike its German equivalent, French mysticism seems to remain stubbornly low-flying: it never soars so high into ethereal regions as to lose sight of the puny figures moving about on the earth, presumably because it starts out from humanity rather than from God. For all his mystical patriotism, Péguy, for example, never abandoned liberty, equality and fraternity and even when he chose to reject the world and turn towards God he did so with his pockets full of the soil of France.
Given, then, that the moral system formulated by Pascal has had a vital and lasting impact on French political thought, the actual motives that led it to be adopted as the model of humanism are still not entirely clear. Outside of and distinct from all religious considerations, Pascalian morality can be said to have fulfilled a variety of different functions precisely because the concept of God was accessory to it: it satisfied the demand for a non-authoritarian, operative moral code; it provided a metaphysical explanation of human existence that either excluded or left God in suspension; and, finally, it furnished a doctrine of liberty.

On this latter point, it is interesting that the attitude towards authority advocated by Pascal — inner resistance, intellectual defence through understanding, the deliberate choice of activity or passivity — corresponds to the behaviour adopted by people seeking to safeguard their personality in the face of extreme threat. The turning point in a concentration camp, according to a former inmate, is the abandonment of inner feelings and reservations. (231) Without identifying seventeenth and eighteenth century France with a concentration camp, it is probable that the combined absolute authority of Church and State was experienced as an extreme threat by those who aspired to liberty and that they, therefore, adopted Pascalian morality as a psychological doctrine of freedom. On the other hand, it might also have been adopted as providing a philosophico-metaphysical explanation of human existence or else simply as a moral code, since a section of the French, like the Chinese, have consistently sought a non-transcendental ethical system. All in all, it is apparent that Pascal's doctrines could have been absorbed into French political culture for a variety of non-religious as well as religious reasons so that, in time, political attitudes derived from Jansenism became as in-bred as the "instincts du chien de chasse", which is the expression Alain employs to describe the
beliefs of a Radical. (232)

More problematic really is the question of the actual religious persistence of Jansenism. According to Taveneaux and such limited formal sources as exist, Jansenism disappeared after the French Revolution. (233) According to the cure of the village of Criqueboef, Jansenism continued in the villages and rural areas of Normandy until the Second World War. Normans who considered themselves as Jansenists rarely and sometimes never went to mass, took communion at the most once a year at Easter and remained violently and uncompromisingly anti-clerical. Radicalism, the cure remarked without prompting, was simply the transposition of Jansenism into politics. (234) Moreover, it is evident from the writings of the Abbé Six that the rural Jansenists were not isolated, at least in the decades around the turn of the century: Catholicism itself was permeated in Normandy by an extreme form of internal puritanism with a tendency to world-denial and to mysticism and the Abbé, no friend of the Jansenists, denounced the sermons preached at the time — with their heavy emphasis on sin, damnation and hellfire — as *jansenisant*. (235) This evidence, piece-meal as it is, is nevertheless interesting since it inevitably raises the question whether Jansenism also survived the Revolution in other areas of France, there being no reason to suppose that Normandy should be a particular exception.

Evidence from other sources also corroborates the continued existence of Jansenism or of a strict form of puritanism of Jansenist spirit. According to the distinguished Dominican theologian, Chenu, the great Jansenist families used to live around the former convent of Port-Royal in Paris until the First World War. (236) In Lyon, for instance, it was not uncommon to find puritan Catholicism allied with anti-clericalism and Republicanism as late as the Second World War. Families who never set foot in a Church and mocked the nominal Christianity of the well-dressed bourgeoisie on their way to Sunday mass while themselves adhering to a
puritan, internal ethical code, considered themselves as Catholic.(237) In fact, it is not especially unusual to discover a streak of Jansenism in a French family or even a self-professing isolated Jansenist.(238) This modern Jansenism may take a variety of forms. It may remain within Catholicism, austere, moralist in a puritan self-regulating fashion and with a tendency both to Gallicanism and anti-clericalism. Otherwise, it simply denotes a puritan form of Christianity that rejects the institutional Church entirely. The way it has continued to be transmitted from generation to generation appears to be mainly through family tradition - the adolescent undergoing a religious crisis remembers a Jansenist great-uncle or grandfather (239) - or else through education. Pascal's *Pensées* have been taught in the upper classes of French secondary schools since 1815.(240) Certainly for Péguy, with his sense of sin and his puritanism, and probably for many others the *Pensées* came as a kind of revelation in late adolescence. And it is worth asking whether this might have been the case particularly in the Jesuit colleges which played such an important role in French education even in this century: a considerable number of Radicals have been brought up by Jesuits and it may be that some of them turned to the ideas of the Jansenists out of revenge against and reaction to their rigid, highly disciplined and authoritarian education.

Broadly speaking, one can say that even when the Church and the Republic were at loggerheads, the identification of Republicanism with irreligion as of Catholicism with clericalism and authoritarianism was certainly less absolute than is generally made out. On the one hand, the daughters of Radicals and Socialists, as André Siegfried observes (241), were often sent to convent schools while their wives went to mass; some anti-clerical Republicans like René Billières, President of the Radical Party, never missed a mass; while other Republicans might be puritan Catholics who rejected the Church. On
the other hand, Catholics themselves might be libertarian puritans with little or no regard for the Pope, the Church or the clergy - as deeply anti-clerical, in fact, as the most fanatical Radical. But what is impossible to judge, in the absence of good local monographs, is the extent of the minority tendencies within each of the opposing camps of believers and unbelievers. (242)

In view of the tremendous impact of Jansenism in France in the seventeenth century, its persistence in the face of persecution in the eighteenth century and its continuing influence, in Normandy certainly, until the Second World War, the question inevitably arises what happened in between: that is to say what was the link between Jansenism, the French Revolution and the early Republican movement?

Obviously no very precise answer can be provided without careful research. Nevertheless a few points may be made in passing. De Tocqueville, for instance, without denying its classical aspects, always maintained that the French Revolution was a religious phenomenon. In this light it should be remembered that the two most fanatical and mystical movements that occurred in France in the first half of the eighteenth century were both of religious inspirations: first there was the revolt of the Cévennes Huguenots which lasted over a number of years and secondly, there was the convulsionist movement of mystical Jansenists in the Parisian cemetery of Saint-Medard. Messianic groups of Jansenist origin even took part in the Revolution itself. And the Parisian population, by all accounts, had been permeated in the early decades of the eighteenth century by a particularly austere and absolutist form of Jansenism.

Despite the ideological diversity of early nineteenth century Republicanism - which will be described in the next chapter - the mainstream of the movement was libertarian, decentralising and in general had a close affinity with Jansenist principles. La Jeune France.
one of the movement's first papers defined Republicanism as:

... la conséquence de ce précieux principe de discussion et d'examen à l'aide duquel chaque intelligence est aménée à vouloir rejeter l'absuridité des doctrines du pouvoir tel que l'avaient les défenseurs du droit divin.

It was, further, a thirst for equality and for justice as well as the disdain:

... universellement éprouvé pour les distinctions qui ne viennent pas du mérite personnel, de ce besoin de contrôle de tous les actes du pouvoir, enfin de cette conscience de la dignité de l'homme et du citoyen qui le fait résister à l'arbitraire et s'indigner à l'idée du despotisme. (243)

Even as late as the mid-century, the Republican organisational drive in the French provinces was partially founded on the ethical appeal to the principle of free will. (244) Moreover, it is striking to observe the extent to which Republican clubs in the nineteenth century flourished particularly in those geographical areas where Jansenism and Protestantism had been strongest in the seventeenth century and before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. (245)

The exact nature of the link between religion and the early Republican movement needs to be carefully researched before any valid conclusions can be drawn. Nevertheless it should be borne in mind that the French people did not begin to be dechristianised until after 1848 and that a major characteristic of early nineteenth century socialism, political clubs included, was the religiosity of its spirit and terminology. (246) Marx was forever complaining that, with the exception of Proudhon, French socialists were perpetually showering him with invitations to conferences on the subject of God. The French people, it is frequently asserted, could never forgive the Church for siding with the rich and powerful. (247) But this does not necessarily mean that they threw out the baby with the bathwater or religion with
the Church. And it is perfectly conceivable—proven in two cases—that in the first half of the nineteenth century, during the crucial founding period of socialism and republicanism, Jansenism continued to exist within particular areas in the form of an anti-clerical and puritan Christianity. (248)

Moreover, since there are grounds for supposing that puritan libertarianism was a feature of nineteenth century France, this raises the question whether anarchism and radicalism—both of which identified political liberty with freedom of conscience—did not also partially represent a kind of permanent Reformation; the demand for liberty of conscience and free will displaced from religion to politics.

Against the total authority of Church and State, Pascal set up a doctrine of total liberty. Where in other countries political liberty was secured by means of the separation of Church and State, in France it was realised after a fashion by the separation of internal liberty from external authority; freedom became liberty to judge but not to act, liberty to be conscious of a situation but not to change it. However, between this doctrine and the actual character of the Jansenists there was a partial contradiction, for few of them were total quietists—indeed the Jesuits frequently accused them of the sin of pride. Pascal, whose Christian humility was never as absolute as his moral and intellectual demands, saved his conscience not just by resisting internally but by actually refusing to sign a document denying Augustinus. But other Jansenists did not escape so easily: under the threat of losing their livelihood, their liberty or their lives, they signed. Thereafter, it was presumed, rather hastily, that Jansenism and libertarianism were dead.

In the same period, the Church also reclaimed other dissidents, but in a different fashion through the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes: many Protestants, rather than have their children removed
from them, were reconverted to Catholicism in the last decades of the seventeenth century. The question is whether these diverse puritans, libertarian Christians trapped within the authoritarian structure of the Catholic Church, eventually found a somewhat schizophrenic solution to their situation in that they vented their dislike for ecclesiastical institutions through anti-clericalism and deflected their demands for religious liberty and equality, doomed to failure in the Church itself, on to the political plane.

The historical validity of such a hypothesis cannot be tested within the limits of this study. However, it does seem to offer a reasonable explanation for the rather odd dialectic - which will be examined in later chapters - between libertarian Catholics and political anarchism in the period between the 1930's and the 1960's.

The years broadly between 1930 and 1936 marked an important watershed in French history for it was during this period that the old anarchist tradition of French socialism was reborn. In time, it will be shown, this led to a total change of style on the French Left, dominated since the Commune by the scientific socialism of Marx. There emerged a new concern with personal and political liberty, with moral and social values, with pragmatic action in the here and now and not at some distant date when social and economic conditions might be ready; what was essentially different in this New Left, even although it too had its share of doctrinaire purists, was the preoccupation with personal creativity and social invention as opposed to the dogmatic conformism of the Marxists. At the same time, this current also reactivated attitudes that were as integrally a part of it as the concern with liberty and creativity - that is to say moral revulsion, hesitation
and ambiguity with respect to political power, institutions and activity.

The reasons for the revival of Proudhonian anarchism in the 1930's were only partially religious. Many of the young generation who considered that the doctrines of Proudhon offered a solution to the problems of modern civilisation were influenced either by tradition or environment - Proudhonian groups existed both before and after the First World War. A minority of Catholics, however, were directly influenced in their anarchist political orientation by religious considerations.

On the one hand, these Catholics were a generation with strongly libertarian religious leanings - many professed admiration for Pascal - who nevertheless were and, on the whole, remained members of an authoritarian Church which they neither opposed nor tried to alter. On the other hand, they advocated the virtual - but not the total - dismantlement of the apparatus of the State on the grounds that it was spiritually stultifying and demanded that society satisfy the aspiration for internal liberty and fraternal communion that the authoritarian and hierarchial Church denied. Some of the Catholics of this generation were deeply distressed by the Church's position; others, and notably Emmanuel Mounier, one of the principal leaders of the movement, seem to have been less distressed than simply disdainful of the ecclesiastics and their institutions very much after the manner of Pascal. But either way it is hard to imagine that such an ambiguous situation did not breed some form of psychological tension.

And it is likely - particularly in view of the unreasonably violent way that parliamentary democracy was rejected for specifically spiritual and moral reasons - that anarchism offered an outlet for this tension as well as a compensation for the Church's authoritarianism.

Such a conclusion, moreover, is supported by post-war develop-
merits within French Catholicism. There were at least two identifiable, Catholic groups that evolved over a decade from a vaguely humanistic but essentially uncommitted political stance to a position very close to anarchism - when it was not openly anarchist or even anarchistic. In both cases this evolution seems to have had at its root the conflict between liberty and authority in the Church.

The first of these two groups was the **Vie Nouvelle**, a movement of educated, middle-class Catholics whose interests, initially, were mainly religious and social. After the War the Vie Nouvelle translated the aspiration for religious liberty of the pre-war generation into concrete demands, demands identical to those made by the seventeenth century Jansenists. These were, principally: permission to read the Bible, to say mass in French, to participate in Church affairs on equal terms with the clergy and, finally, the right to individual conscience. Not surprisingly, such unorthodoxy led to fierce opposition from the clergy and it was in the ensuing conflict that many members of the Vie Nouvelle forged the anti-authoritarian doctrine that, led them eventually, by the early 1960's, to adopt a political position of anarchism or near-anarchism. Having started out by demanding liberty and participation in the Church, they ended by transposing their religious dissent to society. It should be added that they were also supported in this evolution by the **Personalist doctrine** of Emmanuel Mounier which was no less than Proudhonianism as translated by a Christian moralist and philosopher with little notion of and less sympathy for political science.

The other group to come into conflict with the Church - and they were supported by the Vie Nouvelle - were the young Catholics within certain of the evangelising Church-directed youth movements. Urged by the Church to act as Christians, in a humane and responsible fashion, they were led, paradoxically, to challenge the authority of the Church with the very notions of responsibility it had taught them. The turning point
was the Algerian War for the issues at stake here were too important
to be shelved in the interests of fraternal Christian reconciliation.
The Church wanted to maintain discipline, authority and hierarchy;
the Catholic youth groups demanded the right to individual judgment.
The stalemate that resulted led to the dissolution of the organisation
that had centralised Catholic youth movements for almost a century -
the ACJF. (249) Some, in this situation, remained passive or became
cylical. Others, moralist and crusading still - but anti-authoritarian
too-often turned towards anarchist ideas or groups.

Three decades after the Second World War, the two main organisations
on the French Left with strongly anarchist currents - the Parti Socialiste
Unifié party and the Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (CFDT)
union - are recruited to a considerable extent among Catholics. In
view of the international crisis of the Catholic Church, this extreme
left-wing political orientation of Catholics - a partial but nonetheless
important phenomenon - is simply seen as a by-product of the turmoil in
modern Catholicism... And to some extent, no doubt, it is; at the same
time, its political implications cannot be fully grasped unless it is
also seen as the latest stage of a long and unique history of religious
dissent, linking up with a broader movement of Catholic reform, but
retaining still a rhythm and logic very much of its own.

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Chapter 2.

The Historical Development of French Political Clubs.

If the growth of the British and American political party systems are amply documented, the same cannot be said about the French. It is true, of course, that there exist a considerable number of works on the Republican movement in the nineteenth century and on the revolutionary clubs, in particular the Jacobin Club. But all of these are primarily historical chronicles. French political science has totally neglected the possible impact of clubs on the political party system. And yet, clubs were the form of political expression ordinary Frenchmen were most familiar with for no less than a century and a half.

The task of assessing the significance of clubs historically is immense and cannot be undertaken within the limits of this study. On the other hand, to ignore them entirely would be rash in a country where historical factors habitually play a large role and when, besides, even a summary acquaintance with the subject immediately suggests links between past practice and present-day prejudice. By way of compromise, this chapter will limit itself to four aims. It will attempt to give an impression of the wide scope and very considerable importance of the club movement. It will draw attention to the overlapping areas between the religious dissent previously discussed and the clubs. Then the major lines of development that determined their evolution in the nineteenth century will be brought out. And, finally, some tentative suggestions will be made as to how clubs influenced the later political parties and, in particular, shaped the popular perception in France of what a party stands for.

First a fundamentally important fact: modern French political consciousness grew up not in relation to parliament nor on the basis of local
liberties - for traditional liberties and institutions had been largely suppressed by the centralising and authoritarian monarchy - but in societies and clubs. And these, having no tradition of their own to draw on, were deeply marked by the imprint of the era that spawned them.

There are two principal determining factors in the emergence of the political clubs. First, the appearance of a new curiosity - rational, critical and intellectual - that gradually spilled over beyond its initial religious preoccupations to question social and political dogma. And second, the fact that the regime failed to provide the most rudimentary kind of framework either at local or national level within which ideas and energies could be creatively released. The Parliaments or royal law courts, the last remaining relics of the medieval French constitution, still had powers. But, during the eighteenth century, the requirements of aristocratic birth cut them off from the bourgeoisie. Societies and later, clubs, provided the sole outlet for the growing public interest in the affairs of the community. And these, by their inevitable intellectual bias, faithfully mirrored the social, philosophical, religious and political ferment that was gripping eighteenth century France.

All France, as Daniel Mornet has observed, was beginning to think. (1) Not just abstract philosophical ideas but science, literature and agriculture were debated enthusiastically in the furthest flung provinces. Although critical in shaping the new opinion, the writings of the philosophes did not create it. Disrespect for tradition and thirst for knowledge formed the basic groundswell which carried the philosophes themselves along together with countless literary societies, public libraries, provincial academies, reading groups, masonic lodges and café cliques. From 1765 onwards, these formal and informal discussion groups, since come to be known by the term sociétés de pensee, flourished all over France.

With time, the topics they tackled became increasingly concrete and daring.
But it was only in the last decade before the Revolution that the old assumption that the affairs of State concern only the King was challenged and actual political issues debated.

Political clubs began to appear in this final pre-revolutionary period. In essence, however, they are indistinguishable from the general movement of sociétés de pensée since they were not revolutionary nor endowed with any other special characteristic. When the first political club was created in 1782, it was authorised by a minister on the condition that religion and politics were not to be discussed - and no women admitted. (2) Given the scarcity of documentary material, little may be said with certainty about these clubs of the pre-revolutionary period. According to Mornet, they were numerous before 1789 but less important than political cafés and literary societies. (3) Certainly, Augustin Cochin has been articulate enough on the subject; but then his views are not backed up by evidence.

According to Cochin, a bitter critic of the sociétés de pensée and a relatively influential one since he is one of the rare observers ever to have discussed them at any length, they incarnated philosophical abstraction divorced from all reality: 'c'est la cité des nuées aux oiseaux bavards, loins des choses existantes ou possibles.' (4) In fact, the role they played in helping to draw up the famous Cahiers de Doléances for the first meeting of the Estates General points to the opposite conclusion: namely that when given the opportunity to concern themselves with practical issues, the societies did so perfectly competently. (5) Moreover, to call consistently as they did for the freedom of conscience and commerce, religious toleration and the abolition of slavery was scarcely unrealistic or utopian. Admittedly, society and club activity before 1788-9 was intellectual rather than practical, but this does not amount to evidence that they were necessarily dogmatic or doctrinaire as Cochin has intimated.
It would have been surprising if they had been since the intellectual trend after 1750 was not to create systems but, on the contrary, to reject them. (6)

The evidence suggests that the marked intellectuality that characterized the French style of political approach from the outset was due less to any inherent tendency of the French mentality to see politics in terms of disembodied theory than to historical circumstances. There was the fact that political involvement began in a period of intellectual awakening. Also — and this was even more determinant — the clubs were systematically excluded from the formal political system and, as far as possible, denied contact with practical social realities. 

The passions spent on the hustings in the same period in England, in France were confined to small circles that indulged principally in reflexion and philosophical speculation simply because these happened to be the only activities open to them.

One other point about the historical context might be made. The critical spirit that eventually found an outlet in clubs and societies was directed originally against the dogmatism of the Church. Only after 1760 did the initial aspiration for freedom of conscience and morality based on reason broaden into an altruistic, humanitarian movement. The question is to what extent the sociétés de pensée carried over the old religious quarrels into politics. Freemasonry, which was a powerful force in eighteenth century France — there were over 600 lodges and around 30,000 masons on the eve of 1789 (7) — most certainly attracted Jansenists. Many known ones joined the lodges. (8) This is scarcely surprising since the two movements overlapped in time and had quite a lot in common. A commentator of the 1740's has observed:
Il faut qu'il y ait toujours quelque objet qui occupe. On ne parle plus des Jansenistes ni des molinistes; les Franc-maçons ont pris leur place. (9)

The reigning spirit of egalitarianism in the lodges – however superficial – their moral tone and also, of course, their autonomy would have appealed to Jansenist sympathisers. Moreover, Freemasonry was not revolutionary. On the contrary, deeply moralistic and, to a degree, mystical, it preached a kind of: '... évangile humanitaire plein d'une religieuse fraternité.' (10) The strong moral flavour and even religiosity of many of the societies and clubs – which continued for the best part of the nineteenth century – is stressed here because it is generally ignored. But a large number of monographs would be needed before any valid conclusions could be drawn as to the political implications of moral and religious principles and beliefs.

And, at present, these are virtually inexistent.

The role played by lodges, societies and clubs before 1789 was primarily on the level of ideas and is, therefore, difficult to evaluate in its effect with any precision. During the revolution itself, they very soon turned to action, becoming a vital part of the revolutionary mechanism. Even at this stage, it is scarcely easier to measure the weight of their influence – did the revolutionary clubs dominate public opinion or did it use the clubs? – but at least their activity can be more clearly defined.

The creation alongside the Estates General of the Club Breton, the original nucleus of the Jacobin Club, was no revolutionary act. It was a pragmatic reaction of a kind which, in the British context, produced certain vital features of the parliamentary system. In England, for instance, William III began to choose his ministers exclusively from one parliamentary grouping since he found Whigs to be more compliant than Tories in raising money. (11) In France, the Club Breton was formed because, among the confused mass of almost a thousand deputies who
arrived in Versailles in 1789 for the first time, some had clearer expectations and felt a greater need for solidarity than others. The Bretons, although still Royalists, were particularly interested in new ideas and the club was the natural outgrowth of their early café meetings. Almost immediately, however, the club changed from a regional to an ideological group. This transformation, which was to have an important effect on the future course of the Revolution, occurred, it has been suggested, because the deputies had acquired the habit of discussing their ideas along philosophical lines during their long apprenticeship in the provincial sociétés de pensée. (12)

When the Club moved to Paris in the wake of the Constituent Assembly and took on the new name of Jacobin Club from the former Jansenist convent that now served as its premises, its purpose continued to be practical. (13) It included writers, who were not necessarily deputies, as of right — an interesting indication of the political mentality that had developed in the eighteenth century. But, in the beginning, it was above all a refuge for provincial deputies who felt isolated in the capital or else handicapped by their own lack of political experience. Here the new parliamentarians could talk without being caught in the bewildering cross-currents of intimidation from the Assembly’s public galleries and contradiction from its right wing. Soon the debates in the Club acquired greater force and verve than those in the Assembly itself, and so increased the Jacobins’ attraction and influence. However, if Club members had adopted the habit of discussing in advance the subject on the Assembly’s agenda and then casting a homogeneous vote on it when the Assembly met, the Club itself had still no clear doctrine. Robespierre, its future leader, was already on the Left. But a Centre and Right also existed. In 1790, with over a thousand members — the majority of whom were no longer deputies — and with one hundred and fifty-two provincial branches, the
Jacobin Club, also known as Amis de la Constitution, broadly favoured constitutional monarchy but was not yet democratic. (14)

Other clubs, which cannot be discussed in any detail here, soon appeared on the heels of the Jacobins: Club des Montagnards, Club des Feuillants, Club des Cordeliers etc. From 1790-1 onwards, popular and fraternal societies were formed in every ward in Paris. Sometimes they were branches of the bigger clubs such as the Cordeliers, for instance, where the entrance fee was minute in comparison to the more exclusive and highly organised Jacobin Club. At other times ward societies consisted merely of a handful of people who gathered to read a news-sheet or to discuss new ideas such as the sovereignty of the people - a notion which they understood in its literal sense. (15) The Assembly for its part was not slow to recognise the potential challenge of the clubs. Its last act in 1791 - futile as it turned out - was to ban them for provoking unwarranted agitation against legitimate authority. (16)

In any event, there was little place for parliament during the period of the revolutionary clubs. Power became ever more tightly concentrated. The dictatorship of the Convention was replaced by the dictatorship of the Committee of Public Safety until, finally, Robespierre reigned. The Jacobin Club, often assured where others hesitated, backed by Parisian and provincial club activists and strengthened by the war, had been forged from purge to purge into an instrument of revolutionary purity. Beside it, other popular societies and watch committees constituted the propaganda machine of a constantly evolving Revolution, themselves increasingly dragged along by the Terror they had helped to provoke. Then, once totally in command, the Jacobins began to destroy themselves. With the death of Robespierre in 1794, both the Terror and the revolutionary clubs came to an end together.
Jacobin Club, together with its multitude of provincial tentacles, was dissolved and the new regime spawned its own clubs. (17)

By the end of the Revolution, what exactly did the term club mean? Broadly, a political club may be defined as a political association that meets periodically and sometimes admits the public alongside its own membership. It need not necessarily participate in electoral activity and can, if it chooses, permit a greater measure of freedom of opinion, expression and internal movement than are possible in an electoral committee. Some of the revolutionary clubs, such as the Jacobin Club, were highly organised and exclusive. Others, the local ward associations in particular, were merely ad hoc bodies. But nothing predestines a political club to become an intellectual power-house. And yet the two terms - club and société de pensée - are habitually used interchangeably. This practice is justifiable in so far as clubs generally had partial or implicit intellectual preoccupations, both before the Revolution, during it and throughout the nineteenth century. But it also tends to gloss over an important fact: namely that already by the end of the Revolution, clubs and societies were no longer primarily intellectual circles as before 1789 but had performed many of the main functions of a political party. Besides spreading revolutionary ideas and taking charge of popular education, they had served as electoral committees, exerted pressure on behalf of particular interests, recruited political leadership and, for a brief period shaped government policy and mobilised opinion behind it. (18) Further, they were operating in a historical situation where many of the conditions often accompanying the development of political parties were present: a variety of social and socio-economic structures; popular democratic or mass styles of conducting politics; a common political arena; the need felt by political elites for structures enabling political business to be conducted in a reasonable, predictable manner. (19) There
are, therefore, solid grounds for concurring with the view:

In so far as the revolutionary groups that pressed for
the abolition of royal authority in late eighteenth
century France assumed a popular character, we may speak
of the beginning of political parties in France. (20)

French political clubs, clearly, came closer to constituting the
embryo of a political party than the factions, cliques and courthouse
juntas that carried out public business in the early American colonies.
Yet, by the 1840's, the general mould of the American party system was
already set. (21) In France, clubs did not develop into organised
political parties until over a century later. The question is: why
should the embryonic club state have continued to exist for so long?
And has this unique situation had any permanent political consequences?

When Republicanism re-emerged under the reactionary Restoration
regime, it was confined almost exclusively to secret societies. (22)
Even these were not unambiguously republican since they often included
a strong liberal element. They tended to focus their activity on two
fields: on conspiratorial and insurrectional activity and on doctrinal
reflection and propaganda.

One of the earliest secret societies was the Charbonnerie. This
was a mixed bag of conspirators - Republicans, Bonapartists and even a
few Orleanists - who could agree on nothing beyond the necessity to
overthrow the legitimate monarchy and subsequently consult the people by
constitutional plebiscite. Another was the Loge des Amis de la Vérité, a society linked to Freemasonry which itself was now being used as a cover by students. (23) The Loge undertook studies and discussions on the best forms of government. It also founded a number of newspapers. But its plots, like those of the Charbonnerie, came to nothing as it was infiltrated by police agents.

The old pattern of popular revolutionary activity at ward level was revived in Paris by the Municipalités. These clubs were composed mainly of students; their aim was to seize power in the event of the fall of the Bourbons. Other revolutionary groups, harboured by newspapers, constituted a new form of organisation even if their aims were scarcely original. The purpose of the society within the bureau of the Tribune, for example, was to promote a coup d'état and prepare armed resistance. It was the influence of these secret societies, together of course with republican propaganda and the action of the parliamentary opposition, that in 1830 brought Parisian workers out to man the barricades. (24) But while the clubs - with the model of the 1789 Revolution in mind - demanded a Constituent Assembly, the republican leaders supported Louis Philippe. They assumed and hoped that the new regime would develop into a constitutional monarchy.

The republican mentality had been lastingly marked by the revolutionary model with its emotive dates, its violent language and extremist solutions; but at the beginning of the Orleanist monarchy its influence, in reality, was no more than symbolic and romantic. (25) The mainstream of the Republican movement was predominantly moderate, either refusing to contemplate revolution in any circumstances or else only as an ultimate resource. (26) After the failure of the Charbonnerie in 1822, Republicans had begun to place more emphasis on research and reflexion and at the same time to switch from conspiratorial to legal action. They gathered
in philosophical groups such as the Société Diablement Philosophique or in salons where they met with older revolutionary personalities - Lafayette among others. The main source of their libertarian principles was, of course, the Revolution of 1789. But some looked also to German spiritualism. (27)

A new development around 1830 was the concern with social reform. Republicanism became gradually less theoretically and more practically oriented: 'La philosophie... n'intéressait les nouvelles générations que par ses conséquences pratiques et sociales.' (23) The most popular themes, for instance, of the Tribune des Départements - one of the many Republican papers beginning to appear in Paris and the provinces - were decentralisation and economics. Saint-Simon's writings were studied in many of the clubs and won not a few disciples among Republicans. On the whole, it can be safely said that under an external parade of revolutionary language and imagery, Republicanism of this period was libertarian in spirit and broadly supported decentralisation. (29) Violent and dictatorial elements continued inevitably to exist, and Republicans often displayed a less than whole-hearted adherence to the concept of representative government but the over-all tendency within the movement was towards legal action and democratic practice.

This is borne out by the kind of organisations that followed on from the initial conspiratorial groups; these were: Aide-Toi, le Ciel t'Aidera; Association pour la Liberté de la Presse; Association pour l'instruction libre et gratuite. The first was a perfectly straightforward organisation for civic education without either social pretensions or anarchist leanings - it merely advocated administrative decentralisation. The leadership which included both liberals and moderate republicans sought to enlighten opinion by publishing accounts of parliamentary proceedings and, where possible, by backing candidates at local and
national level. By 1833 Aide Toi had committees operating in 35 departments. The second association also aimed to educate the public, in particular, workers and peasants. However, it took no part in electoral activity; instead it acted as a kind of watchdog, keeping a look-out for injustices of any kind, especially in the fiscal field. The last organisation was the most exclusively educational. In 1833, 2,500 of its members were taking part in 54 conferences. At this point it was banned by the government which had at first tolerated it. This was a severe loss for the Republicans since the association had been the only place where liberals and moderate Republicans could meet ordinary people and work out together a common programme on the basis of differing viewpoints. Thereafter workers did not stop trying to acquire knowledge: they simply turned to secret societies.

The more exclusively Republican groups, it must be said, were less scrupulously legalistic and often contained turbulent and revolutionary elements that were not always easy to control. However, all the evidence indicates that until the law of 1834 dissolved the educational associations already mentioned at the same time as the two main Republican organisations - the Amis du Peuple and the Droits de l'Homme - the moderates consistently maintained the upper hand.

The Amis du Peuple liked, on occasion, to indulge in violent oratory but its main interest was to further social reform. (30) Its proposals included free education; the reorganisation of the magistracy; the payment of deputies; the abolition of tax on alcohol; the reform of the penal system. Consequently, it started out by supporting the government counting on it to carry out the reforms the Amis du Peuple would bring to its attention. This phase did not last long. First of all because the association was soon disappointed by the government's lack of reforming zeal; and, secondly, because Casimir-Périer started to take legal measures
against the group. This was the signal for a section of the Amis to clamour for violent action. But the leadership still persisted on a reformist path. Raspail one of its main leaders had some of the extremists expelled, replaced the former public meetings (31) with an underground organisation and aimed at creating a network of popular educational courses for both adults and children in every ward in Paris. Such prudent behaviour was of no avail in the face of the government's determination to crush the society. The Amis du Peuple was dissolved and its membership transferred to the more powerful Société des Droits de l'Homme. (32)

The organisation of the Droits de l'Homme was destined essentially to protect its members from government interference and repression and also from possible informers. Each of its sections contained at least ten and at most twenty members. This was a precaution commonly taken at this time against Article 291 of the Penal Code which made meetings of over twenty persons liable to prosecution. The sections both in Paris and the provinces - where the society had numerous affiliated groups - were formed on the basis of the municipal ward to guard against the intrusion of spies. Leaders had to be elected with an absolute majority and re-elected every three months. The aims of the club were to disseminate Republican propaganda by means of pamphlets and papers and to adapt Republicanism - understood as the free development of the physical and moral faculties of the individual - to progress. Its bent was constructive and practical; its main concern to build up a body of precise doctrine and concrete reforms. (33)

The Droits de l'Homme was, on the whole, indifferent to parliamentary action. On the other hand, it favoured universal suffrage as calling to power virtuous men. But these virtuous representatives were to be mere 'hommes de conseil' and laws, to be legitimate, needed the sanction of
primary assemblies. Although the society avoided alliances with other groups for fear of doctrinal contamination, its political ideology was never very clearly defined and it was always internally divided. Some indication of the divergences of the Droits de l'Homme may be gleaned from the names of its sections, such as: Mort aux Tyrans; Washington; Babeuf; Souveraineté du Peuple; Fraternité; Vengeur; Amis de la Vertu. Despite the effort of the moderates themselves to manipulate violent terminology so as to prevent schisms, a new organisation appeared within the existing one. The Société des Droits de Peuple, like its parent association, was deeply imbued with moralism and religiosity and despite all revolutionary undertones the first article of its programme stated that the society recognised the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. But once again it was the government and not the extremists that most harmed the cause of moderation and democracy. In 1834 it passed a law enabling it to dissolve all associations - artistic and cultural as well as political - and to impose on offenders not just fines but prison sentences. (34)

The law of 1834 marked a turning-point. Thereafter, the Amis du Peuple found the path of practical reform definitively blocked. The Droits de l'Homme could no longer pursue their initial aim of up-dating doctrine and keeping abreast of new problems. In general, the moderates now tended to lose their leadership to the more violent elements. Before 1834 Babeuf's dictatorial theories had been examined by Republicans, but critically; afterwards Babouvism was accepted without reservation in some circles, and especially by the least educated. Before 1834, emphasis had been placed on the education of the masses; afterwards political education was frequently replaced by the call to revolution and regicide. Everywhere Republicans were faced with the alternative of either disbanding or forming secret societies. This applied to trades union as well as political
activity. Before the law the workers' mutual benefit societies had never been particularly effective in pressing for social reforms as they were too closely observed by the authorities. Nevertheless a remarkable variety of organisations had existed. Now workers were forced, if they were looking for solidarity or education, to join secret societies from which they emerged thoroughly politically indoctrinated. (35) The energies that had previously been spent in forming associations were dissipated in gunpowder plots. 'La loi sur les associations produisait des sociétés secrètes violentes et dangereuses.' (36)

The secret societies started to be created immediately after the brutal suppression of the Droits de l'Homme. The paper Humanitaire and the Légions Révolutionnaires, both violent and Babouvian in sympathy, illustrate two different forms of the revolutionary organisation that now began to flourish. The staff of the paper, being debarred from meeting elsewhere, used editorial assemblies as a cover. Since these took place only once a month, small clubs of fifteen were formed so as to allow people to come together more frequently and in relative security. Humanitaire's doctrine was materialist and favoured the abolition of the family and towns - these being regarded as centres of corruption and social authoritarianism. The Légions Révolutionnaires was a much larger organisation, grouping around 25,000 people - mainly workers, students and military - but it too was subdivided into very small sections. It was led efficiently but dictatorially by an état major drawn from among the military members. While they conceded - and regretted - the society's lack of internal democracy, they insisted that the fault lay not with them but with 'une gouvernement liberticide et une chambre prostituée.' (37) However, quite often individuals and groups hatched plots and manufactured gunpowder without the backing of any kind of organisation. The attitudes of Republicans both inside and outside the societies had reached a new
pitch of violence after the law. An agenda found by the police contained the advice: "Peuple! .. point de pitié; mets mus tes bras, qu'ils s'enfoncent dans les entrailles de tes bourreaux!" (38)

Not all the secret societies even now were entirely run by conspirators and fanatics. In Lyon secret societies were often really reading groups where people came to be instructed and even amused. And some of the clubs, such as the Familles and the Saisons, were fairly moderate in spite of their now accentuated use of violent terminology. The Familles was about 1,200 strong and included mainly workers, students and soldiers. Its twin aims were insurrection and the deliverance of the human race........ Propaganda alone, consequently, was inadequate. Arms must be gathered and revolution provoked. This meant daily confrontation, as its members were warned, with "les cachots, les bagne, la mitraille et l'échaufaud." And just to make sure that its violent uncompromising nature should be understood, the society maintained that:

... la peine des traitres est la mort qui peut être infligée par tout membre de l'association qui a reçu l'ordre de ses chefs.

But in reality, the Familles was still concerned with social reform, education and the right of the citizen to participate in government. It was also profoundly moralistic and maintained that its members had duties as well as rights; they must practise the Republican virtues of sobriety, courage, devotion and fraternity.

The title Familles denoted a kind of organisation - units of five persons plus one chief who met once a month - and the same was true for the Saisons. A smaller organisation including 600-700 workers, the structure of the Saisons was based on the calendar. There were 6 members and one leader called Sunday to each cell which was based on the week. (39) The Saisons demanded the right to be educated, to
religious freedom and to participate in government since man: 'n'est
pas seulement composé de matière, mais... a une intelligence.'

These secret societies, often in relation with editors of newspa-
pers who gave them orders, had a very real influence on the people
until the last days of the Orleans Monarchy. (40) Their character
tended to vary depending on whether they were based in Paris or the
provinces. While the centralisation of the country led the Parisian
clubs to act on the assumption that the government might at any moment
be overturned by some lucky stroke of fate, the provincial clubs were
less obsessed with insurrection and conspiracy and disillusioned finally
by the constantly failed coups in the capital. 'Les Patriotes du Midi
semblent se dégouter de Paris' stated a document of the period. (41)
Barbès, one of the Republican leaders, even found himself unable to start
a newspaper at Montpellier because of the local activists' refusal to
cooperate with a Parisian editor. The Central Committee of the Droits
de l'Homme, for instance, found that its orders were not easily accepted
by its departmental committees. (42) Broadly speaking, the Republican
movement favoured decentralisation anyway, but the government greatly
accentuated this trend by its ferocious repression of the mildest forms
of agitation in Paris and relative leniency towards provincial clubs.

Government strategy, then, encouraged violence, insurrection and
oligarchy within societies and the decentralisation — to the point of
paralysis and ineffectiveness — of the movement as a whole. Another
effect it had, curiously, was to strengthen the Utopian strand in Republi-
canism. All criticism of the regime was severely punished. The very
word Republic was banned. Yet Utopian doctrines were regarded as more
or less harmless. Cabet was left free to propagate his Icarian theories —
defined as 'la réalisation de la démocratie et du christianisme dans sa
pureté primitive' — unmolested. Since all evil lay in atomistic
individualism and social organisation, Cabet's solution was to found a society based on the principles of liberty, equality and association in which money and property would be abolished. At the same time, realising that his ideal society must be preceded by preparatory stages, Cabet allowed an initial dictatorship whose role it was to prepare the way for universal suffrage and the abolition of force. Such theorising, as Georges Sand, noted, scarcely worried the government:

Le pouvoir, du moment qu'elles ne revêtent aucune application d'actualité politique, s'inquiète peu de théories et laisse chacun construire la cité future au coin de son feu, dans le jardin de son imagination. (43)

It was the constant propaganda of the republican secret societies and their influence over the people that brought about the revolution of February 1848. The first steps of the new provisional Republican government, besides the abolition of the death penalty and of slavery, consisted in establishing universal male suffrage with its corollary, the right of association. The revolution made by the people, it observed, should be organised for the benefit of the people by fraternal institutions. (44)

There followed a real flowering of clubs. Within the first month after the revolt 250 appeared in Paris and another 200 soon joined them. (45)

Sous le gouvernement provisoire, tous ceux qui pouvaient disposer d'une salle quelconque, de trois tonneaux, d'une planche, de quelques (sic) chaises et d'une sonnette, improvisaient un club. (46)

The pendulum that after 1834 had swung away from philosophical, philanthropic and professional organisations to insurrectional societies now swung back again. The conspirators went to the clubs to discuss
universal suffrage and social theories still carrying their arms, until requested by the uneasy government to leave them behind.

A persistent feature of French political life, so the theory goes, consists of a general unwillingness to join organisations or to create intermediary bodies. Yet the massive club movement of 1848 belies the inherent nature of this tendency. Certainly some of the clubs were less than serious. But, given the opportunity at last, republicans showed themselves enthusiastic to create associations of every kind. The clubs of 1848 served a tremendous variety of purposes. 'Club', in reality, was an umbrella term which covered not just para-military, ideological and educational groups but also friendly societies, unions and professional pressure groups. The specialist clubs catered for every social category imaginable, from artists, schoolmasters, caretakers and women to political prisoners and domestic servants. The clubs of 1848 served a tremendous variety of purposes. 'Club', in reality, was an umbrella term which covered not just para-military, ideological and educational groups but also friendly societies, unions and professional pressure groups. The specialist clubs catered for every social category imaginable, from artists, schoolmasters, caretakers and women to political prisoners and domestic servants. The Club des Domestiques et Gens de Maison, for instance, was both a friendly society to which its members paid one franc and a social pressure group with the aim of achieving equality between servants and employers. The feminist clubs agitated for female emancipation. The Club de la Démocratie Militante expected each of its members to contribute arms for the barricades.

Two factors should be borne in mind with respect to the club ferment of this short period: the total lack of political experience of the republicans outside the limited realm of the secret societies and the long enforced political silence that was now at an end. Republicans flocked to the clubs to claim their sovereignty as if it were a tangible hand-out:

.. chacun se croyait appelé à émettre un jugement, à proposer un remède à la situation; et on allait au club pour revendiquer sa part de souveraineté. (47)

The past had left its imprint both on the form of the club - they were rarely larger than 300-500 - and on the atmosphere that reigned in them.
The oratory was often of the most violent order, especially with regard to religion and property. Societies such as the Club du Vieux Chêne preached real hatred of the government and the bourgeoisie. Everywhere inflammatory speeches were made and subversive motions voted. Clubs with only a handful of members assumed the most resonant titles: Club Directeur, Société Centrale... Political tendencies of every kind undoubtedly co-existed in the clubs but two, in particular, caused the new government some disquiet. In the first place, there was the old aspiration to direct or semi-direct democracy. It was believed at the time, as a contemporary observer has written, that every citizen should participate in the direction of public affairs and assume executive power, that the least of citizens was on perfectly equal terms with the government. (48) The activity of the clubs he described in the following terms:

C'étaient autant de petits parlements, qui tous aspiraient à devenir grands; chaque club avait la prétention de primer les autres, de devenir une pépinière de représentants, de ministres, de fonctionnaires publics, voire même de dictateurs... On se prenait au sérieux, on se délégait à soi-même une part quelconque de l'autorité, on somnait au nom du peuple souverain le Gouvernement provisoire d'exécuter les arrêtes du club. (49)

Moreover, they were never content with the reforms. The clubs, so went a police report on a particular group, refuse to confine themselves to purely constitutional or political discussions but preach a doctrine of total social renewal. (50)

An even clearer picture of the kind of political organisation that clubs constituted at this time can be gained from precise examples taken from Paris. Detailed accounts exist, for instance, of the clubs of Blanqui and Barbès and offer an interesting insight to the political mentality of the mid-nineteenth century Republicans.
Blanqui and Barbes were both in prison when the February Revolution broke out. As soon as they were freed they rushed to Paris to offer their services to the provisional government — only to find that the government had no intention of using them. Consequently, Blanqui, the arch-conspirator, created the Société Républicaine Centrale — 'Nous aurons au moins le prestige de la force révolutionnaire' he observed with some bitterness. Barbes, a Republican of more moderate leanings, founded the Club de la Révolution.

Blanqui, who dominated his club by the force of his personality and his fierce oratory, had strong convictions of an anarchistic nature rather than a precise political programme or doctrine. (51) Like Proudhon, who belonged to Barbès' club, he believed all power to be oppressive by nature and distrusted all social dogmatism. His club had the self-appointed task of limiting and supervising the government, stimulating it to action by petitions and addresses and finally of declaring the will of the people. However, Blanqui was no pragmatist. On the contrary, the central element of his social theory, such as it was, consisted of an uncompromising absolutism in action. Blanqui could never bring himself to accept half-measures. Nevertheless, as the records of the club prove and as Blanqui himself has admitted, at least half of the members of his club were moderate republicans and even legitimists. Its clientele was altogether very mixed: it included journalists, doctors and administrators, the obscure supporters — often workers — of the old secret societies, but also social outcasts of every kind. The Club even invited and procured the membership of writers and artists — Baudelaire, Leconte de Lisle, Sainte-Beuve, Wallon among others — recalling the action of the Jacobin Club in 1789. But there the resemblance ends, for Blanqui's association was totally lacking in the organisational acumen that the Jacobins had shown. Its daily meetings were never prepared in advance. Should Blanqui himself happen
to be absent, some citizens simply took over and started a discussion. These were always heated and punctuated with interruptions and noisy scenes. (52) *La Voix des Clubs,* a liaison paper between different clubs, has left an eloquent description of the proceedings in the Société Républicaine Centrale in the absence of an agenda:

Il s'ensuit que chaque orateur exprime les idées qui l'impressionnent le plus; les travaux du club ne présentent aucun ensemble, ne conduisent à aucun vote, et l'assemblé toute entière passe son temps à produire et à écouter de vaines déclamations. (53)

The disorder and confusion, in other words, were extreme, especially when one bears in mind that the attendance at meetings could vary between 500 and 1,500.

Barbès' club, which was composed largely of Republican notables, was hardly any different. It had rules but these were never applied. Nor did its committees operate effectively. (54) As for political doctrine, Barbès had even less of it than Blanqui. Instead he had philosophical and religious beliefs, in particular a deep faith in God which he claimed to be derived from Rousseau. More moderate than Blanqui, he believed that society could be changed by common effort and not necessarily, as the latter maintained, by violence and class antagonism.

Immediately after February, various attempts were made to unite the clubs to fight the elections of April. (55) The attitudes and behaviour of the two clubs here examined, help to explain why these efforts were largely ineffective. Barbès thought of the idea in the first place. Declaring that he had no intention of creating a dictatorship, he invited the Parisian clubs each to send a delegate to a central club - le Club des Clubs - from which intellectual centre, as he called it, ideas would find their way back to each single one of its branches. He was especially careful to point out that the Club de la Révolution:
Quite soon the Club des Clubs had succeeded in attracting 200 clubs, workers, corporations and even representatives of the national guard and the army. Having obtained funds and official approval from the government, it sent delegates to 86 departments. However, only six of its 34 candidates were elected, which hardly amounted to a success. It is true that elections were an unfamiliar activity. But it must also be said that the Club members showed infinitely more interest in the selection of the candidates than in the material organisation of the elections themselves.

Blanqui, on hearing of Barbes' plan, had immediately set up a rival organisation. But it failed even more rapidly than the Club des Clubs. Or rather it never got off the ground at all, since Blanqui found political heterogeneity unbearable even in the context of an electoral meeting. Eventually, the Société Républicaine Centrale itself backed a large number of candidates, but only four were successfully elected.

There is, thus, absolutely no justification for the claim made by Weiner and La Palombara that in France 'the transformation of legislative cliques or political clubs into mass-oriented organisations is associated with the revolutionary year of 1848.' First of all, the clubs themselves showed a great deal of hesitation in abrogating their own precious sovereignty and only limited interest in electioneering. Besides, they were almost totally without experience in the electoral domain. How the situation would have developed – that is, whether the clubs would eventually have shown greater willingness to transform themselves into electoral committees and have accepted the limitation of their independence – is impossible to say. For just as the monarchy had halted the evolution of the 'Republican Party', as it is termed somewhat euphemistically by the law of 1834, so now the newly elected Republican Assembly followed...
faithfully in its footsteps by voting a new series of repressive measures. Within just six months of the February Revolution, the clubs—far from being given free rein to create a 'mass-oriented organisation'—were legally prohibited from contacting each other.

After the invasion of the Assembly by the Parisian mob in mid-May, some deputies were no doubt genuinely apprehensive. Others were only too pleased to be given the opportunity to evoke the famous 'spectre rouge', as is clear from the false rumour circulated by the Assembly that Blanqui favoured the return of the guillotine. In reality, both Barbes and Blanqui had tried to stop the demonstration and the assault on the Assembly. (58) But the government believed, not without reason, that clubs were encouraging the idea that the people, too, had a right of control. Easily frightened by the normal activity of republican institutions they now set out to curb the clubs. By an initial law in July 1848, the government forbade all communication between clubs or their representatives, outlawed secret societies directly, demanded that one quarter of places in each club be reserved for outsiders, that minutes be taken and signed, and that public authorities be admitted for the purpose of supervising the proceedings. In addition, the law also contained a particularly vicious article making liable to prosecution any discussion contrary to public order or consisting of criticisms of particular persons. (59) In June of the following year, the government went even further: it voted a law giving it the power to outlaw clubs or any other meetings for a year. The pattern was the same as in 1834. Even the more a-political self-help organisations were now banned, since they all included republicans and were, in the eyes of the government, potential centres of political agitation. The friendly societies that tried to help unemployed or striking workers were treated as secret societies and in 1850 were expressly legislated against. These laws,
it should be said, were not promulgated by way of symbolic warning. They were applied in the harshest possible manner by an administration which, in its loyalty to the old regime, had regarded the new policies of the provisional government as heretical. Offenders were deported either to Cayenne or to Africa. Police repression went so far as to suspend choral societies since their moonlight sessions, in the eyes of the public prosecutor, constituted an ideal opportunity for conspiracy.

As the regime once again blocked all moderate solutions and the 'men of order' prepared their coup d'état, the Republicans turned their backs on both representative government and on Paris and began to organise themselves in the provincial towns and the countryside. They founded committees, reviews and philanthropic associations which appealed to the free will and the enlightened spirit of the individual. (60) Even literary circles and café groups on the eighteenth century model reappeared: Café Sorges; Cercle littéraire etc. (61)

In Prades, near Montpellier, to take one provincial example, there were three recorded clubs in 1849; the Salle des Rosaires; the Union Humanitaire; the Société Fraternelle de Prades. The first club was highly informal, consisting of daily meetings in an old chapel under the presidency of an advocate and local municipal counsellor called Bonnet. The principal activity was to read out aloud from the newspaper La Réforme and comment on it. On Sundays, workers and country people came in great numbers. The Union Humanitaire which included about 300 people was led by an ardent socialist who had been dismissed from his administrative post for his 'exalted opinions'. It was organised on the same lines as a secret society with sections containing only ten members. Its aims, under the philanthropy it had assumed as a cover, was to spread socialist Utopias, organise the forces of socialism and
to maintain contact with workers. The Société Fraternelle was smaller with just 140-150 members. It included the leading citizens of Prades and supported law and order. (62)

In general, the trend after the law of June 1849 was for clubs either to transform into secret societies once again or else to disguise themselves as non-political associations. But despite the restrictions imposed on them, republican societies seem to have sprouted everywhere. No less than sixty groups, all of them with political aims, were formed by workers in Lille. Elsewhere, as in Rouen, secret societies infiltrated the workshops. Republican propaganda flourished mainly in the towns. However, in some departments, as in Drôme, it also acquired considerable influence in the countryside. It would be interesting to know the reasons for local variations: why, for example, Die in Drôme should have been a centre of revolutionary socialism, while Montélimart was much less radically hostile to all authority. But nineteenth century political clubs are not, as yet, sufficiently well documented to be able to enter fruitfully into such questions.

What is apparent from the evidence offered by Tchernoff is that a large part of France - in particular the east, the centre and the Midi - was riddled with secret societies. (63) They were often directed from Paris or Lyon or else from abroad, namely from London or Switzerland; their aim was principally to disseminate republican propaganda. At the same time, many were prepared to use violent means to overthrow society and establish direct government by the people. This much is revealed by the very large number of arms seizures that were made and the secret munitions factories discovered at the time. (64) Despite all the obstacles in their way, the societies often succeeded in maintaining communication between one another from department to department. In some places, around Orange and Avignon and in the general area of
Aix, Nimes and Grenoble vast networks of secret societies existed. (65) Sometimes they hatched collective and sometimes independent plots. In 1850 a great conspiracy was discovered spreading over fifteen departments in the south-east and with further ramifications to the east and south-west. As a result of this disclosure, the insurrection was foiled but not before barricades had been erected and a running battle fought between local inhabitants and government troops in a town in the Ardèche. Elsewhere, it was not uncommon for bands of men to take to the maquis or for local people to rescue political prisoners with pitchforks and pistols.

The Bonapartist coup d'état of 1851 finally wiped out the societies. But in the meantime, the Republican cause had suffered a grave setback. Tens of thousands of Republicans, among them the most capable organisers, were either deported or imprisoned. In the southern department of Hérault alone, 30,000 people were legally charged. (66) Tchernoff's characterisation of the Second Republic as being a period of permanent plotting is no exaggeration.

The constant oppression experienced by the Republicans had not so far altered the character of their movement. After the dictatorial first decade of Louis Napoléon's reign, during which the opposition was either in hiding or in exile in England, the Republicans reappeared cautiously and took up the same organisational line as in the past. While the regime's liberalism was still tentative a d limited, they made use of the clandestinity provided by the masonic lodges which they now began to infiltrate. A literary society near the Opera also served as a cover and many aspiring young Republicans made their debut here by dropping carefully weighed liberal remarks on politics or religion. Students and workers were more likely to use cafés and in 1866 forty-two people were arrested at the Café de Renaissance and charged as members
of a secret society.

In 1869, the regime authorised free elections. This was the signal for the old ferment of clubs, leagues, electoral committees, masonic lodges and fraternal societies — variously Proudhonist, Blanquist, Communist or moderate Republican — to reappear once more. Napoleon won the elections as well as the plebiscite that followed. But the plebiscite showed that the opponents of the regime were in a majority of 50,000 in Paris. Whether at this point clubs and societies would slowly have evolved into electoral committees, as they had so little opportunity to do in 1848, is again impossible to say; for on September Napoleon was defeated at Sedan.

As the formal institutions of society wavered, the Parisian mob took the law into its own hands. Developing from a mass demonstration outside the Assembly that won the support of the National Guard supposedly protecting it, two rival factions of Republicans — one headed by Gambetta and bearing the tricolored flag, the other brandishing the red flag and the principles of 1793 — raced each other down the quays of the Seine to the Hotel de Ville. Here, two days after Sedan, Gambetta's moderate Republic was declared.

In the confusion that followed, the clubs and societies with their clientele of workers, artisans and petite bourgeoisie (67), and the lodges with their more educated membership at last succeeded in playing a practical political role. Freemasonry provided the personnel for the municipal authorities that now took over the larger towns. (68) The popular societies helped to throw out the political cadres of the old regime in the autumn cantonal elections.

In Paris too, the Republican movement threw itself into the various elections that were held. Some attempts were made to form electoral committees on a wider and more organised basis than the club or Fraternal
society. Blanquists and radicals mingled with Marxists in the Comité Central des Vingt Arrondissements de Paris. Nevertheless, the overall pattern that emerges in the republican movement in this relatively short span of time is not one of convergence towards unity but of uneasy co-existence between different groups combined with continuing deep divergences. (65) In the elections of February 1871, four candidates, supported by different clubs, were elected to the Assembly. Clubs were further divided in their attitude towards the Commune. Some were too moderate to support it. Others disappeared after the insurrection of the 18th of March. Still others took part in the Commune. A Federation of Eleven Clubs, as it was called, was formed to transmit motions to the Commune from revolutionary associations: the Club des Prolétaires de Saint Ambroise, for instance, submitted suggestions on workers wages. (70) Others were less practical. The Club Révolutionnaire de Notre-Dame des Champs, housed in a church where the Marseillaise was played on the organ and a statue of Christ draped in a red scarf presided over the proceedings, denounced the members of the Commune for playing at being deputies. This was the more ineffectual side of the club movement, theatrical and romantic. The bloody week of vengeance inflicted on Paris by the Versailles troops that brought the Commune and clubs to an end illustrates another side of the movement: a readiness to face deportation and even death for the sake of Republican principles.

After the Commune, observers estimated that Socialism would not appear again in France for another half century, such was the devastation that had been wrought. The surviving Socialist groups, at least in Paris, were able to do so only by functioning as secret societies. (71) Unfortunately, when it comes to examining the provincial situation, detailed studies on the lines of those made on the earlier popular republican societies by Tchernoff and Lucas are lacking. But provincial societies
were apparently less ravaged by the holocaust of 1871 than their Parisian counter-parts. Halevy records a conflict that developed in Lyon as late as 1873 between the local authorities and the masonic lodges and clubs. The latter, having recently turned away from their old religiosity, were openly flouting the Churches. While before 1848 the Republicans had been known to batter down the doors of Churches to obtain religious rites for their dead, they now resorted to civil burials, brazenly waving the banners of their societies—much to the shock and horror of the bourgeoisie of Lyon. (72)

In the last resort, however, the clubs did not die a natural death. The new republican government, having secured its position by the electoral victory of 1877, turned round and banned clubs in 1881. (73) As in 1791 and in 1848, clubs were still regarded as potential usurpers of legitimate representative government. "Un club, par example effraie, et c'est tout simple; c'est un mot que la masse traduit par un chiffre : 93", Victor Hugo wrote in 1830. (74) This time, however, clubs did not reappear again so soon. Although only seemingly dead—like a dormant volcano—as their brief reappearance in the thirties indicates, fully seventy years were to pass before a revival of any significance occurred.

French party development remained in a fluid state for broadly a century and a half if the earliest societies around 1765 are taken as the beginning and the foundation of the Radical Party in 1901 as the culmination of the process. Over this period, clubs did not evolve slowly into an organised political machine with a mass membership or gradually achieve full participation in the political system as did the British and American political parties. From the Revolution onwards
they existed in a state of virtually suspended development. The repressive measures taken by successive regimes against republican organisation were one reason for this. On the other hand, France was not either a total autocracy; representative mechanisms operated partially and even under Louis Philippe the Republicans had a toe-hold in parliament. So what were the other forces that contributed to holding up party development?

As the earliest political parties are often associated with a crisis of participation (75) and as the French political system experienced such a crisis in a protracted form, this is clearly a factor of some importance. The Revolution of 1789 had given rise to a wide demand for political participation which, from the start of the nineteenth century, was constantly exacerbated by republican propaganda. But as the extension of suffrage was slow and partial, it failed to provide the necessary impetus to transform the semi-clandestine clubs into political parties: before 1848 only a fraction of the population was enfranchised; and after the coup of 1851, elections were suspended until the final phase of the Empire's existence. (76) In addition, two other critical variables in the extension of parties - the importance of parliament and the role of ideology - further obstructed evolution.

The pre-1870 parliamentary system inspired little respect or loyalty in the mass of French people. After its total subservience under Charles X, who always maintained that he would rather chop wood than rule constitutionally like the English king, it was further discredited by Louis Philippe's ministers, Guizot and Thiers. Guizot's action was consistent with his proclaimed liberal beliefs only in so far as he faithfully served the new middle class's financial interests. Thiers, unlike Guizot, acknowledged popular sovereignty, but his own temperament was authoritarian and he was not disposed to allow much rein to parliament. (77) When, finally, Louis
Napoléon extended its powers in the last years of the Empire, he also took back with one hand what he had given with the other by holding a referendum which by-passed parliament. Parliamentary 'parties', consequently, were loose and undisciplined groupings without real contact with the mass of the people.

The few Republicans who succeeded in winning parliamentary seats under the Orléans Monarchy in spite of the electoral laws being weighted against them (78), tended to be conservatives who looked to the bourgeoisie for support and did not hesitate to contract alliances with dynastic groups. One section of the Republican Party in the legislature, represented by Ledru-Rollin and Arago, had some influence on grass-roots opinion and the popular clubs, but the organic link that grew up in England between the parliamentary party and the electorate as a result of the nineteenth century suffrage acts failed to develop in France. Then, besides the main factors already mentioned, there were also several other important subsidiary elements: the most radical Republican leaders were often in exile; the press was consistently muzzled; deputies tended to believe that popular sovereignty was vested in them alone and that, therefore, all outside pressure was illegitimate. As for the societies themselves, after the law of 1834 they could no longer hold public meetings and were forced to conceal their activities and their leaders. The club — easy to mobilise and to disband — was much more suited to their purposes than the cumbersome structure of an organised mass party.

Then there were also ideological grounds that led many Republicans to regard representative democracy either as immoral, irrelevant or, at best, incomplete. Anarchism was a sufficiently important current within pre-Commune Republicanism to act as a brake on party development. Proudhon, whose influence was immense (79), was quite scathing on parliamentary democracy and its trappings until the last years of his life. Republican
societies, such as the Droits de l'Homme, often favoured suffrage merely as a means of electing virtuous men to power or of furthering social reform while their final aim remained self-government. From the Jacobin Club to Blanqui's Sociéte Républicaine Centrale, clubs continued to believe they had a right to share in popular sovereignty and showered governments with motions, proposals and declarations. In the absence of actual social and economic democracy, the club - which was usually small enough to allow everyone to express their opinion - was an admirable substitute for anarchism. This is not to say, of course, that clubs were an exclusively libertarian form of expression. As Lucas had pointed out in his description of the 1848 club movement, among the mass of self-appointed people's representatives and ministers there were not a few self-appointed dictators.

It seems likely, on the whole, that the anarchist strand in Republicanism slowed down the pace of its organising drive. But to what extent it is impossible to measure in the absence of monographs. Despite all the obstacles in their way, the clubs of the 1848-51 did try to forge links between themselves. Had they had more opportunity to participate in elections, they may well have modified their radical demands for self-government and ended, as Proudhon did, by settling for a high degree of decentralisation. In 1865 when leading Republicans gave their blessing to the Programme Décentralisateur de Nancy (which even contemplated resuscitating the old provinces), the decentralising current had a powerful influence within Republicanism. (81)

In sum, it may be said that the failure of political clubs to develop into political parties in the nineteenth century was due to government repression, to the prolonged crisis of participation caused by the inadequacy of suffrage extension, to the infrequency of electoral activity and to the reduced status of parliament. Ideology, doubtless, played a significant
role, but its effects remain imponderable.

The club structure, at the outset, was a reflexion of the society that produced them. It expressed both the desire to participate in politics and the need to take precautions against oppressive regime. The Droits de l'Homme limited its sections to less than twenty people so as to escape Article 291 of the penal code. While the paper Humanitaire and other secret societies was subdivided into numerous very small clubs so as to avoid detection altogether. There is, however, a case to be made that the club structure not only reflected but, in time, also shaped political development and attitudes.

The Republican movement in the beginning of the nineteenth century contained a number of different tendencies. Certain of these were potentially inhibiting to the organisation of a mass political party: intellectual sectarianism and a tendency to divisiveness; a fanaticism that dismissed moderation as a fatal weakness; a streak of authoritarianism that betrayed dictatorial leanings. But these were never the dominant features of the movement. The mainstream of Republicanism was notable for the imaginative richness of the ideas and organisation forms it generated. Far from being excessively intellectual and dogmatic, Republicans attached great importance to practical endeavours and to keeping abreast of change. They strove constantly and courageously - in view of the odds against them - to organise an effective political machine and to promote democratic practices within it. So there is every reason to suppose that their weaknesses resulted from their lack of political experience and
could have been overcome in time had the movement been allowed to evolve freely.

As it was, the behaviour of successive authoritarian regimes prevented any such development. By keeping clubs in isolation, they prevented the Republicans from organising an effective political machine and from acquiring a sense of political responsibility. By forcing the clubs underground, they promoted internal oligarchy over democracy, insurrection over education, intellectual rigidity over imagination. By tolerating utopianism and suppressing self-help, they encouraged theorising and discouraged practical initiative. It was government action that assured the ascendancy of extremism over moderation.

All this is to say that if nineteenth-century clubs became identified with a particular style of political behaviour—ideological, theoretical, sectarian, anarchistic or authoritarian—this was due only to a limited extent to the inherent tendencies in Republicanism or to the club form. It is possible that anarchists would have found their way to creating clubs even if French regimes had been more democratic. And it is probable that the club structure accentuated some aspects of Republicanism, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the main responsibility for the Republicans' divisions lay with government action; that it was largely the external action of governments that shaped the character of clubs—isolating them from each other and cutting them off from contact with the most vital currents in the country—and then virtually forced Republicanism in their mould. Since access to the formal institutions of society was barred to them and even the most
harmless, non-political organisations outlawed, the Republicans were driven into clubs and secret societies.

In many respects the long club experience had a determining effect on the political system that finally emerged in France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. To take the example of the parliamentary regime; what has been called the siege mentality of the French deputies, causing them to lay total claim to national sovereignty and to concentrate all power in parliament, was the result not only of the theories of Montesquieu but of the experience of the nineteenth century when, time and again, the Parisian mob invaded parliament and demanded to share in the sovereignty of the government. (82) But it is not within the scope of this study to examine all the side-effects of clubs. Having stressed that clubs initially reflected more than they shaped particular forces in society, the hypothesis will be examined that the club structure — as determined by the nineteenth century environment — ultimately also influenced political attitudes and people's perception of political parties and that this provides a vital explanatory dimension in the appearance of the modern political clubs.

To start with, it is worth looking at the Radical Party. It has some unusual features that offer a valuable insight into the French perception of political parties. Moreover, as Thibaudet has observed, the Radical Party's inheritance from the 1789 Revolution came to it through the sociétés de libre pensée as he calls clubs. (83)

The Radical Party was created in 1901 by 78 senators, 201 deputies, 476 local committees, 155 masonic lodges and 215 newspapers to fight the elections of the following year on the vital issue of anti-clericalism. (84) It is clear from this composition that the Radical rather than the Socialist
Party — which was closely modelled on the German Social Democratic Party — inherited the traditions and form of nineteenth century French popular politics. But while the old clubs had had a considerable clientele of artisans and workers, the Radical committees — which pre-existed the Party itself — were mainly made up of notables and minor local dignitaries.

Newspapers, it will be noted, were among the original founders of the Radical Party. And an unusual feature of its statutes was the opportunity accorded to papers supporting party doctrine to join it directly and to be represented at congresses by their editors. (85) This, doubtless, was a throw-back to the vital role played by newspapers in the Republican movement in the nineteenth century. Perhaps it also signified a preoccupation to give ideology and intellectuals a place in the Party. Another probable hang-over from club days was the right accorded to any party member to attend congresses by buying a special card. Such people could not vote but they might create a kind of artificial public opinion and so influence the atmosphere of the congress. It seems hardly too fanciful to see here an echo of the old aspiration to self-government. Finally, the two types of radicalism that Thibaudet distinguishes within the Party correspond to the two patterns of behaviour — authoritarian and anarchistic — that predominated in the clubs. First, there was the centralising, authoritarian temperament of proconsular radicalism, legalistic, patriotic and napoleonic; second, there was the radicalism of the comités signifying the representation of the citizen against the state — citizen control, in other words. (86) The habit of the Radical committees under the Third Republic of ensuring the voters' loyalty to political power at the same time as attacking that power (87), gives some indication of the persistence of traditional attitudes and behavioural patterns within a new form of political organisation.

Against the hypothesis that clubs permanently marked the French
political outlook, it may be objected that after about 1880 Marxism began to dominate the French Left and that Marxism with its materialist doctrine and its disciplined, organised and highly authoritarian party structure had little in common with the club movement. This would be to overlook an important point: namely that Marxism gained its ascendency within the French Left in the form of Guesdism. The principal characteristics of Guesdism may be defined as follows: an uncompromising all or nothing attitude; doctrinal intransigence; the negation of mere reforms; collectivism; the class struggle; the subjugation of unions to the political party. Since the radical, extremist aspect of the club movement included all of these features – with the exception of the last – it is arguable that French Marxism was more directly the result of the Republicans' experience in clubs and secret societies, capped by the brutal destruction of the Commune, than of the actual political theory of Karl Marx.

In conclusion, an attempt will be made to construct a model of political behaviour based on the nineteenth century political clubs, their structure, the functions they did or did not perform and the attitudes they fostered. Later this tentative model will be tested against the aspirations and perceptions current in the post-war clubs.

Broadly speaking, the political party - which is not always easily distinguishable from other political organisations - may be defined by its stability, inclusiveness and electoral role. (83) Normally, its aim is to occupy and hold political power. The French political club, on the other hand, was generally unstable and exclusive in form and rarely participated in elections. (These distinctions, of course, are ones of accent and nuances and not of nature.)

Few, if any, clubs were allowed to lead a calm, continuous existence. They appeared and disappeared, merged into each other or were dissolved.
within very short spaces of time. Politics, in these circumstances, was either a joyful verbal free-for-all, spontaneous and disorganised; or else it was conspiratorial or insurrectional and might imply membership of some tightly organised revolutionary group like Blanqui's Central Revolutionary Committee. Victor Hugo has described the theatrical side of a Parisian rising in 1839, involving mainly schoolboys with guns too large for them to carry. (89) At the same time, of course, many thousands of Republicans died on the barricades or were deported to colonial prisons. The club, in short, was either highly integrative, or an outlet for a fleeting spasm of political discontent or interest. The long haul, tedious and banal, of day to day political organisation was not a part of club life. Politics was always a heroic combat.

Secondly, clubs were always small ranging from a handful of people to a maximum of around fifteen hundred. As such they tended to be exclusive and homogeneous, for in the case of disaccord it was very easy to go off and found another club. Moreover, they would frequently put the accent on doctrinal purity to make up for their external weakness. And since their decisions mattered so little anyway, there was very little pressure on clubmen to reach a compromise. Lack of political responsibility and realism were the logical outcome of the clubs' failure to gain access to the centres of political power. They could afford the luxury of championing what Weber calls the ethics of conviction over the ethics of responsibility since they never had to face the problem of reconciling means and ends in politics. (90) As there was never any danger that they might be called on to act on their own proposals, they could advocate means and ends of the utmost purity without ever questioning whether 'good' ends must necessarily be attained politically by ethically good means.

Beyond sporadic revolutionary periods, clubmen did not expect to
occupy political power. Consequently, while the club performed some party functions - such as political education and leader recruitment - it neglected those associated with the electoral process and holding power. Interest aggregation, conflict resolution and the task of mobilising segments of opinion behind government policy were outside of the province of political clubs. The club's aim was not so much to occupy power or to promote immediate reforms as to convince people of the rightness of the Republican ideal: 'Nous aurons un jour une République, et, quand elle viendra d'elle-même, elle sera bonne' (91) wrote Victor Hugo. The elected representative, therefore, was accorded scant respect. Clubs, by the nature of their environment, were naturally populist. And it is significant that one of the earliest French socialist 'parties', the Possibilists, soon found themselves with a break-away group, the Allemanists, who demanded that all elected officials be brought under the authority of party federations and donate half their salary to the party. (92)

From the Jacobins to Blanqui, clubs believed that intellectuals should have a place as of right in politics and literary societies continued to be used as a cover for political activity throughout most of the nineteenth century. This intellectual bias, it seems likely, coloured the way politics were perceived. It would explain why Mauras should want to place a monarchist conviction in people's intelligence or why some early socialists like Herve used to insist that it was more important to increase the influence of socialist ideas than to win elections. (93) This type of approach was reflected also in the way that electors saw elections, at least in the early phase of the Third Republic. Elections enabled voters' opinions to be represented in Parliament - they were a demonstration of conviction and sentiment before they were a practical act. (94) At the same time, it should be borne in mind that clubs were never exclusively intellectual, never purely sociétés de pensée. They
were also friendly societies, professional groupings etc. Despite the identification of the two words, club and société de pensée, the dominant trait of nineteenth century clubs was their limited size and informal structure rather than their intellectual bias.

One problem about distinguishing between the influence of these historical factors and that of anarchist doctrine, is that the two tend to reinforce each other: the clubs were prevented from sharing in power and, at the same time, at least part of them had an anti-power philosophy. The informal and hierarchial structure of the club, when it was not a secret society, might be ascribed to the action of the State in preventing the clubs from acquiring stability. On the other hand, the club structure might also have been determined by anarchist ideas. Pelloutier, creator of the famous syndicates, always insisted that officers must be temporary and members free to leave:

What is a syndicate? An association you are free to enter or leave, without a president, having as its only officials a secretary and treasurer who are instantly dismissible. (95)

The same is true about the intellectual bias of the clubs. This might have been the result of their origins in a period of great intellectual ferment and their development separate from the realities of power, or else it might have stemmed from the fact that politics according to anarchist doctrine is primarily a matter of will and knowledge. It was on the basis of this belief that Proudhon for most of his life shunned elections, maintaining that issues should be decided by study rather than by voting. Then again the fact that clubs performed only the functions of leader recruitment and political education and never such integrative roles as conflict resolution and interest aggregation is explicable in terms of historical circumstances - and also in terms of the non-conformist ethics of anarchism. The notion that it is man's
duty to resist reality with values would undoubtedly have acted as an obstacle to social integration. Also the populism that grew out of the division between the politicians and the people imposed by the regime was heavily underscored by the anarchist belief in corruption of the former and the purity of the latter. Clubs, finally, were virtually the only available political outlet for ordinary Frenchmen; but they could also represent the uncompromising demand for social and economic as opposed to merely representative democracy.

In sum, the perception that some proportion of French people might be expected to have of a political party, whether as a result of historical experience or of anarchist doctrine, would be broadly as follows. A party would be an organisation small enough for each person to express his own opinion unhindered by the censure of party line of leadership, and likely to be relatively homogeneous. Participation would be on an informal and sporadic basis. Formal organisational matters would probably receive scant attention and electoral activity arouse little interest. There would exist a general tendency to regard politics as being about ideas and winning over people intellectually alongside a more pragmatic preparedness to tackle concrete issues and problems in a non-aggregative manner. But the main tasks of the political party would be considered to be political education and secondly, leader recruitment. Also elected representatives would be strictly subordinate to the people. Finally, if the model was secret societies rather than clubs, participation would be dedicated and total and discipline more authoritarian.

As will become apparent in later chapters, many of these perceptions were in fact current in the post-war clubs and the smaller of the political parties.
PART II.
Chapter 3.
Intellectual and Religious Change.

The 1930's marked a significant watershed in French history, for during this period three separate but inter-related developments began to change many of the assumptions on which French thinking about politics was based. One of these developments was the revival of Proudhonist anarchism. Concurrently, both as cause and effect, there was the re-emergence of the whole philosophico-intellectual tradition - libertarian, moralist and anti-Cartesian - that was linked inseparably with it. Anarchism could scarcely have flourished in an intellectual atmosphere entirely dominated by the materialism and dessicated rationalism of the nineteenth century Positivists. Finally, because French Catholicism was itself in the throes of change - becoming gradually less dogmatic and more modern - the path was cleared for an eventual political reconciliation between Catholics and non-Catholics. From the 1930's onwards, the secular and religious worlds continued to have different practices and beliefs, but they no longer constituted divergent and hostile mental universes.

The political opposition between Catholics and non-Catholics had never simply revolved around the alternatives of social conservatism and social progressivism. At the outset of the French Republic, Church and State confronted each other with a hostility that was all the more implacable, absolute and uncompromising because political barriers were reinforced by religious and intellectual quarrels: each side was doubly and even triply insulated from the other. Faith was opposed to reason, revealed authority to individual judgment, morality to materialism. Non-believers often felt bound to deny the validity of any moral values while Catholics would oppose all aspects of rationalism. A significant case is that of Jean Barois, a Catholic who, at the time of the Dreyfus
Affair, felt obliged to renounce religion altogether since it seemed incompatible with reason and individual judgment. (1) But even then the opposition between faith and reason was already breaking down. By the 1930's it had been totally undermined: rationalist Republicans had reinstated metaphysics and the Church had made concessions to reason.

On one level, this development obviously contributed to reducing the tension between Catholicism and Republicanism. More important in the long-term, however, were the separate currents released within each. The retreat from strict rationalism and materialism and the increased preoccupation with moralism and even mysticism in Republican circles led to the rebirth of traditional forms of French socialism, libertarian, moralist and anti-materialist. The retreat from dogmatic authority in the Church, partial as it was in the religious domain itself, permitted the resurgence of an equally traditional form of religious dissent. These two libertarian currents - the one political, the other religious - had been intimately linked in the past and their renewed interaction in the 1930's helps to explain how it was that a small but influential minority of young Catholics rejected Christian Democracy and slipped with ease from an authoritarian religion to an anarchist-orientated political doctrine.

In sum, the religious and intellectual changes that preceded and acted on the political renaissance examined in the next couple of chapters had three main aspects. French Catholicism had received an infusion of new ideas from traditional sources - i.e. medieval and seventeenth-century theology - that greatly affected the way Catholics perceived democracy and the Republic to which they were now moving closer. Secondly, secular intellectual circles, in their renewed concern with moral and spiritual problems, were no longer fundamentally cut off from Catholics or from important strands of their own tradition such as the libertarian
and moralist socialism of Proudhon. And finally, linked to this
general metaphysical revival, there was a parallel intellectual revolt,
international and not merely French, against rationalism and science;
a movement that exalted the heart and the body over the mind and aspired
to greater freedom and spontaneity — personal freedom from authority
and intellectual freedom from dogmatism. If one word had to be chosen
to cover the religious and intellectual climate that gave rise to the
new approach to politics in this period, it would be liberty.

France, of course, had a powerful indigenous libertarian tradition
on which to draw: in religion and philosophy, there was Pascal; in
politics, Proudhon. Consequently, the watershed of the 1930's was at
once a new political start for France and a return to the past. And
it was for this reason, no doubt, that the body of political ideas that
emerged then should have put down such strong and tenacious roots in
spite of the short duration and the numerical weakness of the reform
movement itself. In this chapter the religious and secondly, the in-
tellectual aspects of the political renaissance that occurred in the
1930's will be examined in turn.

During most of the nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church
opposed both scientific progress and the new ideas stemming from the
French Revolution and from industrial development. In France the in-
fluence of the Church waned continuously after about 1848: the bourgeoisie
remained fairly faithful, but the mass of French people became dechrist-
ianised. (2) It was to counter this decline and to come to terms with
the modern world more generally that at its synod in 1870 the Church
turned to Saint Thomas Aquinas and medieval theology. Aquinas, both
philosophically and politically, was admirably suited to Rome's purposes.
His distinction between theology and philosophy provided the Church with an instrument to overturn the domination of theology and thus make a place for science in religion. This distinction also permitted the recognition of political pluralism: that is to say the collaboration of Catholics and non-Catholics for immediate social purposes irrespective of ultimate religious ends. Then Saint Thomas' concept that man has material as well as spiritual needs furnished a theoretical justification for the Catholic Church's new social doctrine, embodied in the encyclical Rerum Novarum of 1891. In an earlier encyclical, Aeterni Patris of 1879, Rome had displayed its determination to reconcile faith and reason by demanding that Aquinas be recognised as the only valid Christian philosopher.

The religious renewal begun in Rome had little direct effect in France before the turn of the century. French bishops who had shown hesitancy over accepting Thomism were gradually replaced under the Papacy of Léon XIII. But, on the whole, Thomism remained confined to seminaries. While the mass of Catholics, despite being pressed by Léon to rally to the Republic, showed little inclination to do so at this point. The essential point, however, was that Rome had moved away from the rigid dogmatism that had characterised it throughout the nineteenth century. The way was open for change.

Change, in the French context, meant above all the re-emergence of old traditions. Practically, the paternalist, social Catholicism formerly associated with the name of Lamennais began to make a comeback. And, intellectually, Catholics were once more drawn towards a humanist and anti-authoritarian form of Christianity. At this time its most persuasive advocate was the Catholic philosopher, Blondel.

Non-Catholics of the rationalist and positivist schools had always reproached Catholicism for founding faith on the dogmatism of revealed
authority and for this reason rejected not merely Catholicism but religion altogether. Blondel's contribution to the intellectual revival in Catholicism - and the religious revival in secular circles - was to approach the problem of faith from the opposite end: his apologia treated faith as the free and conscious recognition of the inadequacy of man and nature. It was an act of human liberty because it signified the choice of being constantly prepared internally to receive grace. Religion was thus no longer a ritual imposed on Man from outside, a kind of spiritual conformism; it became instead a freely-willed personal commitment. (4)

Blondel, whose aim it was to re-establish contact with non-Christians, was at once attacked by traditionalists for allowing independent thought to by-pass the teachings of the Church and accepting the triumph of personal will over reason. For all his disapproval of the irrational aspects of Pascal, Blondel was too Pascalian for the comfort of conventional Catholicism. To justify faith by human needs was regarded as a highly unorthodox procedure and one, moreover, that endangered the authority of the infallible Church. If, in the end, Blondel escaped official censure, this was doubtless because the creed of integral Christianity he developed from religious libertarianism presented no threat to Rome. For the other noted Pascalian of the period, the priest and theologian, Laberthonnière, who demanded effective liberty of expression and not merely internal liberty of thought, was placed on the index in 1907. (5) Laberthonnière published nothing after the First World War since he had been forbidden to do so, but he wrote in their entirety the sermons of the Père Sanson, like himself a member of the Congregation of the Oratoire, a seminary where the traditions of the seventeenth century were still kept alive. And Sanson, in the years around 1930, preached at Notre Dame, apparently with considerable effect on young Catholics.
Interest in Pascal revived in Catholic circles - as also in secular ones - around the turn of the century. The modernist movement in the Church, for instance, was partially influenced by Pascalian ideas. Although their aim was essentially to integrate modern criticism into faith without ending up in Protestantism, many modernists, in their rejection of dogma, their demand for a religion of the heart, felt spontaneously close to Pascal and frequently invoked him. At the same time, modernism was never a homogeneous movement and its influence was short-lived and restricted.

It was not until later - broadly from 1920 until the Second World War - that sympathy for Pascal was at its peak. And even then the great mass of Catholics were scarcely affected. On the other hand, a considerable number of educated Catholics, more generally the young and notably the seminarists felt the sway of Pascalian ideas. For some, this sympathy was a source of anguish since it placed them in an uneasy and ambiguous position vis-à-vis the Church.

At the other end of the scale were the Thomists who preached the revival of a New Middle Ages in the period after the First World War. Their Catholicism, integral, inward-looking and intolerant, tainted the strongly revivalist movement that had gripped the French Church with profoundly reactionary under-tones. Jews, Freemasons and democrats, according to the integral Thomists of the 1920's, were responsible for the decline of religion and the political decadence of France. Consequently, many Catholics of this period sympathised with the extreme right-wing group, Action Française, as spontaneously as the modernists had sympathised with Pascal. They had the same enemies and rejected critical individualism equally fiercely. It was the Thomists, of course, and not the Pascalians who represented the mainstream of thinking within the Church.
Yet overall, despite integralism and the condemnation of Labert-honnière, Catholicism by the 1920's had broken out of its mental ghetto and acquired new verve, confidence and intellectual cachet. The religious revival among Catholics gave the French Church a dynamism that it had not known in a very long time. It even held an attraction for non-Catholics now. This was partly on account of its own evolution, partly on account of the spiritual revival in secular circles; the first decades of the twentieth century, in particular, were an era of conversions to Catholicism. All this had an important influence on the ideological baggage of Catholics. It set the mood and the tone of approach to politics when, from the First World War onwards, a Catholic avant-garde began to move cautiously towards acceptance of the Republic and of democracy.

The dissociation of Catholicism from the political Right had, in fact, already begun before 1918 under the stimulus, limited but real, that the War gave to the idea of religious and political reconciliation. But the Sillon, as Marc Sagnier's embryonic Christian Democratic Party was called, had been nipped in the bud by the Church for being too independent. Later, it re-emerged as the Jeune République Party. (11)

Another development of this period that, in time, helped to end the political identification of Catholics with the Right was the separation of Church and State in 1905. At first this move angered the Church and damaged its short-term interests. But the break was beneficial in the long-term since it blunted the political ambitions of the ecclesiastics and brought the Church closer to the people. Democracy, as Thibaudet observes cynically: '... est le nom qu'on donne au peuple quand on a besoin de lui. Et séparée de l'Etat, l'Eglise a moralement grand besoin du peuple.' (12) By the post-War elections of 1926 anti-clericalism in its most virulent form was virtually dead. (13) And in the
same year, the Church cut an important bridge with its past: Pius XI condemned Action Française. The effect of the Pope's action is difficult to over-estimate since it forced a whole generation of young Catholics, and notably the priests many of whom had tacitly supported the extreme Right, to look for some new form of political commitment. (14) Integral Catholicism took a new direction. From being inward-looking, it became out-going and humanist: Catholics began to see their Christianity as affecting their whole lives from a new more socially orientated angle. By discrediting political reaction and by preaching moral rejuvenation and social concern, the new Pope gave his support to the small but active minority concerned to redefine the relationship between Catholics and politics.

French Catholicism of the inter-war years was well equipped for this task both intellectually and morally. Its new-found humanism was buoyed by the mood of confidence resulting from the religious revival of the preceding decades. While it was fortified against the tendency to vague spiritual sentimentalism by the social realism of medieval theology, ever mindful of the needs of the body as well as the soul, and by the rigorous moralism of such noted Catholic personalities as Péguy and Bernanos. Péguy, in particular, had always been violently hostile to the theorising of intellectuals and to the rather abstract fraternity preached by the Church: thought must be indissolubly linked to action. What Péguy stood for above all else was the necessity for commitment; and this, in turn, entailed a rigorously non-conformist attitude towards society. His influence was strong now in the 1930's, perhaps stronger than at any other time, on the young generation of Catholics who took to heart the Church's espousal of humanist ideas. They mocked mercilessly those who remained uncommitted:

... ces jeunes catholiques d'aujourd'hui qui sont des jeunes
Here once again internal puritanism was acting as a stimulus to social awareness and even revolutionary thought. Because they identified it with the status quo and with intellectual and social conformism, many young Catholics felt bound to oppose the bourgeoisie. It was in this sense that they referred to the 'révolution chrétienne' and to a 'prise de conscience révolutionnaire'.

The new dynamism in the Catholic world was linked also with the rise of professional and youth organisations. Previously the Church's influence in the working class, for instance, had been negligible. Now there existed a new Catholic workers' organisation, the Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique, whose insignia read: 'Fiers, purs, joyeux et conquérants.' With equally bold assurance, a vast meeting held in the Mutualité in Paris was entitled: 'Les Catholiques sont présents.'

Coupled with this expansive mood of confidence was the notion that Christianity held the solution to the problems besetting the modern world. Catholics had the faith and the political word. A new Dominican paper - this was also an era of tremendous growth for the Catholic press - even announced its ambition to be the weekly 'du Temps Present.'

However, the Catholic currents moving in the direction of democracy and social progressivism before the Second World War were really of qualitative rather than quantitative importance. Although fairly numerous, the members of the new Catholic organisations - among workers, students, sailors, peasants etc. - did not become seriously politically conscious until during and after the War. And then they turned for their inspiration to ideas dating mainly from the pre-War period.

Moral and religious fervour apart, the hallmark of the progressive
Catholicism of the 1930's was a remarkable burst of intellectual and political creativity. But it was not so much muscular and aggressive as heroic, messianic and intellectually and morally high-minded. Young Catholics thought of themselves not just as political activists but also as revolutionaries in quest of a spiritual revolution that would transform the world. Catholicism, in short, was no longer dragging its feet historically: for the first time it felt itself to be in the vanguard of progress.

But there was also a reverse side, darker and more doubting, to the bright mood of optimism and certitude. It was of political importance in that it steered both spirits and doctrine. First in line was the bad conscience of numerous Catholics over the Church's role in the past, an uneasiness on account, particularly, of its alliance with the decadent bourgeoisie. This led to the desire to break the alliance and, in general, to make amends for the past by action in the present. (21) Secondly, among a minority within the minority, there was the internal puritanism previously discussed. These people vigorously denounced all humanist ideals they judged to be insufficiently backed by active personal commitment. They tended also to by-pass Christian Democracy, which they criticised for sentimentalism and complacent idealism, and landed themselves on the anarchist Left. (22) In fact, the different concepts of humanism which were a source of division among the Catholic Left in the 1930's corresponded exactly with the different notions of morality held by Jansenists and Jesuits. Jesuits conceived of morality as the external obedience to dogma, Jansenists saw it as the internal commitment to personal truth. In the same way, the humanism of the Christian Democrats was more formal and less internalised than that of the Proudhonian Catholics.

Whatever the personal interpretation of each group of their religion,
broadly speaking one can say that the principal characteristic of the new political thinking of the 1930's was its penetration by a spirit of conquering Catholicism. Etienne Borne, himself part of the generation of Catholic reformers has described the politico-religious euphoria of the epoch:

Nous imaginions que nous nous trouvions à la veille d'une grande épreuve, que nos chemins allaient se resserrant de plus en plus jusqu'à cette rencontre dramatique qui allait décider de tout ... Les chrétiens qui toujours avaient été à la remorque de l'histoire, souvent essoufflés ou tentant vainement de contredire l'inévitable, allaient cette fois rejoindre et constituer peut-être le peloton de tête. Tout alors serait possible et avec une solution humaine des grands problèmes, avec une justice enfin rendue aux petits, aux opprimés, aux écrasées, avec la déroute des grands mythes païens du totalitarisme apparaîtraient enfin les chances de ce que nous appelions, avec Jacques Maritain, une nouvelle chrétienté. (23)

The spate of conversions of non-Catholics to Catholicism at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, was the result, it has already been observed, part of the Church's own evolution and part of a transformation within secular circles. The main impulse behind this transformation was a revolt, among young generations, against the arid combination of philosophical rationalism and scientific materialism that had begun to dominate French intellectual and academic life after the Enlightenment. By the 1870's, even the spiritualist tradition in Freemasonry had disappeared leaving Comte's Positivism and Taine's Naturalism as the reigning intellectual orthodoxies.

Positivism was progressive and humanitarian in that it replaced God with Man as an object of worship; at the same time, duties and self-sacrifice subordinated Man firmly to humanity. Taine's Naturalism,
on the other hand, was mechanistic and evolutionist: Man is an object in nature like any other, only slightly more complicated, and, in time, the laws governing his conduct will be known in the same way as scientific laws. Neither theory took any interest in God or metaphysics - both subjects dismissed as irremediably redundant - and neither took into account human liberty. (24) What was real could be expressed clearly and what was expressed clearly was real - such was the assumption of the time. As the historian Augustin Thierry has put it:

The French insistence upon clearness and discretion, which sometimes, it must be confessed, restrains one from saying more than a part of what one thinks, from doing justice to the depth of one's thought, seemed to me a tyranny at the time. (25)

It was in reaction against strict materialism and the prevailing form of dessicated intellectual rationalism that there gradually emerged - broadly from the 1890's - a metaphysical and mystical revival. (26) Besides reason and determinism, the revolt also encompassed the cocksure optimism and priggish intellectualism that held life, with its confusions, at bay. Paradoxically, while young Catholics were looking for liberty at least part in the increased application of reason to human affairs, non-Catholics were hoping to find it by curbing rationalism.

The Catholic conversions of this period seem to have been inspired as much by romanticism and intellectual and emotional resignation in the face of the world's contradictions as by the actual belief in a God. Pégy, apparently, was converted by Joan of Arc, while Paul Claudel, one of the earliest of the Church's prestigious new converts, discovered faith through Rimbaud. He was relieved, as he said, to escape the clutches of: '.. ce monde hideux de Taine, de Renan et des autres Molochs du XIX siècle.' (27) Intellectual circles, scientific as

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well as literary, became increasingly receptive to Catholicism. According to a contemporary witness, Raissa Maritain, there were forty Catholics at the Ecole Normale in 1912, one third of the college compared to only three or four persons in 1905. (28) And this evangelical blossoming, notably in the Grandes Ecoles which were more frequented anyway by pupils of bourgeois Catholic origin than the university, continued unabated throughout the 1920's.

Not all of those affected by the new spiritual mood turned to Catholicism, of course. Some joined theosophist groups. Many were only morally looking for undogmatic moral guidance and unable or unwilling to skim faith from the institutional Church like cream from milk as Péguy did. But the essential point was that metaphysics and morality, even when they did not lead back to religious faith, had again become intellectually respectable. This development received official academic sanction when a highly esteemed professor wrote in an eminent review in 1913 that it was no longer possible to maintain that religious thought constituted a hopelessly outdated phase of human evolution. Metaphysical speculation, the professor went on, was even an essential human concern. (29)

For a generation or so after the First World War, Péguy was a symbol of freedom. For the generation around the turn of the century, as for Péguy himself, it was Bergson who represented the reconquest of liberty. 'Bergson a brisé nos fers', Péguy once commented. (30) The philosophy of Henri Bergson exactly suited the anti-rational and anti-intellectual mood of the young, for, it exalted intuition and feeling over reason and intelligence, spontaneity over mechanism and materialism, the concrete over the ideal and conscience over authority. Knowledge, in Bergson's theory, was the product of experience rather than of intellectual conceptualisation. Matter was static and only memory or spirit was
dynamic; evolution thus became a permanently fresh creation, a heroic personal confrontation with the refractory forces of nature. (31)

Philosophically, Bergson was in every sense close to Pascal—he even proclaimed the superiority of religions based on conscience over those founded on authority. As both were influential concurrently, without it being possible to ascertain whose influence came first at the time. However, the effect of their doctrines was to knock science and rationalism off their pedestal and to give free rein to personal experience. This intellectual exercise sparked off a heady liberation amongst young Frenchmen who had been trained to see Man in the world in terms of perfectly tapered shrubs in geometrically ordered gardens such as those at Versailles. Henri Massis has described the intellectual impact of Pascal, in particular, on his own generation in the following terms:

Aversion de la clarté, primat donné aux arguments de cœur, culte de la chose qui s'éprouve, mépris de celle qui se démontre, exaltation du trouble, de la contradiction, du pathétique, voilà ce qu'au début de notre siècle épris de bergsonisme, une génération découvrit en Pascal. Elle en fit le symbole de la scission entre les manières de penser qu'avait suivies le XIX siècle, tyrannisée par le dogmatisme des scientifiques et les aspirations qui étaient les siennes. Pascal a vaincu Descartes, tel était, d'après Georges Sorel le grand fait de notre histoire morale. (32)

The impact of Pascal on secular circles had begun towards the end of the nineteenth century when the Sorbonne no longer insisted on the separation of philosophy and metaphysics—hitherto metaphysical theses had been unacceptable in French universities. (33) New courses on Pascal treated the two together. And in 1900, a lay professor named Léon Brunschvicg published a new, annotated edition of Pascal's work. Henceforth Pascal exerted a powerful, if by no means undisputed influence on philosophy as on religion.

Pascal's religious thinking matched the mood of modern religious
disquiet and his philosophy was equally in line with new trends. His philosophical approach, inductive, concrete, based on observation, rejecting alike idealism and empiricism, accorded with the new existential and phenomenological studies that were challenging the academic dominance of rationalism from the 1930's on. For all the differences among the dissidents who were carrying further the anti-Cartesian revolt of the turn of the century, they all rejected abstract thought and essences and sought to grasp by reflexion experiences as they are lived rather than as they are known by pure reason. This meant the end of any kind of certainty about Man or Nature; it meant also that society could no longer be regarded as a community of reasonable minds. Rationalism had tapered and smoothed all the untidy butts and ends of human existence: contradictions, coincidences, ambiguities, absurdities, the fundamental problems of Man's liberty and significance— all the opaque aspects of life that had preoccupied and fascinated Pascal. Marxism had followed in the footsteps of Rationalism, resolving contradictions with equal ease. Now all the old questions were back, as unresolved as ever, and with them, inevitably, Pascal whom Voltaire had already considered as his most powerful adversary.

The solutions arrived at by the new generation were not particularly innovatory in relation to the Pascalian moral-philosophical tradition. Jean-Paul Sartre eventually opted for the existentialism that Pascal had avoided through faith. And his conclusion 'Si Dieu existe, l'homme est néant' concurred fully with that of Proudhon and Alain. Merleau-Ponty, rejecting subjectivity or individualism, arrived at a relativist humanism. While Gabriel Marcel was converted to Catholicism on the eminently Pascalian principle of the insufficiency of Man and Nature— i.e. life is always greater than can be thought, reality is inexhaustible. (34)

The revival of this tradition did not of course prove Sorel's view that
Pascal had won over Descartes, but it did mean that a cycle of French thought had come full circle. Politically, the 1930's turned back to the period before the Commune; philosophically, the inspiration of the period was pre-Enlightenment. This meant a return to original sources all round, since the early nineteenth century Proudhonist tradition was derived from the seventeenth century.

In any country other than France, such intellectual developments might be of little political significance. However, the particular prestige and audience enjoyed by French intellectuals, the intellectual conformism of universities and the frequently minimal distinction between morals, philosophy and politics in the French mind ensured that these changes had social and political importance, although in what exact measure the philosophers directly or indirectly influenced politics it is hard to say. On the one hand the revival of Proudhonism was a fairly self-contained phenomenon; at the same time, it was also supported and accelerated by the revolt against philosophical idealism which gave the French intellectual scene an infusion of realism and relativism.

French intellectuals, in their approach to politics, are habitually more interested in the sources and moral value of ideas than in their applicability to a specific situation. But the 1930's generation of young philosophers, when they turned to politics, generally considered that translating values into social and political realities depended on the conditions of existence. Simone Weil, for instance, was representative of the new political spirit in her criticism of words beginning with capital letters and ending in isms.

Our political universe is exclusively peopled with myths and monsters; we know only entities, only absolutes... Nation, Security, Capitalism, Communism... But to what capacity do they refer? (35)

As for her own political choice, it was directly in the Pascalian—
honian tradition. It steered a course between the absolute and reality in advocating a cross between Utopianism and functionalism. In the view that principles must be guides to action and not absolutes, she was supported by Merleau-Ponty, de Jouvenal and Albert Camus. Sartre, on the other hand, performed a strange about-turn from his own existentialist position and ended up as an absolutist moralist, representative of the old tradition of French intellectuals in his membership of the Communist Party and of the new tradition in his support of the anarchist and revolutionary young Left after the students' revolt of May 1968.

The immediate impact of this prudent generation of thinkers was, of course, small: Camus and, to a lesser extent, Merleau-Ponty provided an intellectual and moral justification for the intellectual youth of the 1950's not to join the Communist Party and instead to accept the unsatisfying compromises of political life. But their main importance lay in the part they played in renewing a tradition that extended outside their own restricted circle, a minority tradition certainly, but one that contributed in time to changing the intellectual and political atmosphere of France.

Thus by the 1930's, rationalist humanists had lost much of their self-confidence, while Catholics were beginning to lose their social pessimism and their inferiority complex over their rear-guard role in history. The works of Freud and Nietzsche, the First World War followed by the rise of totalitarian regimes severely shook humanist optimism. Reason seemed suddenly not so much invincible as impotent. Science and technology, far from leading inevitably to material and moral progress, were now seen as harbouring unsuspected dangers as well as being per-
petually open to abuse. Sin, evil, imperfection, uncertainty—all had been relegated to the ash-heap of history by French rationalist humanism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Now in the twentieth century, they were thoughtfully disinterred. (36)

The political theorising of the non-conformist intellectuals of the 1930's was varied and far from being uniformly libertarian. But if it had a leitmotif, a kind of inner core, it was the preoccupation with liberty: personal, religious, intellectual, social and political. The ground had been prepared for this development in so far as the limited freedom accorded by the Church gave new lee-way to the libertarians within it; while the secular intellectual world, in breaking with Cartesian rationalism, materialism, idealism and optimism, separated the fate of the individual from that of the human species—without, of course, neglecting his social needs. The urgent necessity, as one of the young reformers put it, was to reassert a philosophy of Man against the excesses created by philosophies of ideas and things. (37) By this he simply meant that all idealist and materialist philosophies had failed and the time had come to create a society to suit Man's needs rather than constantly to try to adapt human nature to some abstract system. That was the core.

The context was that of the 1930's: a context of moral and metaphysical scepticism and disarray, of humanist pessimism and of irrationalism; a time of social and economic disintegration and crisis. Capitalism and liberalism seemed to have failed irredeemably. Both in the western world as a whole and within France itself, all hitherto accepted values were being called into question. In this situation, the young French intellectuals who were also in the grip of the anti-
rationalist current might easily have jumped on to the bandwagon of fascism or else lapsed into nihilism, personal anarchy or passivity. Why was it, then, that instead, and alone in Europe, they produced a body of political ideas that was both libertarian and original in relation to all existing western political systems?

The answer is to be found in the unique combination of circumstances that existed in France at the time. Above all, the French had time to think. Partly due to their sense of national decline and partly because of their a priori anti-capitalist bias, the non-conformists realised very early on - as early as 1928-30, in fact (38) - that what was really afoot was a crisis of civilisation. At the same time, the economic crisis began to make a serious impact on France only gradually from 1932-33 onwards; even then it affected the middle classes, from which most of the intellectuals stemmed, much less traumatically than in other industrial countries. In contrast to the Germans for example, French intellectuals were deeply conscious of the moral and political drama without, initially, experiencing the same material desperation. Significantly, from about 1934 on, as the crisis deepened and events gathered momentum, the reviews began to decline and disappear.

Moreover, in the prevailing atmosphere of despair and void, the French intellectual non-conformists had two solid, if antithetical, supports: the Roman Catholic Church and the political doctrines of Proudhon. The bottom had not entirely fallen out of their world. Besides reassuring Catholics that, despite Nietzsche, God was still safely in Heaven, the Church condemned Communism, Fascism and Capitalism, thereby stimulating French Catholics to seek an alternative. At the same time, the Republican tradition had ready to hand an anarchist theory that satisfied all the major criteria of the epoch in that it
was moral, libertarian and opposed to Cartesian rationalist system — without, however, totally discarding reason. A major characteristic of Proudhonism was the way it balanced reason and free, individual creativity. And one of the most striking and most vital aspects of the political thinking of the non-conformists was that for all their rejection of rationalism as a system, they never lost their grip on reason.

French intellectuals had one other advantage — and it was considerable. This was the social and economic 'backwardness' of France. Since in France science, technology, industry, capitalism and mass-organised society in general were far less advanced than in other developed nations such as Britain, the United States or Germany, it was easier to denounce their evils and to demand their control. Their very lack of development gave the French the mental freedom to question the whole basis of modern society while other countries were preoccupied simply in papering over the gaps.

Still, it would be a mistake to conclude that the political thought of the non-conformists was in the last resort simply a reversion to humanist optimism in the tradition of the Enlightenment. It was a return rather to the austere humanism of Pascal and was indelibly marked by the moral and material atmosphere of the 1930's: nihilism and economic collapse were the punching bags against which the young intellectuals tested their political muscle. Intellectuals they were and intellectuals they remained, their achievements on a direct political level being negligible. But their doctrine contained two important, practical notions that were particularly novel within the intellectual context of France with its idealised schemes. One was that in the modern world, where the material and moral conditions of individual existence are increasingly inter-dependent, theories on liberty or moral life must be
firmly anchored in concrete reality, if they are to be meaningful. The second notion was that the absolute is not realisable on earth and that politics is the realm of the relative. This is all the non-conformists meant when they maintained, in their own idiosyncratic terminology, that the spiritual must be inseparable from the carnal, that to save oneself is to save the world and that the goal of society must lie between the absolute and the real.

The spirit of the non-conformists intellectuals of the 1930's was a strange combination of old and new. In a sense, they began the modern youth culture in the degree to which they were conscious that their values differed from those of preceding generations in very many spheres: only youth, they decided, would solve the problems posed by modern civilisation. They even held a Youth Assembly at one point, but this turned out to be chaotic and inconclusive. At the same time, they were also permeated by a humanist notion peculiarly French: that Man may humanise - but not perfect - a valueless world through the values that are in him alone. How far this ideal was linked to the religious and philosophical revival of Pascal in preceding years is difficult to say. Perhaps it had become an unconscious reflex after centuries. At any event, its austerity and anti-determinist morality acted as a powerful antidote against the negativism of many current philosophies - particularly combined with the heroic and optimistic idea of the universalist mission of France:

.. l'espoir, presque mystique chez certains, que la France considérée parfois comme un vieux pays rétrograde... était seule capable de trouver une solution humaine aux angoisses du présent, que la 'grande nation' à vocation universelle possédait la dernière chance de réussir la révolution que les idéologies étrangères avaient manqué. (39)
PART II

Chapter 4.

Personalists and Personalism: the Revival of Proudhonian Anarchism.

... s'il est de nouveau dans les préoccupations des hommes, question de l'individu, de ses droits et de la liberté... alors, ne nous y trompons pas non plus, ce n'est pas avec un vocabulaire de vacuum cleaners, de frigidaire et de machines à calculer que l'on soulèvera le monde; l'idéologie française dont le dynamisme est intact, retrouvera toute sa puissance. (1)

The creative political ferment of the 1930's in France resulted essentially from the confrontation of two contradictory moral and intellectual tendencies, the one pessimistic, the other prudently optimistic. On the negative side, the acute concern and unease that gripped the non-conformist intellectuals from about 1928 had three sources: there was the sense of French national decadence and decline; the painful recognition that the Catholic Church had betrayed its mission in allying itself with the Right; and, finally, the consciousness that behind the growing economic crisis a deeper crisis of civilisation, similar in scope and impact to the Renaissance, was building up. (2) The idea of the crisis of civilisation, which had a wide currency at the time even outside the non-conformist group, rested on two assumptions: capitalism had failed; fascism and communism were symptoms of this failure without, in themselves, offering a solution.

La crise matérielle révèle sa véritable cause: elle est d'abord une crise morale, une méprise sur la notion d'homme. L'ordre même du monde est en jeu et cet ordre est spirituel... Ce qui d'abord menace l'Europe, c'est le mépris où elle tient les puissances de l'âme. En face du matérialisme de Moscou et l'affairisme de New York, c'est dans un effort convergent pour sauvegarder l'esprit de l'homme et la tradition de sa culture que l'Europe trouvera le salut. (3)
A generation with a thirst for liberty and in revolt against the abstraction and intellectualism of rationalism — on which they blamed all the ills of France (4) — was hardly likely to turn to totalitarian or materialist systems. The problem, then, was to create something quite new. The prospect of such an undertaking did not daunt the young intellectuals. On the contrary, their most striking characteristic was the belief not only that the enterprise was possible but that they, in particular, were perfectly well equipped to carry it through. In this optimism, never facile, but rather of a serious, self-sacrificial and heroic caste, they were supported by their youth, their Christian fervour and by French humanism at its most self-consciously messianic.

Because of the fundamental nature of the crisis and because of their own spiritual inclinations, the non-conformists approached the problem of social and political reconstruction not at the level of structures but from the very basic angle of personal ethics and social values. The only way to begin to create a new order within present chaos was to return to the first principle: what is Man and what does he want? In a book that appeared in 1932, La Crise est dans l'Homme, Thierry Maulnier formulated the task confronting his generation in the following terms:

Si la civilisation tout entière peut être aujourd'hui remise en jeu, c'est parce qu'elle a ignoré et blessé aveuglément l'être humain dans ce qu'on pourrait appeler son exigence éternelle. Avant de dresser qui que ce soit contre une société inhumaine, il faudrait peut-être trouver ou retrouver ce qu'est l'homme et ce qu'il veut. (5)

The starting point of the non-conformists was identical to that of the Marxists: Man is alienated in modern society. But their approach was different in that, without denying the relevance of actual social and economic conditions, they placed the moral aspect of the problem first: they believed that no real political renaissance could be envisaged
without a change in values.

In this view, as in other respects, they diverged sharply from the Marxist and materialist mainstream of the French Left. Consequently, they claimed to be neither left nor right-wing politically. In fact, many of them cautiously supported the Popular Front. However, illustrative of their reservations about the Left was the remark made by Emmanuel Mounier in 1938: 'Abundance, peace, leisure, pay increases, that is all perfectly legitimate, but is it all one can find to say to a civilisation which is dying?' (6)

This chapter does not aim to deal exhaustively either with the non-conformists themselves nor with the Personalist creed they created. The origins and sociological composition of the young intellectuals and the general significance of the term Personalism will be dealt with only briefly. The principal purpose of the chapter is to show how Personalism was related to the revival of Proudhonian anarchism and to give a broad outline of the principal practical solutions proposed on the basis mainly of this political doctrine.

One of the earliest centres of the non-conformists was the Club du Moulin Vert. This was less of a formal organisation than an ecumenical discussion group where young Catholic, Protestant and Jewish intellectuals met to reflect on the possibilities of finding a spiritual solution in the contemporary global crisis. The original impetus behind the Club came from a young Jewish Russian emigre, Alexandre Marc, who had studied both at Iena in the explosive atmosphere of the Weimar Republic and at the Institute of Political Science in Paris. Although Marc became a Catholic convert only in 1933, he was already by 1929–30 much preoccupied by the question of faith and he later claimed that he and the group came to see the relevance of politics through discussing religious problems. (7)
Initially, the Club was not especially sanguine about the possibility of saving European civilisation and, after the manner of the early Socialists, it discussed the merits of founding a small colony in Canada. Then the arrival of two new members decided the issue: half the Club went off to meditate on purely spiritual matters, while the other half set about preparing the political review *Ordre Nouveau* which appeared, after a period of doctrinal maturation, in 1933.

The new arrivals, Robert Aron and Arnaud Dandieu, had been working together on the same questions as interested the Club from 1927 - i.e. well before the onset of the economic slump. Aron was Jewish, Dandieu an atheist until converted to Catholicism on the eve of his early death in 1933. In general, the nascent review, like the old club, consisted of a remarkable religious and political combination, mixing Catholics and Protestants, Trotskyists and sympathisers of Action Française. However, since all were agreed that modern materialist civilisation was in a state of decadence and all adhered broadly to the moral and political principles covered by the term of Personalism, the review was able to hold together for the relatively short period of its existence. Although Dandieu's cool atheism was not appreciated and the review had, as its motto, 'Spirituel d'abord, économique ensuite, politique à leur service' (8), *Ordre Nouveau*’s humanism remained, in principle, a-religious.

Not all of the reviews matched *Ordre Nouveau* in religious and political diversity. Yet underneath a broad agreement on a few essential principles, there was about the movement as a whole a political unpredictability that fully justified its claim to be neither on the Left nor Right. Thierry Maulnier, one of the most gifted of the young intellectuals, illustrates the difficulty of pinning conventional political labels on them. Maulnier was an agnostic and a sympathiser of the extreme right-wing organisation, *Action Française*. But his motives were not at all orthodox. What Maulnier derived from Maurras was essentially the courage
not to conform, the readiness to support a minority view, intellectual dynamism and political realism. (9) It should be said that neither of the latter two qualities were particularly common in the existing left-wing political parties at this time. Otherwise Maulnier was influenced by Marx in the major role he accorded social and economic questions and by Nietzsche on the crisis of humanism in a world without God.

In general, the presence of extreme right-wing ideas and sympathisers within the non-conformist movement was not a sign of fascism. Some eventually turned fascist but the majority did not. It should be understood rather within the framework of a political tendency perhaps peculiarly French: the unexpected combination of extreme radicalism and conservative traditionalism. This trend, strongly evident in Jansenism, appears also in Proudhon who was radical enough on liberty and property but still puritan and traditional with respect to life-style. And it would explain how a particular brand of the extreme Right - individualist, austerely moralist, romantic, anti-capitalist and communalist after a medieval fashion - could consider itself Proudhonist. The numerous efforts made by anarcho-syndicalist and extreme right-wing groups to get together before and after the First World War are incomprehensible unless this background is borne in mind. (10)

In sum, the essential characteristics of the political movement created by the intellectuals of the 1930's were intellectual anarchism and eclecticism: while they shied away from all formal systems and dogmas - and this was the point of their Personalism - they were cheerfully prepared to annex ideas from any and all for their own purposes. Nevertheless, and if only in the interests of simplification, a break-down of the tendencies, groups and reviews will be made. (11)

There was the neo-traditionalist school which ranged from the extreme
Right through Action Française renegades to the Christian Democratic orientated Personalism of Jacques Maritain. It included numerous ephemeral reviews such as Combat, Réaction, Cahiers, La Revue du Siècle etc. (12) The neo-traditionalists were, in the main, Catholics who before the Pope's condemnation of 1926 had frequently sympathised with Action Française. At the same time, it should be said that many young Catholics had already been evolving away from Maurras before 1926.

The general intellectual ferment within Catholicism, the new social teachings of the Church, its insistence on the dominance of Christian values over the notion of State supremacy and its broad support of internationalist principles - all of this contributed to separating young French Catholics from fascism. (13) Jean de Fabrègues, Maurras' secretary, went over to Thomism out of concern with social and economic problems and not just on account of the Pope's action. From then until the war, this former right-wing extremist proclaimed himself for the preservation of civilisation and the liberty of the spirit against all totalitarian doctrines and regimes. However, if many former Action Française young Catholic intellectuals followed Fabrègues, not all did and the political positions taken up by Combat were often indistinguishable from those of the fascist Right.

More significant in the present context were the reviews that were all, in their different ways, Proudhonist. Of these, Ordre Nouveau was the most practically inventive; it was also readier than the others to take the political bit between its teeth in the sense of tackling such concrete and practical problems as structures and the relationship of means to ends. (14) For this reason it was labelled as 'technocratic' by Esprit which remained, for its own part, resolutely intellectual, moralist and Christian in its political approach. Plans and L'Homme Réel both had syndicalist leanings and were close to Sorel as well as to Proudhon. Plans - to give some idea of the eclecticism of the epoch -
started out with a slight weakness for fascism but then became increasingly hostile towards it and ended up in sympathy with the Soviet Union. *L'Homme Nouveau*, while inspired partly by Proudhon, was the most ambiguous politically; the only theme that emerged clearly was its anti-capitalism. (15)

What exactly did Personalism signify in the 1930's? In one sense, Personalism was as diffuse and ambiguous as the assorted collection of people who preached it; it was a convenient label and rallying cry rather than a coherent political theory. "Rien ne serait plus faux que de parler du 'personnalisme' comme d'une école ou d'une doctrine", as one of its original instigators, Jacques Maritain, has written.

C'est un phénomène de réaction contre deux erreurs opposées et c'est un phénomène inévitablement très mélangé. Il n'y a pas de doctrine personnaliste mais des aspirations personnalistes et une bonne douzaine de doctrines personnalistes qui n'ont parfois de commun que le mot de la personne. Il y a des personnalismes à tendance proudhoniériste, des personnalismes qui penchent vers la dictature et des personnalismes qui penchent vers l'anarchie. (16)

Nonetheless, for all the woolly sentimentalism it sometimes tried to pass off as political theory and the realms of vague spiritual terms - lumière, clarté, rayonnement, éclair, joie, mystère (17) - it poured out with abandon over the political arena, Personalism had a very real political significance. This may be fully grasped only if the doctrine is approached at different levels. In its most basic and unstructured sense, Personalism implied a particular mode of thinking about politics and society that was based on Catholicism, and especially on French Catholicism in all its ambiguity. At a more concrete political level, it also described two particular processes: the transition of a section of French Catholics from the Right to the Christian Democratic Left; and secondly, the reconversion of part of the French Left, both Catholic
and non-Catholic, to Proudhonist anarchism. Personalism was a convenient label, especially for Catholics: under cover of the ideological fog it created, they could make their way comfortably to the centre Left and even to the extreme Left without feeling too hampered by the heavy hand of the French Church hierarchy, frequently less liberal than Pius XI.

The central concept of Personalism, considered as a set of political principles governing political thought and action, was the dualism of individual and society: the individual must consider the community since he can have no existence outside it, but the community, equally, must respect the rights of the individual. In this Personalism was a reaction, as Maritain observed, against the contrary errors of individualism and totalitarianism, whether fascist or communist. Individualism, generally qualified as 'selfish' was held to be derived from Protestantism. The dualistic concern for the person (this term was used to avoid individual) and for the community, the non-conformists claimed to find in the original inspiration of Christianity or, more specifically, in Catholicism. The other Protestant practice which they condemned was the separation of the spiritual from the temporal domain. Politics, like economics, should be governed by moral values. This was what was meant by the phrase, the 'primacy of the spiritual', next only in popularity to the 'crisis of civilisation' in the political jargon of the 1930's intellectuals. At the same time, the spiritual had to be inseparable from the carnal - to use again the terminology of the period. This idea had a double meaning. The practical aspect signified that Man has physical as well as moral needs and the purpose of political life is to enable them to be harmonised - a concept stemming from the medieval political theory of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The intellectual aspect consisted in the belief that humanism must be a set of operative principles rather than an abstract idea: thought and
action must remain indissolubly linked. This doctrine was contained once again in medieval theology and political theory but also, and more forcefully, in the French Jansenist tradition. Both ideas were, of course, part of the contemporary reaction against rationalist abstractions and against liberal democratic systems whose roots were tightly curled around the Protestant belief in the freedom of the disincarnated soul.

Personalism did not always lead to specific solutions. But, at the very least, the political and moral assumptions on which it rested served as a critique of all existing systems. Fascism and communism were rejected as not accommodating the person. Capitalism was condemned for gross materialism and inhumanity. Liberal democracy was criticised for ignoring the concrete needs of the individual and the community aspects of society. Whereas the person should be the pivot of the political system, the Soviet Union exalted the State and the United States the economy. No existing system could satisfy a Personalist.

At the same time, there were considerable nuances in the definition Personalists gave to the concept of the person. Those whose origins lay on the Right tended to think in terms of the eternal truths of human nature independent of will; their vision of society, consequently, was more static and conservative than that of Esprit and Ordre Nouveau. Esprit, for its part, accused Ordre Nouveau of seeing the spiritual too exclusively in terms of the self-assertive liberty of Man, and so neglecting the puritan internal struggle of Man against himself. (20) But, in essence, what Personalism meant for them all, whether in the name of a Christian idea of personal responsibility or of a Nietzschean will to power, was the domination of the material world by Man: "Nous appelons personnaliste toute civilisation affirmant le primat de la personne humaine sur les nécessités matérielles et sur les appareils collectifs qui soutiennent son développement."

Although essentially Catholic in origin, the principles of Personalism
were perfectly acceptable to non-Catholics since they also constituted part of French political culture. Until 1905, Church and State were linked in France, while capitalism was relatively undeveloped. Consequently, the notion that politics and economics should be closely supervised by moral values was not alien to Frenchmen. Moreover, the historical development which led to individualism was missing in France.

Calvinism itself, as Tawney has pointed out, was far from individualistic at the outset; it became so largely through its interaction with the early stages of capitalism. (22) In France, the stimulus of capitalism was missing both in the seventeenth century, when royal bureaucratic agents were appointed to take over economic functions that would otherwise have been handled by the nascent middle class, and again in the nineteenth century when instead of launching into commerce, the bourgeoisie gravitated instead towards the administration. (23) Thus France never experienced the pressure that built up in Protestant countries to free temporal interests from the constraints of religious values, as it avoided the development of religious dissent into strict economic and political individualism. Its position, in fact, was unique: unlike the Catholic south, France had an important libertarian tradition in Jansenism; and unlike in the Protestant north, the values of medieval communalism were virtually intact and capitalism weak.

Finance in France has been traditionally dominated by Protestants and Jews. French industry, as late as the 1930's, still consisted of a large number of family concerns, often not excessively inspired by motives of profit but instead paternalistic in an almost medieval manner, exercising a heavy-handed moral surveillance over the lives of their workers but at the same time concerned to protect them against age and unemployment. (24) Even the most celebrated textbook used in Republican
schools before the end of the nineteenth century subscribed to the Catholic economic ethic: namely that one should make only a minimum profit and one's moral duty is to share with others. (25)

Practically, of course, by the twentieth century individualism and capitalism had become part of social and economic reality in France as elsewhere. But in France they lacked both the deep roots and the aura of moral virtue that they had acquired in Protestant countries. In the light of French values, capitalism, for example, was not a virtue but a vice. That the riches of the country could be exploited by a few, flew in the face of the concept of society as a community. Also because France has traditionally been a country of artisans and small peasant proprietors the separation of work from capital in the interests of profit was never fully accepted. But in the last resort, the condemnation of capitalism was really total because metaphysical: a society that values the accumulation of material wealth while permitting poverty is a society degrading to the human soul.

Liberal parliamentary democracy was regarded with no more favourable an eye. It was merely the instrument employed by a minority to protect its material interests. Moreover, it frustrated the real role of Man in society which should be at the level of 'natural communities' - the family, work, the region etc. Here again religion was mingled with social reality, for the idea of natural communities was not only derived from medieval Christianity but also corresponded to the mentality of a still predominantly rural and artisanal country. (26)

Personalist principles, then, despite the aethereal terminology they were sometimes couched in, were profoundly subversive. They were subversive both of the country's institutional structures as of all the values of the modern, materialist and industrial society into which it was belatedly evolving. Nevertheless, had this return to original French
sources remained only a matter of attitudes, its impact would probably have been extremely limited. As it was, Personalist principles were incorporated in two coherent doctrines which became influential in particular after the Second World War.

The more moderate of the two doctrines was the Personalism associated with the name of Jacques Maritain. Maritain had been a Protestant and anarchist Socialist before the spiritual revival of the turn of the century swept him, along with many others of his generation, into the arms of the Catholic Church. Once converted, he recovered rapidly from the anti-rationalist impulses that had at least partially inspired his conversion, quarrelled with his more mystically-minded and non-conforming friends like Peguy, and became a leading exponent of Thomism.

In 1926, Maritain was once more caught up in the new currents that were slowly changing the face of French Catholicism. The Pope's condemnation of Action Française, to which he himself belonged, forced him to think seriously about politics for the first time. Hitherto, his own preoccupations had been principally religious and philosophical and if he sympathised with Maurras' organisation this was on account of the strong moral distaste he felt for the political life of the Third Republic, coupled with the patriotic attachment he felt for France and not because he was in any sense fascist. (27) Now in 1927, realising the fundamental amoralism of Action Française (in the tradition of nineteenth century Positivism, it rejected all normative morals), he published La Primauté du Spirituel, both an explicit repudiation of Maurras' doctrines and an assertion that morals must be the dominant force in politics. Henceforth, Maritain was to be the mouthpiece and interpreter of Pius XI in France, integrating papal encyclicals with Thomism and all the while moving steadily in the direction of Christian Democracy.
Maritain's Personalism was principally a philosophical operation. Its purpose was to change the assumptions of Catholics in their approach to politics and thereby shift them gradually from the Right to centre Left. But, in so far as it also entailed a broadly coherent concept of the State and the relationship of the individual to it, this brand of Personalism had three main aspects: the justification of pluralism and also of political action per se; anti-capitalism; a liberal theory of the State.

In *Humanisme Intégral*, published in 1936, Maritain advanced an idea that appeared highly innovatory at the time: namely that religious differences should not divide people politically and that Catholics must work together with non-Catholics for the common good of all. Moreover, while politics remain subordinate to morals, Catholics must also realise that politics is a domain with its own techniques: politics and morals must be distinguished but not separated and the techniques of politics must be learned like others. 'Il ne suffit pas d'être pieux, juste et saint pour être un bon politique. Il faut encore la connaissance des techniques utiles au service du bien commun..' (28) Having thus brought Catholics to understand their political duties as Christians, Maritain set about changing their view of the economy as well as of the State. Capitalism signified the exploitation of Man by Man; and Maritain, without going so far as to demand its abolition, insisted instead on its close control. On the basis of the medieval notion of the just wage and the encyclicals *Quadragissimo Anno* and *Carite Compolisi* of 1931 and 1932, he demanded the right to work and to a minimum wage and even accepted public ownership, if on a limited scale. In general, he condemned capitalism as materialistic, contrary to Christian values and harmful to fraternity among men. In addition, to taking a more responsible view of society and the economy, Catholics must also participate more actively in the State. Inspired again by medieval Catholicism and by *Quadragissimo Anno*, Maritain maintained that the
power of the State must be limited by a variety of groups and associations and that Catholics must initiate and support these. Finally, by the late 1930's, Maritain even went the length of approving parliamentary democracy, although he later claimed that his first experience of democracy as a living reality rather than an abstract set of slogans was in the United States.

Maritain's Personalism, clearly, was not the new political solution for the western world that the non-conformists were seeking. Certainly, it hoped to modify both capitalism and parliamentary democracy - mainly by participation, popular control and a large dose of Christian morality - but it did not direct against them the full subversive force of its first principles. It was, for France, a rare political phenomenon: a theoretical compromise. Sometimes, after the War, it contributed to creating a sense of unease with the system even among moderate Catholics who seemed often to be vaguely searching for 'autre chose' - something else. (29) But the radical values of the non-conformists were most fully and faithfully incorporated in and carried forward by the Personalism derived from Proudhon.

The revival of Proudhonist anarchism under the label of Personalism was a development common to Catholic and non-Catholic groups. Proudhon, then by Sorel and Peguy, were the main references of all the philosophically-minded non-conformists. (30) The use of the term Personalism - as opposed to Proudhonism - appears to have had a mixture of motives. First there was the original spiritual inspiration of most of the reviews and the diverse religious beliefs they represented, so that some common neutral term was needed. Then there was the fact that they discovered Proudhon en route rather than starting out with his doctrines. Finally the short duration of the reviews meant there was insufficient time for
either a full-scale exploration of Proudhon or for the word PERSONALISM to be supplanted by the term Proudhonism. Ordre Nouveau, for instance, explained its attachment to Proudhonism in the following terms: "Sans nous rattacher le moins du monde à Proudhon, nous nous sentons spontanément proche de lui, de même que nous sommes proches de Sorel et de Péguy sans être de leurs disciples." It is true that the review was never slavishly admiring of Proudhon's doctrines: it approved only the anarchism of the PrincipFédératif and combined it with an economic system different - albeit only in emphasis - from his mutualism. But neither Ordre Nouveau itself nor any of the other reviews such as Plans diverged from or developed Proudhon's basic theory of the State. Even his approach to politics and to political parties, which might profitably have been modified, remained intact. The creative role of the non-conformists was mainly restricted to integrating modern developments - technological, industrial, economic and social - with anarchism, a process that Proudhon would have been the first to approve in view of his insistence on the importance of contemporary conditions.

Besides the fact that Proudhonism was in line with the libertarian aspirations of the time, its resuscitation is not hard to explain historically. In the 1930's Marxism was just beginning to be taught in French universities, while the ancient and indigenous tradition of anarchism was dormant rather than dead. At the turn of the century anarcho-syndicalism - Proudhonism allied with revolution - had been the dominant ideology among French workers. This sympathy was far from confined to the working class: Leon Blum maintained that the whole literary tradition of which he was a part at this time was permeated with anarchist thought.

While the violent strand of anarchism declined with the failure of
the great strikes prior to the First World War, interest in Proudhon was rekindled. Just before and after the War various attempts were made, especially by the CGT, to create Proudhonist circles and a general climate of interest in his work. Leon Jouhaux, who dominated the CGT for nearly fifty years, remained Proudhonist in sympathy although, in practice, he was obliged to renounce the anarchist aspect of his syndicalism. Anarchism by the 1930’s was indisputably in decline, but it still constituted a fundamental strand of French culture: Arnaud Dandieu’s family, for instance, possessed the entire works of Proudhon and that is how he came to discover anarchism. (35)

The anarchist attachment of the non Catholic non-conformists then is readily understandable. But the fact that Catholics should have sympathised with Proudhon, while cold-shouldering Christian Democracy, is more surprising. Logically, the link between a rigidly authoritarian religion such as Catholicism still was in the 1930’s, and a specifically anti-authoritarian moral and political doctrine like anarchism is not self-evident.

There were Catholic members in all of the groups, but Esprit, which carried Proudhonist Personalism over into the post-War era, was overwhelmingly Catholic and it was led, moreover, by a man whose faith in his religion was unshakeable: Emmanuel Mounier. At a word from Rome, Mounier, whose whole life was his review, would have suppressed it. (36) Esprit was not, of course, a mass circulation paper in the Catholic world - its circulation was around 6,000 - but it carried considerable weight in avant-garde intellectual circles and was, in addition, particularly popular among young seminarists who read it regularly - and in secret. (37) The question, therefore, is: was the anarchist attachment of Esprit accidental, the somewhat perverse but not particularly significant political penchant of a tiny minority. And if not - if it was somehow tied up with or
contained within their Catholicism - does it offer an insight into the complex interaction of religious and political attitudes in France?

Neither Mounier during his lifetime nor Esprit after his death were particularly explicit with respect to the Proudhonist inspiration of Personalism. In memorial number on Mounier in 1950, after his death, the review treated Personalism as if it were a unique, but unsystematic form of philosophy: copious references were made to Thomism and to existentialism, but no one mentioned that Mounier's Personalism was Proudhonism. Today the term Personalism has dropped out of sight at Esprit altogether. Attitudes towards it tend to fall into one of two categories: there are those who consider Personalism with the kind of absent-minded veneration they might accord the relics of some minor saint and who still refer to it, if at all, with a pious but fleeting intellectual genuflexion; then there are those who maintain cynically and in private that Personalism, while full of Christian sound and fury, signified nothing.

Yet, even if Mounier's own declarations on the subject were rarely unambiguous, he himself admitted on at least one occasion that the inspiration of Personalism and Proudhonism were identical. And he quite frequently referred to the link between Personalism and the humanist traditions of French socialism.

As early as 1937-38, Mounier wrote a long article which, for all its reservations, was extremely sympathetic to anarchist ideas. In the course of it he observed that current research should be directed towards defining a non-authoritarian State such as Proudhon had already outlined: 'Je ne vois guère de différence pratique entre les formules du Principe Fédératif et celles de l'Etat d'inspiration pluraliste dont le personnalisme a plus d'une fois esquisse l'inspiration.' (38) His reservations about anarchism were on three scores: its anti-theism, its optimism and its legalism. Now, so far as Proudhon is concerned -
as opposed to Bakunin or Kropotkin - the reproaches of optimism and Positivism were singularly misplaced and indicate that Mounier, at the time, had not fully grasped Proudhon's doctrines. This, moreover, is borne out by his assertion that out of the three, Kropotkin's anarchism was backed by the most complete philosophy. On the other hand, anarchist anti-theism could hardly be expected to recommend itself to a Christian like Mounier and his criticisms of Proudhon's and Saint-Simon's anti-political tendencies were certainly justified, if contradicted by his own anti-political remarks. (39) It seems reasonable to conclude that before the War, Mounier felt separated from Proudhon by his own incomplete understanding of Proudhon and by Proudhon's attitude towards God. That he should, in the circumstances, have stuck to the term Personalism at this time is thus perfectly understandable.

It is evident from the footnotes to the anarchist article that Mounier was already acquainted with a good many of Proudhon's work prior to 1939, but it was during the Occupation that he really studied Proudhonism intensively. (40) He also taught at the predominantly Catholic Resistance centre, Uriage, where Proudhon and Peguy were openly acclaimed as the two great 'French socialists'. (41) And just after the War, in 1945, he cited Proudhon and Jaurès as being the sources of the French humanist socialist tradition to which he attached Personalism.

Nous avons toujours affirmé à Esprit que la révolution doit être à la fois personnaliste et communitaire, ou, si l'on veut, personnaliste et socialiste, les deux termes étant à peu près synonymes dans la grande tradition française. (42)

Moreover, the book he published on Personalism just before his death was no less than a summary - and a somewhat bald one - of the philosophical and moral concepts of the Pascalian-Proudhonian tradition. Man shapes his own destiny and humanises the world by his 'liberté responsable'. (43) The dialectical relationship of Man to nature is
the mainspring of progress; and progress itself is a never-ending struggle against the resistant forces of nature: '... la voie propre de l'homme est cet optimisme tragique ou il trouve sa juste mesure dans un climat de grandeur et de lutte'. (44) Institutions impoverish inter-personal relations but are nevertheless necessary, although preferably on a small-scale. Education is better than violence as a way of changing the world:

... le personnalisme donnera toujours le primat aux techniques d'éducation et de persuasion sur les techniques de pression, de ruse ou de mensonge: car l'homme ne va bien que là où il va avec tout lui-même. L'Unité d'un monde de personnes ne peut s'obtenir que dans la diversité des vocations et l'authenticité des adhésions. C'est une voie plus difficile et plus longue que les brutalités du pouvoir.'(45)

In sum, then, one can safely say that by the post-war years Mounier had acquired a thorough knowledge of Proudhon's thought and was perfectly well aware of the link between it and his own brand of Personalism. Yet why, in that case, did he patent the concept? Although Esprit was earnestly engaged in preaching the creed of Personalism to the Catholic world - and with no small success - Mounier in the main refrained from drawing attention to the umbilical cord that connected Personalism to Proudhonian anarchism. On the other hand, he was quite prepared to invoke the great French Socialist traditions in general terms. Again, his book, Le Personnalisme, dropped philosophical names with considerable abandon - Nietzsche, Heidigger, Kant, Marx - but ignored Proudhon. It is a strange document altogether. It presented the bare bones of the Pascalian-Proudhonian tradition without the flesh, omitting both the metaphysical context of Pascalian morality and most of Proudhon's political doctrine. It is scarcely surprising, in the circumstances, that Personalism has since been relegated to oblivion, for, without an understanding of its sources, the book is largely incomprehensible. Why, then, did Mounier write it? And why was he so reticent regarding Proudhon?
before attempting to answer these questions, it is necessary to examine why Mounier should have opted for Proudhonian anarchism in the first place.

Proudhon was a moralist who sought to create a society to suit Man rather than to tailor human beings to fit the pattern of some ideal society. He thus began by considering Man in society in total terms, suppressing all barriers between the moral, physical and social aspects of his existence: alienation occurs when any facet of Man is hurt, Man regarded as a being of infinite complexity but who aspires fundamentally to internal liberty within himself as well as to equality with other men. However, given the imperfection of humanity, the total end of alienation was not envisaged by Proudhon's final schema. For him the best society possible in an imperfect world was one which allowed for the maximum possible freedom while making a realistic assessment of material possibilities: the society outlined in the Princip_Fédératif, in fact.

Mounier approached society in exactly the same way: as a libertarian moralist concerned to create a situation of minimum human alienation. The first theoretical step in this direction, as he saw it, was to separate the original and genuine values of the Left from the ideologies and systems that enclosed them. (46) These values consisted essentially of two component parts: the people and, secondly, what Mounier described as l'habitus démocratique. Il est lié ni à la démocratie individualiste, ni au parlementarisme, ni à la loi du nombre, ni au progrès des lumières; il unit le sentiment de l'égalité spirituelle des hommes au souci de protéger leur vie personelle contre les abus de tous les pouvoirs, et à la sollicitude des corps publics pour chacun d'eux, sans exception préjugée.(47)

It is clear from this passage, as from everything Mounier ever wrote on the subject, that he saw personal morality as being very directly the foundation of all society. It is up to each individual and not to
society to shape his own destiny, he once observed. (48) The community aspects of political life must never be forgotten, of course, but authority must never interfere with Man's internal liberty: 'Ce que le pouvoir ne peut se subordonner, c'est ma personne et sa liberté profonde.' (49) As for the State, it must be kept at a distance: 'Surtout il ne faut pas se substituer aux personnes pour les décisions dont dépend leur destin même.' (50) This is where problems started for Mounier. Like all libertarian political theorists he inevitably came up against the question: where does the frontier lie between private life and society with its necessary constraints?

It appears evident that the anarchist direction taken by Mounier at this point had as its origin a violent revulsion from the idea of political power. His article on anarchism makes some revealing distinctions in this respect. 'Autorité' is purely moral and 'puissance' denoted physical force. But between the two is 'force', the visible instrument of authority: '... non exclusif d'une certaine contrainte quoique tendant, par destination spirituelle, a s'en expurger toujours plus complètement.' (51) This recalls, quite irresistibly, Alain's dictum: 'Le vrai Pouvoir Spirituel ... est seulement spirituel; il agit en éclairant l'opinion, c'est à dire par la parole et l'écriture seulement.'

It was also in line with Proudhon's belief that progress in morality and knowledge would lead, in time, to the progressive diminution of power in society.

Mounier's assumption, following Proudhon and Alain, was quite clearly that power is immoral and that society, therefore, only becomes moral as power is transformed into authority - an authority, moreover, vested in the entire social body and defined as a living tissue of persons to stress the individual identity of each within it. (52) Like Proudhon and Alain, Mounier had no patience with the idea of an abstract general will. He saw the moralising factor in society, the element that decreased power,
in liberty - in the free, creative faculty of each individual:

L'Etat retrouve par elle un contenu spirituel,... avec, par excellence, pour attribut 'd'instituer, de créer, d'inaugurer, d'installer' et le moins possible, contrairement à la formule ambiguë et dangereuse d' 'exécuter'. (53)

It was because he saw the duty of society to enable the maximum moral as well as material fulfilment of the individual that Mounier condemned formal democracy. Liberal, parliamentary democracy with its trappings of parties and elections he dismissed disdainfully as the rule of the anonymous number. Only a political system that permitted the living responsibility of each person, to use one of his favourite phrases (54), could be regarded as genuinely free.

Because Mounier habitually blurred the frontiers between morals and politics, his whole outlook on society was directly shaped by the moral qualities he attributed to humanity. His first optimistic theoretical assumption - that Man aspires to liberty and equality - he qualified by the more pessimistic after-thought that Man never lives up to his dreams and desires. On this basis, like Proudhon, he opted for a weak, highly decentralised State rather than for absolute anarchism. He justified his choice, characteristically, not on practical grounds of social organisation but because of the way he interpreted Man's nature: 'L'Etat personnaliste est un état faible, au sens où l'humanité est faible devant la violence, où la loyauté est faible devant le cynisme, où la vérité, parfois, est faible devant le mensonge'. (55) This analysis of Mounier's anarchism still leaves one vital question unanswered: as a loyal member of a hierarchical and authoritarian Church, where did Mounier find the inspiration for his ideas on spiritual liberty and equality, to say nothing of his feeling for the tragedy of human affairs?

To understand Mounier's politics, it is necessary first to grasp the type of man and the kind of Christian he was. Mounier was brought
up in a modest family at Grenoble in the Dauphine. (56) His deepest desire was to become a musician. However, he began by studying medicine only to switch soon to philosophy. His professor at Grenoble, Jean-Jacques Chevalier, was an admirer of Pascal and published a book on him in 1926; otherwise Chevalier was a strong and even oppressive personality so that Mounier, who was nobody's disciple, was glad to be able to escape to Paris. Here he followed up his earlier academic successes and was highly placed in the final examinations at the École Normale. But the academic conformism and the fastidious hierarchies of the Sorbonne held no attraction for him; rejecting the professional and material security of an academic career, he launched himself, despite his lack of financial means, into the highly risky enterprise of founding the review *Esprit*. By this time, Mounier was in his late twenties. The formative influences on his life until then had been the death of his only friend and the discovery of Péguy. Mounier was only 20 when his friend died and the event plunged him into a deep spiritual crisis which deepened his own sense of the tragedy of life. The influence of Péguy, on whom he wrote a book, was at once religious and political. It instilled his Christianity with a vigorous activism and brought him into contact with the humanist traditions of the French Left. Mounier himself later wrote:

Je puis témoigner personnellement que la découverte de Péguy autour de nos vingt ans fut pour beaucoup dans la décision qui nous amena à chercher, autour de la revue *Esprit*, le lien entre les grandes traditions révolutionnaires françaises et ses grandes traditions spirituelles. (57)

The similarities between Mounier and Péguy were very striking. Both came from modest, provincial circumstances. Both edited a review and chose to live a life of poverty and hardship. Both abhorred intellectualism and the dogmatic orthodoxy of the left-wing political parties. No doubt Mounier's non-conformism was less aggressive and
intolerant on the surface than Péguy's but its spirit was no less pure and absolutist. He can scarcely have been very much easier to work with. Most significant of all, however, was the similarity between their religious attitudes. For, like Péguy, Mounier was in the direct line of Jansenist puritanism.

The Catholicism of Mounier was libertarian, quasi-mystical, internal and absolutist. As in the case of Péguy, this internal puritanism led to a revulsion from the familiar satanic duo of the Jansenists: the clergy and the bourgeoisie. The clergy Mounier dismissed out of disdain for human hierarchies. The bourgeoisie he regarded as embodying all that was comfortable and conformist, therefore sinful. Non-conformism was one of the first articles of his creed: 'L'homme peut vivre à la manière d'une chose. Mais comme il n'est pas une chose, une telle vie lui apparaît sous l'aspect d'une démission: c'est le 'divertissement' de Pascal.' He would have applauded warmly Alain's cynical observation that no bourgeois has ever been known to sacrifice his career in the interest of truth. In common with the Jansenists and Péguy, Mounier saw the people as somehow endowed with semi-mystical qualities of virtue.

His commitment was neither to theology nor to dogma but to the practice of self transcendence and purification. He was an absolutist, but one who recognised the hopelessness of his own deepest inclinations: 'La croyance en un Absolu ne donne aucun droit de simplifier la complexité du relatif et de traiter peremptoirement les problèmes humains, en sautant les difficultés.' In fact, Mounier's metaphysical and philosophical approach was squarely in the tradition of Pascal. He had the same dialectical caste of mind; the same impatience with rationalism and concern with the real; the same mystical tendency - the Spanish mystic, Jean des Anges, was one of Mounier's life-long interests; the same belief in the tragic grandeur of humanity. There was also a similar existential
flavour to his religion, although he seems not to have shared the deep spiritual anguish that Pascal and Peguy experienced at various periods of their lives. If faith for Mounier was closer to a bet than a tranquil assurance, he did not, in the last resort, ever doubt in the existence of God.

At the same time, Mounier always maintained that personalism and existentialism had in common a particular approach:

C'est... le sens dramatique de l'existence humaine et de ses perspectives: la fragilité de son être, l'aveuglement et le risque de ses croyances, les limitations de son savoir, la précarité de ses institutions, les silences du monde, la solitude des êtres, le goût de la mort et de néant qui accompagne toute expérience profonde: disons le son pascalien de l'existentialisme. (64)

In existentialism, Mounier rejected mainly despair and resignation. A sense of tragedy was permissible for a Christian - pessimism and the acceptance of the absurdity of the world were not. 'Il est absurde que tout soit absurde. Ou, en termes pascaliens, incompréhensible que tout soit incompréhensible', wrote Mounier. (65) On the other hand, many of his most basic ideas were bred by his existential outlook: the critique of spiritual alienation - of living like an object, unconsciously; the insistence on the impotence of reason and the paradoxical nature of all truth; the consciousness of the drama of the human condition, the limits imposed on humanity by time and space; and perhaps also the preoccupation not to lose contact with non-believers. Like Pascal, Mounier remained determined to keep his lines of communication open to people of other denominations and even to atheists.

Mounier was always insistent on the modernity of Pascal. And in his early twenties, at least, he was certainly powerfully attracted by his thinking: 'Toujours plus encore je m'enfonce dans Pascal.' (66) Consequently it is rather odd how little serious discussion on Jansenism occurs in all the vast body of his works. One is tempted to conclude
that, like Peguy, he avoided contact with heresy by prudently claiming to find his inspiration in Saint Augustin and the early Christians. (67)

In so far as Mounier's religious attitudes are important in the understanding of his political ideas, it is necessary to examine one further problem: namely his relationship with the Catholic Church. Peguy was relatively consistent in that he was never fully reconciled with the Church as an institution even after his reconversion to Catholicism. Mounier, on the contrary, was an obedient Catholic. It has already been observed that if Rome had insisted, he would have abandoned \textit{Esprit}. Yet Mounier's religious libertarianism was indisputable. He even declared his support for the banned Pascalian, Laberthonnière, openly. (68) So how was it that he could bow to the will of Rome with such apparent ease?

The answer lies, no doubt, in the profoundly Pascalian attitude of Mounier towards the Church and the Pope. This was a singular combination of cynical radicalism and mystical traditionalism. Mounier felt a profound disdain both for the institutions of the Church and the person of the Pope that stemmed essentially from his absolutist puritan attitude that all human institutions are worthless. At the same time, he had a regard for the tradition that the Church represented - its mission, in his eyes, was derived directly from Christ - and the role that the Pope played within this tradition. Consequently, on mystical grounds that constituted a conscious abdication of reason he was prepared to obey what he considered as no more than the passing caprices of the hierarchy. (69) Besides, Mounier thought of the dignity of Man as being included within the principle of Catholicism and since it was his habit to think in terms of principle rather than practice, perhaps the authoritarian structure of the Church really did not worry him unduly. All the same, the hypothesis that Mounier's anarchism was in part a compensation for his Catholicism is difficult to dismiss entirely. Would he really have
found it quite so necessary to substitute moral authority for power on
the political plane within the context of a libertarian Church?

Beyond all the unanswerable aspects of Mounier's religious tend-
encies, one point emerges clearly and that is the link between his re-
ligion and his politics. Spiritual libertarianism and egalitarianism;
an absolute disdain for money, power and institutions; the striving for
internal purity - all these political characteristics of Mounier's
anarchism were intimately linked to his religious puritanism. Even
Mounier's approach to Christian Democracy - a practical problem of pol-
itics on the surface - was dictated by his metaphysics.

Mounier founded *Esprit* on an anti-bourgeois and oecumenical basis;
he intended to keep in contact with the people and with non-Catholics.
With this position an all-Catholic, middle-class political party was
obviously in contradiction. Then the clericalism and sentimental opt-
imism, as he saw it, of Christian Democracy was fundamentally at odds
with his own austere and anxious puritanism. Finally, to tie Christian-
ity to a party was equivalent, in the eyes, to abandoning David to the
lion's den. Political action per se was 'une terrible mangeuse d'hommes'
(70) to quote one of his more restrained comments on the subject. All
Mounier's central political assumptions - the virtue of the people; the
inseparable link between internal, puritan values and political humanism;
the necessity for Christianity to dissociate itself from impure political
institutions - were in reality derived from the fundamental principles
of his religion. True to the Pascalian humanist tradition, Mounier
saw the political problem not in terms of the individual giving moral
value to institutions but rather in terms of Man humanising the world
with the values inherent in him.

Given, then, that Mognier was essentially a Proudhonist anarchist,
why was he so reticent about the real sources of his Personalism after
the War? And why, in his final book on Personalism did he shear the
doctrine of most of its main political conclusions and leave it as a rather bald moral code, suspended like a kite over the political arena without visible attachment to practical realities? If not answers, then at least clues are probably to be found in these factors: the Catholic Church, Communism and Mounier's own character.

First of all, an open admission of the Proudhonist influence on his Personalism would have created difficulties for Mounier with the Church. In the early post-war days, the Catholic Church still had not come to terms with socialism. Moreover, Proudhon, who had spent his life hurling abuse at Catholicism was obviously particularly unpopular with the Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy. But just as decisive, and perhaps more so, were the difficulties Proudhon would have created for Mounier vis-à-vis Communism. This problem is of particular interest since it raises as many questions as to the real nature of French Communism as it answers with respect to Mounier's political attitudes.

After the Second World War, one of the constants in Mounier's thinking on politics was the determination not to be cut off from the Communist Party. In part, this was because of the partial reconciliation that had taken place between Communists and Catholics through working together in the Resistance. But beyond this, Mounier felt a deep ideological bond with the Communists for two reasons: he had a semi-mystical attachment to the people as opposed to the bourgeoisie, and he sensed in the Communists the same absolutist quality of faith as his own. His observations on the working class, from which he refused to be separated, frequently bordered on the lyrical:

tout action qui n'intègrerait pas sa maturité politique, son expérience fraternelle, son audace de vues, sa capacité de sacrifice, est aujourd'hui vouée à l'échec, voire à la stérilisation progressive. (71)
And since the Communist Party represents the people, reasoned Mounier, it must not be shut away in a political ghetto. His attitude towards the Socialist Party, on the other hand, was at once singular and unfair: despite the fact that the Socialists had modified their Marxism - in principle, at least, in the interests of liberty - Mounier dismissed them as shoddy compromisers. On French Socialism he wrote:

Impuissance, vagabondage idéologique et politique, flottement entre l'étroitesse primaire et la misérerie sentimentale, voilà ce qu'offre aujourd'hui le socialisme français. (72)

What attracted him to Communism was the absolutism and purity of the faith it represented.

At the same time, of course, Mounier could never fundamentally come to terms with the materialism and authoritarianism of the French Communist Party. He was caught in the impasse that it was impossible to act without the people, and impossible to act with the Communists. Anarchism did not offer a solution to the situation since it would mean breaking with the working class - injuring the faith of simple folk, as Mounier put it. Consequently, the only way out was to abandon all thoughts of mass action and simply link up with old traditions. (73)

This, at least, was his opinion before the War. After the War, he was more doubtful about the political possibilities of anarchism (74), while no more prepared to opt for the Communists. Hence, very likely, the odd, virtually depolitised version of Personalism that Mounier produced before his death. But, curiously, the very development Mounier envisaged before the War - the revival of anarchist traditions as a challenge to Communism - actually occurred within two decades of his death. And in this revival, which will be examined in a later chapter, Mounier's Personalism played a distinctive part.

In Mounier's attitude towards the Communists - notably in his ob-
ervation that their faith resembled that of the early Christians - there was a considerable element of romanticism and lack of political realism. His thinking was coloured, even saturated, by religion. It was possible, he thought, for the Communists to escape the bureaucratisation that constituted their own brand of clericalism - "ce parasite du christianisme de l'Église" (75) - by internal resources. This was obviously a direct parallel with his own attitude towards the Church and it over-looked a fundamental political factor: namely that, unlike the Church, the Communist Party may control the entire State in which case 'internal resources' are not always helpful.

Nonetheless, Mounier's belief that the Communists had much faith but little genuine Marxist theology may well offer a valuable insight into the thinking of French Communist voters, particularly in view of the coincidence of communist and anarchist themes - the virtue of the people, the corruption of the bourgeoisie and the wickedness of money, power and political institutions.

Finally, the confusion about Personalism that Mounier left behind him was also a product of his own character. Mounier saw perfectly clearly that there was a distinction to be made between values and their practical form, between moral attitudes and political action. But he never confronted this problem squarely. (76) The tradition he inherited was characterised by ambiguity on the relations between personal morality and politics; this was neither clarified nor further confused by Mounier, merely perpetuated. The reason he reacted in this way, in spite of perceiving the problem, was probably determined by the fact that Mounier's deepest inclinations were mystical. Political commitment he saw as a duty, but his heart was never really in it. He said as much himself: 'La pente essentielle de mon cœur est une pente mystique et je fais le reste qu'à mon cœur défendant. Mais je suis de mon côté hanté par une vue des trahisons des fils de l'Absolu depuis cent ans'. (77) His work in the
world he saw as impure - but necessary:

Moi qui ai eu toute ma vocation intérieure tournée vers la vie érémite, méditation, flamme intérieure, vie privée; amitié, me voilà jeté en pleine rue, condamné au travail impur et bruyant, à la corvée du quartier. Que Dieu prenne hommage de cette impureté et en lave mon cœur...(78)

In this sense, in the preponderance of mysticism over reason in his make-up and his consequent temptation to retreat from politics, he was closer to Peguy than to Proudhon. A member of the Esprit team, Jean Lacroix, has even suggested that Mounier, in fact, created the review against himself. (79) This mystical and pietist inclination probably prevented Mounier from accomplishing a task he was historically well placed to carry out, namely to reconcile the anarchist tradition with organised political activity. However, Mounier's world-retreating spirit should not be exaggerated either for he understood and welcomed (under certain conditions) the advent of the modern world. And in this sense he was different to Peguy who remained fundamentally backward-looking.

Mounier has been studied in some detail in this chapter both because he was a personality of considerable influence in the Catholic world before and after the Second World War and because of the significant relationship between his concept of Christianity and his political ideas. However, Mounier was an unusual and genuinely non-conforming personality and it cannot be deduced from his particular case that other Catholics who discovered Proudhonian anarchism found it by the same path. Since his generation of young Catholics, especially the intellectuals among them, generally had strongly libertarian religious leanings, it is quite possible that they too came to anarchism through religion. But an enquiry into the Esprit team, for instance, is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study. By all accounts, Mounier's intellectual
Influence appears to have been considerable, particularly in the sense of relativising the utopianism of some of the others:

Nul plus que lui n’a contribué aux environs de 1935, à nous sauver des tentations utopiques, à nous inoculer, avant que le mot soit à la mode, ce qu’il fallait d’existentialisme pour nous écarter des bavardes abstraites. Ses remarques sur l’action, ses réflexions, sur l’engagement marquent des dates cruciales de notre histoire. Combien de ses formules courent aujourd’hui les rues, qui ne seront jamais... rattachées à son nom. (80)

In their quest for a creative political solution to the crisis of modern industrial society, the non-conformists were guided by the principles that society is to be transformed by changing the values of the individuals within it, while also taking into account prevailing material conditions. The values they brought to the task were the values of rural, Christian France. But the conditions they were applied to were those of an urbanised, technological and industrial society.

So far, the intellectual influence of Proudhon has been concentrated on because it dominated the theoretical approach of the non-conformists and determined their theory of the State. But the doctrines of Saint-Simon had their place in the 1930’s too. René Rémond has distinguished between two strands of early French socialist thought: the agrarian, emphasising the role of the producer over the consumer, tending to utopianism; and secondly, the industrial strand, scientific rather than utopian, and more concerned with the consumer. (81) What one might call a cross-fertilisation of these two traditions took place in the 1930’s. To a basic Proudhonist doctrinal foundation there was added an enthusiasm for industry, science and technology. Mutualism, corresponding to the agrarian model, was replaced by economic planning
and in this framework the consumer took precedence over the producer.

The doctrines of Saint-Simon, a combination of rationalist humanism and Catholic social ethics, had integrated the nascent industrialism of the early nineteenth century into the French context which was one of State control rather than capitalist initiative. The result was a rather authoritarian and technocratic brand of socialism: the wealth of the community was to be exploited in the interests of all, and especially of the poorest class, but in a highly organised fashion and under the direction of a specialised class of industrialists who cut out the politicians. (82) From this tradition, the non-conformists dropped the authoritarianism and statism but retained the principle of rational organisation, the interest in modernisation and, of course, the anti-political bent.

*Plans*, for instance, was an extremely avant-garde review, interested in innovations in every field from interior decoration and architecture - Corbusier was a contributor - to medicine. It was representative of the contemporary mood in the belief that society should - and could - dominate technical advances: *'Il s'agit d'ordonner la vie sociale; organiser l'activité de l'homme; faire de la machine une commodité et non une tyrannie; se donner un corps dans une cité logique'.* (83) No doubt the astonishing confidence with which the young intellectuals confronted aspects of modern society which had as yet made very little serious impact on France - large-scale industry, for example - was due partly to the fact that, here again, they were linking up with an old tradition.

In the last resort, it must be admitted that the effort of the non-conformists to create a society to suit Man - freer and more humane - did not live up in practice to their honourable intentions. The proposed solutions, as a rule, were highly abstract although it should be said in their defence that they simply did not have the time to work out their
plans in any greater detail. But what really mattered was that they cleared the intellectual ground around the idea of the crisis of civilisation. Then on the basis of their analysis of the nature of the soil of modern society, they selected the seed to be sown. These seeds might be of only passing intellectual interest and of no political significance but for the fact that they were sown by a new French generation after the Second World War. Consequently, they are worth examining, briefly, under the following four headings: the individual and the State; economics; political action; style.

The individual and the State.

The total abolition of the State was never envisaged. Theories of decentralisation ranged from Proudhon's *Princip Federatif* to the strong but limited State, often tinged with corporatism, of the neo-traditional Right. Frequently, the non-conformists were federalist in so far as they thought in terms of Europe and not just of France. Plans, for instance, had a number of European affiliates. This European approach was supported both by the internationalist principles of the Catholic Church and also by the federalist doctrines of Proudhon. (84)

The underlying principle behind decentralisation was not only to create greater liberty - by balancing local and regional authorities against the state - but also to humanise society. Consequently, many intermediary bodies were envisaged between the individual and society:

> '... cet état en prétendant se substituer à la société, à la richesse vivante des groupes, des communautés, des régions, opprime l'homme et stérilise toute initiative créatrice'. (85) The idea was that Man needed not just freedom from authority but, more positively, freedom to act creatively and responsibly: only this would allow him to control the complexity and giant-scale of modern society. It was this desire for control and the horror of gigantism that inspired *Ordre Nouveau*'s
practical work groups on urbanism and the overall interest shown in this subject in all the reviews. Although, in theory, the non-conformists conceived of decentralisation on the basis of both work and geography, in practice they did not go far along the former path. Workers' control, which will be examined below, was seriously envisaged. And Mounier thought that the civil service should be instilled with readiness to take risks and responsibility, but he was vague about how this was to be achieved. In the political, as well as in the economic propositions of the young Right there was habitually a strain of corporatism.

**Economics.**

Money together with materialist attitudes were regarded as evil. (86) One of the worst features of capitalism, in Mounier's view, was the kind of people it bred. On the other hand, there was no question for him or for the others of going back to a handicraft system or to a peasant economy. (87) Affluence was approved because, in the right circumstances, it was seen to free people from work. In general, the aim of the non-conformists was to humanise the economy by controlling it.

The lowest common denominator of the various groups consisted in seeking guarantees against the vagaries of capitalism: a minimum wage, the right to work. Also there was general agreement on the principle of economic planning. And finally and most audaciously, there was the demand for workers' control and profit sharing.

In fact, the concept of planning never went beyond the stage of being a convenient slogan, since the intellectuals knew next to nothing about economics. Because of the Russian experience, the idea of planning was in the air. However, the Soviet system itself was resolutely opposed on the grounds that it was too authoritarian. In the last resort, the concept the non-conformists had of economic planning was not far removed
from Proudhon's mutualism: it was built on the principle of fulfilment of basic needs, while its form was matched to modern large scale industry (88). The ideas of workers' control and profit sharing were partly based on unwillingness to contemplate the separation of labour and capital, partly on the notion of personal responsibility for one's environment. They were warmly supported by Esprit, in particular. The young Right was more corporatist and had a plan for the representation of capital and labour within every profession.

Political Activity.

At first Personalists of all brands condemned parliamentary democracy and political parties. Maritain only slowly worked his way to the acceptance of politics and political institutions. For the Proudhonists, however, the act of voting was morally unclean:

Il est défendu de voter comme il est défendu de cracher par terre. Ces défenses ne se justifient pas par l'étalage de mille bonnes raisons d'hygiène ou de morale. On s'y conforme par un sentiment personnel de ce qui est propre et de ce qui est sale. (89)

They also believed that it was pointless trying to reform parties from within:

Prétendre entrer dans un parti - le moins mauvais! - pour essayer de le réformer ou l'influencer de l'intérieur, c'est aussi malin que de prétendre entrer dans le Conseil d'Administration des Forges pour essayer de rendre les canons inoffensifs: c'est l'institution même du parti qui est meurtrier. (90)

There was no question that political parties, like the state, might also be considered as a necessary evil. As for parliament, the impression conveyed by the non-conformists was that it was scarcely serious. Aron and Dandieu defined their own political position in the following terms:

... s'il faut absolument nous situer en termes parlementaires, nous répétons, que nous sommes à mi-chemin entre l'extrème
droites et l'extrême gauche, par derrière le President, tournant le dos à l'Assembly (91)

Since the reviews tended, on the whole, to disappear before they could be confronted with the problem of putting their ideas into practice, this is where the matter rested for most of them. Had they lasted, they would have opted (probably) for unions, action groups or model communities of various kinds.

Esprit itself fully concurred with the general diagnosis - 'la politique a trahi l'esprit' - but it could not so easily avoid the problem of political commitment, since it outlived the others. Originally, the review had advised abstention from participation in political parties. Then slowly between 1934–39, as events overtook its political prudence and prudery, Esprit edged closer to politics. (92) An attempt to found a political movement, 'la Troisième Force', on its periphery foundered. But it was decided to accept 'human links' with the Popular Front. The movement of opinion behind the Popular Front Esprit welcomed, but it continued to watch mistrustfully in case it should be betrayed by the 'old parties', as it never failed to label them. Finally, for a short period just before the War, Mounier did actually consider turning Esprit into a political movement:

Si nous ne voulons pas ni désertor l'action politique, ni nous satisfaire de quelques collaborations isolées avec les grands partis décadents, il ne nous reste qu'une issue : sans exclure systématiquement ces collaborations, mener notre action politique propre avec les moyens appropriés. (93)

However, Mounier never returned to the idea of creating a 'movement' as he would doubtlessly have called it to avoid the compromising term party. Then with the creation of the Christian Democratic party, the MRP, and the problem of the Communists, this path was blocked after the War anyway.

Mounier saw Esprit principally as a laboratory of new political
solutions and he considered himself as a philosopher and Christian rather than as a political thinker or activist. But he was too insistent on the need for political realism and the practical application of values to be able to avoid entirely the problem of political commitment. When he did face up to it, he did so in a way that was usually ambiguous and frequently exasperating, but, at the same time, somehow significant. Mounier's attitudes illuminate an approach to politics that was widely current among left-wing Catholic groups and political clubs after the War; they help to explain why and at what points Catholics baulked in the face of political parties and also the kind of substitutes they sought.

Basically, Mounier was haunted by Peguy's distinction between mystique and politique. (94) This largely explains the sources and nature of his hesitations. As a moralist and absolutist, what he found most difficult to contemplate in joining a political party was the fact of being unable to react constantly against the danger of moral and intellectual inertia: 'Une action qui ne se nourrit pas continuellement dans la substance de cette méditation, qui est une vie intérieure, perd son âme et celle des autres.' (95) Consequently, he would talk sagely about the necessity for the double process of commitment and withdrawal, presence and purity, or else give his blessing to participation within a political party where sufficient liberty could be guaranteed, although how he envisaged these possibilities in practice remains a mystery. (96) No doubt his ideal party would have been one into which he could clock in and out of hourly. In its absence, he chose for himself the thoroughly ambiguous solution of what Touchard has called 'availability':

Les problèmes politiques se posaient pour lui, soit sous la forme d'analyse de la situation politique, hic et nunc, soit comme des problèmes essentiellement spirituels, jamais, ou pratiquement jamais, sous leur forme proprement politique, c'est à dire sous la forme d'une action en vue d'un pouvoir.
This is not to say, of course, that Mounier did not perceive a real problem in the conservatism and conformism of political institutions, but in remaining concerned to preserve his personal purity above all he scarcely helped to solve it. Had he drawn up a hierarchy of moral merit he would have put the saint at the top of the list and the man of action at the bottom, like Renan, on the grounds that moral excellence always loses something as soon as it comes into contact with the imperfection of the world - a concept that Michelet referred to as: 'the disastrous doctrine, which our friend Renan has too much commended, that passive internal freedom, preoccupied with its own salvation, which delivers the world to evil'. (98) This, obviously, was the last thing that Mounier wanted to do - to deliver the world to evil - but it is arguable that his kind of attitude made politics less rather than more moral.

On such rare occasions as he conceived of political action more positively, Mounier envisaged what he called: 'des structures Nouvelles d'éducation et d'action politique.' (99) The term 'new' indicated that the 'old', degenerate parties were to be by-passed. The educational role of these structures was to act as an antidote to their political role - knowledge would moralise political commitment. The presumption was also that they would be small so as to enable inter-personal contact and to counter habit and conformism. (100) Such were the maximum concessions that anarchism was prepared to make to conventional, institutional politics. And later, in the 1950's and 1960's, these same ideas were to crop up constantly as the criteria and condition of political action among the inheritors of the tradition of Mounier and his generation.
Style.

As important as their political themes was the new style of action the non-conformists introduced into political life. They were in reaction first of all against the dogmatism of intellectual rationalism and of Marxism. At the same time, they were also wary of the strain of out-and-out utopianism in their own tradition of moralist socialism. On the whole, they were practical, down to earth and anti-doctrinaire while remaining concerned with values as an instrument of change in society.

A new factor was the preoccupation with facts as opposed to a doctrinaire or purely moral approach:

(... le seule affirmation des valeurs spirituelles risque d'être mystificatrice partout où elle ne se manifestera accompagnée d'une assignation rigoureuse de leurs conditions d'action et de leurs moyens.)

Wit at the same time, Mounier would often say: 'La Révolution économique sera 'morale' ou ne sera rien.'

Since it was not now considered that some ultimate social end could be attained, it was the journey rather than the destination that came to matter. Immediate, practical political activity acquired new prestige and importance. Ordre Nouveau, for instance, advocated a civil as opposed to a military service and when the Popular Front granted paid holidays, it was on the point of organising replacements for workers with the help of scouts. Beyond stimulating practical political activity - closely linked in concept to the model communities of the early nineteenth century - the notion that no absolute truth could be attained in society had two other by-products. It led to the acceptance of political pluralism and social dialogue. And it created an awareness, more pronounced at Ordre Nouveau than at Esprit, it should be said, of the relationship between means and ends: a new political relativism. What reappeared in France
in the 1930's was the political style - a mixture of practical gifts and moral enthusiasm - that had characterised both the Saint-Simonists and anarchists from Proudhon to Pelloutier.

What, finally, was the impact of the non-conformists? At first sight, their influence appears meagre. Some of the books they published had a fairly wide circulation: Eléments de notre Destin sold 35,000 copies. (103) But, on the whole, the reviews were largely isolated from the mainstreams of French political life and had in all no more than 12,000 readers. (104) In time, however, this modest side-stream widened into a sizeable river since both the Vichy regime and the Resistance movements derived their ideas primarily from the non-conformists.

L'Esprit des années 1930 n'est pas mort sans laisser de traces; les thèmes et le vocabulaire des mouvements de résistance sont ceux des années 1930, bien plus que ceux de 1936: même anticapitalisme, même aversion pour les partis politiques, même culte de l'esprit, de la personne et de l'humain, même volonté révolutionnaire. C'est exactement le même univers intellectuel qui reparaît dix ans après 1930, et c'est le même échec. (105)

Leaving aside the question of success or failure, how, in the first instance, did the ideas of the non-conformists spread beyond their own narrow circle?

One primary factor was the receptive mood of the Catholic world to new political ideas in the 1930's and the close link of many of the non-conformists with it. A considerable number of Catholics were still attached to the Right or even anti-Republican, of course. But alongside the traditionalists, a new generation of young Catholics were in the grips of a political ferment that was nonetheless genuine and significant for remaining largely at a moral and intellectual level.
A few joined anti-fascist committees or the Jeune Republique Party. But, their idea at this time was mainly to influence the mass of Catholics rather than to engage them in action. They operated primarily through reviews which multiplied at an astonishing rate. (106) As Remond has commented: 'L'histoire du catholicisme francais offre a la vérité peu de décennies où les esprits aient autant progressé dans la réflexion sur les conséquences de leur foi.' (107) It took the Resistance to give a more concrete shape and specific direction to this movement. But, ideologically, it was already formed in the pre-War decade.

The Semaine Sociale of 1937, the yearly meeting of moderate reformist Catholics, had as its subject: 'La personne humaine en peril'. Personalism which covered both the Christian Democratic vision of Maritain and the Proudhonism of the extreme Left, was a term that, in all its ambiguity, was widely employed at this time among reformist Catholics. No doubt, the high circulation papers like l'Aube or La Vie Catholique were in the straight-forward path of Christian Democracy. However, besides Esprit itself, there were a handful of avant-garde and influential Catholic papers - Sept; Temps Present; La Vie Intellectuelle - whose humanism was strongly tinged with a Personalism of the Proudhonist brand. Their circulation varied between 6-10,000, although special numbers of Sept, for instance, sometimes reached a peak of 100,000.

Sept, it should be said, ignored Maritain's stricture that politics is a domain with its own rules and techniques. It was consistently disdainful of political parties per se, maintaining that the only account it was required to render was to truth:

*Nous* L'Heure est venue pour eux, maintenant surtout que l'aspect moral de la crise politique apparaît à l'évidence, de parler
Also the view of the State presented by Sept was often closer to the anti-authoritarian pluralist State of Proudhon than it was to the Christian Democratic version of Maritain. (109)

One of the channels through which Proudhonism filtered through to the wider Catholic press was the journalism of the non-conformists, many of whom contributed regularly to the more intellectual reviews such as Temps Présent, Sept or La Vie Intellectuelle. Names that cropped up frequently were Emmanuel Mounier, Pierre-Henri Simon, Jean Lacroix from Esprit and Alexandre Marc, Daniel-Rops, Robert Aron from Ordre Nouveau. (110) These people - among others, of course - then carried the same ideas into the Resistance movements and further into the post-war era. (111) After 1945 a sudden growth of literature on Proudhon appeared, much of it written by left-wing Catholics. (112)

Paradoxically, the ideas of the 1930's made their way after the war on account both of their traditional and their innovatory aspects. On the one hand, their anti-capitalist, anti-political and anti-authoritarian bias was in line with a very ancient reflex. At the same time, those among the new post-war generations who were obsessed from the Resistance on by the idea that France must make a new political start also saw the value of the seam of political ideas that had been exposed in the pre-war decade and worked them further. A first generation of miscellaneous reformers and modernists, in their prudent and technocratic fashion, applied what had been the main inspiration of the non-conformists: namely that modern industrial society may be rationalised and humanised by a close attention to values and by a realistic assessment of technical possibilities.
Perhaps they were too cautious; they were certainly too anti-political as well as insufficiently numerous to achieve very much on their own outwith the orthodox political structures. Consequently, while opinion became radicalised - or at least a sector of it - and economic modernisation proceeded apace, very few fundamental reforms were carried out. It was perhaps partly as a result of this that the next generation - the generation of the 1960's - dumped all moderation and awareness of technical limitations overboard: the anti-materialism and anti-rationalism of May 1968, for instance, were unclouded by puritan pessimism on the human condition and unhindered by any kind of realistic assessment of the actual possibilities for change. (113)

Thus, at the outset of the 1970's, France, whose formal structures and institutions remained traditional and authoritarian to a very considerable extent, found itself with a political avant-garde whose ideas were not only geared to post-industrial society but laced with the heady brew of Utopianism that the non-conformists had been determined to water down.

* * * * * * * * * * * *
Nous voulons agir, nous voulons transformer le monde dans lequel nous vivons. (1)

If the non-conformist intellectuals of the 1930's were mainly isolated, they were not entirely on their own. Both inside the political parties and outside there were minority groups and individuals, often civil servants or engineers, who had arrived by different routes at the same conclusion: namely that society was seriously out of gear and needed to be adjusted to modern developments in industry, science, finance and technology. In contrast to the non-conformists, this category of dissidents was less universalist-minded and more specifically concerned with France; less philosophically inclined and more preoccupied by precise problems of economic or State reform. Also it was even less homogeneous being neither exclusively intellectual nor predominantly left-wing and not sharing a common ideology such as Personalism. Those who participated in it were usually stimulated to thought or action either directly by the depression or else by what they considered to be the degeneracy of France. However, these groups also tended to decline after the demonstration of the 6th of February 1934 and especially with the creation of the Popular Front.

On the whole, the similarities between the intellectuals and the technically-minded reformers were really more decisive than the differences. Once again, the heart of the movement was a youth revolt against traditionalism and immobilism: beyond being either
left or right-wing it was, above all, modernist. And although more interested in the techniques of modernisation than in moral justification of it, the reformers upheld many of the same values as the non-conformist intellectuals. Most tended to be implicitly, if less virulently and uncompromisingly, anti-capitalist and anti-individualist. Anti-rationalism was less in evidence but the revolt against dogma - especially against the reigning orthodoxy of Marxism - was no less strong. The dominant impulse was to control and to organise society on the basis of ascertainable fact rather than a priori doctrinaire or static legalism and it was not infrequently accompanied by a spirituality or moralism which, like that of Ordre Nouveau, might be but was not necessarily Christian. In some areas the two movements arrived at different conclusions, notably on the question of State reform. But, in general, they followed parallel paths and to some extent complemented each other, for if the intellectuals had a more complete and more generous vision of society, the proposals of the technically oriented groups were often more concrete.

Illustrative of the spirit of the epoch - although by no means representative of all the groups - was the thinking of Henri de Man. De Man, a Belgian former Marxist who stressed the need to recast the ideology of the Left as early as the 1920's was introduced to France by the Socialist, André Philip.(2) The Belgian criticised Marxist parties on two scores: their doctrinaire left wing had lost touch with modern realities, while the right wing was too preoccupied with tactics. Doctrine was divorced from practice and practice from doctrine. De Man's own approach was to turn back to the original inspiration of the early nineteenth century socialists according to which Socialism was primarily an ethical and not a scientific system. He admired especially Proudhon and was close to him both in his belief that modern society should allow more self-government and measure social happiness
in qualitative rather than in quantitative terms. The workers had themselves become corrupted by the materialist values of the bourgeoisie. As for Capitalism, in the period that De Man was writing, it seemed to be succeeding. Consequently, he defined the Socialist economic system essentially in terms of rationalisation and control - by means of minimum wages, security against unemployment, price regulation etc - in the interest of the community as a whole. More generally, he saw Socialism as an immediate and practical possibility, strongly opposing the Marxist tendency to postpone it to some future date when Capitalism was to be vanquished: 'Pour mettre fin au capitalisme, il est moins important d'être en état de battre que de le remplacer.')(3)

In De Man are to be found at their most coherent the two main elements in the approach of the reformers: to make the State and the economy function more efficiently and to regenerate society morally. Some, of course were concerned exclusively with the first question. They wanted a strong State, were interested in economics and tended to think that economic planning held the key to the future; not a few of this category, especially the Polytechnicians, ended up in Vichy.(4) Yet in spite of French statist traditions, the discredit of liberalism and the exasperated reflex of a section of the technical elite against what they considered to be the ineptitude of the politicians, one of the striking aspects of the modernising reformers was that their preoccupation with an effective State, far from being narrowly authoritarian and technocratic, was quite frequently accompanied by a broad humanitarian concern.

The humanitarianism of the reformers, like that of the non-conformists, had its roots deep in French tradition. One of these traditional sources was Saint-Simonism. This, it has already been said, signified a theory of rational organisation - backed by moral enthusiasm -
in the hands of a technical elite: a compound of the humanitarianism of the Enlightenment, Catholic social ethics and the economic traditions of enlightened despotism.

In the early nineteenth century, illuminism had been particularly strong - no doubt because of its organisational mystique - in the great engineering schools like the Polytechnique. After the First World War, it began to flourish again. Thibaudet has described one of the modern disciples of Saint-Simon in the following terms: 'La vertu de Fontaine, c'était, dans la lucidité paisible d'un technicien et l'intellectualisme méthodique d'un cartésien, un souci moral, une idée, une pratique du bien, et une sorte de religion sans dogme...' Why exactly there should have occurred a resurgence of Saint-Simonism at this time is not entirely clear, but it is probably to be explained by the combination of several factors: the growth of industry after World War I; the fact that it tended to recruit among the intelligentsia, from the Ecole Normale in particular; the increase of social consciousness as a result of the economic crisis. Possibly the atmosphere of religious revivalism within the Grandes Écoles since the turn of the century might also have been an element. At any event, there was at least one would-be Saint-Simon among the reformers - Jean Coutrot of the Polytechnician group X-Trice (9) - and a broad current of spirituality which helped to generate a consciousness of what the non-conformists called the crisis of civilisation.

But what, more specifically, were the elements of the French crisis itself as seen by the reformers of the 1930's? In the first place, there was the problem of the State. It was both excessively centralised, cutting out intermediary groups (10), and at the same time paralytic, for it was directed in the interests of the little man - wine-growers, distillers, ex-servicemen - by an administration that was legalistic, passive and liberal. In addition, the attitude
towards the State of the Radical Party, pivot of the parliamentary regime under the Third Republic, was highly ambiguous. On the one hand, Radicals constantly solicited the State: 'L'État devrait...' And on the other hand, they regarded it with the darkest suspicion: taxation was excessive, the administration wasteful etc.

Against this immobilism, the counter-balancing force that might have existed in an independent and dynamic capitalist sector was missing. The employers' class was Catholic and conservative and wielded very little political influence since the victory of the Republicans had placed them in the defeated camp. Moreover, they often recruited their managers from among civil servants who were indifferent, if not downright hostile to the profit motive!(11) As for the Radical Party, beyond favouring balanced budgets, it held few views and had very little interest in the economic sphere: 'Tout le programme économique du radicalisme consiste à majorer, sous une auréole mystique, une épithète, l'épithète petit.'(12) It was, consequently, easy for pressure groups to insist on the State's responsibility to protect the little man and they played on the belief that parliamentary democracy meant the protection of a traditional way of life and the avoidance of the inhuman consequences of Capitalism. Little wonder, then, that business — when it had not compromised itself by clinging to out-moded economic liberalism — was thoroughly disillusioned with the way the economy was being run; in its eyes all government since the First World War, with the exception of Poincaré, had damaged the interests of the country and were guilty of demagogery and incompetence.(13)

France, in the 1930's, was a country in which the idea of expansion was still profoundly alien. Governments undertook few positive measures and when they did act, it tended to be within a framework at once legalistic and authoritarian: the habit in the industrial sector,
for instance, was to impose settlements rather than to negotiate contracts. Yet, this closed, protectionist and rigidly stratified society was beginning to be shaken up almost in spite of itself. From 1920-9, the French economy boomed: there was a dramatic rise both in exports and investments and the growth rate of 4.3% was remarkable. Moreover, the German seizures of plant and property taken over by the State after the War allowed it to play a more active role.

Obviously, the model of a weak, centralised State that suppressed initiative at a grass-roots level but also hamstrung purposeful action at the summit was ill-adapted to the modern industrial society contained embryonically in these new developments. Industrial society in all its complexity, so thought the reformers, demanded some measure of rational organisation at the top and a high degree of initiative lower down.

It has been said that the core of the non-conformist movement was the aspiration for a freer and more humane society. The core of the reformist movement - in so far as it was of significance for the future - was a groping in the direction of reversing the French model of the State. Feeble and centralised in reality, it should be made strong and decentralised. In fact, this thinking marked a change in emphasis rather than a total rejection of the former status quo. That power should be closely controlled has traditionally had strong appeal for the French; but this control as it was exercised in the 1930's was negative - it signified essentially resistance to power. Now the idea that was gradually beginning to make its way was that instead of being negatively opposed, power should be organised and controlled positively for creative ends.

Practically, this new approach meant opting for an expansionist economy and giving the State its head. But in each of these domains, counter-balancing forces were often introduced in the interest of
rationalisation or humanisation, or both. Given French statist and anti-capitalist traditions, it was unthinkable to many of the reformers that big moneyed interests could be allowed to gain hold of the state or to exploit the wealth of society without control and to their own selfish ends. The idea of economic planning was thus favoured as an antidote both to the potentially anarchic and anti-social elements in an expansionist economy. But, contrary to the Soviet example, it was never conceived in France as a doctrinaire system. And in the long-term the most practical and perhaps also the most valuable aspect of the preoccupation with economic planning in the 1930's lay in the least ambitious and global of the ideas it generated, such as those of Jean Coutrot on collective bargaining and incomes policy. (16) Their appeal both in the pre-war era and for later generations lay in the fact that they appeared to provide instruments for organising the economy more efficiently and more rationally without falling into the opposite error from laissez-faire – that of rigid, authoritarian regulation.

Thinking on State reform was underscored by similar distrust for unbridled power: support for a strong executive was frequently accompanied by decentralising schemes. Detoeuf, a member of X-Grise, advocated corporatism on the grounds that if an interventionist State were to be permitted, then it must also be strictly limited. (17) This desire for control not only for rationalist but also for humanitarian reasons was not common, it has been observed, to all the minority groups. (18) But it was sufficiently prevalent to merit notice – particularly as the same combination of rationalism and moralism, together with many of the ideas of the 1930's, were to reappear among the reformers of the 1950's and 1960's, many of whom were again civil servants or engineers.

What kind of people participated in the groups examined here?
First, there were the political party minority movements: the neo-Socialists of the SFIO and the Young Turks of Radicalism. Both were in revolt against the established order within their own party. The 'Neos', as they were called, were reacting against the doctrinaire Marxism of French Socialism, while the Young Turks criticised the complacency of and the bankruptcy of new ideas within the Radical Party. Both groups opposed the negative attitudes towards power current in their own organisation and called for a more positive attitude towards the State.

The Club de Février was a kind of half-way house between the non-conformists and the reformers since it reflected in sweeping globalist terms, while attacking specific problems in a concrete fashion. Its membership was very mixed. X-Crise recruited principally among the engineers of the Polytechnique and became the refuge of a technical elite aware of its own economic ignorance and disdainful of the weak Republic. Finally, the Plan du 9 Juillet was a blueprint for a new State structure. Among its signatories were a large number of top civil servants. Each of these groups will be dealt with briefly in turn.

The Neo-Socialists.

Against the intransigent Marxism of the Socialist Party, the Neos advanced the following argument: property was now less important than other forces; the State was not inherently evil and should be used by Socialists; Socialism could no longer be regarded as exclusively proletarian but must ally itself with the middle classes. (19) The thinking behind this was in the line of Henri de Man - although André Philip never actually joined the Neos. Instead of ignoring the robust constitution of Capitalism and waiting around passively for its imminent collapse, Socialists would be better employed to adapt their doctrine
to modern reality. The Neos, consequently, opposed the orthodox State communalism of their party with a doctrine of State control rather than ownership. Socialism could best be reached, they thought, by means of planning and taxation within a mixed economy. Like De Man, they wanted, above all, action in the present. At the same time, there was in their enthusiasm for efficiency, horror of contemporary chaos and the slogan 'Order, Authority, Nation' a faint fascist intercurrent totally absent in De Man.

But it was not just the whiff of fascism that disturbed the Socialist Party about the Neos. Their theory of a strong State was heresy of a high order in a political party that was engaged at the time in violent controversy as to whether it should participate at all in bourgeois governments. The mainstream of thinking among Socialists was that the State was evil, as was all compromise with bourgeois parties, and that Capitalism would shortly disappear.

The issue that eventually provoked a schism in the SFIO was Daladier's budget which the Neos decided to vote. A group of 30 left the party and, after joining up with other Republicans, formed the third largest party in the Chamber of 1932. However, there was neither sufficient common ground among its members, nor sufficient will, to found a new political party. In addition the growing economic crisis seemed to vindicate the Marxist thesis of capitalist collapse. And so the movement fizzled out with some returning to the SFIO fold, others remaining independent and a few, such as Deat, one of its principal leaders, turning finally to fascism. (20)

The Young Turks of the Radical Party.

Like the Neo-Socialists, the Young Turks were moved by a mood before they were advocates of a firm or coherent doctrine. This mood, above all, was modernist and in reaction against the stuffiness and
immobilism of a party in which to be under 35 years of age was regarded as a serious handicap. Although it was never homogeneous and partly linked to the wider ferment among young French intellectuals, the Young Turk movement remained, in the last resort, fairly independent and self-contained.

The first wave of Radical reformers — people like Bergery and De Jouvenal — were primarily concerned with the problem of State authority. (21) Beyond that they were strongly anti-capitalist and did not much favour parliament. The next wave, including Pierre Mendès-France, Pierre Cot, Jacques Kayser, Emile Roche, Jean Zay, thought more in terms of regenerating the Republic than simply of using the State. Their brief hour of glory came at the Party Congress of Toulouse in 1932. Here Mendès-France made a speech that was totally devoid of the orthodox economic fetishism usual on such occasions. Although not yet Keynesian, he spoke out forcefully against classical deflationary measures and absolutely balanced budgets. It was received with great enthusiasm but this was more on account of the technical brilliance it displayed than because it had convinced the Radical grey-beards. (22) In addition, Mendès called also for a more organised, stronger State and a more just society by means of economic planning, better paid public officials and a drive against the inequalities of the French fiscal system.

The apogee of the Young Turk movement occurred between 1928-32. Thereafter, attention within the party was concentrated on the economic crisis and then on the Popular Front.

The Club de Février.

The Club was founded to bring together people who had been present, on whatever side, at the giant anti-parliamentary demonstration on the 6th of February, 1934. It comprised principally: the review Nouvelles
Equipes, edited by Christian Pineau and including also several prominent Freemasons like Jean Val and Charles Riaudet; there was Ordre Nouveau; and finally various unattached individuals like Jacques Arthuys, one of the civil servants who was calling for a strong State combined with decentralisation. Like the non-conformists who anyway formed part of it, the Club subscribed to the view that western civilisation was undergoing a major crisis and was much preoccupied by general themes of morals and feminism. Otherwise, it was interested mainly in the unions, State reform and economic planning. Later, in 1936-8, the Club's founder Christian Pineau—at the time a Socialist of anarcho-syndicalist tendencies—was to become one of the main drafters of the CGT's economic plan. This plan was limited to ideas on long-term budget investment and a more rationalised approach to the different parts of the public sector, so it was not really a direct forerunner of post-war French economic plans except in the very general sense that it helped to spread the idea that the economy ought to be regulated. (23)

X-Crise.

The Centre Polytechnique d'Etudes Economiques, or X-Crise, was a centre for economic discussion. It was founded in 1933 by that tiny sector of the ruling class who were disturbed by the fact that while the world was being transformed, the French were still thinking in terms of Adam Smith. The members were in majority Polytechnicians, in other words top engineers with first-rate minds. The rest tended to be industrialists or else highly placed civil servants, since these had no economic training at the time. (24) X-Crise was never very large—conferences attracted up to 400 and there were about a dozen work groups of between 20-30 people in operation continuously (25) — but it was exceedingly select.
Membership of the group could have a wide range of motivation. Jean Coutrot, who belonged to the Rose Croix sect, had a clearly messianic caste of mind; he thought of himself as a new Saint-Simon. John Nicoletis, a half-Greek Englishman who taught the Polytechnicians, Keynes from the Times, was concerned mainly by the social situation. Jean Coutrot's ideas on an incomes policy and collective bargaining were really very much his own and not representative of the thinking of X-Crise. This really remained, despite contacts with Ordre Nouveau and the presence of Paul Valéry at conferences, fairly narrowly economic. X-Crise had no impact at all on the public at large. Its achievement was limited but clear: it converted a very small, if strategically placed, part of the French ruling class to the idea of expansion.

(26) Some, like Jean Ullmo, had patriotic motives: they were afraid that in its weakened state the country would not be able to resist Hitler. Others were simply shocked by the fearful/failure that led to the depression. All felt that the politicians had no answers and opposed, to a greater or lesser extent, the malthusianism of the French employers' class. (27) In this situation of void, X-Crise believed - to some extent at least, although it should probably not be exaggerated - that as a technical elite it had a special vocation to further progress.

The immediate aims of the members of the group ranged from educating themselves economically to finding immediate solutions to the depression that went beyond the best answer the ruling class appeared to be able to find - namely to lower wages. Rationalisation and economic planning were much to the fore - although discussion on the latter theme never really went beyond the point of asking whether or not it was possible. (28) There was some awareness of social problems - since civil servants were now beginning to realise that these could no longer be avoided - but no real discussion on State reform. Also Jean Coutrot's ideas on an incomes policy and collective bargaining were really very much his own and not representative of the thinking of X-Crise. This really remained, despite contacts with Ordre Nouveau and the presence of Paul Valéry at conferences, fairly narrowly economic.
Beyond that it was also to some extent the training ground for a number of leading figures within the economic sphere of post-war France. Alfred Sauvy, Pierre Massé, Georges Boris, Claude Gruzon all belonged to X-Crise. (29)

Plan du 9 Juillet.

On the basis of two assumptions - the decadence of liberalism and the danger of totalitarian ideologies - this blueprint proposed: the reinforcement of the executive and the streamlining of the administration, regional decentralisation, anti-capitalist corporatism and devaluation. It was signed by people from the entire range of the dissident groups - by neo-Socialists, members of the Jeune République party, also by a section of X-Crise, notably Jean Coutrot and Louis Vallon (who contributed also to Homme Nouveau). After the signatures came the following declaration: 'Un certain nombre de fonctionnaires appartenant notamment à l'Inspection des Finances, au Conseil d'Etat et à la Cour des Comptes, qu'ont collaboré à la rédaction de ce document, se sont abstenus de le signer pour les raisons de discipline.'(30) The Plan was warmly received by press and public and supported, among others, by Pierre Mendès-France.

Like the non-conformists, the technical reformers had very little immediate impact on the mainstream of economic and constitutional thinking. In the economic sphere, there was a drastic halt to expansion in the 1930's that was due largely to the stubborn conservatism of mental attitudes. Until 1936 governments and elites clung to the irrational hope that the previous state of balance and, in particular, the stability of the currency might be preserved. Then, after 1936, the Communists were as hostile to devaluation as the conservatives. The result was that the country moved straight from depression to inflation and did not emerge from this vicious circle until 1952-3. (31)
In the constitutional domain, parliamentarism reigned supreme. And, until after 1945, the administration remained totally devoid of dynamism.

The interest of the groups studied here lies not in their direct influence but rather in the explanatory dimension they provide for a number of important post-war developments. They illustrate, in other words, how a certain body of ideas emerged, its philosophical and practical sources, and why particular categories of people or professions supported it. In the 1930's civil servants and engineers, for instance, took on a leading reformist role not just because of the abdication of the political parties in the face of the problems of modernisation or because of their own central responsibility for national development, but partly also because their perception of their position in society was marked by a sense of noblesse oblige and their rationalism, traditionally, was combined with a strong dose of moral fervour. In the light of this background, certain aspects of the post-1945 situation are the more readily understandable: namely why engineers and civil servants had humanist attitudes or formed the avant-garde of the modernising movement and why, in turn, this movement remained largely detached from the political parties.

On the whole, the themes and interests of the philosophical non-conformists and the more technically-minded groups were surprisingly similar. Beyond a general aspiration for change and a modernist tone, they shared the same anti-dogmatism, a taste for facts and practical inventiveness; they also adhered to the same set of values, anti-capitalist and anti-individualist. On the question of State reform, a central pre-occupation on both sides, they differed without diverging fundamentally. The neo-anarchist State of the non-conformists over-lapped with the strong but decentralised structure supported by many of the other groups.
Finally, and most important, the two movements supported each other: the ideas of the non-conformists took root that much more easily because material conditions favoured them and because the practical researches of the technocratic reformers supported them. The return to the French anarchist tradition in the 1930's - mingled as it was with other elements - was not merely accidental or sentimental, it accorded with the practical realities of a new world.
PART III.
Chapter 6.

The Emergence of the Jacobin Club.

C'est un bien grand malheur, on l'avouera, pour un homme que de ne plus se reconnaître dans son propre pays, et de ne pouvoir exposer son désarroi à ses compatriotes. Impossible de se détacher, impossible d'accepter, impossible de se faire entendre, voilà les trois portes qui, une fois fermées, vous laissent hors les murs. (1)

The Resistance, it has been justly said, was a potentially revolutionary movement. (2) For many of those who gravitated towards it, whether isolated individuals or members of organised groups, the struggle against the invader was only a first step beyond which lay a more exacting challenge: that of reconstructing France politically. Consciousness of what the reformers of the 1930's had referred to as French decadence — the internal and external weakness of the State; the lack of dynamism of the economy and the malthusian attitudes current in industry; demographic stagnation; political scandals — had by now filtered through to far wider circles. But with it there was very little awareness of the intractability and political complexity of many of these problems. The war-time atmosphere of drama and the rather simplistic view it fostered of right and wrong, combined with the introspection bred by exile and prolonged inactive periods in hiding, together helped to create a very particular kind of climate at the Liberation. Its dominant element was a mixture of self-critical realism and wildly unrealistic messianism. There existed at this time a widespread expectation that a state of harmony and the Brotherhood of all Frenchmen was imminent:

.... 1945 appartient à la même période que 1936, où le peuple interviennent encore dans le déroulement de son propre destin comme une force autonome et cohérente; où la politique désigne un petit nombre de grandes options, à la fois simple
et dramatique; ou peu de gens parmi les partis ou les adversaires s'imaginent que le contenu même du mot socialisme puisse faire l'objet de discussions et d'interrogations; ou la catégorie de l'économie n'a pas encore acquis dans la conscience collective la dignité qui lui permet de jouer le rôle essentiel, raisonnable, et parfois mystificateur, qu'on lui connaît aujourd'hui. (3)

The catchword coined by Marcel Pivert in 1936 - 'Tout est possible et à toute vitesse' - was equally applicable at the Liberation.

In fact, very little of all this happened. The hopes of a political renaissance petered out because they had been grounded not in a movement but in a state of mind. One reason for this failure to develop a movement was the heterogeneity of the parties and groups which participated in the Resistance. Another lay in the strongly anti-political bias of the Christian groups in particular. For them the 'revolution' was social, economic - and moral. Their road to Damascus had been the Resistance and the political conversion it produced retained a large measure of religious feeling: 'C'est en chacun la révolution s'était faite, une révolution sans complaisance envers soi-même, sans esprit de recul...' (4) With this religious element went the familiar repugnance towards politics. Dansette writes on the word 'révolution' as understood by many centre and centre-left Catholics at the time: 'Ce mot était pris dans un sens dépourvu de tout contenu politique vulgaire'. (5)

However, the fact that the Resistance groups were not sufficiently assimilated into the political parties was not only due to their own political pietism. The parties themselves were less than welcoming. The national congress of its federations held by the Socialist Party as soon as the country had been cleared of the invader in 1944 is very revealing in this respect.

Members of the Resistance, the SFIO declared stiffly, were welcome,
of course, to join the party but must not expect privileged treatment; moreover, they must be prepared to accept rules and orders and to fit into the party mould. The old socialists were obviously afraid that men accustomed to acting on their own initiative, who had never been cut down to party size, would try to interfere with their time-honoured habits and generally prevent them from carrying on comfortably as in pre-war days. What is more surprising is that known collaborators who were also faithful party men were given preference over Resistance members. Admittedly, some Resistance groups had been infiltrated by communists, but this scarcely excused the SFIO's behaviour. The Communist Party was no better: before very long some former 'Resistants' - Lecoeur, Servin, Hervé, Tilon among others - were excluded.

This is not to say that the Fourth Republic had no new political blood in its veins. The MRP gave it a considerable infusion while some Resistants, such as Mitterrand and other members of the UDSR, did manage to break through into politics. Then the virtual annihilation of the small conservative formations of the Third Republic and the illegibility of many former deputies cleared the way for new men. But none of this prevented the old guard of politicians from filtering back. They did so, in fact, with quite remarkable rapidity. None of the first three prime ministers of the Fourth Republic had held office before the war; four out of the next five had done so.

Without an effective challenge from outside their own closed ranks, the parties went back to their old ways. General de Gaulle's sudden resignation on the 20th of January 1946 was provoked mainly by the parties' constant bickering but indicated above all their revived vitality and growing strength. Then the vote on the Constitution in October was another step back towards the past: it was approved by a majority of only nine million to eight million with a third of the electorate - eight
and a half million - abstaining or simply not bothering to vote. The Constitution was accepted, as Philip Williams has observed, not on its merits but as an escape from provisional government. (8) It opened the door to a political process which, rather than the departure of the General himself, was regarded with despair by those who had hoped for a new political start:

Le départ du Général de Gaulle avait été interprété par nos aînés comme une espèce de retour à la normale: crises ministérielles, dosages savants, querelle laïque et crise économique. (9)

Back to normal in Third Republic terms meant essentially back to chronic governmental instability. And it needed only the Communists' abandonment of government to complete the cycle. Thereafter, quite apart from the fact that there was not a majority in the country for any one party, there was no longer even a majority in parliament for a lasting coalition. Partners changed according to the dominant issues. The MRP, for instance, defended the regime in alliance with socialists, radicals and conservatives against communists and Gaullists; in social and economic matters affecting the working class it often joined with communists and socialists; on the question of church schools it allied itself with conservatives and Gaullists. In the circumstances, governments became weak and unstable centrist coalitions, harried by pressure groups they were either powerless or insufficiently motivated to resist. Being weak they were inevitably tempted to postpone or to avoid making unpopular decisions. An added complication for governments was the country's still backward economy: in one form or another the economic problem destroyed most governments in the first seven years of the Fourth Republic. (10) And finally, to complete the confusion, the colonial conflicts that were to dominate the life of the Fourth Republic and eventually to bring it down, started almost at once. The key-note
of the Fourth Republic was frustration.

Criticism of the French political system, especially as it was during this period, has been so systematic and so virulent that some commentators have reacted by trying to propagate a less violently censorious view. France, they have suggested, was not much, if at all, worse off than any other Western country. Philip Williams for instance, while underlining the disadvantages resulting from the multitude of parties and the looseness of coalitions, argues that the instability of the Fourth Republic was actually much less dramatic than is generally made out. (11) Similarly, Pierre Avril maintains that government through crises - 'par secousses' - is simply the way French political mechanisms work and should not be worried about unduly. (12)

Admittedly, the over-rationalistic and pragmatic approach to politics current among many of the reformers of the 1950's and 1960's - particularly among the civil servants and, to some extent, the Mendesists - has invited this kind of defence. But the thesis has one important flaw. Leaving aside the doubts cast upon it by the events of 1958 and 1968 (which surely leave a large question mark over the argument that French political institutions function quite well in their own ideosyncratic way), to imagine that the French could ever accept a ramshackle and undignified machine of State on the pragmatic grounds that, after all, it works, is to ignore the moralist core of French republicanism and to under-estimate the patriotic pride that is so intimately linked with it. The vision of France, as the pilot-vessel of humanity, and the reality of the leaky old barge of the Fourth Republic were strictly incompatible. Republicanism, if it means anything, means not a compromise between various interests but the dominance of morality over interests, the triumph of liberty and
equality against all forces standing in their way through the exercise of the personal will of each individual citizen. (13) France can never really be herself in the eyes of Frenchmen when she is just muddling through from day to day:

... les différents gouvernements français imposent à la France un visage que je ne reconnais pas. Ces gouvernements sont des gouvernements légaux, appuyés par la nation. ...La seule riposte serait de prendre les armes et de faire ce qu'en d'autres temps on appelait une révolution. Nous n'en avons pas les moyens, ni le courage; nous ne sommes que quelques hommes, perdus dans une marée d'imprécations à laquelle ils ne comprennent pas grand chose; nous avons obscèremment l'impression de n'être plus tout à fait chez nous... (14)

Even the sober civil servants of the Club Jean Moulin grew quite lyrical in their belief that in seeking the answer to her own immediate problems of modern industrialised society - and this in the thick of the murderous Algerian War. This curious cross-fertilisation of patriotism and humanism was not just confined to wordy old radicals, the mentality of the modernising young was equally affected. It is important to bear this in mind because both the style and form of political commitment of the reformers of the 1950's and early 1960's was deeply marked by their particular perception of their country.

However, the frustrations of the Fourth Republic did not in the main lead to an upsurge of reformist opinion. By the early fifties living standards were rapidly improving, so that many voters, relieved of immediate economic pressures, sank into political apathy or cynicism. Only a minority - generally the most active and imaginative section of young people - felt impelled to take on some form of political commitment. Some of these sought refuge in the Communist Party, for it still retained the heroic aura of the Resistance. Others, repelled by the Communist Party's theoretical approach to all problems, its dogmatism and finally its inaction, looked elsewhere. Pragmatic and activists like the non-
conformists of the 1930's, they were vividly aware of the extent to which the world around them was changing and they were anxious to meet its challenge so as to restore France to its true role in the world. At the same time, they realised that resistance to change, both in the traditional parties of the Left and among the public at large, was strong. If reformist ideas were in the air, they were nonetheless confined to very narrow circles:

Nous savions aussi que tous les changements nécessiteraient des obligations, des choix, des options, des sacrifices. Or, il était évident que la crainte du changement paralysait tout le monde. L'instabilité gouvernementale française dissimulait une très grande stabilité dans le refus. Ces idées cependant commençaient à se faire jour, dans les cercles assez limités, il est vrai. (15)

One of these limited circles and probably the first group to represent the protest of youth against the Fourth Republic was the Club des Jacobins. The society was founded in 1951 and within one month it had sufficient support and was well enough organised to send out invitations for its first meeting. It took this encouraging start as a sign that people had been waiting for just this kind of move. (16) It drew its inspiration from the principles of the Revolution of 1789:

C'est courant novembre 1951 que quelques hommes de bonne volonté, animés des plus purs sentiments républicains, eurent la pensée que, dans ce monde quelque peu incohérent il devait y avoir quelque chose à faire et qu'il fallait faire quelque chose ... faire revivre les principes, l'esprit et l'idéal du plus pur républicanisme, celui de la Révolution de 1789, celui des Jacobins. (17)

By this time, the regime had clearly betrayed the hopes of the Liberation. In addition, France was deeply involved in the Indochinese War. Those who joined the Club - they had come together casually through discussion and in meetings, the paper explained (18) - were of mixed political origin
and outlook. But they shared a feeling of revolt against the system and the optimistic belief that a remedy only had to be sincerely sought for if to be found. Most were young - the average age in the Club was 33 - and a number had been in the Resistance. (19)

That the early members of the Jacobin Club had come together 'casually' was true only up to a point. The membership of the Club was, in fact, drawn predominantly, but not exclusively, from two overlapping circles: Radicalism and Freemasonry. Another current represented, if only marginally, was left-wing Catholicism. This point deserves notice both because of its importance in the background of Charles Hernu, founder and moving spirit of the Club, and because of the light it throws on the general theme of the relation between certain religious and political ideas treated here.

Charles Hernu was raised as- and remained - a Catholic of a very particular kind. His family, although devoutly and even austerely Catholic, never set foot inside a church. The environment in which he grew up was both piously Catholic and passionately anti-clerical. In Lyon in pre-war days this apparently paradoxical combination, it seems, was by no means uncommon. Hernu's father, a tram driver, would mockingly observe the Lyonnaise bourgeoisie as they trooped to church on Sunday mornings; in his opinion they went to church purely to be seen and to show off their finery and he despised them. The main reason behind his own refusal to go near a church was that institutions are human and therefore worthless. The link between this form of religion - morally austere, absolutist and anti-institutional - and his attachment to the Radical Party is apparent: the one was a facet of the other. (19) And yet, after he was dead, Hernu was astounded to find in his father's wallet Catholic sacred objects.

For all this anti-clerical upbringing, Hernu, as a youth, wanted
to become a priest (his family was tolerant and did not object). His mind was changed partly on account of a personal crisis, but partly also because of the influence of a young priest whom he met when he was a member of the Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne. The priest secretly read Proudhon to the young people - this was during the occupation - thereby leading them to criticise not only society but also the Church itself. These anarchist ideas made their impact and Hernu, having turned his back on the Church - although he never lost his religious faith - became Vice-President of the Young Radicals of the Rhone area.

Hernu's Catholic background was known in the Club des Jacobins and never worried or surprised anyone. Besides, he was not alone. There were other Radicals in the Club who were also religious and even loyal Catholics - Paul-André Falcoz, for example. Catholicism influenced Hernu's political attitudes only to a minor extent. Although he favoured secular schools, he was involved in Mendès France's plan to come to an agreement with the Pope on the difficult problem of church schools. By the early 1950's the Catholic Church was having difficulty in recruiting priests. Mendès' idea, therefore, was to agree to allow Catholic clerics to operate in State schools in return for the suppression of Church schools. Overtures were made to the Pope and the plan might well have worked if Mendès' ministry had not been defeated in February 1955. Hernu's own Catholic affiliation also helped the Jacobin Club to become, to a limited extent, a kind of half-way house for Catholics who were either anxious to bear witness on the Left but were alarmed at the prospect of actually joining a left-wing party, or else were only prepared to make the long journey to the Left by slow stages. Guy Penne, a Vice-President of UNEF, and Jean-Pierre Prévost, one-time Secretary-General of the MRP, both spent some time in the Club before their final conversion
to socialism. And during the period of Mendes' ascendancy in the Radical Party, some Catholics who could not quite bring themselves to go the length of joining the Radicals became members of the Jacobin Club instead. Georges Suffert was one of these. Hernu was quite justified in claiming that the Club: 'a su... être un trait d'union avec un certain nombre de courants chrétiens'.

In the main, however, believing Catholics were the exception rather than the rule in the Club. The source of its strongly moralist tone was not Catholicism but left-wing Radicalism. Although not exactly the successors to and certainly not the disciples of the Jeunes Turcs of the 1930's, the Jacobins were closely linked to them in both thought and practice.

Politically, the Young Turks of the 1930's had been a mixed bag. But they did have one common denominator and that was the aspiration to restore the vitality of the Republic and of the Radical Party. Their impact was small because the Popular Front and then the war diverted attention from their aims. Some of the Young Turks, mainly the left-wing faction, joined the Resistance and found themselves cooperating for the first time with Communists. This experience was emotionally and politically decisive and the left-wing radicals - Cot, Kayser, Bayet, Meunier and others - emerged from the Resistance with the slogan: no enemies on the Left. (20) Those who were members of the Union Progressiste were actually affiliated to the Communist Party. Otherwise, they preached neutralism abroad and demanded wide-ranging social and economic reforms at home. As in the 1930's, they continued to harangue the party on the need for change and on the importance of productivity and modernisation. At the 1945 Radical Congress, Cot ironically informed his audience that the prospect for France becoming the foremost national park in the world was hopeful. But the Radical Party, captured now by a clique favouring classical economic liberalism,
was less responsive to its left-wing than ever. When Cot, speaking on the necessity for adaptation, cried out: 'Are we going to orient ourselves to the left or the right?', a voice pronounced: 'Let us simply remain ourselves!' (21)

In 1946 the left-wing Radicals were evicted from the party. Although the Radical Party recovered its grip on power because of its central position within the parliamentary system, it never thereafter regained its sense of purpose and identity. (22) The Jacobin Club, on the other hand, had both. It was far more guarded towards the Communist Party than the post-war branch of the Young Turks but in other essential respects their ideas converged. And when the Young Turks had disintegrated, the Jacobins looked upon themselves as the true representatives of left republicanism: 'Les Jacobins sont conscients de former l'aile marchante du radicalisme de gauche'. (23) In fact, they inherited from the left-wing Radicals who were expelled from the party, not only an attitude and a tradition but the Club itself. The Young Turks had formed a Jacobin Club in 1936, then the title was taken again by a group linked to the Union Progressiste. Hernu inherited the Club from Jacques Mitterand, a left-wing radical and mason who became Master of the Grand Orient de France.

From the beginning, the Jacobin Club was intimately allied with freemasonry. It has always been coy about openly admitting this, although give-away phrases have sometimes appeared in Le Jacobin: 'Pendant 13 ans, qu'a fait la Gauche, la Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, la Frano-Maconnerie?' (24) To be a mason was, in fact, an indispensable qualification for all members of the Club's directing committee. (25) Whether freemasonry had any influence on the Club's operations is more difficult to gauge. Certainly, wealthy masons like Charles Briandet and Jacques Nisen kept the Club on its feet financially. But French freemasonry had been hard hit in the war and its files destroyed so that it was hardly in a position to
exert any kind of pressure in the 1950’s. The most one can say about the relationship between freemasonry and the Jacobin Club is that each helped to build up the other. In 1963 in a letter to Jacques Mitterand, Hernu claimed:

... depuis douze ans le Comité Directeur du club a fait entrer dans nos loges plus de 300 profanes. Le club a donc été très discrètement une excellente anti-chambre de la Frano-maçonnerie. (26)

The Club, in turn, was able to obtain masonic reinforcement when the need arose. (27)

The Jacobins, then, were not quite such a random grouping as they sometimes made out: about 80% of members over the period of its duration have been masons and between 50-60% Radicals. At the same time, the Club was never a closed circle. And when they were accused once of being sectarian, the Jacobins indignantly produced a quotation from Pascal on tolerance which thereafter prefaced every copy of Le Jacobin: ‘Je ne suis pas du tout d’accord avec vous, mais je suis prêt à me faire tuer pour que vous gardiez le droit d’exprimer votre avis.’ Indeed sectarianism would have defeated the Club’s principal aim which has always been the reunification of the Left. The twenty-four deputies who, at the start, were in regular contact with the Club were not just Radicals but drawn from a number of different parties. The following list of members of the Executive Committee with their professions and political allegiances provides a representative range of party attachment in the Club. (28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Briandet</td>
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Professionally, the Jacobins were:

- 20% businessmen and industrialists
- 20% civil servants
- 19.5% liberal professions
- 12% employees
- 6% elected representatives of various kinds, including deputies
- 6% engaged in artistic activities
- 4% engineers
- 6% students
- 3% property owners, retired or without profession
- 2.5% workers
- 1% active army officers.

Political sympathy and party attachment, particularly in France, do not necessarily go together. Probably no more than half the Club were ever actually members of any party and even then they rarely held positions of any importance. There were a few exceptions. Gaston Maurice, one
of the founder members, was a member of the Comité National des Radicaux et Résistants de Gauche and served on the Executive Committee of the Union Progressiste. Georges Maury, a former president of the Jeunesse Radicale-Socialiste, was also on the Executive Committee of the Radical Party. Jacques Gambier was chef de cabinet to Guy Mollet. Pierre Barrucaud was on the National Committee of the SFIO. Roger Charny was on the Executive Committee of the Radical Party. (29)

Finally, no picture of the Jacobin Club would be complete without giving some account of the personality of Charles Hernu. Every club here examined was dominated by one man, yet each of these men exercised his authority in a different manner. Hernu's ascendancy over the Jacobin Club was owing partly to his dynamism and drive but partly also to the fact that he embodied in his person a certain type of republican temperament and mentality. Good-natured, gregarious, optimistic and tolerant in a deep almost instinctive way, savouring the good life, as much at ease in the language and lore of the republican Left as a fish in water, he led the Club first of all by leading a certain way of life. His faults - a tendency to indiscretion, a fondness for gossip - were part of the same whole. In addition, a sense of theatre and a taste for conspiracy made him a natural mason. His approach to politics resembled that of a country priest to religion; it was morally earnest, realistic and uncomplicated. Unlike a good many politicians of the Left, who were more expert by far than he was at manipulating the moralistic formulas of republicanism, Hernu never in the course of his political activity feathered his own nest. If he was not an intellectual with a particular or original vision of society, he was never merely a short-term tactician. Very early on, he came to a number of conclusions about French political life - notably the necessity for the reunification, internal reform and modernisation of the Left - and to these he stuck

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with courage and tenacity, often in the face of considerable odds. Loyalty on a personal level was also one of his most fundamental characteristics: he served first Mendes France and then François Mitterand as their political aide de camp. On the French Left, where politicians, like the condottieri of the Renaissance, are given to manoeuvring in the first instance for personal position, loyalty and the readiness to take a back seat are qualities as valuable as they are rare. Another notable characteristic of Hernu’s, his liking for publicity, stood the Club in good stead. Seldom have a small band of lonely wanderers in the political wilderness received such full and continuous press coverage as Hernu was able to secure for his Jacobins. Yet he never manipulated the Club or imposed himself or his views on it. Of course, there were crises between himself and it in the course of two decades. But in the last resort the Club held together because between Hernu and the Jacobins there existed deep bonds of affection, mutual understanding and complicity.

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Chapter 7.

The Life and Ideology of the Club.

Notre exigence c'est la République. (1)

To be fully understood, the Jacobin Club must be treated on two
levels. On the surface, it was a group of reform-minded young people,
most but not all of them left-wing radicals, whose primary preoccupation
was to promote the unity of the Left. This, they judged to be the
essential precondition of republican regeneration. In domestic policy
Jacobins supported working-class interests and favoured extensive social
and economic reforms; in foreign affairs they leaned towards a tempered
form of neutralism; and in colonial matters they were liberal progressives.
Towards the Communist Party their attitude was always cordial but careful:
while ready to negotiate with it, they were nonetheless on their guard
against its illiberal tendencies and mistrustful of its contacts with
the Soviet Union. On one level, then, the Jacobins were simply a group
of patriotic Activists whose energies were absorbed by the crises and daily
problems of the Fourth Republic.

But beyond this pragmatic Leftism, the Club also had a sense of
identity and a distinct political ethos - an approach, perhaps, rather
than an ideology. The Jacobins themselves claimed that their particular
characteristic was 'a state of mind and a method' without which there was
no hope of revitalising France. (2) Through this moral and intellectual
framework or filter, whose source was the republican tradition associated
with Proudhon and Alain, the Jacobins - or part of them, at least - saw
and judged the political world. And the vision they thereby acquired
inspired them, in turn, with their sense of purpose and feeling of identity.

The republican tradition as interpreted by the Jacobin Club merits
attention for a variety of reasons. In the first place, the type of
approach towards political change to which it gave rise constituted a break with most of the thinking on the subject under the Third and Fourth Republics; to this extent, the Jacobins were linked to the reformers and non-conformists of the 1930's for the latter had previously made the same break themselves. Second, since the Radical Party had lost contact with its ideological roots, the ideas of the Club become, if not exactly representative, at least indicative of how the younger and more modern-minded sectors of radical opinion were thinking. The Jacobin Club constituted the opposite pole to Poujadism. And third, the Jacobins' particular concept of republicanism offers a number of important insights into the club form itself.

It has already been suggested that the raison d'être, by and large, for political clubs was that their members' perception of political commitment did not square with the necessities of mass political organisation. One problem about justifying this kind of assertion is that there were so many rational reasons for steering clear of the traditional parties at this time, that membership of a club is not in itself sufficient ground for concluding that the motivation behind it was anti-party feeling. Besides, the Jacobins, in particular, were steadfast in their insistence on the need for a united party of the Left. It is not easy, therefore, to pin down their anti-party bias - however much one might suspect that the French Labour Party they envisaged was mainly for other people to join.

Nothing is provable exactly, but the weight of evidence - drawn from the Club's writings, from its internal organisation and from its cooperation with Mendès France in reforming the Radical Party (3) - supports the view that the Jacobins were in fact reticent, although never absolutely hostile, towards party politics. This bias, it will be shown, was inherent in their brand of republicanism.

This chapter will give only a brief outline of the Jacobins' programme
and policies, for these were neither remarkable nor original. Then their overall political approach will be dealt with in more detail. Finally, the day-to-day functioning of the Club will be described.

The Jacobin Club, in the first instance, was a reaction against the Fourth Republic, against its weak, indecisive coalition governments and their shabby style of political wheeling and dealing. The Jacobins regarded stability as a primary necessity, for they believed only stable governments were in a position to take strong action, to make unpopular decisions if need be and form and to uphold a political programme. Political programmes were the Jacobins' great hobby-horse:

*Il n'y a pas de grande réforme sans un programme minimum précis, au service duquel se mettront des cadres politiques résolus sous une direction cohérente.* (4)

For them the first condition both of stability and of a coherent programme was, of course, the unity of the Left. Besides, the multiplicity of left-wing parties was also a severe hindrance to the Left's accession to power for it discouraged voters. And since men of worth were not confined to any one party but were to be found among all sections of republican opinion, why maintain divisions? To bring all republican reformers together was the Jacobins' self-appointed mission: ‘.. il faudra continuer à rechercher le grand dénominateur commun des républicains. C'est la mission essentielle du jacobinisme.’ (5)

Having raised the question of left-wing unity, the Jacobins could not ignore the problem of the Communists. In the early 1950's the Communists were cold-shouldered by the Radical and Socialist Parties but sometimes slavishly admired - partly on account of their Resistance role - by some
of the smaller left-wing groups part of what later became known as the New Left. The Club rejected both positions. To isolate the Communists in a country where they commanded a steady quarter of the votes cast was simply political nonsense. (6) The fact that, in the meantime, the social gulf between classes was constantly widening further underlined the sterility of such a policy. (7) Not only was it possible to negotiate a limited contract with them but this kind of dialogue, in the long run, was the only hope for the Left. At the same time, the Club found the sentimentalism of the New Left towards the Communists profoundly irritating and it excluded all close contact with the Communist Party so long as it remained dependent on its 'Rote rouge' and accepted the violation of the liberty of expression. (8) But this kind of middle path was not so easy to follow, as the Club soon discovered by the re-action of both the Radical Party and the Communist Party itself. The Radicals, for a time, forbade double membership of the Party and the Club until Charny had the ban lifted in 1953. As for the Communists, when Hernu protested against the trial of the Jewish doctors in Moscow shortly before Stalin's death in 1953, they attacked the Club for what they called its 'systematic anti-communism'. (9)

One other major point of conflict between the Club and the Radical Party was social and economic policy. The Radical Party had turned to economic liberalism; the Jacobin Club saw itself not just as the inheritor of the tradition of 1789 but also of 1870 and the Communards. (10) The Social Republic was to be the next conquest of the people. In the main, the Club's social and economic analyses consisted of a combination of traditional left republican prejudices and a modern concern with productivity. Employers exploit workers for their own profit, supported by a government that breaks strikes. A first task, therefore, is to break the domination of the State by capital and finance. This could be done,
in the Jacobins' view, by means of a large-scale redistribution of income and through fiscal policy. In addition, contractual wage negotiations and a measure of workers control would put power back where it should be - in the hands of the people rather than in those of private interests and the State. Like the Young Turks, the Jacobins insisted that to secure higher wages for the workers was in itself an insufficient policy for the Left: to reform economic infra-structures was equally important. But along this particular line of thought the Club never advanced very far. While they saw the importance of economics and productivity, the Jacobins were never roused to much enthusiasm on these subjects and remained, on the whole, content to follow the lines set down by Mendès France. (11)

In foreign affairs, the Club pursued a policy of left-wing nationalism. It supported NATO only as a defence organisation and wanted to see this minimum commitment balanced by an opening to the East, including more commercial exchanges. Equally, it did not want to see a 'Europe vaticane', a Western Europe dominated by Christian Democrats, cut off from the communist countries and it constantly advocated the entry of Britain and Scandinavia into the EEC both to prevent such a development and to help control the newly rearmed Germans. The Jacobins passionately opposed German rearmament. (12)

In Indochina, then in Morocco and Tunisia and later in Algeria, the Jacobins always advocated the same liberal line of action: negotiation and progressive reforms. However, they were also realists and when it became apparent that the colonies wanted no less than their independence, they were quite prepared to accept it. Besides, they saw colonialism as at odds with their own principles, being founded: '... sur les intérêts privés, système incompatible avec le sentiment de la justice.' (13)
The theme of French decadence, it has already been observed, had been growing steadily since the days of the Franco-Prussian war. It probably reached its highest pitch during and just after the Second World War, but it was far from dead under the Fourth Republic. Criticism of the political system came from many different quarters: from the Gaullists; from the young who had been disappointed by the failure of the Liberation; from the Communists; from liberals alienated by the regime's entanglement in successive colonial conflicts. But this criticism was usually levelled at some external force. At the turn of the century, the blame for all that was wrong had most often been placed on the shoulders of Jews, Freemasons and sometimes Protestants.

The Fourth Republic had its own, more sophisticated array of scapegoats. An old favourite still riding high was the French national character:

Si le Français ... est cet être à la fois léger et inconstant, individualiste à tout prix mais aussi homme de goût et de raison, sage et combien mesuré quoiqu'avec des accès imprévisibles de violence ou de raison, et il est tout cela de naissance, de génération en génération depuis le temps des Gaulois, alors aucun problème français n'est soluble ... Par exemple, on n'arrivera jamais à lui faire payer ses impôts. (14)

Two themes that commanded steady popularity were the iniquity of the capitalist system and the flaws in constitutional mechanisms. Another version blamed the shortcomings of political life on the failure to see and make correct choices. Either there was a guilty party who needed only to be unmasked, or else everything was the result of a misunderstanding. All that was needed was for people to grasp their true interests and for politicians to face up to the real facts:

... il suffirait que l'on se décidât une bonne fois pour toutes pour le bien... Le système c'est encore le mal. Il est commode de la charger de tous nos pêchés. (15)

These various approaches had one common denominator and this was
resignation; long-term resignation on account of the national character; medium-term resignation with regard to the capitalist system since any real change must be preceded by its abolition; short-term resignation about constitutional rulings which would simply have to be tolerated until the time was ripe to amend them again. There never seemed much that could be done immediately. According to the anti-capitalist analysis, for example, the French crisis was just part and parcel of the general crisis of western capitalism. Some would even insist that France was in the avant-garde of decadence and which was reassuring to the extent that it meant that change was on the way but was still not necessarily relevant to the life of anyone living.

As for the individual Frenchman, either he was most fortunate in belonging to such a unique quixotic people, too rich perhaps in political ideas but still pace-setters for the rest of the world in this domain; or else he was most unfortunate in being born into a country that, owing to a particular heritage - its hexagonal shape or the influence of the Romans - was forever doomed to political instability. Either way, he was not himself responsible.

Both the reformers and the non-conformists of the 1930's disagreed sharply with this type of outlook. If they had a common denominator it was an impatience with the political passivity of their countrymen. For their own part, they were determined to influence events. The Christians, in particular, regarded the political system as shaped by the moral will and intellectual understanding of each individual; consequently, they preached political responsibility and a pragmatic approach to new developments.

The Jacobins' thinking was on these same lines. They were irritated, of course, by the constant merry-go-round of ministries. But, in the last resort, they were less perturbed that the show was bad than
by the fact that the floor-boards were rotten. Their main pre-
occupations were neither constitutional nor institutional but sociol-
ogical. The real core of the French problem was that social and
economic structures were ill-adapted to the new facts of life and to
this, in turn, was linked to the stubborn refusal to change mental
attitudes. (16) To change structures without changing men or at
least their minds was simply self-defeating. (17) This was one of the
most recurrent themes of the Club and determined its highly moralistic
tone:

C'est le refus de l'effort réel qui est à la base de
notre absence de réflexe devant les événements actuels,
qui est à la base de l'absence de la France dans le
monde. (18)

The Jacobins were not, of course, alone in pointing out to the
French that they had a personal responsibility for the way the political
system functioned. A book that made an impact in the 1950's was La
France Déchirée: in it the author blamed the malfunctioning of political
society on the excessive intellectualism, conservatism and irrealism of
the French. (19) Mendes too belonged to this school, but with him the
emphasis was on rationalism rather than on morality; his object was a
smoothly running and efficient State and this, he wanted to show, was
unobtainable without a measure of social justice.

Left-wing Catholics also upheld the theory of responsibility against
the idea that the system was the source of all evil:

... j'ai cru pendant des mois et des années à une espèce
d'image d'épinal qui mettait face à face de vilains
gouvernements et un bon peuple, somme toute innocent des
bêtises et des péchés qu'on lui faisait commettre. Quand
j'ai commencé à entrevoir qu'il existait entre eux deux
une secrète complicité, j'ai pensé que la faute en était
aux journaux et à la radio qui ne faisaient pas leur travail
d'information. Puis j'en suis arrivé à penser que les
peuples ont la presse qu'ils méritent.

C'est donc les Français qu'il fallait observer; c'était
They differed from the Jacobins mainly in emphasis. Anxious to atone for the past and to come to terms with the modern world, they were far more obsessed with economic and technological developments. This obsession was also a kind of compensation for their strong anti-party bias. The Jacobins were never particularly enthusiastic about the parties of the Left, but being linked to one by tradition – which the Catholics were not – they tended to have a much more balanced attitude towards them. The Catholics focussed their rationalism on economics and technology but in the domain of politics they turned very frequently into pure moralists.

One other difference between the left Christian groups and the Jacobins – and one that helped to conceal the anti-political sentiments of the latter – lay in their attitude towards the historical mythology of republicanism. Modernist Catholics found it maddening when Mendes brought out such phrases as 'Nous sommes en 1788'. What was the point of that sort of thing, they would ask peevishly; what had 1953 and 1788 in common, anyway? (21) The Jacobins thrived on such references. They were never shy of giving the sacred cows of the Left a decisive shove when it came to such concrete matters as policies and programmes, but the traditional language and lore of republicanism was an indispensable part of their political activism. One of Le Jacobin's most striking characteristics was a taste for resounding republican rhetoric:

Il y a encore des bastilles à prendre. Le 14 Juillet est à refaire tous les jours; Il y a encore des féodalités à abattre; ... la République reprendra aussitôt la tradition que nos pères ont crée et pour laquelle ils ont tant de fois versé leur sang. (22)
Often quoted were Robespierre, Saint Just and Alain. The general sense of the quotations was that the people must control the politicians: 'Le peuple est mépris dès qu'il ne se fait pas craindre'. (23) The term 'citoyen' was frequently employed. And the Club boasted of having: 'le citoyen Isnard, descendant direct du député Isnard, Président de la Convention'. It was proud also of another of its members, Jacques Gambier, an expert on Robespierre. (24)

Beneath their often extravagant political terminology, however, the Jacobins harboured a distrust for politics that, for all its greater moderation, was no less persistent than that of the Catholics. They referred quite openly to: '... les bas politiciens'. (25) Or they would address politicians in a tone of great moral outrage: 'Professionnels de la politique, vous avez pu nous voler le grand espoir qu'avait fait naître en nous la Résistance et la Libération'. (26) Unlike Pégy and the Catholic Club Citoyens 60, they never drew the distinction between 'mystique' and 'politique', but they referred to the great betrayal of the Resistance ideals as 'le passage du lyrisme au politique'. (27) To the category of traitors belonged also the technocrats: '... les traîtres, les secessionistes, les technocrates, les affairistes, les petits ambitieux'. (28)

With the corruption of politics and politicians, the Jacobins contrasted the purity and disinterestedness of those not holding power: '... les purs, les naïfs, ceux qui ne seront jamais ministres ni secrétaires d'état...'. (29) This purity was always associated with 'the people', and in the context of the 1950's it was identified with youth, for, true to republican tradition, the Jacobins considered it the duty of sons to be to the left of their fathers: '... la pureté des intentions de la génération des hommes de trente ans s'accomode mal des préoccupations affairistes de nos aînés'. (30) Moral purity was an obsession
in the Jacobin Club and the pivot of its political thinking. Le Jacobin was described as: 'Le journal propre dirigé par les hommes propres'. (31) While the definition of what a Jacobin should be was no less moralistic:

Le Jacobin est un homme qui se veut libre et de bonnes moeurs. C'est un homme qui est prêt à sacrifier son bonheur particulier pour défendre le bonheur de la société.

Le Jacobin veut une République dure et pure.

Le Jacobin n'a pas peur des batailles disproportionnées car il a l'élan, la conviction et le mépris des contingences.

Le Jacobin se défend de toute flatterie à l'égard du Peuple; il dit la vérité, aussi impopulaire soit-elle, car il a finalement confiance dans le jugement des citoyens, mais il sait que si la Vérité est Une, elle a toujours plusieurs visages et c'est pourquoi il est tolérant. (32)

Behind this kind of thinking, which seemed to come perfectly naturally to the Jacobins - for, even if they quoted Alain, most seem not to have read him - was a simple concept: the opposition between morality and interests. This opposition was never specifically stated or analysed or in any way explained, but it was implicit in the whole Jacobin approach. Politics, for the Jacobins, was not the conciliation of conflicting interests: the purity of the Jacobin lay in his disinterestedness. Unlike Poujade they never explicitly denounced 'l'écrasement de l'humain par la matière' (33) yet they subscribed equally to the old opposition of spirit and matter. Liberty and equality are spiritual forces that must be constantly asserted against material obstacles. The moral purity of the citizen is the instrument with which he fights privileged interests and in dominating them secures the Republic. Good government is politics purged of all its immoral elements: it presupposes a morally good citizenry who, because of their goodness, promote honesty in public life and truth in government affairs. This explains why the Jacobins always placed the whole weight of their emphasis on the need for stern and active citizenship, for once this
could be assured all the rest, according to their intellectual schema, would follow. Obviously, this approach made them exceedingly intolerant of the failings of the Fourth Republic.

What conclusion may be drawn from all this about the Jacobins' perception of political commitment? The same moral assumptions when manipulated by Peguy and Mounier led to the idea that political activism means the humanisation of society by means of moral values rather than through the reform of institutions. And it is arguable that, despite the occasional kind word they threw to the political parties, the Jacobins also followed this interpretation. Significant in this respect are three terms they often used: 'élan; disponibilité; sens critique'.

At the turn of the century, there existed a widespread belief that only a kind of moral upsurge or an outburst of revolutionary violence could bring about the regeneration of the country. This belief, or a tempered form of it, the Jacobins shared: "... le pouvoir appartiendra demain à ceux qui redonneront un sursaut d'énergie morale au pays." (36) Usually this restoration of moral energy was referred to by the word 'élan'. Besides the idea of morality, the two other ideas contained in this word were the linked ones of will and action. The following passage on de Gaulle and Mendès France brings out the sense of the word very well:

... tous deux ont dit que la politique c'est d'abord l'action; tous deux ont souhaité un régime attrayant qui, dans un grand élan de volonté nationale imposerait les intérêts généraux contre les intérêts particuliers; tous deux ont dénoncé les mesquinés combinaisons politiques auxquelles nous sommes habitués." (37)

Politics, then, is the will to action. But what kind of action?

First it must be moral. Then it must allow the exercise of critical judgement: "... le Jacobinisme seul redonnera aux Citoyens ce qui leur manque le plus: le sens critique et la vertu." (38) This,
in turn, depends on two conditions: information on which to base a judgment and independence in arriving at it. (39) Although the Club's strength never lay in its intellectual attainments, it always insisted forcefully on its role as a centre of civic education and believed that one of its main functions must be to have ideas. According to one survey, 91% of its members considered that the Club existed to promote new ideas, 78% thought that its mission was to interest in politics those who did not want to join a party, and only 52% saw it as preparing the path for a new party. (40) This will to action and to moral and intellectual independence at the same time are best expressed by the word 'disponibilité' - meaning 'preparedness' or 'availability'. And by this the Jacobins meant the moral readiness to stand by and defend republican principles, with their lives if need be, rather than the practical readiness to undertake the mundane day-to-day business involved in running a large political party. In the Jacobin Club, as in the others, there were always few takers for the minimal paper-work involved in its running administration. The following description of how the Jacobins saw their battle conveys the force of the word 'disponibilité' very well:

Le combat des Jacobins n'est pas abstrait. Loin d'être des spectateurs, nous sommes, depuis dix ans, au contact quotidien des réalités nationales, tant politiques, économiques que sociales. Nous nous engageons parfois, sans jamais faire dépendre nos choix d'autre chose que nos propres analyses mais, nous restons une force disponible. (41)

Had the Radical Party been more left-wing, the Jacobins would probably have joined it quite happily and never felt the need for a club. But this was because the Radical Party with its looseness of structure and the wide scope it allowed to individual personalities within it was never a mass, organised party in the accepted sense. In these respects, the Jacobin Club was the Radical Party writ small.
But before going on to examine how the Club actually worked in practice, there is one further point to be made about its ideology. For, over the two decades of its existence, an interesting development occurred in its thinking on the role of the State.

In the nineteenth century, before the foundation of the Republic, two currents co-existed in republicanism: the one centralising, the other decentralising. Léon Bourgeois, for instance, was a decentraliser; but as soon as the principle of secular schools was questioned, he became authoritarian and centralist. The Jacobin Club in the 1950's, while quoting Alain on the corruptibility of all power, supported Mendès France in his advocacy of a strong State, for this was in line with their own aspiration for more decisive government. But the old distrust of government and power was not dead but only dormant. And, ultimately, the idea that the power of State and government must be limited by popular control led the Jacobins to support decentralisation and workers participation, in management, so as to counter the growth of State influence. (42) Like some of the reformers of the 1930's they had turned their backs definitively on the negative combination characteristic of the Third and, to a lesser degree, the Fourth Republic: centralisation and weak government. More generally, this development constituted a break with radical negativism and perhaps marked the end of a long phase of republican thinking:

Journalist: "Être de gauche, c'est être contre les pouvoirs, a dit Alain."

Hernu: "C'est exact, mais aujourd'hui la gauche doit cesser de se définir par ses seules négations." (43)
The legalism of the American political clubs described by J. Q. Wilson was absolutely alien to the spirit of the French clubs — and in particular to the spirit of the Jacobin Club. No detailed account of its statutes need be given for they are of no importance. The National Executive Committee, as the small band of friends who formed it rather grandly called themselves, sometimes had the prescribed seven members and sometimes twice as many. The General Assembly did not meet twice a year as advertised, but once every two years at the very most. Members of the NEC were co-opted rather than elected; the hard core of NEC members has not budged in twenty years. The President is, of course, still Charles Hernu and although it is true — as the statutes point out — that he has no special voting privileges, this is because he needs none. The Jacobin Club is and always has been in his hands. (44)

The Club was thus not exactly democratic; at the same time it did offer a kind of substitute form of democracy. For the members of the NEC exercised a kind of collective leadership derived from Freemasonry, while ordinary members retained the freedom to come and go as they liked and to say what they pleased.

The team spirit and sense of solidarity that allowed the NEC to function were partly natural to it and partly consciously fostered. The original team were all masons and this helped to create a close bond between them. But although it remained a basic rule of the Club that all members of the NEC should be masons, like all its rules this one was sometimes bent. If someone was considered sufficiently valuable from the Club's point of view, he would be co-opted on to its managing committee without complications. Thereafter, there would probably be some attempt to enrol him as a mason. Another rule of the NEC that strengthened its solidarity was that any one of its members could veto
a new member.

The general meetings of the Club were free, informal and orientated to open debate rather than prepared speeches. One important and fundamental law of the Club was that no one was ever prevented from talking, however unpopular his views. This suited its members who have always tended to see democracy as the right of everyone to express his opinion rather than as the passing of majority resolutions. In fact, members would often secure far-reaching amendments to motions proposed by the NEC. But to ask what would happen if the majority of the Club opposed one of the proposals the NEC put forward would be to misunderstand the nature of the Jacobin Club. It went through great internal turmoil on a number of issues: on the principle of Presidential elections, on the referendum in 1962, on what attitude to adopt towards the FSA Parti Socialiste Autonome etc. But neither this turmoil nor the majority that might eventually emerge mattered much. What mattered to the members was the right to uphold their own views on all separate issues, while sharing the same basic principles. In contrast with a political party, there was never any question in the Club of toeing the party line, even temporarily, and in this lay its fundamental attraction.

The style of the Club's meetings, like that of the paper, were lively, informative, combative but not intellectual. Unlike many of the post 1958 clubs, the Jacobin Club never published books, built up vast files or offered its members evening classes in economics. Nevertheless it was always profoundly convinced of the need for ideas in a Club and for this reason made sure it had a few intellectual members to consult, much as a tribal chief might keep soothsayers both for their possible practical value and as an indispensable adjunct to his prestige. Two such ideas men of long standing were Roger Charmy, a journalist and
top administrator of the Société Générale de Presse, and Alain Gourdon, a member of the Cour des Comptes. In the late 1950's these were joined by Marc Paillet, a former Trotskyist and deputy editor of the Agence France Presse, and Guy Penne, a dentist and former Vice-President of the Union National des Étudiants Français.

Membership of the Club had only a very loose meaning, since members might be very assiduous in attending meetings at one time and then drop off when other interests or activities claimed them. Actual card-holding, in the circumstances, had very little meaning. The general monthly meetings, during the Club's hey-day under the Fourth Republic, regularly attracted 2-300 people, sometimes twice as many if some particularly burning topic was under discussion or a special session was organised. A meeting at Morocco held in the Salle Wagram in June 1955 when the Moroccan situation was deteriorating rapidly was attended by a thousand people. But it is very hard to judge how many hard-core Jacobins there were or even broadly to estimate the extent of the public audience the Club reached over the years. If the circulation of Le Jacobin paper is taken as an indication, then one could say that the Club had a minimum circle of 1-1,500 faithful followers during the 1950's. However, this basic number was itself subject to enormous fluctuations.

In the mid-fifties, when Le Jacobin together with the Express constituted the main press supports for Mendes France, about 15,000 copies of the paper were printed, 6-8,000 sold and the rest sent out free as propaganda. Then in the early 1960's, after it had lain dormant for a period, Le Jacobin again, but only briefly, reached a circulation of 7,000. (45)

The Club took its role as an open forum very seriously. Both at its meetings and in its paper it consciously fostered an atmosphere of tolerance and restraint. A very wide range of people - from Gaullists like Jacques Chaban-Delmas and Michel Debré to François Mitterrand, Leo
Hamon, Edgar Faure, Eduard Depreux, Robert Buron — either wrote in Le Jacobin’s ‘tribune libre’ or else attended meetings. The programme announced in the first number of the paper gives a fairly representative list of the kind of topics that were discussed:
- The Defence and Development of Laicity.
- The Situation and Future of the French Union.
- How should German Rearmament be regarded?
- Technical Progress and Fiscal Reform.
- The Crisis of Justice and the Republican Order.
- Robespierre.
- The European Defence Community.

Whether the inter-party contacts and conferences that took place had any real effect is very hard to say. In 1953 a Committee for the Reconstruction of the Left was set up after a study session sponsored by the Jacobins and attended in a personal capacity by over 50 politicians and trade unionists of the Left. In its support Le Jacobin 9 sent out an appeal for subscriptions and for the creation of local action groups and departmental and national assemblies. But nothing came of this movement, for at this time the Club also became deeply involved in Mendès France’s effort to renovate the Radical Party.

One other subject that should be mentioned briefly are the Jacobins’ provincial branches. At one time or another in the 1950’s about 15 or so of these branches were recognised by the Parisian parent Club, albeit always after considerable hesitation. For the Jacobins were always concerned not to appear to be or to be mistaken for a political party. Second, there was a problem of finance. Since the Parisian Jacobins existed on a shoe-string budget, they were in no position to subsidise other groups. And, third, they saw that the supervision of provincial branches would be a difficult task, given the informal structure of the
Club, while to leave them free would be to incur the risk of their views or activities compromising the parent organisation. One of the few provincial branches that succeeded was the Jacobin Club at Marseilles and this was only because it was run by a relative of Charny, a member of the NEC.

After May 1955 when the Jacobins began actively to participate in the reform of the Radical Party, provincial centres were more than ever discouraged. Prospective Jacobins - and there were very many at this time - were advised to join their local Radical federation. Retrospectively, this has appeared as a mistaken strategy, as many young people were definitively discouraged by their reception in the Party, still controlled in the provinces by the old guard and local notables. In the circumstances, local sections of the Jacobin club might have served a useful purpose in maintaining the interest and involvement of many young Mendesists. But this happened only in North Africa and only to a limited extent. At the end of 1955 Falcoz wrote to Bonnet, a local leader, outlining a strategy of creating clubs to infiltrate the powerful rightist orientated Radical federations in North Africa and so reverse their majorities. (46) In the following year five clubs did actually hold a meeting. But, in the end, they succeeded only in making themselves unpopular with Jacques Soustelle then Minister in charge of Algeria, without achieving anything.

Being the first on the scene and lacking in experience, the Jacobin Club at first, saw only the difficulties involved in creating other groups and none of the opportunities. It was not until political clubs began to mushroom after 1958 that it began to explore the prospects in this direction with real interest.
Chapter 8.

The Jacobins and Mendesism.

Nous proclamons que le Radical-Socialisme de la IV République sans doctrines, sans méthodes, sans enthousiasme est à bout de souffle. (1)

Two men held out the hope that a break could be made with the stagnation, confusion and shabbiness of the Fourth Republic and that France could be restored to the high place in the world that was her due: General de Gaulle and Pierre Mendès France. Both men owed their popularity to a style that set them apart in the public mind from the run-of-the-mill politicians of the Third and Fourth Republics. These styles, although different, were both rooted in French tradition. De Gaulle, autocratic and a loner, represented an ancient remedy - the recourse to a political saviour. Mendès France, for all his modernising enthusiasm, was a traditional republican in his firm faith in the capacity of the people to improve themselves by the sole means of their own reason and virtue. The instrument he chose to carry out this regeneration was, symbolically enough, the oldest party in the Republic and the repository of republican traditions: the Radical Party.

Mendès differed from most other French politicians, in the first place, because he was interested in and understood economics. As a member of the Young Turk group before the war, he had been feeling his way gradually towards a liberal Keynesianism. Then, after the war, he was de Gaulle's Finance Minister. He resigned from this post in 1945 because his austerity programme was rejected as likely to prove too unpopular; inflation promptly followed. Thereafter, Mendès spent a number of years in New York as France's permanent representative at the UN's Economic and Social Council. At the Assembly in France he rarely spoke more than once a year and when he did it was to point out that
the economic modernisation of France and the continuation of the Indochina War were incompatible: the French must choose which they wanted. Economic expansion was certainly his own priority and one of his most constant themes. At the same time, Mendès was never just a clever economist, he was also an old-style republican with a particular concept of the relationship between citizen and State. And this made him aware of the growing alienation of ordinary people from the political regime, especially young people and Communist voters. The crisis, as he saw it, was one of communication and so the solutions he himself offered were primarily aimed to restore public confidence. Hence also his choice of a political vocabulary which seemed, often enough, to have been lifted directly from the Sunday sermon of some non-conformist chapel: honesty, truth, sacrifices, choices, the keeping of promises and the acceptance of moral obligations...

In June 1953, the situation in both Indo-China and Tunisia was becoming increasingly alarming and Mendès was finally called upon to form a government. He took this opportunity to put his own strict code into practice: he would choose his ministers without regard to party claims and make them promise not to join the next cabinet. This highly moralistic approach struck a deep chord in the public imagination and, given the general apathy and cynicism of the period, the response he aroused was remarkable. However, it was the politicians who had the last word and, with 202 abstaining, Mendès' first attempt to form a government was defeated.

In 1953 Mendès failed to be invested because of his recommendations for Tunisia and Indochina, yet he became Premier in June of the following year precisely on account of these same proposals. By that time, the situation in those countries, especially in Indochina, had become so desperate that the deputies had very little room for manoeuvre.
Moreover, after the failed investiture of 1953, those politicians who had blocked Mendès' path began to feel the pressure of disapproval from the left-wing electorate in their constituencies. (2)

Young people, in particular, flocked to Mendesism. To them it offered an escape from the eternal exercises in Marxist orthodoxy of the French Left; instead it stood for a scientific and pragmatic approach to modern problems, political activism and a moral attitude towards government. As one young Mendesist put it:

Mendès-France, un instant, nous aura permis de croire qu’on pouvait à la fois 'faire de la politique' et garder les mains propres, être Président du Conseil et dire la vérité. (3)

With their combative spirit, the Jacobins were among the first to heed Mendès' call to arms. On the occasion of his celebrated first investiture speech, the entire editorial committee of Le Jacobin signed an enthusiastic article supporting him. This speech, they wrote, was a quarrel between generations: all that was young in France, metaphorically rather than literally speaking, supported the deputy of the Eure. Yet, the Club's backing of Mendès France was never unconditional. To the Jacobins Mendès was more a lighthouse in the dark, a point of reference and reassurance, than a chosen path. Socially and economically, in colonial matters and in relations with the Communists, Mendès stood to the Right of them. (4) He had also accepted German Rearmament which they still bitterly opposed. Besides, the Club prided itself on its independence and for all its insistence on programmes and on unity of party policy, it was no more prepared to surrender this independence than were the clubs of 1848. It is up to us, it would maintain, to study problems and solve them ourselves. (5)

Although one Jacobin Club sometimes accused Mendès of conservatism - was Mendès not closer to Tardieu than to Blum, to Churchill than to Bevan?
one article asked (6) - it broadly supported him because his efforts seemed to be directed towards the same ends as its own. There is no point in allowing ourselves to be paralysed over a case of conscience, observed Le Jacobin on the issue of German rearmament, when the decisive issue at stake is the future political and economic health of the country. And without Mendès France the Left’s chances of achieving this would be greatly lessened. (7)

From 1954 onwards, the immediate task for Mendès was to harness the popular support he had built up in the country. However, the failure of de Gaulle’s RPF had illustrated some of the difficulties of forming a new political party. Mendes, consequently, chose to renovate the oldest party in the Republic, the one also to which he himself was attached - the Radical Party.

This was a formidable undertaking. By the early 1950’s 65% of the Radical party’s electorate was aged over 50 and only 10% was working-class. (8) Its influence in the larger towns had declined since the war and over half its electorate was localised in the south-west where the Radical federation’s rivalry with the Socialist Party tended to cut them off from the rest of the Left. This rightist orientation was even further accentuated by the pressure of the wealthy North African federations and of banking circles. The 1949 Party Congress had gone so far as to condemn nationalisation and to criticise social security.

Nonetheless, there was some support for the Mendès experiment within the party itself. In 1953, at the Party Congress at Aix les Bains, Mendès won a large measure of support for his social and economic policy. Then at the following Congress, Herriot himself symbolically handed the torch
of leadership to Mendès. Broadly, those who were favourably disposed towards Mendès tended to be either the very young or else the old who remembered the Popular Front. The big feudal barons of Radicalism, Baylet in the south-east, Maroselli in the east, maintained a benevolent neutrality so long as their own fiefs were left undisturbed. For as long as Mendès did not upset party routines too drastically, they, in common with many other notables, were quite flattered to have him as leader. (9) The real problem at the outset was that the administrative machinery was firmly in the hands of the anti-Mendèsist faction.

Here the co-operation of the Jacobins was of real importance. As soon as Mendès had resolved to take over the party, they were at his side:

Il faut que le Président du Conseil ne soit pas seul, qu'il ait derrière lui un parti moderne, capable d'affronter les élections de 1956 non seulement avec une âme, mais aussi avec une technique. Il faut que nous puissions lutter aux armes égales avec les grandes machines politiques qui se sont constituées ou rénovées après la Libération. (10)

Their first contribution was to help win over enough local federation presidents and secretary-generals for the executive committee of the Radical Party to be able to call a special congress. They did this by travelling all over France, convincing local leaders and activists of the need for change within the party.

But it was at the Extraordinary Congress itself held on the 4th of May 1955 - after Mendès had been defeated in the Assembly - that the Jacobins' unaided efforts proved decisive. A favourite ruse in the Radical party was the unscrupulous use of party membership cards by a small clique who thereby maintained their control of the party. And the Jacobins feared that in the coming party election, Martinaud-Déplat, who was in charge of the administrative machinery, would swamp the vote of those members present by using the proxy votes of absent or non-existent members. On the 4th May, Déplat lived up to expectation by
booking the congress hall for only a few hours - hoping thus to cut down the debate to a minimum. As the members present were quite clearly and enthusiastically for Mendès France it would have looked odd to them, once they had realised their strength, if Mendès had nevertheless failed to gain control of the party machinery.

At this point, there burst into the congress hall about 150 Jacobins equipped with whistles and even armed with other weightier instruments in case the Right had brought along its own supporting team of strong-arm men. The whistling and shouting - intended to prevent Martinaud-Déplat from speaking - reached such a pitch that he was forced to leave the congress hall altogether. The Jacobins, who had had the foresight to hire another hall nearby, transferred the Radicals to it. Voting there was by a show of hands and Mendès won a clear majority. (11)

As the majority of the 2,000 party activists present were actually in favour of Mendès, it might be maintained that he would have won even without the Jacobin intervention. Yet he lost in 1954 when Herriot came out in support of him and the majority were behind him. And he lost again at the Strasbourg Congress in November 1957 although the party workers had not then turned against him. There is certainly reason to believe that if he had then let loose the Jacobins again - all crammed into cars outside and rearing to go - he would have won. As it was, he strictly forbade them to interfere. In fact, one of the unanswered questions posed by Mendès' failure to renovate the party is why he never forced his opponents to defend themselves before this congress, for it might well have disowned them.

In the process of consolidation following the Extraordinary Congress of May 1955, the Jacobins were directed by Mendès to take over the administrative machinery. The party headquarters at the Place de Valois had been cleared of all documents and files by Déplat and his
colleagues, but the party was acquiring new members every day. (12) Quite soon the Administrative Presidency was replaced by a 7-member Action Committee. Of these seven only three were permanently at the party headquarters in Paris and all of them were attached to the Jacobin Club. (13) Paul Anxionnaz was Secretary-General; Georges Scali his lieutenant. Claude Panier had the important task of approving party investitures. Harris Pusais, another Jacobin, was in charge of party propaganda. And, finally, Falcoz was head of the newly-created École de Cadres whose role was the rapid training of loyal Mendesist party activists, as well as to provide the concept of man and history which it was felt that political parties ought to have. (14)

The party machinery had been captured in May. Almost immediately a project for the revision of the party statutes, giving increased influence to the party activists, was approved by the Executive Committee. But in June people were already beginning to leave for the long French summer vacation. Consequently, the confrontation between Mendesist and conservative Radicals at local level had to be postponed until late September. Then, in November, Edgar Faure brought about a dissolution of the Assembly. This meant that the Party would have to present itself to the electorate before the new broom had had time to sweep the rightists out of the cobwebbed corners of the party where they were lying low. The elections of 1956 were a bitter blow for the Mendesists.

The Republican Front that stood for election on the 2nd January 1956 was not what the Jacobins had envisaged by the reunification of the Left. Without any real agreement on social or economic, far less colonial affairs, it was no more than an old-style electoral alliance containing the SFIO, the Radicals, the UDSR and the Social Republicans. Still, it presented a chance for the Left and as such was backed by the Jacobins, some of whom stood to be elected under the banner of Mendès France. The Club itself,
Le Jacobin was at pains to point out, was standing above the melee.

Despite the entry of 52 Poujadists into the Chamber, the Republican Front won a modest victory. Outside his own constituency, the Paris area was the one most favourable to Mendès France. As radicalism traditionally had little influence there, the Mendesists had less to contend with than in strong party fiefs. The radical federations of the Seine area acquired around 13,000 new members and this was the work of young and devoted new-comers rather than the old party cadres.

Ces nouveaux militants qui payaient leurs cotisations, venaient aux comités, allaient coller des affiches en scooter, étaient un type inconnu au parti radical: des activistes. (15)

Foremost among these activists were, of course, the Jacobins. Quite a few of them were elected and the Club itself was temporarily turned into a campaign committee for Charles Hernu. Mendès himself attached some value to their effort and wrote to Hernu that he was well aware that a large part of the credit for the satisfactory result of the elections must go to the Jacobins, both in Paris and in the provinces. (16)

Although the elections themselves had been moderately successful, neither Mendès France nor the Jacobins were particularly satisfied. For the Socialist Guy Mollet, as leader of the largest coalition party, had been nominated Premier and Mendès had even been denied the post of Foreign Minister he wanted, on account of MRP objections. (17) In addition, the Mollet Government, despite its electoral promises that new and conciliatory methods would be used in Algeria to regain the confidence of the local population, soon began moving in the opposite direction and became even more repressive. This deteriorating situation in Algeria formed the sombre backdrop both to Mendès' own personal decline and to his failure to reconstruct the Radical Party.

Thirty to forty more loyal deputies would have made all the difference
to Mendès' premiership in 1954. (18) Now, in 1956, he was scarcely better off, for the hard core of deputies he could rely on numbered no more than a dozen. These called themselves the 'élus protestataires'. They were mainly young, mostly Jacobins from the Seine area and in revolt both against Mollet's accession to the Premiership instead of Mendès and against the new regime's Algerian policy. (19) On Algeria they opposed each vote of confidence thus over-turning successively Mollet, Bourges-Manoury and Gaillard.

With the administrative machinery under control, it was the party's parliamentary group that caused trouble. All the Radical Party's traditions - the independent personalities of Radical parliamentarians; the autonomy of local federations; preoccupation with political office at the expense both of principles and programmes - worked against Mendes France's efforts to transform the party into a disciplined unit. Although the 'élus protestataires' also threw all their weight in the balance to this end - sometimes actually embarrassing Mendès by their high-principled stands - there were not, in the last resort, enough of them to force the pace. When Mollet became Prime Minister, they declared that Mendès ought not to participate in the new government. It took all Mendès' powers of persuasion to bring them to accept that it was against the national interest to provoke a ministerial crisis so soon after the elections. They were relieved when he finally resigned of his own accord on the 23rd of May, but they wanted him to take the Radical ministers with him. He could not have done this, even if he had tried, but the Jacobins, in particular, almost split on this issue. Only Mendès' personal appeal for compromise saved the situation. Hernu had already once threatened to resign when, just after the elections, Radical parliamentarians stopped coming to party meetings. But this threat had no more effect than his proposal, advanced a little later, that the party should define a coherent long-term policy
with the general objective of improving the standard of living. Felix Gaillard remarked that it would raise too many problems...(20) \textit{Liberation} was only too accurate in its comment at the beginning of April that, beyond a small group of Jacobins, faithful - more than faithful - to Mendesism, the majority of the Radical Party remained what it had been before its renovation. (21) With Queuille and Morice condemning the Party's 'defeatism' in Algeria (i.e. Mendes' policy) and the growth of an anti-Mendesist movement calling for group leadership, a show-down was becoming inevitable. It came at the Party Congress in Lyon in October 1956. Mendès France won a vote of confidence by 1,006 to 426 and André Morice and his friends went off to form another party. To this so-called party they attached a Club - the Club des Montagnards - which represented the right wing of Freemasonry while the Jacobins, of course, represented its left wing. (22) Ostensibly the Club was intended to prove to the public that the secessionists were not just staid elderly gentlemen - clubs being connected in the popular mind with radical activism. But the loose club structure no doubt appealed to the Morice faction for much the same reasons as it did to the Jacobins.

However, if Mendès France envisaged that the departure of Morice and his friends would open a glorious new era, such hopes were disappointed. The parliamentarians behind him had never been very numerous but now even some of them were falling away: Leclercq voted for the government, while Hugues and Rolland abstained. In a letter to Hernu on the subject, Mendès expressed his disappointment: 'Nous ne pouvons pas, de ce côté, affirmer un front homogène et cela est vraiment très gênant.' (23) Moreover, as hysteria over Algeria continued to mount, he was losing support even more rapidly in the Party and in the country. When the powerful south-west federation turned against him it was an unmistakable signal that his star...
was on the wane. Then, finally, his attempt to impose voting discipline failed when put to the test shortly after it had been accepted at a party meeting in March 1957 at Chartres. The Bureau refused to expel two deputies who would not appear before it. Mendes concluded that he could no longer make his will prevail as party leader and he resigned on the 23rd of May 1957. (24)

Why did Mendès fail to keep his grip on the Party? And what conclusions about the Club may be drawn from the Jacobins' involvement in the revival of Radicalism?

There were two fundamental and inter-related reasons for Mendès' failure: Algeria and the Socialist Party. A genuine alliance between Socialists and Mendesists might have strengthened Mendès' hand against the Radical parliamentarians. But with Mollet as premier and Lacoste operating in Algeria, such an alliance was ruled out. Another reason, but one which would probably have been less decisive in other circumstances, was the long period of time needed to overhaul the party machine. Local deputies would brook no interference in their own particular fiefs, while to build up new federations was a slow process. In some areas - notably in the Bas-Rhin - the new team had some notable successes in building new federations, but without a deputy even these were not immediately useful. About ten years of painstaking effort would probably have been necessary for the Mendesists to gain the upper hand in the Radical Party. (25)

Then there were other factors, less important in themselves, but which loomed far larger once Mendès was already on the down-grade and hastened his fall. These were mainly connected with the faction that gravitated around Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber and his paper L'Express. These people who, unlike Hernu and his Jacobins, were foreign bodies in
the Radical Party, sometimes acted with considerable lack of circumspection. Non-radicals like Brigitte Gros, Servan-Schreiber’s sister, were simply parachuted into the Party’s Bureau. And, although tighter organisation was obviously necessary, the way that it was carried out was often insensitive. For instance, the veteran ex-premier Queuille was once stopped on his way into a congress and asked to show his party card ... Altogether, the Radicals did not appreciate being expected to take orders from the Express contingent and their resentment grew constantly more bitter. There was another less excusable source of friction: Servan-Schreiber himself and many of his group were Jewish and in the Radical Party there had always existed a strand of anti-semitism. Mendès France, who was prudent enough to ensure that Rene Mayer, also Jewish, would not stand for present election near his own constituency in Normandy but in North Africa, could perhaps have made more effort to forestall the growth of anti-Jewish feeling in the party. Then, another point, Mendès tended to forget that the activists sometimes liked to win, too, and was unwisely negligent of such matters as cantonal elections. Finally – and probably unknown to Mendès himself – there developed inside the party an atmosphere of intrigue and dishonesty that made the ordinary member uneasy and suspicious. In 1955 the Mendesists had won control of the party leadership by a show of hands; thereafter, their victories were not always so open. Even if their ends were justified, their means were counter-productive, for they thereby greatly hampered the development of that solid morale as a group which would have enabled them to lie low for a number of years if necessary and slowly improve their position inside the party. (26)

If the Jacobins had no part in such underhand activities – their own methods being infinitely more extrovert – it can scarcely be said that they achieved great wonders in the administrative domain. Anxionnaz, who, as Secretary-General, should have been taking the party machine in
hand, was rarely at the Party Headquarters, having been appointed Secretary of State for the Navy. Scali, his assistant, was not especially cut out to be an administrator. Charles Hernu was directing all his dynamism into his duties as deputy. The Jacobins had been the only team available to look after the party machinery but they, it turned out, were not especially interested in the task. From the start they had insisted that the Club maintain its independence and all their energies they expended either in being deputies or in helping others to become deputies. Hernu has explained this as the natural outcome of the Club's general philosophy, according to which democracy means essentially the intimate connection between electorate and deputy rather than the organisation of some mass party. (27)

The point should not be over-stated, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that at the core of the Jacobins' involvement in the renewal of the Radical Party there was a contradiction, only partly concealed. On the one hand, the Club preached a united effort; on the other hand, it insisted on its own independence. On the one hand, it demanded discipline; on the other hand, it took pride in reaching its own conclusions and making its own choices independently. It saw the importance of the Radical Party's administrative structure and worked hard to gain hold of it, yet it failed to follow through this initial effort. If the Radical Party had actually become transformed into the kind of monolithic Labour Party which the Jacobins, in principle, wanted, might they not then themselves have been the first to abandon ship to take to that all-purpose raft, the Jacobin Club? It cannot, of course, be said with certainty but the suspicion remains...

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At the beginning of the summer of 1958, Mendès France wrote to Hernu:

Il faut indiquer de la manière la plus énergétique que
The UFD - Union des Forces Démocratiques - had been rapidly set up after de Gaulle's accession to power by Daniel Meyer, President of the League of the Rights of Man. Like many of the groups that sprouted at this time it was intended primarily as a kind of watchdog in case the Gaullist regime should turn fascist; beyond that it was meant to be the basis for a general coalition of the left-centre, non-communist spectrum of opinion that opposed de Gaulle. (29) But so far as Mendès and the Jacobins were concerned membership of this new structure was not originally intended to supplant their commitment to the Radical Party. This change occurred only under the pressure of events. The first of these was the massive defeat of the left and centre-left parties at the elections in the autumn. Many Radicals, in particular, rallied to Gaullism and so there seemed to the Mendésists to be very little point in lying low within the Party in the hopes of a future seizure. But the Jacobins themselves did not formally leave the Radical Party until it forbade double membership with the Club in February 1959. (30)

The first phase of the Club's attachment to Mendès France had ended - and ended in failure. The next phase was, if anything, even less successful and never involved more than a quarter of its members. Nevertheless, this period deserves to be dealt with, if only briefly, because of the general insight it offers into the club movement that now started to develop.

The UFD was composed of a number of groups and individuals who were referred to in the 1950's as the New Left. Like the Jacobins themselves, this New Left had its intellectual origins in the 1930's and it carried forward not just the themes and preoccupations of the earlier movement but also the heterogeneity that had been one of its essential characteristics.
The most critical event in the development of this New Left was the Socialist Party Congress of 1946. After the Resistance there was a new political vocabulary in the air—words like 'travaillisme' and 'humanisme'. In the circumstances the Socialist Party had three choices: 1) to remain itself and thereby probably to forego all possibilities of growth; 2) to ally itself with the new humanist and spiritualist groups on its Right; 3) to come to some kind of agreement with the Communist Party. (31) Léon Blum, the thinker of the Socialist Party, inclined towards the second solution: the moment had come, he believed, for the Party to open itself out and adapt to changing conditions. Its materialist philosophy should be attenuated, its concept of the class struggle transformed. But Guy Mollet, doctrinaire and intransigent, won the day and the Marxist orthodoxy of the Social Democratic tradition was not challenged.

C'est un moment important de l'histoire du socialisme français. La SFIO a peut-être laissé échapper une occasion unique de se renouveler. (32)

This decision meant that anarchist Personalists, humanist Socialists and the more left-oriented among the modernist reformers from the 1930's were left without a home in a political party beyond the minute Jeune République party. There were also other politically homeless or isolated groups and individuals who were either Marxist or had Marxist leanings: Communists who had been excluded or resigned from the Party, Trotskyists and the Union Progressists, a short-lived post-Resistance group who advocated the unity of the Communists and the Socialists. Then there were personalities who had left or had been excluded from a variety of different parties: Both Vallon and Capitant were ex-RPF; Claude Bourdet, André Denis and Leo Hamon had been excluded from the MRP; Sartre and Camus were ex-RDR; David Rousset was ex-SFIO. The range of political opinion was very wide. Almost all that the New Left groups had in
common - beyond left-wing political tendencies, of course - was their rejection of all the main existing political parties. The Communist Party was too authoritarian or insufficiently revolutionary or not modern-minded enough. The MRP was too exclusively Catholic and was soon compromised by its colonial adventures. The Radical Party, always suspect to revolutionaries, socialists and modernists alike, was finally eliminated as a possible haven when Mendès withdrew from it.

The New Left, therefore, had to organise itself as best it could around reviews or personalities, in small parties, in loose or ad hoc groupings. These groupings were often very mixed, but sometimes there existed a dominant tendency within them. Besides the Union Progressistes, the Marxists were often to be found in Centre d’Action des Gauchoes Indépendants, a mainly electoral structure that never succeeded in having any candidates elected, or sometimes in the Mouvement de Libération du Peuple, predominantly working-class and Catholic. Otherwise the left-wing Catholics collected around such reviews as Esprit, Témoinage Chrétien, Reconstruction (33), in the Jeune République party or in the groups Vie Nouvelle and the Mouvement de Libération Ouvrier - the first middle-class and the second mainly working-class in membership. The Express collected the modernising reformers and Combat, then later France-Observateur the humanist socialists. (34)

The first attempt at co-ordinated action made by the New Left was on the occasion of the municipal elections of 1953. But this was short-lived and not very far-reaching for the issue of German rearmament split the movement down the middle. It was really Mendès France's failure to become Premier and then his resignation from the government in 1956 that brought home to the New Left the harmfulness of its own divisions. The Algerian War stimulated the search for something beyond the habitual loose and shifting attachments and it also, for the time being, papered
over the very substantial political differences between the groups. These various factors together created a dynamic drive towards unity and, after a long gestation period, the New Left finally brought forth two political parties: the Union de la Gauche Socialiste in 1957 and the Parti Socialiste Autonome one year after. (35) Later, in 1961, the two united to form the Parti Socialiste Unifié.

In 1958 the die was not yet cast for the PSA and the UGS; they might have developed in a number of different directions. And as they were both much concerned that the socialism of the future should be democratic and were both interested in attracting the young and what they termed the new social classes, the prospects were hopeful enough. (36) But the Jacobin Club, from its own experiences in the past, was suspicious of the New Left, considering it to be too intellectual, too Parisian and disproportionately anti-political. (37) It therefore created the CAD - Centre d’Action Démocratique - at the beginning of 1959 so as to give Mendesists a meeting point and base separate from the UFD and to create a reception centre for those who felt that they could no longer stay in the Radical Party. (38) But the CAD also had another aim: to serve Mendesists and Jacobins as a launching pad into the PSA. The idea of a small, structured party was supplanting the wider coalition the UFD represented and Mendès France, who joined the PSA later on in the year, was already urging his supporters to do likewise. The Jacobins judged that if they entered the new party on bloc rather than individually they would obtain better terms - hence the CAD. (39)

Mendès' calculation behind this move seems to have been as follows: the Radical Party represents traditional social classes, while it is the new ones that must be sought and they are more likely to be attracted by a totally new organisation. Next, there was a widespread
belief in the political circles of the Left that a revulsion against Gaullism was bound to come at some point quite soon and that some substitute for it must be created in advance. Also Mendès - and many others - thought that his personal membership of the PSA would attract thousands of his supporters of earlier years - which turned out to be a miscalculation. Another miscalculation was that a large number of Socialist deputies were behind the SFIO secessionists and would follow them into the PSA. (40)

The ex-CADists - for Mendès had insisted that the CAD be dissolved and that its members join the PSA individually - were not happy at the prospect. Hernu, who followed Mendès mainly out of loyalty, wrote to him: 'Si vous devez adhérer au PSA, j'avoue que c'est avec une grande inquiétude que je vous suivrai.' (41) Falcoz, like the majority of Mendesists and Jacobins, refused to join and informed Mendès of his objections to the PSA. First, he believed it would turn out to be more interested in tactical combat against the SFIO than in the search for new paths to Socialism. This would involve Mendès in exhausting internal party battles to prevent provocative initiatives and unrealistic declarations intended only to make the PSA seem more to the Left than the SFIO. And secondly, he thought the PSA did not really correspond to what young people wanted because it was not modern enough. (42)

The lack of understanding between the Mendesists and Jacobins on the one hand and the PSA on the other was really fundamental, for the growing sectarianism and doctrinaire socialism of the PSA was quite unpalatable to their new partners. While the PSA had set itself the task of steering a path between Stalinism and bourgeois reformism, the Jacobins and their friends were in fact perfectly at ease with bourgeois reformism and did not in the least appreciate the lessons in Socialism read to them by the Party.
Even Mendès himself had to clarify his view on the class struggle. But his supporters were much more harshly treated. The PSA showed great unwillingness to admit Charles Hernu on the grounds that as a bourgeois element he endangered its doctrinal purity. After being subjected to an examination on Socialism, he was finally forced on the Federation of Noisy-le-Sec in December 1959 as a member after it had refused to accept him. (43) This pattern was repeated in countless other cases. Hernu complained to Mendès:

...Je crains que l'enthousiasme de nos amis du CAD ne se transforme vite en amertume; plusieurs secteurs du PSA de la Seine font en effet passer des examens probatoires sur le socialisme à nos amis et envisagent même de refuser de leur accorder le droit de voter et de prendre la parole pendant six mois. (44)

Even Mendès himself was driven to remark sourly on the generosity of the PSA in according two out of twenty-five leading party posts to his supporters after they had brought it half its members. (45) By 1960 the new party had finally betrayed its early promise: it had become as sectarian as the Jacobins had predicted, one more minor faction without any real hope of rallying the Left or of serious electoral potential. The results achieved by ex-CAD members were negligible and even those small successes they had been able to score were due to a masonic influence rather than to the sympathy of the PSA. (46)

A year later, all attempts to conceal the animosity of the two young groups were abandoned and their relations grew worse. Only about a quarter of the Jacobins - and about 2,000 Mendesists - had joined the Party in the first place and many of these had dropped out already. (47) Now the Club's retreat was completed as Hernu, who had been divided in his loyalties for some time between Mendès and his Jacobins, resigned from the PSA. Hovnanian, who left before him, accused the PSA of being too narrow, too doctrinaire, too rigid. Hernu reproached it for
equivocation towards the traditional parties. In his letter of resignation to Depreux, leader of the PSA, he wrote:

D'une part on y condamne les partis traditionels mais, d'autre part, on veut negocier à tout prix avec la SFIO, en matiere electorale notamment. (48)

Mendès France, while admitting the PSA's tendency to be divided into numerous warring factions (49), nevertheless tried to persuade Hernu to stay. But this time in vain. Quite apart from his indignation at what he considered to be a systematic attempt on the part of the PSA to crush his friends, Hernu had also had enough of the ungrateful task of acting as Mendès' spokesman in the party. (50) In October 1962, the Jacobins were back full circle, very much in the same position they had been in before 1955, for the unity of the Left was as distant as ever.

While still in the PSA, the Jacobin Club had collaborated with R&W. Thorp, a liberal lawyer, in organising a series of conferences termed the 'Colloques Juridiques'. The themes of these conferences were Algeria and civil liberties, but their principal objective was to hammer out a programme around which the Left would be able to rally. When the Club was thrown back on its own resources again, it followed through this initiative. And in March 1963 the Centre d'Action Institutionelle was formed. Apart from the Jacobins themselves, it included Thorp, François Mitterrand and his supports from the Ligue pour le Combat Républicain, a new group formed after de Gaulle's rise to power in 1958.

In the 1950's Mitterrand had written several times for Le Jacobin's open forum but his relationship with the Club had never been close.
Moreover, he had been one of the ministers who did not resign with Mendès over Algeria and he had been sharply criticised by the Jacobins at that time. Then, after May 1958 and at the elections in the autumn of that year, Mitterand and the Jacobins found themselves on the same side, equally opposed to de Gaulle for his violation of the republican Constitution. But a close association only began in 1962 when, after a meeting on Algeria at the Mutualité, both Hernu and Mitterand were chased and maltreated by the police. (51) This was the start of a new phase for Hernu and the Jacobin Club, but one that in all essential respects was a repeat of the pattern of the past seven years. Only now Hernu became the right-hand man of Mitterand instead of Mendès France, while the instrument chosen to renovate and unite the Left was no longer an old party but a new mouvement of political clubs especially created for the purpose by the Jacobin Club and Mitterand. (52)
Chapter 9.

Motivation and Membership

... entre le 10 mai et le 17 juin 1940, les Français eurent le pressentiment qu'un événement redoutable venait de les atteindre: ils songèrent que peut-être la France était morte. Tout leur effort intellectuel dans les vingt ans qui suivirent consista en une formidable volonté d'oublier ces jours d'agonie. Aujourd'hui, dans les claîeurs algériennes, l'inquiétude d'alors remonte à la surface. Et pour la première fois chacun se pose à voix basse la question: la France existe-t-elle encore? (1)

In May 1959 the worsening crisis in Algeria dealt a final blow to the French Republic. General De Gaulle emerged from political retirement and was named President du Conseil by President Coty before being granted full constitutional powers by Parliament. But both De Gaulle's intentions with regard to Algeria and, initially at least, his constitutional plans were shrouded in obscurity and ambiguity. For the first few weeks after May many people feared that the General was merely a convenient democratic screen behind which an army coup was being prepared. And even when they no longer feared this, they lived for a period in the daily dread that parachutists were about to descend from the skies on Paris. Yet public opinion on the whole remained about as indifferent now to the collapse of the Fourth Republic as it had been passive previously when the Third had disappeared. In the uncertainty and menace of the political climate in 1958, as after 1940, only a minority was activated by a traditional reflex to defend the Republic - and, once again, the minority was often made up of isolated individuals and groups without political affiliation rather than of the official, organised bodies of society.

The motivations of most of those who had joined the French war-time Resistance, outside the Communists perhaps, had been instinctive rather than intellectual. The spirit of the Resistance was, as Georges Bidault once described it, 'un etat d'esprit doublé d'un acte de foi.' (2)
this he meant a proud refusal to accept humiliation or to allow the State to be taken over; a stubborn reassertion in the face of crisis, disaster or overwhelming odds of patriotic republican convictions and the democratic values they implied; and, finally, faith that the political regime could be salvaged and a fresh start be made. It was this essentially moralistic impulse to bear witness — 'porter témoignage' — rather than any hope of inflicting serious military damage on the occupying German forces that moved the French Résistance: 'L'intransigeance morale fut le point de départ de toute action résistante'. (3)

The first steps in the creation of the Club Jean Moulin were of the same moral order. The Club was a symbol of republican refusal before it was an organisation with a set purpose or a specific function. It was created by its founders because, being determined to defend the Republic, they supposed vaguely that to establish contacts with like-minded people and collect information would at least be a start in that direction rather than because they had a master-plan with which to confront the situation. But besides outraged national pride and the smarting sense of humiliation that France could be brought down to the level 'd'une quelconque république sud-américaine', as the Club later put it, there was an additional poignancy about the situation in 1958 in that the country was on the verge of civil war. At the turn of the century 'décadence' had been variously blamed on Jews, freemasons or Protestants. The defeat of 1940 could be ascribed to German treachery. But 1958 was a different matter. There was no scapegoat to hand. Moreover the process of demoralisation that had taken place under the Fourth Republic ruled out any such facile explanations for the collapse of the Republic as had been current in the past. If Frenchmen were ready to fight Frenchmen and the State was once more on the point of
disintegration, the conclusion was inescapable in 1958 that only the French were responsible.

There were other important differences between the Résistance situation and 1958. Outside the Communist Party — and later the Socialist Party — the Résistance had recruited people with little or no political experience. If many felt drawn eventually by force of circumstances to concern themselves with politics, their main preoccupation continued to be active combat. Ideas inherited mainly from the non-conformists of the thirties were put together hastily in hiding and sometimes more carefully prepared by commissions in Algiers. But nothing approaching a coherent or precise programme emerged or, for that matter, could emerge given the circumstances of the time and the wide differences among the various Resistance groups. While often acutely conscious of the ill-adaptation of French political structures, the Résistance was a kind of baptism of fire and fraternity — especially between Catholics and non-Catholics — before it was a practical political movement.

In 1958, on the other hand, the danger of fascism soon receded, if only provisionally, and it became clear fairly rapidly that de Gaulle intended to uphold the Constitution. Consequently, the energies of those who found themselves in clubs such as Jean Moulin were freed almost immediately from para-military activity for the more intellectual task of political reconstruction. Moreover, the membership of the Club Jean Moulin was relatively homogeneous, a fact which greatly contributed to its sense of purpose and efficacity. And finally, the body of new political ideas that had accumulated within French society over a decade was both more precise and coherent than it had been at the Liberation.

The motor that set these various forces into motion was an acute sense of unease as to the relevance of French values and institutions.
In 1940 the same unease had been widely current, but only for a brief period. Then France took her place among the victors having decided, with relief, that she was still a great nation. The doubt, however, did not really disappear. And by 1958 it had both deepened and reached a wider public. For some, and they were often of the generation who had been in late adolescence at the time of the Libération, doubt had even hardened into certainty: the pace of the modern world being increasingly rapid, unless France made an immediate and urgent attempt to pull herself up by her political bootstraps, she might never again be able to catch up. (4)

The Club des Jacobins, formed in 1951, was mainly a traditional reassertion of republican and democratic principles in the face of what its members considered to be the decline of the State. The Club Jean Moulin, set up seven years later in response to a crisis of the State and a colonial war, was also this. But it was something more: it marked the realisation that traditional republican values needed to be inserted into a new type of society - industrial, urbanised society - which required new political forms and attitudes. The Fourth Republic, despite all its political shortcomings, had been a period of sustained, vigorous economic expansion: in 1954 the growth rate had reached 5.5% and averaged over 5% thereafter. (5)

Consciousness of the importance of modernisation and the need for an urgent, total overhaul of the French State and society was not, of course, new. When on a visit to New York just after the Liberation, General de Gaulle made a grandiose speech on the glory and grandeur of France, the response of Jean Monnet, first head of the French Planning Commissariat, had been characteristically dry: 'Les Français sont grands et la France est grande, mais sa production est faible, ses méthodes antiques. La France, il faudrait la moderniser.' (6) His warning,
even then, had been that there was no time to be lost: 'Il n'y a pas de choix pour la France sinon entre une décadence graduelle et l'action immédiate.' (7) The gauntlet thrown down by Monnet had been taken up individually by a generation of new men, mainly administrators, holding new ideas who restaffed the French economy after the War and had contributed as much, if not more, to expansion than technology and economic structures. (8) In the Club Jean Moulin it was taken up at a more conscious and directly political level: it was the ambition of the Club to make the French realise that there was an alternative to General de Gaulle's highly personal vision of French grandeur, that a new industrial phase of French national existence was starting and that it only had to be understood, defined and willed to exist.

The first of the series of telephone calls which started the Club Jean Moulin were made by Daniel Cordier, secretary to the Résistance hero Jean Moulin and himself a former war-time Resister. (9) Cordier's political evolution between 1940 and 1958 is interesting, since his personal change in outlook is symbolic of a much wider change in attitude in certain sections of French public opinion and goes a long way to explaining why people should have felt the desire or need to join a club in 1958.

Cordier's image of France as a great power and a force to be reckoned with in the world had been formed when, as a child, he had been deeply impressed by the parts of the famous Angkor Watt temples from Cambodia on display at the 1931 Colonial Exhibition at Versailles. Yet, in 1940, France fell in only a few weeks. Cordier, who was then very young, joined the Résistance out of defiant republicanism rather than for any
well-defined intellectual reasons. 'Le nazisme, c'est trop fort!' summed up his attitude at the time.

By 1958 Cordier had become a well-known international art dealer with no political links whatever. Like many others he had been disappointed in his hopes of seeing a political renaissance in France after the Libération and had withdrawn totally from public life without ever having joined a political party. (10) Then in May 1958 he was deeply shocked to see the French State crumble practically without resistance for the second time in his own life-span. The French State, so it seemed to him, could practically be taken over by anyone who chose.

This time his reaction went beyond republican activism. Although neither an intellectual nor a doctrinaire socialist, Cordier felt that the time had come for the Left to revise its social, economic and political analyses fundamentally, since neither the Third nor the Fourth Republic had been able to inspire sufficient loyalty to save themselves.

The first person Cordier telephoned, Stephane Hessel, was decisive for the future orientation of the club. Hessel had been a former Résistance friend of Cordier's, but he was also a brilliant intellectual and high-placed liberal civil servant dealing with French overseas territories at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Before the War, Hessel, a German-Jewish expatriate, had been placed first in the entrance examinations to the literary elite school, the Ecole Normale Supérieure. Disqualified as a foreigner, he re-sat the examinations as a naturalised French citizen and came first again. His war record was equally distinguished. But the war marked him permanently, leaving him with a deep and lasting horror of torture and the trappings of dictatorial regimes.

The third Résistance member in the original team which founded the Club Jean Moulin was Marcel Degliame, a massive, colourful character who had been Chief Saboteur of the southern region of France during the war.
He was a fellow-traveller of the Communists but no intellectual. Another notable Résistance personality, Philippe Vianney, joined a little later on after the Club had been set up. As a student during the war, he had edited a paper with a very personalist flavour *Cahiers de Défense de la France*. He was bitterly disappointed by the kind of Republic established by de Gaulle after the Liberation for he was among those who had hoped to see the total transformation and rejuvenation of French political structures. (11)

The other four members of the original team illustrated various political side-effects of the Résistance. Aged around twenty at the Libération, they had been too young to fight but old enough to be romantically affected by the idealism and mystique of the period. They were: Jean Aptaekman, Francis Dumont, Jean-Pierre Vivet and Claude Mahias. For them, as for many of the first members, the improvisation of the Club's early days, the hunt for roneo machines, the paraphernalia of secret printing presses, radio stations and watch words was a belated but none the less exciting occasion to exercise the regret at not having taken part in the Résistance.

Romanticism played its part in moving a section of the Libération generation to look for some kind of political commitment in 1958, but they were also influenced by more serious considerations. Claude Mahias is a case in point. In the immediate post-Liberation period he had been part of the Left intellectual circles around Albert Camus at the Résistance newspaper *Combat*. After a time he had drifted away from political involvement, partly out of disillusionment with the
Fourth Republic, partly because of personal and professional reasons. But now that the Fourth Republic was collapsing, he felt haunted by the forgotten challenge of the Liberation and by the uneasy suspicion that the neglect on the part of people like himself was at least partially responsible for its disintegration. (12)

In May 1958 this small group of friends and acquaintances met in an elegant mansion in the Avenue Henri Martin belonging to Aptaeckman, a wealthy businessman of Left-wing sympathies. The atmosphere was not reassuring. The loyalty of the army, the police and even the administration was openly in doubt. And the comings and goings next door where Jacques Soustelle lived were an ominous indication of the activities of supporters of French Algeria. The situation, all agreed, was profoundly disquieting. But it was difficult to decide what exactly should be done. Collect weapons, go underground ...? The other debate was around the name the group should adopt. Association for the Republic, Human Rights, Liberty, Freedom ...? The second point was settled by Hessel who, inspired by Cordier's contact with Jean Moulin and, perhaps, his own link with the administration, selected the name: Club Jean Moulin. The term 'Club' was chosen primarily because Hessel intended the group to be a 'think-tank'.

Jean Moulin was useful also because it showed that the Club's opposition to General de Gaulle was not on account of the General's role in the war. (13)

Jean Moulin himself personified the particular brand of heroic liberal humanism that was the original hallmark of the Club. Before the war Moulin had been a civil servant in Pierre Cot's Air Ministry in the Popular Front Government. When the Germans invaded France he was a prefect at Chartres. It was an initial brutal encounter here with occupation forces that decided him to take a political stand.
A republican by sympathy and background, he had previously been linked with the Radical Party without apparently playing an active political role within it. Now he went underground and eventually joined the Free French in London. From there he returned secretly to France as General de Gaulle's envoy to form the National Council of the Resistance. Eventually, in 1943 he was betrayed to the Gestapo, tortured and killed. (14)

Some of Moulin's activities and ambitions were to be closely echoed in the thinking of the Club: notably his attempts to persuade the left-wing parties within the National Council of the Resistance to unite and his founding of the study group, the Comité Général d'Études, to draw up a blueprint for the political renewal of post-war France. But if he became the patron of the Club it was less on account of his official positions and activities than because he symbolized a French republican model: that of the readiness of the ordinary French citizen to rise heroically to the occasion and defend the Republic in moments of danger and crisis. At the Club's second premises in the rue Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, a small flame burned continuously next to Jean Moulin's photograph, underlining his image of patriotic saint.

The Club itself was not plunged into Resistance-type activities for long, although sub-groups continued to operate in secret against the OAS until 1961-2. When it became evident that de Gaulle did not mean to overturn the Constitution, the emphasis in the Club switched to study and research. At this point some of the romantics among the original nucleus, observing that civil servants were beginning to flock in and noting the replacement of whisky by orange juice, decided it was time to fade out. Danyer Cordier stayed on as Honorary President and continued to take an interest in the Club's activities, but Hessel now became the key figure.
Hessel, a diplomat in his early forties, had neither the habitual hawkish profile nor the sharp, birdlike brilliance of many French intellectuals. With his rounded features, his kindly, restrained manner, his abhorrence of conflict and air of moral authority he seemed more like a judge or a priest, or half-way between them, than a diplomat. And, in fact, he fulfilled something like the functions of both in the Club. For, while he remained in France, before being posted to Algeria in 1962, he was Jean Moulin's last court of appeal, its final resort when no solution could be found. When tempers ran high, which they sometimes did on account of the imaginative and often highly personal initiatives of Georges Suffert, the Secretary General, it was left to Hessel to reduce the tension. And even after he had left, he maintained, in a way, the Club's moral conscience and reference: what Hessel would have thought or would have done was to a certain extent the Club's yardstick. Above all, Hessel transmitted his personal style to Jean Moulin, which, as it so happened, was the embodiment of the model of anglo-saxon civic behaviour that the clubs in general were so anxious to import into France; a style characterised by moderation, compromise, fair-play and a gentlemanly agreement to differ amicably.

As a friend and former adviser of Mendès France, Hessel brought part of the Mendesist inner circle with him to the Club: Georges Boris, Jean Saint-Geours, Simon Nora, Pierre Avril. Boris never played a great role in Jean Moulin and died not long after its creation. But it is somehow fitting that he should have been a member for he was himself the very type of intellectual 'éminence grise'-having served in turn Blum, de Gaulle and Mendès France - that the Club aspired to become. Only, Boris was not so fastidious about party political commitment as many members of Jean Moulin and did not conceal that he was a life-long member of the Socialist Party. (15)
Jean Saint-Geours, a leading and influential civil servant, was head of Budget Planning at the Ministry of Finance. Pierre Avril, was a law professor and journalist. He edited the *Jahiers de la République*, a Mendesist review advocating the brand of Swedish socialism that had captured the imagination of part of the modernising new Left in the late fifties and early sixties in France. Simon Nora, an Inspecteur de Finance and commonly acknowledged to be the most brilliant civil servant of his generation, had newly returned from an EEC post in Brussels. Owing to his past association with Mendès, the top administrative posts he felt to be his due were now being withheld from him. So, for a period, he became the Club's intellectual prima donna. Unlike Boris, however, actual party commitment was unthinkable for him: the only political position he considered acceptable was a privileged one of holding power behind the throne. Nora circled the political arena rather like a cat, arch in his attitude towards political parties, anxious to remain independent but also to wield some kind of influence. However, not only the stars of Mendesism joined the Club. At the beginning there were even a few elderly Radicals who had no political home once the Radical Party had turned its back on Mendès France.

Initially, then, the Club had a strong Mendesist flavour. Had Mendès accepted to stand for the Presidency of the Republic the Club would have settled down comfortably in the role of his brains-trust. (16) And for a long time - until about 1962 - Hessel and others hoped that Mendès, being a politician, was only playing hard to get, and would in the end accept to stand. But Mendès refused to give way, on the grounds that the presidential election was contrary to French republican principles of legislative domination.

In its call for a 'new republican civic consciousness' and in the general principles it outlined, the Club's Charter was indistinguishable
from Mendesism of the fifties. These principles were: 1) Respect for individual liberties, (against torture, censorship and the racialism that had grown up during the Algerian War) 2) Self-determination for colonial countries, 3) Peace, collective security and the ending of colonial wars; 4) Social justice and international solidarity (the Plan and foreign aid); 5) Political participation; 6) National and international democracy (civic education, information, Europe). The themes and even the language of Jean Moulin in the beginning were strongly reminiscent of the Jacobin Club: 'C'est à l'intérieur de chaque citoyen qu'à l'extrême limite la démocratie meurt ou renaît.' (17) Even the stern moral exhortations to revive republican 'virtue' reappeared:

L'exemple de Jean Moulin peut inspirer aujourd'hui ceux qui, prenant conscience de leurs responsabilités dans la crise actuelle, se donnent pour tâche de rendre à la République sa vertu. (18)

The plummy republican prose of the Club's Charter and its first broadsheets soon gave way to a more sober style as the civil service element began to dominate the Club. This domination, however, was primarily intellectual because, contrary to general belief, the technocrats never formed the majority of Jean Moulin's membership. The socio-professional and age break-down was as follows: (19)

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<tr>
<td>Civil Servants</td>
<td>171</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberal Professions</td>
<td>111</td>
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<tr>
<td>(journalists, doctors, lawyers, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academics and teachers</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Private business sector</td>
<td>126</td>
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<td>Students</td>
<td>22</td>
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What these figures do not indicate is that almost all the serious work of the Club - the work that was the foundation and justification of its reputation - was done by the civil servants. But why should technocrats have felt motivated to join a political club in 1958 and after? Broadly, there were two types of cause: particular causes relating to the circumstances in which the Club was founded and general causes linked to developments within the French civil service itself.

In the first place Hessel naturally tended to recruit members for the Club from among his own friends, who, like himself, frequently came from top administrative circles. It was Hessel, for instance, who brought Jean Ripert, the deputy Commissioner of the Plan to Jean Moulin. Ripert, in turn, brought Etienne Hirsch, the Commissioner himself. Had it not been for the early adhesion of such stars of the French administration, the Club's quasi-opposition to Gaullism might have deterred more civil servants from joining. As it was, their attachment gave the all-clear for lesser firmaments of safety-minded administrators to follow suit, since victimisation was made difficult for the regime by the high proportion of its top personnel that eventually found their way to the Club. At the same time, there was some attempt to conceal the identity of top members. And when the complete list of members was raided during the Algerian War, there was considerable alarm in the Club, particularly in case it had been taken by the OAS. But, such was the confusion of the time, that it eventually turned up in the Ministry of the Interior - in the hands of a member of Jean Moulin. (20)
Moreover, it should be stressed that Jean Moulin's early strategy—that of keeping a finger on the pulse of events—and its continuing preoccupation with spreading its own ideas and influence led it to take a special interest in the civil service. If the Club had no power itself, its strength was in knowing where power lay. Club members in Ministries were approached to supply lists of potential sympathisers. (21) Georges Suffert, the Club's first Secretary-General, followed a careful policy of attracting the right people and not infrequently approached top officials in the name of the Club. On the other hand, he also tended to consider anyone with influence a worthwhile catch. 'Ton Président de Laennec m'intéresse fort: ces bougres ont une sacrée influence...' he wrote to a friend regarding the President of a powerful medical association. (22)

One of the influential administrators whom Suffert attempted to recruit was François Bloch-Laine. Bloch-Laine had been Head of the Treasury under Robert Schuman when he was only 35 but was dismissed by Pinay. Thereafter, and until 1967 he ran the Caisse des Dépots at Consignations, an important State financial institution acting as a bank for the public sector, which under him became transformed into an influential instrument of State intervention for social ends. This kind of achievement explains Bloch-Laine's particular prestige in the Club. For the type of civil servants in Jean Moulin he was a prototype representing, in the words of Philippe Bauchard: 'la réussite d'un haut fonctionnaire qui n'a pas quitté le stade de technique, une certaine éthique de l'administration, un moralisme chrétien.' (23) Bloch-Laine was a kind of corsair: that is to say he was able to combine loyalty to the State with a considerable degree of personal independence and the implementation of progressive policies. He communicated a sense of purpose and initiative to administrators in that he demonstrated to them
that they could, if they chose, bring off bold initiatives. His style — the epitomy of clarity, openness and courtesy — gave them a thrill of intellectual pleasure.

Broadly speaking, there was in Bloch-Laine's general attitude towards the political and industrial Establishment — in his concern to subject the exercise of power to the scrutiny of a particular brand of Christian moralism and in his readiness to criticise French business — an aristocratic impertinence that in a sense both defined and set the limits to the Club's radicalism. But Bloch-Laine was never himself a member of Club Jean Moulin, although he remained closely associated with it, both attending meetings and organising study groups at his own home. As a prudent civil servant, he feared that the intricate operations conducted by Georges Suffert would end by compromising him. (24)

For other civil servants the Club Jean Moulin was an important and necessary outlet. The Algerian War, coming on top of the demoralisation they had suffered under the Fourth Republic made many technocrats feel the need for some specific political commitment. (25) And they were all the more ready to join the Club in preference to a political party since it had set itself the task of up-dating political thinking.

Another important explanation of the high proportion of civil servants both in Jean Moulin and in other clubs lies in the fact that the technocrats were almost the only modernising force under the Fourth Republic. The political parties were insensitive to modernising themes and when, in addition, General de Gaulle assigned them to the ash-heap of history, their potential usefulness to the modernisers as a platform from which to influence public opinion was even further diminished. On the other hand, the blockages in French society, particularly on the level of attitudes and behaviour, led the modernising technocrats to
look for some new kind of expression. And in the late fifties and early sixties a club had infinitely more chance to act as a laboratory of new ideas and as a former of opinion than any political party.

The roots of modernising technocracy in France go back to Vichy, and beyond Vichy to the thirties. But it developed fully as a national force in the fifties. It was largely the civil service that directed the big investment effort that gave France modern and competitive industries; through its control of a large public sector and with the help of techniques provided by the Plan, it contributed directly to the economic expansion under the Fourth Republic. And if an important section of French elites, including those in industry, were won over to economic development between 1945-66 the credit, as Pierre Avril points out, was due in no small measure to the technicians. (26) This impact of the administration on industry was direct as well as indirect through the notable tendency of the senior officials of the prestigious and innovatory Inspection de Finance to indulge in 'pantouflage' i.e. to transfer their service from the public to the private sector. (27)

Two new factors that made themselves felt in the fifties help to explain the transformation of the civil service - and, to a lesser extent, business management - in this period. In the first place, the generation who were aged under 45-50 underwent the influence of Keynes. (28) While this did not lead to agreement on economic theory, it did mean the appearance of a new common approach far removed from the old protectionism and fear of economic expansion. A second factor was the transition from a legalist to a socio-economic approach within the civil service, an approach that was encouraged at the Planning Commissariat and taught at the new administrative school, the Ecole Nationale d'Administration.
The considerations of form and accountancy which preoccupied their predecessor have given way to an almost obsessive attachment to the ideas of growth and modernisation which has profoundly changed the climate of the upper reaches of the public service by introducing a more positive, concrete attitude. (29)

A leading commentator on the French administration, Bernard Gournay, has identified the 'passion du concret' as a principal characteristic of the new generation who entered the administrative service after the Libération:

Soif du concret, désir d'action, volonté d'efficacité; tels semblent les maîtres-mots des nouvelles générations. Refus d'un certain verballisme, de l'éloquence creuse qui se complaît dans l'étalage des grands sentiments et la répétition des formules toutes faites. (30)

This new administrative ethos with its emphasis on content rather than form, its concern with the solid and tangible rather than with doctrine and ideology, was the mould which shaped the thinking of the Club from the very beginning and which further contributed to its attraction for other modernising groups.

Not surprisingly the Planning Commissariat, the most important modernising group of them all, was a fertile recruiting ground for the Club. From early post-war days the Commissariat had been the spearhead of the new anti-formalist, socio-economic drive against legalism and hierarchy in French society. Monnet himself always insisted that the Plan was as much an instrument to increase receptivity to change and to break down sociological barriers to development as it was a means of organising material growth. Modernisation, he would always say: 'N'est pas un état de choses, c'est un état d'esprit.' (31)

But there were also other, additional grounds for the close links that were to develop between the planning personnel and the Club Jean Moulin. For a combination of different reasons - the low average age of the planners and the wide range of activities they represented, the
Commissariat's relative independence from the Government and from budgetary pressures - the Plan had become a centre of ideas. Secondly, by the late fifties the Plan had reached the end of the first phase of its development. New ideas needed to be worked through. Planners would undoubtedly have met outside office hours to discuss the larger problems that were now emerging even if the Club Jean Moulin had never existed. But since it did exist, and since Etienne Hirsch and Jean Ripert were members, debates were carried over from the Commissariat to the Club. (32)

Etienne Hirsch, Monnet's successor at the Plan, was respected in the Club essentially for his technical knowledge, and, later, for his resistance to Gaullist nuclear policy when he became head of Euratom. His European federalist views apart, he was a Leftist of a classical social-democrat kind and his importance for the Club Jean Moulin lay more in the prestige he lent it than for any personal political influence he exerted on it.

Jean Ripert, on the other hand, was a key figure. As a young man after the Second World War he had been deeply disturbed by French claims to victory. France, he knew, was in reality a defeated country. (33) As the Planning Commission seemed to be one of the rare places where France's weakness was fully realised and dealt with, Ripert joined it in spite of that the fact that, as a newly graduated economist, he had only the haziest idea of what economic planning actually meant in practice. Economic and social problems apart, Ripert's other main interest was decolonisation. As a left-wing Catholic he was influenced by the Church's teaching on the subject and joined the review Esprit with a view to learning more about it.

In 1958 Ripert had joined the Club partly because he was afraid that General de Gaulle's return was only a cover for the preparation
of an army coup. But he also felt that although the Fourth Republic had been an economic success, it had been a political failure and the need to provide the Left with new ideas was urgent. Esprit, in Ripert's view, was too doctrinaire and unrealistic to undertake such a task, so he went to Jean Moulin. Since he had in the meantime become an important figure at the Plan - less because he himself was an innovator than because of the open-minded atmosphere he fostered - his membership was important. Among younger civil servants especially, he had acquired considerable personal authority, and in the Club his support was frequently necessary to rally a section of the members behind a project. This was to create all sorts of difficulties as Ripert - a complex, torn character - tended to reflect the Club's contradictions, especially with respect to political parties which he regarded with great suspicion, in his own person.

Ripert and the parallel activities and interest of the Club and the Plan together attracted a high-powered contingent from the Commissariat. Many of the leading personalities at the Plan, or in services linked with it, were among the most active members of Jean Moulin: Pierre Uri; Paul Lemerle; Bernard Cazes; Pierre Viot; Jean-Paul Reynard; Michel Astorg; Yves Ullmo; Claude Gruzon. Pierre Masse, a former member of X-Crise who succeeded Hirsch in 1959 often came to the Club and addressed it, but he never became a member. Another former member of X-Crise who did join was Alfred Sauvy, an eminent demographer and the director of INED. Sauvy had been drawing attention to France's demographic decline and insisting on the urgent need for economic expansion from the thirties.

Lastly, for certain left-wing elements in the administration the Club Jean Moulin constituted an intellectual refuge. Once it became obvious that Gaullism was more than a temporary parenthesis and was
likely to last, a number of civil servants whose sympathies were on the Left found themselves out on a limb. Rather than give their ideas to the regime which they feared would claim credit for them while at the same time emptying them of their vital content, they preferred to work on them in the Club. Although it was habitually stifled under layers of responsibility and respectability, there was nevertheless a certain devil-may-care element in Jean Moulin which derived considerable satisfaction from obstructing and frustrating the Establishment.

Representative of this current and at the same time of the Club's most dynamic and hard-working core was Sylvian Lourie, a young civil servant at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs introduced to Jean Moulin by Hessel. Trained as an economist in the United States, Lourie had spent a lot of time out of France and so was more aware than most how ill-adapted many French political and social structures were to the conditions of the second half of the twentieth century. He was also of the generation permanently marked by the vision of the Résistance. His nationalism, consequently, was not narrow and chauvinistic but modernist: France must be more open to the outside world and more ready to accept change. With this went a profound impatience with traditional political attitudes, and particularly with the parties of the Left which, as he saw it, were less concerned with the genuine problems of the moment and concrete achievements than with ideological posturing. On the other hand, he was no Gaullist either. And so, having no other outlet, he joined the Club. But although it satisfied him intellectually, Jean Moulin never really gave him the opportunity to participate actively in matters to do with everyday life. Lourie yearned for what he called 'dustbin' politics but he was to find that while the Club discussed anglo-saxon civism at great length it was never able—or perhaps ultimately, willing—to come to grips with it concretely. (35)
As for the anti-Gaullism of the Club, this needs careful qualification. No personal attack was ever made by the Club on de Gaulle, nor was there ever any clear agreement on what Gaullism represented socially or historically. (36) Some administrators, such as Lourie for example, were quite unambiguously anti-Gaullist. Others joined the Club solely on account of the Algerian War and were not really anti-Gaullist at all, except in so far as the General seemed to be delaying unnecessarily in ending the War. When, after 1962, they found themselves in quasi-opposition to the regime but no longer sustained in this difficult position by moral fervour against an unjust war, many left. Thereafter - and especially as it soon became involved in drawing up a political programme for the opposition Presidential candidate, Gaston Defferre - the Club's political position on the Left became more clearly defined.

If the gap between the late fifties and the non-conformist intellectuals of the thirties was bridged by the presence of former members of X-Crise in Jean Moulin, another link with the thirties appears with the arrival in the Club of a group from the review Esprit.

After the War Esprit was still steering its left-wing course between Communism and 'bourgeois capitalism'. However, as the prevailing winds on the Left after the Résistance and Libération were blowing strongly in the direction of Communism, it was partially carried with them. Mounier, who ran the review until his death in 1950, like many others who had been closely associated with the Résistance, refused to envisage political action that would cut him off from the masses or to allow the Communist Party to be shut away in its ghetto after its ministers had
withdrawn from the government in 1947. Otherwise the effect of Communism on *Esprit* was to give the word 'révolution' in its pages a much more orthodox content than it had had in the thirties.

The period 1956–57 marked a turning-point for the review and also to a certain extent for the non-communist Left. At the review Jean-Marie Domenach took over and brought with him a team to direct it that was both younger than the previous one and included less academics and intellectuals and more civil servants. (37) For this new generation that replaced the one formed by the Résistance and Libération, Communism had lost its bright halo and magnetic pull; it had come to represent Stalinism and the invasion of Hungary and Poland. Nor was the economic performance of the Eastern countries considered impressive. France, under planned capitalism, had achieved more spectacular economic progress. The new generation, feeling the failure of the old, decided on a return to Personalist sources and to a less doctrinaire approach: 'Nous avons choisi de penser, de penser davantage; ... il faut en finir avec les synthèses faciles.' (38) Why had the review not foreseen the revolts of Budapest and Warsaw?

Parce que notre sociologie se référerait plus volontiers à des concepts globalement séduisants qu'à la situation de la personne, sa situation spirituelle, aussi bien que matérielle. (39)

Many of those who had been young and affected by the idealism of the Libération had now ceased to believe in the 'Révolution'. (40)

This new outlook affected *Esprit* in two different ways. On the one hand there was a return to the old notion of the supremacy of the spirit and a greater concern with values; on the other hand, a practical-minded reformism that stressed the importance of economic laws and the limited margin of manoeuvre open to governments. Neither concern excluded the other necessarily. But most of the intellectuals of *Esprit*
were totally ignorant of economic problems and Ripert, who was forever pointing out that one per cent growth in national income is equally important as and ultimately more effective than just to redistribute present riches, soon found himself fatally labelled a 'technocrat'. He, in turn, interpreted their failure to turn up at Jean Moulin as being due to squeamishness in facing concrete problems. (41) It was as if history were repeating itself with Jean Moulin accusing Esprit of the same failings as Ordre Nouveau had reproached it with in the thirties, while Esprit in turn once again responded by returning the scathing epithet of 'technocratic'.

Ripert's practical line of approach was reinforced and developed by the sociologist Michel Crozier, Research Director at the CNRS. Crozier had written a doctoral thesis on American unions in the United States and had become convinced there that ideologies simply blocked political processes. Returning to the Tocquevillian critique of French society, he saw the solution to the French situation in the replacement of the class struggle by practical political activism at a community level as the motor of change. Not only was the Soviet Union not a model for Western industrial societies, but it had nothing to teach them. A subtly, secretive personality with great personal charm and a very evasive manner, Crozier operated on the Club Jean Moulin by permeation rather than confrontation so that although he was a key intellectual influence on it from the outset - and the book L'Etat et le Citoyen bears his indelible mark - this influence was not immediately apparent. It was not until the last phase of its existence - after 1965 - that the Club became, very clearly, the philosopher, Crozier, surrounded by his group of disciples, most of whom were civil servants. (42)

Crozier himself had broken with Catholicism, but the other four members of the Esprit team who joined Jean Moulin - Olivier Chevrillon;
Georges Lavau; Jean Ripert; Georges Suffert — were all practising Catholics. Olivier Chevrillon, a brilliant and indefatigable writer of reports was a member of the elite Conseil d'État. Somewhat incongruously, this aristocratic and rather fastidious-mannered intellectual joined the PSA in the hope that Mendès would transform it into a modern party — only to land in a crypto-Chinese cell. (43) Georges Lavau was a law professor and former member of the Jeune République party.

Georges Suffert, a gifted journalist and popularizer, who in 1958 became the Club's first Secretary-General at the age of 31, straddled practically the whole political spectrum from which the Club was drawn. He had been President of the Fédération Française des Étudiants Catholiques; worked one year at the Plan; written for both Esprit and the Cahiers de la République; edited Témoignage Chrétien; briefly joined the Radical Party and the Jacobin; presented himself at the elections of 1958 as a Mendésist candidate. In 1958-59 he was currently involved in the PSA-PSU Party and a member of the CFTC union.

If Georges Suffert was everywhere he was everywhere as a Catholic.

D'auoi loin que je me souviens, j'ai toujours vécu immergé au sein du monde catholique. A huit ans je courais dans les jambes du curé; à douze ans j'arpentais les provinces, un énorme sac sur le dos, derrière les prêtres aux traits bourins qui nous parlaient le soir autour du feu; à vingt ans je contemplais, fasciné, du haut de la terrasse... la cathédrale de Chartres, l'ahurissant défilé des étudiants qui montaient vers la Basilique; jusqu'à l'horizon toutes les routes étaient noires.... (44)

But in the late fifties left-wing Catholics still tended to be regarded with a combination of distrust and disbelief by the traditional Left: 'Côté laïque l'hésitation reste grande; ces nouvelles recrues sont-elles solides?' (45) Suffert, a warm and ebullient southerner who
made contacts easily in whatever circles he moved, found himself both the envoy and alibi of left Catholicism. Alibi, because he was a warrior and it was clear, at this point, that his battle was on the Left. When invited to become Secretary-General of the Club, Suffert was virtually unemployed, having just been dismissed from his post as editor of *Témoignage Chrétien* on account of his radical views in Algeria. (46) He also reassured the Left in that his appetite for politics was both large and relatively undiscriminating when compared to the habitual tendency of left-wing Catholics to pick at politics and concentrate on the dainty moral morsels. In fact, his appointment at *Témoignage Chrétien* had originally been held up for this very reason: ‘Plusieurs responsables ... redoutaient son tempérament polémiste et sa passion de la politique’, as one of his former associates at the paper has written. (47) In a curious way Suffert personified in his own character the Catholic and Republican tradition that Gilbert Dru had hoped to see reconciled before the Christian-Democratic MRP was formed. (49) In Suffert there was the sentimental hand on the heart moralism of many Catholics at the same time as a characteristic radical taste for political manoeuvring, for personal coups and for a strategic position at the centre of political action.

With Suffert at the helm and Hessel absent after 1962, the Club Jean Moulin shifted away from its original atheism towards a more Catholic orientation. However, this evolution is subject to qualification. Although Catholics came to be heavily represented in the active minority that ran the Club, they were never in the majority. Ever since the MRP had turned its back on Mendès France, if not before, young Catholics had been looking for something new. They came to Jean Moulin because its themes and style attracted them rather than to meet other Catholics or to form a Catholic clique. And when on one occasion Suffert tried to
push through a clause on religious education in schools, he found himself with a revolt on his hands. (49) The bourgeois and fashionable side of the Club always dominated its Catholic aspect. Besides, intellectually, the rational moralism of the Catholics was in perfect accord with the moral rationalism of the Mendesists.

But, in the last resort, Jean Moulin did acquire a kind of Catholic colouration that made it difficult for strongly laic groups to join. (50) Its books were all printed by the Catholic publishing company, Editions du Seuil, which had its premises next door to and was closely linked with Esprit. (51) Paul Flamand, Seuil's director, and a friend of Emmanuel Mounier, was for some years a member of the Club's executive committee. Also on the executive committee were unofficial but highly placed representatives of three major Catholic unions: Marcel Gonin, from the Confederation Francaise des Travailleurs Chretiens; Alain Grzybowski and later Jose Bidegain from the Centre de Jeunes Patrons; Lucien Douroux from the Centre National de Jeunes Agriculteurs. Moreover, the representatives of the students' union, Union Nationale des Etudiants Francais, who were recruited to the Club to provide young blood frequently came from a strongly Catholic background; they were five - Gabriel Mignot, Claude Neuschwander, Pierre Gaudez, Jacques Delpy and Michel Praderie. (52)

However, Jacques Pomonti, the student leader who followed on after Suffert as Secretary-General was not himself a practising Catholic, although his own union, Etudiants Socialistes, was most anxious to link up with left-wing Catholic groups around the time when Pomonti was active within it during the late fifties. (53)

The presence of these centre-left and left Catholic circles in Jean Moulin attested neither to a Catholic plot nor to the intention of creating a new Catholic dominated realignment of centre-left political forces. Catholics were in the Club quite often for reasons of personal
friendship, principally with Suffert, and quite simply because — like the other members of the Club — they were looking for a new form of political expression outside the existing parties. But, in the end, this Catholic orientation was not without political consequence for Jean Moulin.

Politically and professionally, then, the Club was both rather mixed in its membership and at the same time had a number of dominant, underlying traits. While including both engineers and such academic personalities as Georges Vedel and Maurice Duverger (54), it was the civil service element, emboldened and provided with an intellectual framework by Michel Crozier, gave the Club both its seriousness and style. Politically, about half the Club’s members were in the PSA-PSU at the outset; the other half were mainly uncommitted, although there was a sprinkling of Socialists, some former members of MRP ministerial Cabinets and a few Communists who had left the 'Parti' such as Claude Alephandé, Robert Fossaert, Claude Winter. It was the same type of clientele, by and large, as had composed the Nouvelle Gauche of the fifties: Mendesists, left non-MRP Catholics, humanitarian socialists plus modern-minded administrators and managers from both the public and private sectors.

The PSA-PSU attracted these people in so far as it advocated a democratic socialism — as opposed to social democracy — and the updating of the social and economic analyses of the Left. But because this democratic socialism became also revolutionary, militant and sectarian, few members of the Club remained in the party. For some time and largely because of the Algerian war, the overlap of membership
between the Club and the party continued. But after 1961-62, the tendency was for Jean Moulin members to leave the PSU while most of the PSU members left the Club with Michel Rocard. (55)

Thus a whole new sector of opinion that had developed in the fifties was left without a party expression: the Mendesist technocrats, the less virulent democratic socialists and humanitarian leftists – all those in short, of the New Left who no longer believed after 1956 that socialism, or simply a more modern and more just society, would be brought in by a revolution. Some were quite happy, and these were mostly the technocrats, to be in a Club that thought out new solutions for the Left. They were never very enthusiastic about being the nucleus of some great new Labour party. (56) Others, and these were frequently left Catholics, were relieved at being able to discharge their civic duties in clubs without being confronted with the necessity of choosing a party political commitment. But, finally, there were also those whose temperaments were less moral or intellectual than political, who felt the necessity to produce new ideas for the Left but also the need to act. Their presence in the Club is fundamental to the understanding of the dilemma between thought and action that was to dog almost all the original Clubs, and perhaps especially the Club Jean Moulin.
In spite of the tragic circumstances of the Algerian War, the years 1954-62 marked the happiest, and perhaps also the most effective phase of the Club Jean Moulin. The political values and convictions that motivated the great majority of its membership seemed both more relevant and more vital in the situation created by the War than at any later time; the Resistance-inspired romantic activism; the staunch belief in and agitation for democratic liberties and honest dealings on the part of the Government; the optimistic faith in progress through examination, elucidation and explanation. The Club's studies helped to bring the war nearer a political solution, and it expected, once the Algerian imbroglio could be resolved, to be able with similar methods to usher in the new, modern, industrial and anti-traditional society that it was convinced lurked just off the political stage waiting for its cue. During this period, too, the Club appears in its most attractive light. The seriousness had not yet given way to sententiousness; the fashionable, bourgeois and worldly side was less dominant in the prevailing atmosphere of crisis and tension than it was later to become. A cohesion and discipline were imposed by the war which proved difficult to maintain once it was over. In short, everyone was more or less in agreement for the first four years of the Club's existence because its aims and action were limited by and subordinated to the war.

A high proportion of the civil servants who entered the Club in this initial phase were motivated primarily, and sometimes solely, by opposition to the colonial conflict. Liberal-minded administrators
tended to react to the crisis situation in May 1958 and for some months thereafter by banding together and Jean Moulin, in this first period, was apparently only one of a number of small, informal resistance groupings. (3) That civil servants in particular should have felt impelled to react in some way is understandable. Of all social bodies, the army apart, they were probably most immediately and closely concerned by what in the spring and early summer of De Gaulle's return to power seemed to many Frenchmen an imminent possibility: the collapse of the democratic state. Even once it became obvious that the General did not intend to overthrow the Republic, administrators remained acutely aware of how dangerously the War was affecting the rest of the political system — blocking reforms, threatening fundamental liberties, breeding civil disobedience and holding up the process of economic modernisation. (4) Their traditional sense of responsibility was heightened by the critical situation and many were prepared and even anxious to take on some form of political commitment. One member of Jean Moulin has described the reaction of fellow civil servants who joined the Club in 1958 and 1959 in the following terms:

La guerre d'Algérie, la décolonisation ... était un défi à notre système socio-politique, un problème imminent dont le pourrissement risquait de gangrêner l'ensemble de nos institutions ... Pour beaucoup d'entre nous - je parle en particulier des fonctionnaires - elle fut l'occasion ... d'une première prise de conscience du problème politique: le matin du 13 mai, le technocrate s'est réveillé républicain. (5)

The Club Jean Moulin was both a comfortable and a sensible choice for administrators: they could count on being among their own kind, profit from its work groups and discussions and at the same time break out of their isolation without incurring the professional inconveniences that a political party might entail. (6)
or had been closely concerned with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Club members like Vaez-Oliviera, Scafabero and Karraoul, for instance, had had wide experience of North Africa and were leading figures on the liberal wing of the Moroccan administrative corps. Having been forced for years to conceal their profound disagreement with the Fourth Republic's decolonisation methods behind a professional mask of imperturbability, the Club for colonial civil servants was a glorious occasion to say what had been left unsaid for so long. (7) Besides, many feared at first that the Fifth Republic would be even worse than the Fourth on decolonisation. Jean Moulin also included many younger civil servants who had had direct experience of the aggressive mood of European settlers during the courses they had followed in Algeria as part of their administrative training. Of the sixty odd students of the École Nationale d'Administration who graduated in 1959, one-third joined the Club. (8)

If civil servants — among others — came to the Club looking for an active outlet after so much agonised looking-on, they were not disappointed. Depending on their interests, aptitudes or temperaments, the members of Jean Moulin could participate in three types of action: 1) direct Resistance-type activities which involved personal danger; 2) the preparation of documentation on Algerian problems; 3) general action designed to affect public opinion or the Government.

Directly inspired by the Resistance was the Centre d'Études d'Information pour l'Afrique du Nord et la Communauté. The Centre consisted of a small group of seven or eight friends — including Olivier Chevrillon, Michel Rocard, Alain de Vulpian and Alain Jacob (9) — who published a fortnightly news-sheet which they sent to about 4,000 serving officers in Algeria. The purpose was to detach the officers from the virulent 'French Algeria' current by providing them with an informed and liberal
view of current events. It was also hoped thereby to dispel their illusions as to the state of opinion in France. Many officers, especially those who had come almost directly to North Africa from Indo-China, had been out of France for years and had lost touch with French public opinion; some sincerely believed it to be totally in accord with their own line of thinking. At the same time the paper put over the Club’s general theory on the basic soundness of the French economy and modernisation process: France, to be great, did not need Algeria. (10)

Surprisingly enough the Centre’s news-sheet was never seized. This may have been because the secret police thought that it was inspired by Jacques Foccart and the Elysee, a possibility — so far as they were concerned — in view of the fact that Georges Suffert saw Bernard Tricot, the General’s A.D.C., on a number of occasions at this time. (11) The news-sheet which ran to 19 copies lasted from May 1960 to July 1962 when it ran into financial difficulties. Besides, by this time the attempted army coup of April 1961 had already cast doubt on the usefulness of the operation.

Although financed by Jean Moulin, the Centre was run independently and very secretly. A liberal lawyer by the name of Fauchon was borrowed from another Club, Rencontres, (12) to act as a screen and conceal the involvement of the civil servants in the Centre which was itself never openly recognized by the Club Jean Moulin. (13) While the secrecy surrounding it at the time was a necessary protection against the pro-Algerian terrorist organization, the OAS, continued reticence is explained by the necessity for protecting civil servants. Some of the young administrators who were sent to Algeria by the Government to research into the state of opinion in the army undoubtedly handed over their highly confidential information to the Centre, while the lists of officers necessary to the whole operation were obtained from within the administration.
Even the less potentially hazardous Club Bis was not revealed to the general members of Jean Moulin until 1962 when it was transformed into a public opinion research centre. Its task was to consider practical ways of combating fascism and the OAS, in cooperation with other political groups such as the P.S.U. The collection of an arms depot being more in the line of the PSU, Jean Moulin's contingent - about 40 strong - undertook the communications side. This consisted of:

1) contacting groups with similar preoccupations: trade unions, Gaullists, PSU etc.

2) preparing a weekly documentation which included an analysis of the right-wing press and of the climate of opinion within certain groups. This was then sent to about 200 people who were considered to be in key positions as defenders of the Republic.

3) collecting OAS and anti-OAS material.

4) making contact with the provinces and laying a network of information which could be used if resistance became necessary. (14)

The Club Bis also hatched a number of odd plots involving secret radio stations outside Paris, schemes to block the Paris underground and mobilise all the taxi-cabs. If it was fortunate for France that the parachutists never appeared, it was probably doubly fortunate for the Club Jean Moulin.

More directly useful and more suited to the aptitudes of administrators was the work of the Algeria Commission. This Commission was formed soon after the creation of the Club and included about 40 members, mainly drawn from the Ministry of the Interior and the Quai d'Orsay. (15) It was directed by Olivier Chevrillon, himself a member of the Conseil d'Etat, and met in his flat. Before long it became an acknowledged authority on Algerian problems.
Initially majority opinion in the Commission and the Club favoured self-determination for Algeria - at the very least. In 1958 independence was seen as a solution only in so far as no other could be found. The carefully qualified position taken in the Club's bulletins was based, in true technocratic style, on the examination of each and every alternative. However, all the members of the Commission had in common a horror of military power, force and torture and they all believed in the necessity to negotiate. But between the belief in negotiation and outright acceptance of Algerian independence lay the difficult problem of the European settlers and what to do with them. A study made under Vaez-Oliviera, a Finance Ministry official, finally had a decisive effect in leading the Club to envisage independence. He showed that, in practice, Moslem emancipation in terms of employment and otherwise meant that large numbers of Europeans would have to leave Algeria whatever the political settlement. Preparation to receive them in France was vital since the settlers might be less inclined to fight to the last ditch if a future in France was guaranteed to them. This argument was put forward in a book published in 1962: Deux pièces du Dossier Algérie. (16)

The impact of the book on informed public opinion in general is difficult to estimate. Yet the work of the Commission certainly influenced the Evian Agreements - the latter reproduced whole paragraphs from its proposals unchanged - and it may even have speeded up the conclusion of peace. (17) Here, for once, the line of influence between the Club's work and the Government's action is clear. As early as 1959 the Secretary-General of the Conseil d'État, Gazier, was instructed to start preparing the ground in the event of eventual negotiations with the FLN. As it happened, three of the most active members of Jean Moulin's Algeria Commission - Bacquet, Cressel, Salusse - belonged to
the Conseil. Gazier, who was perfectly aware of their affiliation to
the Club, included them in his work party. And later, Salusse was
secretary to the French delegation who went to Evian. (18)

This influence on the Evian Agreements led the Club to be con-
sidered in some circles as an instrument of the Government. (19) It
is certainly true that after initially accusing him of practising the
same policy of immobilism in Algeria as his predecessors, the Club Jean
Moulin came round towards the end of 1959 to believing that de Gaulle
was irresistibly drawn towards granting total independence to Algeria
and that only he could make the French accept it. (20) All the same,
its commentary on the General’s tactics hardly amounted to a vote of
unconditional confidence:

La politique algérienne du Général De Gaulle a pour elle
l’écrasante majorité des français; quelle que soit la
duplicité du chef de l’État, il lui est difficile de
revenir en arrière, face à l’opinion internationale... (21)

It also took part in peace demonstrations with students and workers'
unions and in the national press as well as in its own bulletins,
constantly harried the Government to speed up the pace of progress
towards a final settlement and condemned its irresolute attitude towards
Algerian extremists in highly placed positions or the behaviour of the
police. (22) Jean Moulin was too critical of authoritarian tendencies
in French society, too traditionally republican, to be an instrument of
General De Gaulle.

Until the Government agreed to open negotiations with the Algerian
FLN in the spring of 1961 it had the Club’s full support on only two
occasions: at the time of the barricades in January of 1960 and during
the attempted putsch of the General’s in April of 1961. (23) This
support had its picturesque moments. When the barricades went up in
Algiers in January 1960 and a fascist coup seemed imminent, Jean Moulin
organised thousands of postcards to flood in on and totally disrupt the life of the Elysee. The point of this republican publicity stunt was to draw attention to the fact that there were still thousands of loyal citizens in France who remained attached to legal authority. A year later the Army Putsch in Algeria and the news that Paris was again in danger of invasion once more mobilised the Club: very early one morning a (disputed) number of civil servants clad in anything that had come to hand looking passably military collected with other potential resisters in the courtyard of the Ministry of the Interior. Hemmed in on every side by heavily armed police, this solid phalanx of about a hundred highly placed civil servants in their not very martial mackintoshes bravely waited to repulse an invasion that never came. (24)

At first sight this para-military activism seems strangely out of character with such a respectable and sober set of civil servants and, in the light of twentieth century weaponry, even rather comic. Yet this kind of behaviour, together with the basic structure of the Club - which consisted of cells of ten members so as to enable rapid mobilisation in emergency - was in the purest tradition of nineteenth century Republicanism. And had the members of the Club Jean Moulin followed the example of the Club des Democrates Fraternels of 1848, they would have rounded up the sleeping citizenry in the houses around the Ministry of the Interior and fraternally forced them to the barricades. At any event, it is probable that Jean Moulin and groups like it contributed to the resurgence of the revolutionary tradition that occurred directly on the heels of the Algerian War.

Georges Suffert wrote when it was over:

Réaliser la paix par une négociation conduisant à l'indépendance. Il y avait là une ligne générale qui nous permettait de fonctionner au mieux et de rencontrer, à peu de chose près, l'opinion de la presque
The War had greatly increased the influence of the Club, especially among administrators. And this was not just because of the high position of many of its members, but also on account of the expertise it had acquired on Algerian problems. Not surprisingly, therefore, those who believed that the Club could become an instrument to reform French politics and, in particular, the non-Communist Left, hoped to build on this initial achievement. The Club Jean Moulin, they intended to prove, was not just a by-product of the Algerian War.

Nor was it, entirely. Yet once the War was over, the civil service element became increasingly unhappy at finding itself in quasi-opposition to the regime, for they were now partly or even totally reconciled with it. Used to obeying, civil servants felt impelled to act faced with the events of May 1958. The existence of the Club in these circumstances undoubtedly prevented a number of them from resigning from their posts. But after Evian many - although by no means all - began to drift away. And with them went the political activists of the PSU. Thereafter, even when it was supporting Gaston Defferre as Presidential candidate, the Club never regained the cohesion and sense of purpose it had had during the Algerian conflict.

Finally, this period of Jean Moulin's existence is interesting because of the practical insight it provides into the spirit - a combination of slightly self-conscious theatricality and genuine bravery - and inner workings of the Republican tradition. While this tradition, in turn, offers the best general explanation into the resurgence of political clubs in 1958 and after.
The Internal Working of the Club.

Vu de l'extérieur il apparut comme un groupe distingué, au vocabulaire sociologique, consentant des confrontations, obtenant de brillants concours, utilisant l'arme secrète de la bourgeoisie libérale: un snobisme de bon ton. (1)

Quite soon after its foundation in 1958 Jean Moulin began to steer an intellectual course. The Club deliberately set out to be a think-tank and saw in this role its major 'raison d'être': ... notre réflexion est le seul fondement de l'audience dont nous bénéficions.' (2) It also felt itself to be making up for the sins of omission of the political parties, particularly those of the Left, in this domain and consequently justified in adopting a patronising attitude towards them.

However, Jean Moulin was never intended as just a French version of the Fabian Society. It was to become, accessorially, a living model of how democracy should work. Hessel's idea was that the Club should attract able people, place them in committees and make use of their ideas. It was to become a forum for open discussion, a centre of free participation. This, it was estimated, would challenge in the most effective possible manner the corrupt internal practices and the stultifying intellectual atmosphere of the political parties. 'L'apport du club' noted Jean Moulin 'peut être considérable pour combattre le sectarisme des organisations'.(3)

Initially, the unity of the Left was only a long-term and indirect objective for the Club. First the Left must have a solid foundation — in terms of new ideas and new men — on which to build. Jean Moulin was quite confident of being able to provide both. Yet if the motivation behind most of the studies undertaken by it was to revitalise and
update the tired formulae of the Left, its leaders were cautious about admitting as much openly — especially in the early days when many of the civil servants were far from being unambiguously left-wing. Suffert wrote to a friend, privately:

Ce que nous cherchons discrètement à faire, c'est de préparer des équipes techniquement valables qui pourront un beau jour se mettre à la disposition d'un gouvernement de gauche. (4)

The Club, then, fulfilled many of the functions of a political party — except, of course, the main ones of standing for election and holding power. But it was most insistent that it was not a political party and almost obsessively anxious — until 1963-4, at least — to keep politics at arms length. The Jacobins watched over their clutch of deputies with pride and in between reading them moral lessons they mixed perfectly happily with politicians. The attitude of the Club Jean Moulin was altogether more complex. On the one hand, it boasted of the lack of political personalities in the Club; when members acceded to important party functions they could count on being asked to withdraw. (5) And when the possibility was raised that the Club's patron, Jean Moulin, might have been a member of the Radical party, the question was not treated objectively as interesting if somewhat unanswerable, but rejected with horror. Party politics were described significantly, as 'jeux politiques périmés'. (6)

However, later in 1963-4, when the Club became intimately involved in launching the presidential candidature of Gaston Defferre, it was quite thrilled by the importance of its own political role. At the same time, if the subject was discussed at any length at the weekly lunches of the executive committee, someone would be sure to steer the conversation along more intellectual tracks. (7) The Club took its intellectual duties immensely seriously and never rid itself of the deep-seated belief
that too much intercourse with politics and politicians would tarnish its own principles and ideals. (8) All in all, one might say that the Club's feeling about politics contained most of the repugnance and not a little of the fascination of a monk's attitude to vice.

So far as its own functioning was concerned, there was some realisation in the Club that given the variety of political opinion present, an agreement would have to be reached on how to represent them all. In contrast to the practices current in the parties, there was to be no wheedling and dealing:

Il faut que la composition du Comité Directeur reflète, aussi exactement que possible, les sensibilités politiques et les origines professionnelles des membres. Il ne s'agit pas de tendance - Dieu nous en préserve ! - mais de fair play. (9)

Jean Moulin always had a firm faith in the efficacity of civism - by which it generally meant middle-class good manners - as an antidote to political malpractices. The Club's own gentlemanly habit of agreeing to differ amicably was intended to shame the warring party political factions. Equally, its loyalty to its principles would show up their opportunism; the authenticity and vivacity of its participational life would set them an example.

Given this purist approach to politics, it came as something of a surprise to its members that a club might engender its own conflicts. And when these conflicts inevitably arose, it perished almost as much from the shock that this could happen as from their direct results.
In terms of its own inner organisational structure, the Club Jean Moulin had two sources of inspiration: the republican clubs of the nineteenth century and the post-war Economic Plans. From the first was derived the habit of dividing the club into subsections of ten or eleven people. In the early days when a military coup was still feared, small groups facilitated rapid mobilisation; later, they enabled a high degree of participation while still containing sufficient people to be intellectually productive. (10)

From the Economic Plans, the Club copied the principle of horizontal and vertical - that is to say general and specialist - committees. It also adopted the custom, peculiar to the Planning Commissariat, of mixing people of very different professional background. It often drew attention to this feature as being one of its own most original and remarkable attributes. Duverger wrote of the Club's seminal work:

Cette collaboration d'éléments si divers, aux origines si variées est l'une des sources de l'originalité de l'État et le Citoyen. (11)

It is certainly true that Jean Moulin's Committees were very mixed. The committee on French overseas territories, for instance, contained 36 civil servants (6 of them members of the Conseil d'État), 6 teachers, 9 administrative executives in the private sector, 7 engineers, 5 social scientists, 2 journalists and 12 students (9 of them from the Polytechnique). (12)

It is also true that the top echelons of the French civil service are particularly caste-ridden and not normally given to collaborating professionally with outsiders. But it does not necessarily follow from its mixed composition that the Club Jean Moulin was a radical departure from a very old rule. (13) Certainly, some civil servants were specifically attracted because of the opportunity the Club afforded to mingle and work with people from varying backgrounds. In reality, however, civil servants
formed a kind of inner circle, polite and sometimes even attentive in its dealings with non-professionals, but never truly open to them. Moreover, the aura of professional connivance and complicity that surrounded it pervaded the whole atmosphere of the Club, often irritating and antagonising not just the other clubs that worked with it but also many of its own members. (14)

Formally, the Club Jean Moulin was composed of an executive committee, of general committees of ten members christened reading groups and of specialist committees. The executive committee had the responsibility of applying the Club's statutes, deciding its policy, organising its Internal Letter and Bulletin, naming the specialist committees and providing them with topics. (15) It was not authorised to take important policy decisions unless the whole club, at a General Assembly meeting, had previously approved the question in principle. General Assemblies were generally held once a year. There were also yearly study sessions at the old abbey of Royaumont near Paris on major topics like Europe or the Presidential regime etc. One, then later two sponsors within the Club were needed before an application for entry could be made. Professional standing was another necessary pre-condition. The General Assembly of 1959 decided:

que le recrutement du club doit se limiter aux cadres, tant fonctionnaires qu'industriels, intellectuels ou syndicalistes. Tous sont décidés à donner une part de leur temps disponible à condition que nos travaux soient sérieux. (16)

In theory, the Club was supposed to be supported entirely by membership fees. In practice other means had to be resorted to as members were slow in paying up and it was chronically short of money. (17) Subsidiary clubs were discouraged on the whole, less for financial reasons than because some of the more important people in Jean Moulin greatly feared being compromised by what some branch might say or do. (18) There was a branch for EEC administrators in Brussels and others in Nice
and Mulhouse, but very many more might have been created. The works of the Club, it was originally decided, were to be collectively written and anonymous.

How Jean Moulin actually operated in practice, at least for the first couple of years of its existence, is illustrated by the way that *L'État et le Citoyen* was written. The General Assembly appointed a committee to organise and supervise fifteen groups in which specialist and non-specialists were set to work together, each group charged, in theory, with producing a chapter. In practice, some people wrote chapters more or less independently, others joined the Club simply to help with the book and occasionally even collective chapters would emerge. These initial drafts were then circulated to the reading groups, criticised and sometimes re-started from scratch. At the final stage, the main chapters were debated for two days in the General Assembly. The result of over a year's effort was a pile of 15,000 pages of foolscap...

But Georges Suffert undertook to rewrite the entire book in his summer vacation and succeeded in reducing it to 400 pages. (19)

Many of the arguments put forward for participational democracy in *L'État et le Citoyen* may be traced to one man: Michel Crozier, the sociologist. In the main, however, the ideas in the book reflected the opinion of the whole Club. This was not always the case, for sometimes one personality impressed a book with his stamp and at other times the collective principle broke down. *Un Parti pour la Gauche* was written by Georges Lavau; *Pour une Politique étrangère de l'Europe* by Simon Nora. The first was commissioned by the executive committee, but neither it nor the second necessarily represented the views of all of the members. Another book *Le Socialisme et l'Europe* was so hotly disputed in General Assembly that it was not published anonymously in the name of the Club,
but carried a pseudonym chosen by the authors. Jean Moulin's most notable failure in this domain was its book on education which was never published. When the non-specialists on the committee proposed radical reforms, the academics barred the way, insisting the bright new ideas of the others were invalid because they had no personal experience of schools and universities. As a result the book that finally appeared was so insipid and confused that it was vetoed by the General Assembly. (20) At other times, compromises between differing opinions were hammered out with more success. The Club had no firm policy on an independent French nuclear force and so the executive committee deliberately chose a commission that included the whole gamut of opinions on the subject. In view of this background, the book, *La Force de Frappe*, caused relatively little friction and appeared in the name of the Club.

In obtaining the information it needed, the reputation of the Club and the leading positions of many of its members were a great boon. For the outsiders who were invited to appear before its committees, whether politicians, unionists or administrators, generally came. Sometimes, the purpose of the committees was to influence its visitors as much as to benefit from their knowledge. This was clearly the case of the committee on institutions. It included the two leading French experts on and exponents of a Presidential regime, Professors Duverger and Vedel. First, they set about persuading the rest of the members of the Club of the advantages of this system; then they turned their attention to the political class. Guy Mollet, Edgar Faure, Jean Lecanuet, Paul Coste-Floret were invited at different times and all appeared, without realising probably that Jean Moulin, besides wanting to understand the positions of the different parties, also hoped to contribute: '... à dégeler les crânes qui ont été saisis par le conservatisme institutionel aux alentours de 1910.' (21)

The Club took its self-appointed role as shaper of the intelligent and
informed sectors of public opinion very seriously and would issue instructions to its members on how they should behave towards outside personalities who were not intimately attached to its visitors must be treated with great courtesy so as to make them say more than they intended; the hall must remain full so as to give them the impression that Jean Moulin was a force to be reckoned with and to encourage them to speak of it externally. (22)

In spite of the Club Jean Moulin's much more formal and organised nature, to ask whether it was democratic in a legalistic sense would be as irrelevant as in the case of the Jacobin Club. There converged around it a network of friends of long standing, at the beginning mainly those of Hessel, who took the work of the Club seriously but who also saw it as another expression of their friendship: discussion of personal problems and family dramas blended quite naturally in these early days with political and academic debate. Nor, at the outset, did the intimacy of some set them apart from others. For the enthusiasm generated by the Club's first collective venture, the writing of l'Etat et le Citoyen, combined with the cohesion wrought by the Algerian War, precluded the growth of a narrow, cliquish atmosphere. Morale was high and the level of dedication of members often astounding. It was not unusual, particularly during the period of writing its first book, for people to turn up to work three and even four evenings a week. (23)

The Jacobin Club, it has been said, had its own peculiar form of democracy: masonic collegiality combined with freedom of speech and movement. The Club Jean Moulin also had an individual style of internal regulation. This was a blend of social and intellectual elements: courtesy and restraint in debate combined with a realistic approach to problems whereby the possibility of conflict might be reduced to a minimum. The first time a vote was taken in the Club was over the referendum in
1962. (24) This gentlemanly consensus - made possible mainly by the common bourgeois origin of most of the members - was one of the features that attracted civil servants to it. Sometimes this style interested them for its own sake and they joined the Club without necessarily feeling any sympathy for its aims. At other times it stimulated left-wing administrators who hesitated to join the parties because they found their behaviour and approach so unsympathetic to take on a more active political commitment. (25)

Within its own limits, the Club Jean Moulin could be considered a successful, smoothly running enterprise until about 1962. Thereafter a slow decline set in from which it never recovered. Partly this was due to a growing divorce between leaders and rank and file, partly due to the slackening of the original ideals that fired it. The Club Jean Moulin had always been serious, sometimes to the point of solemnity. Now it grew sententious and self-important. In the past membership had frequently entailed a deep feeling of commitment and a sense of personal adventure. All too often now it was seen as a status symbol, an ornament on one's visiting card.

Some of the changes 1962 brought for the Club were, in fact, positive. It received an influx of young people on the executive committee, mainly UNEF leaders, while many of the civil servants who had joined only on account of the Algerian War left. But against this must be set the too rapid growth of the Club and the decline of its sense of purpose. In February 1962 it numbered over 500 - virtually double its previous membership. (26) Many of those who joined now that the Club had acquired a reputation did so out of snobism or personal ambition. Young civil servants hoped to be noticed by their seniors or else wanted to be able to boast externally that they were on familiar terms with such and such a
notable figure. (27) At the same time, the sense of urgency generated by the war decreased, so that the Club's besetting sin of perfectionism increased correspondingly. (28) Also, now that the war was over, political problems were less straight-forward, more intractable and Jean Moulin hesitated, not sure which path to follow. (29)

As enthusiasm and sense of purpose waned, two factors that had always been present, if less noticeably so, now became quite distinct irritants: the civil service hierarchy and the too predominant position of the executive committee. From the start, the civil servants had transposed their professional hierarchy into the Club. Leading administrators were as unlikely to be challenged in Jean Moulin as in their own offices and certain questions were simply not approached until they had given their approval. Not that they would ever have silenced a challenger directly. Their mode of domination was a subtle and conniving elitism. An opponent or simply someone who questioned the ideas or approach of the civil service top brass would find it intimidated to him how deeply his attitude was regretted; how little this was expected of him; how it had always been thought that he, at least, understood....(30) None of this, of course, encouraged free participation or helped the Club to become an open forum.

In the same way, the hand of the executive committee began to appear too heavy once the initial period was over. From the start it had kept all the reins of power firmly in its own hands on the plea that if the Club was to have an influence, it must be able to act quickly. (31) Also, it had rapidly acquired the habit of co-optation; judicial telephone calls informed people whether their candidacy was acceptable or not. (32) Obviously this created bad feeling. And by the autumn of 1962, Georges Suffert was forced to concede publicly before the General Assembly the existence and necessity to remedy a serious malaise that had grown up in
the Club. In a private letter he admitted:

Notre faute est de n'avoir pas tenu suffisamment au courant les membres du Club de nos cogitations, de nos hésitations et finalement de nos décisions. (33)

After this, various attempts were made to democratise the Club. The system of reading groups, never very successful after the end of the writing of *L'Etat et le Citoyen* anyway, was changed twice. (34) Members were asked to fill out cards with personal ideas and suggestions. At one point, General Assembly meetings were even held every three months. But none of these reforms made a lasting difference. Nor could they in view of the fact that from 1963 onwards a small inner circle within the Club was bent on turning it into a launching pad for the Presidential candidacy of Gaston Dafferre without consulting the members and against the wishes of a high percentage of them. Jean Moulin was involved in some mysterious dealings, that much was clear throughout 1963. The feeling of being manipulated was unpleasant and difficult to erase. Many members simply left at this time. But one, Philippe Viannay, wrote a letter of protest to the executive committee:

Il y a deux Clubs: le Club réel et le Club légal; d'une part les copains qui se comprennent au premier clin d'œil, comme les civilisés d'Huxley, les copains qui font des grands coups avec les autres copains qui se trouvent dans les divers ministères, dans les syndicats ou dans la presse. D'autre part, le Club légal dont ne font d'ailleurs pas partis tous les membres du Club réel et qui est là pour donner du corps à l'opération et que l'on convie de temps en temps à applaudir les performances des autres. Le départ de nombreux participants du début, et qui représentaient un capital sûr, ne laisse pas d'être significatif et inquiétant. (35)

The Club's leadership also had its own complaints against the members. The reading groups did not work, it was intimated, because the habit of participation was not sufficiently deeply rooted in the French: '... la
démocratie, du moins telle que nous l'entendons, n'est pas encore dans nos habitudes et nous n'arrivons pas si facilement à la bâtir.' (36)

Sometimes the executive committee would complain in the Club's Internal Letter that work was not up to standard, or not quickly enough completed or else that it was operating in a void. (37) Out of 525 members, charged an Internal Letter in 1962, the same hundred always did the work; this was not good enough. But by far the most recurrent grievance of the executive committee and the administration against the members was their persistent failure to pay up their membership fees on time or even at all. Internal Letters again and again put out plaintive appeals for fees to be paid up. Another source of irritation was the unwillingness of members to volunteer for administrative tasks. There was never any shortage of people prepared to give up their evenings to work on committees but, after the end of the Algerian War in particular, they could rarely be persuaded to help with administration. (38)

No doubt most of these complaints were justified. A group as informal as Jean Moulin, operating on a very small budget, could hardly be expected to sustain a persistently high standard of work and level of commitment over a number of years. But it was not on account of fluctuating vivacity, undemocratic features or even its furtive political involvement that the internal functioning of the Club was ultimately a failure. The real failure of Jean Moulin lay in the aura of elitism that pervaded the atmosphere surrounding it and that finally deteriorated into the outright manipulation of a narrow clique.

One of the most original and penetrating insights of the Club was that many of the problems of French democracy are intimately linked with the authoritarian attitudes prevalent in French society. Its central message was the urgent need for greater participation in public affairs so as to make modern industrial society both more efficient and more
humane. Even more than new ideas, a fundamental change in attitude and behaviour in the decisive factor in future democratic development, was one of the Club's most persistent themes:

La recherche d'un nouveau style de vie démocratique, dépendra plus de la manière dont se sera ainsi exprimé un certain courant démocratique, que du nombre d'idées nouvelles qu'elle apporte au débat publique... (39)

Yet with its own teaching - and preaching - Jean Moulin's action was in flagrant contradiction. This fact was not lost on outsiders and undermined its moral and intellectual authority. The Club itself had to admit, wryly, when a further revolt against the lack of internal democracy was launched in 1966, that such accusations were startling against a Club that had written l'État et le Citoyen. (40)

It is, lastly, a significant comment on French society of the early 1960's that one of the rare groups to be aware of and anxious to remedy its excessive authoritarianism should itself have fallen victim to the very malady it analysed so elegantly and condemned so conclusively.
Chapter 12.
The Ideology of the Club.

Le pari sur la démocratie en 1961 n'a de sens que s'il est fondé sur une tentative d'insertion des valeurs traditionnelles de liberté dans des structures modernes mal connus et fondamentalement mouvantes. (1)

During the early post-war period, it was frequently assumed in progressive circles concerned with the modernisation of the country that economic development would have a decisive impact in itself. If only France could overhaul and renovate her infrastructure in industry, commerce and agriculture, her traditional political problems would at once be reduced to manageable proportions and in time disappear entirely. This school of thought interpreted political life as a conflict between static and dynamic France: as the latter gained ground the political system would automatically become modernised. (2) By the late 1950's, however, this optimistic faith in the general benefits of economic progress began to be troubled by doubts. For the success of the Fourth Republic in the economic domain had affected neither traditional attitudes towards political power, the political parties nor the Communist vote. After 1958, when the institutions of the Republic crumbled for the second time in the life-span of one generation, these doubts grew even more pressing. Political modernisation gradually came to be seen as a problem in itself, independent of economic development.

In the Club Jean Moulin, the topic was approached with bemused exasperation, but without undue pessimism. Among its members were a number of the civil servants who had helped to engineer the economic recovery of the 1950's and they were very well aware of the many changes, both technical and economic, that had already taken place. France, all were agreed, was no longer the sick man of Europe:

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En réalité, ce pays, non seulement n'est pas mourant, mais il est en plein sue d'adolescence. Les jeunes cadres craquent de partout et de nouveaux sont en train de surgir. La France est en train de changer de peau - c'est visible à l'œil nu - et ce sont les mythes qui retardent l'évolution. (3)

And yet to judge by the political parties and the press, modern France did not exist. The far-reaching changes of recent years - changes in both the working conditions and standard of living of the working class, in consumption, in agricultural techniques and even in the operation of capitalism - were hardly reflected in the formal institutions of society. There was a vast discrepancy, concluded the Club, between the new realities of modern French society and the persistence of outdated beliefs and images. These were referred to disparagingly as 'myths'. The solution to France's political problems was first to dispose of these myths, and then to begin to think about modern society in an entirely new way - if still within the framework of basic democratic principles. The meaning of democracy was no longer clear in an age of television and mass literacy.

At this point the humanism of the Club took a universalist turn. In part no doubt this was due to intellectual habit: the French have a long tradition of thinking in global terms politically. But there were also more immediate, practical reasons. Since the crisis of French democracy coincided with a crisis of democracy within modern industrial societies more generally, it was obviously impossible to solve the one without a careful analysis of the other. To some degree, so ran the Club's reasoning in the introduction to L'Etat et le citoyen, the inadaptation of ideology to reality is a feature common to all modern industrial societies. The only alternative seems to be to impose dogmas by force or else to maintain the status quo. Fifteen years after the Second World War:

les utopies sont moribondes, les idéologies ne recrutent plus grand monde. Le goût du bonheur et la tendance à l'organisation
In these circumstances, and by their efforts to come to terms with their own problems the French will have the privileged role of leading a world-wide movement to regenerate democracy - the most fundamentally important, probably, of our epoch. (5)

The first step along this path is to reflect with the objective of founding 'une pensée politique nouvelle'. (6) This reflexion must be based on traditional principles and at the same time take account of new realities. The practical task the Club set itself was to reconcile democratic ideals - and mainly liberty - with modern social, economic and technical developments. However, this 'new political thought' which Jean Moulin always considered as its own original contribution to humanity - "Cette approche surprend et fit réfléchir" (7) - was in fact no less than the old approach of steering a path between realism and Utopianism allied with the interdisciplinary methods already much in use at the Planning Commissariat. (8)

If the gap, so familiar on the French Left, between principles and their application is to be avoided, observed the Club, then every political project must be based in the first instance on ascertainable fact. Some facts may be calculated with absolute certainty: no French government is able to raise the rate of growth to 19/6 or to halt the exodus from country to town. At other times precision is impossible. Optimum agricultural production, for instance, cannot at present be estimated. The essential point is that perfect solutions are not attainable; all that is possible is to integrate the maximum number of factors and narrow down alternatives within a particular time limit. Traditionally, political programmes deal either in short-term (platitudes or horse-dealing) or long-term proposals (ideologies and platitudes). But they carefully avoid
the medium-term, the only perspective in which real choices may be
made.(9)

How Jean Moulin envisaged the process of making these medium-term
projects becomes clear in the following passage:

Le temps des Jean-Jacques Rousseau et des Marx est terminé;
le temps de la pure analyse des concepts sans données
techniques précises est révolu. Marx, en 1961, créerait un
institut; il lui serait impossible de se satisfaire des
approximations économiques et sociologiques, des références
historiques et de la connaissance philosophique qui lui
suffirent il y a cent ans. Obligatoirement, sa visée serait
pléthorique; il devrait intégrer au fur et à mesure les apports
de la sociologie, de l'économie politique, de la cybernétique.
Mais sur chacun de ces points, il lui faudrait tenir compte
d'un nombre considérable de variables.... Enfin, il devrait
dans une dernière étape tenter de trouver un terrain de
conciliation entre la description des alternatives ouvertes
par l'évolution globale, et les valeurs auxquelles plier
cette évolution elle-même.(10)

In itself such a system is only a body frame - the motor is supplied by
values. Of course it is necessary to have an efficient state, admitted
Jean Moulin, but it cannot be justified if it is to be obtained at the
cost of the physical, intellectual and moral independence of its citizens.
(11) It is vital to remember, observed the Club, that personal liberties
are permanently threatened in the present world; human rights are more
formal than real. There is nothing automatic about democracy. On the
contrary, democracy represents a precarious set of values and to uphold
it may necessitate the sacrifice of efficiency in some measure. (12)

Between the 'open' and 'moral' system of the Club and the Marxism
of the orthodox parties of the Left there was obviously very little common
ground. Marxist doctrine in the Club's view encased change in a straight-
jacket, while what was needed in a perpetually changing society was the
possibility to innovate and invent. Moreover, Marxism played down the
moral responsibility of man for the type of society he lives in, while
Jean Moulin emphasised its importance. Also the pluralist, libertarian
society the Club itself envisaged was fundamentally at odds with such notions as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

On the practical as opposed to theoretical level, the gap between the Club and the Left was equally wide. The Club was resolutely realistic and modernist; the political parties seemed indifferent to and unaware of change and concrete issues. That the French bourgeoisie should persistently evade practical problems in their political programmes was quite bad enough, thought the modernists. But what was worse was that the Left should continue unabashed to apply ready-made solutions based only on theory to the practical daily problems of living. (13) Forever demanding social progress, the Left always omitted how it was to be achieved in practice. The lack of knowledge it displayed on economics was, to say the least, lamentable. Ignoring the 'real' problems of the nation, it was absorbed in myths of its own making, like a dog forever chasing its own tail. Little wonder, then, that it was able to rouse so little enthusiasm in the public:

Contre un général bien en chair, une gauche de rêve sortie tout droit d'un manuel d'histoire et qui ne parvient pas a incarner les tendances d'une opinion publique qui vote pour de Gaulle sans être gaulliste et qui est républicain tout en refusant de voir revenir les visages de la décadence, voilà quel est le problème français numéro un. (14)

Jean Moulin had little patience with the large parties of the Left - with their dogmatism, their economic ignorance, their lack of enthusiasm for modernisation and their lack of interest in decentralisation. Above all, the Club was suspicious of the parties' attitude towards the civil liberties that for itself were the very essence of democracy. The strategy of the club movement, which Jean Moulin supported until it became involved in complicated manoeuvres to set up Gaston Defferre as the Left's presidential candidate, was to build up such a powerful pressure for change in public opinion that the left-wing political parties would eventually
be forced to change their ways. Most of the work of the Club was intended either to create such a reformist climate of opinion or else to lay down the basis for a realistic and non-demagogic programme (which would put the political parties to shame) for some future left-wing government. This was the idea behind the *Sept Projets pour entrer en Démocratie*, a document that was rejected by the General Assembly as being too insubstantial. (15) The thinking it was based on was, however, typical of the Club. Reforms were to be carried out in strategic sectors of society which were to undermine the principal bulwarks against change. It was the short-cut par excellence – neat and effective without involving anything so untidy and old-fashioned as revolution.

In spite of its own estimation, the political thinking of the Club Jean Moulin was not really original. Theoretically, methodologically and practically the Club supported most of the conclusions of the non-conformists of the 1930's. State reform was the centre of its own preoccupations and it too favoured decentralisation. What distinguished Jean Moulin from other groups and clubs was the style of its approach to the immediate problem of political reform – a singular blend of optimism and urgency.

The optimism had a variety of different sources. First there was the superior quality of the members of the Club. The Secretary-General once commented: '... nous disposons probablement au club, d'un groupe d'hommes comme il n'en a pas existé en France depuis la Libération.'(16) There was also the belief that in Michel Crosier's sociological analysis of French society the Club possessed a fund of knowledge that gave it special insights into the political problems of the country. Then there was the feeling that the style of moderation and the medium-term projections it favoured were in line with the needs of the future: the Club was afloat on the flow of history. Finally, there was the patriotic pride
of the humanist tradition. But this was less in evidence in Jean Moulin than it had been among the non-conformists of the 1930's. (18)

The sense of urgency was partly dictated by the French situation after 1958. Partly it was a by-product of the Club's idea of its own worth: the political solutions that were needed so urgently could be provided by Jean Moulin because of the quality of its membership and the validity of its message. The Club thought of itself as a kind of short-cut to political wisdom. (19) It would produce the programme of reforms that was needed then later some politician could be found to put them into effect. The Club Jean Moulin considered, in the style of Plato, that the equivalent of Titan of Syracuse had only to be found for all to be well.

This chapter will begin with an account of the analysis that formed the Club's intellectual backbone: the idea that increased participation is the necessary condition for the democratisation of mass industrialised society and Michel Crozier's theory of authority patterns in French society. The next two sections will treat respectively the Club's proposals to reform the State and society. The Club's work on foreign policy will be outlined very briefly in the final section, for this was both the least successful and least influential part of its output.

The Intellectual Background.

The Club Jean Moulin, as has already been observed, approached the problem of democracy in France within the wider context of democracy within the modern industrialised State. The latter, according to its own detailed sociological analysis (20), needs a far greater degree of participation
than has hitherto been historically possible:

L'humanité n'a jamais eu autant besoin des ressources de réflexion, d'intelligence et de participation que seule la démocratie peut mobiliser non seulement au sein d'une petite élite, mais dans la masse tout entière des citoyens. (21)

All countries will, of course, have to adapt to the new conditions. But this adaptation will be particularly hard for France. For her traditional pattern of authority - apathy combined with revolt - is diametrically at odds with the kind of active and responsible behaviour that is necessary in a modern society. Nevertheless change is possible: French traditions, being conditioned by cultural factors rather than by national character, are not immutable. If they really want to, the French can reverse their awkward tradition, since formal structures mainly reflect the type of social relations current in any society and these depend on people's attitudes - 'Nous en sommes responsables'. (22) Crozier's conclusion, in essence, is the sociological counterpart to the old republican ethic of personal responsibility: 'for the Republic to exist we have only to will it. For Crozier the cure for lack of participation was participation. (The remedy for the fear of cold water is to jump in; difficulties have only to be faced to be surmounted.)

Democracy, began the Club's argument, has never really existed. In the past, the participation of the masses in politics has been minimal and undiscerning. Universal suffrage has been no more than a cover for manipulating oligarchies who, while bowing to the inevitability of accepting it in theory, have been careful to domesticate it in practice. Not, of course, that total participation is either possible or desirable. Bit a far more equal balance between leadership from above and participation from below could be achieved.

In spite of the prognostics of pessimists, it is arguable that mass
society has made some progress in this domain. Participation today is more conscious and manipulation less arbitrary. This is because the conditions created by the modern world favour greater involvement. There are more groups and institutions within which the individual may participate and this, in turn, leads him to expect to be given the right to do so in all domains that concern him either directly or indirectly. Involvement has also become more formal and conscious; discussion and negotiation and not simply acquiescence have become the rule. The modern citizen plays many more roles than before and these may be at once specialised and over-lapping; he is, for example, both pedestrian and car owner, both employee and property owner. While these multiple roles create more tension, they also allow conflicts to be resolved with greater ease. And they invalidate Marx's theory of the polarisation of classes.

All in all, modern man is fairly well protected against misfortune and natural disasters, but he is all the more vulnerable to society. Its power has increased greatly and become more distant concurrently, so that the participation of the citizen is often unconscious and indirect. In such circumstances, to decentralise is vital. For the citizen cannot overcome his feeling of impotence unless centres of power are created at levels where participation is possible for him. Decentralisation, however, is not just for the benefit of the citizen. It is also the most effective way of mobilising all the resources of the community.

What are the conditions of effective participation? Generally, citizens must be well educated and informed and they must wish to participate. Also those best adapted to their milieu are those most likely to be active. Although secondary to the human will, means are also important. Factors like size must be taken into account when decentralising; units must be neither too big nor too small. They must be
heterogeneous and relatively independent. Above all, social distances must not be too wide nor authority too great, otherwise the necessary balance between participation and resistance, liberty and authority will not be achieved.

Nothing could be more opposed to these conditions than the French practice of State centralisation and individual resistance to it. In France, ran Crosier's argument, the apparently all-powerful State is constantly questioned while the citizen: '... oscillant constamment entre la révolte et l'apathie a beaucoup de mal à adopter des comportements responsables.' (23) Participation, such as it is, is always abstract; ineffective because ignorant, assertive without being responsible.
There is a curious indifference - almost a void - where concrete matters are at stake. It is as if the French were afraid of taking binding decisions. The origin of this fear is the incapacity to resolve conflicts at a personal and group level and this incapacity, in turn, is both cause and consequence of the high degree of authoritarianism in French society. This theory Crosier drew from and justified by his own practical sociological researches.

At the head of each group in France - each office, factory, union, political party - there is a curious person who concentrates all power in his own hands. He refuses to share his authority, mistrusts even the experts he himself has called in and is convinced of his own indispensability. Inevitably his subordinates are afraid to take the least decision without his approval. As a result they either lose interest in their work or resort to passive resistance. The atmosphere soon becomes tense and bitter and a paradoxical situation develops whereby over-worked superiors face dissatisfied subordinates. In short, authority suppresses dialogue; lack of dialogue, in turn, poisons human relations and breeds a scepticism that finds its outlet in politics.
since no outlet is available within the professional framework. Moreover, this authoritarianism is ineffectual and self-defeating since it leads to a situation where those in authority have no practical knowledge or accurate information, while those who do know lack decision-making power. And yet to act differently would be difficult because of the highly centralised structures within each and every domain of French society.

It is when one begins to think about how this situation might be changed that the complexity of the problem becomes apparent. For if organisational structures are paralysing, they also afford protection. Impersonal structures enable a personal confrontation - 'face a face' to use Crosier's expression - between those who make decisions and those who are subject to them to be avoided. In a sense, the situation is ideal for both. Those at the top escape responsibility since they lack effective channels of communication:

... leur pouvoir ne correspond au fond qu'à des satisfactions de prestige et à une participation à demi symbolique aux grandes affaires. La voie sûre, la voie rationnelle, c'est le recours au précédent. (24)

Subordinates, equally, are cushioned against risk. The impersonal and bureaucratic nature of social structures shield them from arbitrariness and favouritism; career promotion is governed entirely by criteria of seniority. Both groups dispose of considerable autonomy because they have a monopoly of the functions attributed to them.

The protection of impersonal structures is necessary because the French find personal contact intolerable. And they find personal contact, with the risk of conflict it carries and the fear of favouritism it arouses intolerable because of their passionate will to be equal - their 'volonté acharnée d'égalité'. It is the autonomy of different levels that makes social distinction bearable:
Between these 'castes', as Crosier calls them, and social class the relationship, of course, is close.

Reluctance to enter into personal contact also partly explains the French habit of constantly appealing to the State. Rather than have their authority directly challenged by negotiating with their unions, employers, in general, prefer the unions to appeal to the State to impose a settlement, even although this settlement might suit the employers less than the result of a direct bargain. The unions, too, favour this type of action since it allows them to maintain their liberty of action, and their freedom of criticism and to safeguard their ideological purity. But recourse to impersonal mediation, while maintaining social distance, also suppresses the power of initiative of each group. The very idea of power becomes less real. It is no longer the means to achieve an end but acquires an abstract value in itself. There are no intermediary levels between the capitalist sovereign and the proletarian subject: power can neither be divided nor shared. Power must be absolute and whoever holds it omnipotent.

This attitude goes a long way to explain the behaviour of the French reformer. Invariably, he considers it sufficient to have a good programme, to secure support for it and to enforce it when the time comes. He is incapable of understanding problems of application other than in terms of energy or to appreciate that society is not a machine but a set of subtly inter-relating roles which may be transformed or influenced from within themselves but are likely to offer insurmountable resistance if attacked head on.
However intelligent, competent and determined he may be, a French reformer is rarely able to progress very far; as soon as his reforms begin to be applied, they are immediately obstructed by their own unexpected effects. Why? The main reason is that he tries too hard to shield his projects from outside pressures. This enables them to remain coherent, but it deprives the reformer of the information that would allow him to adapt these projects to the human material involved. Because their method of application is authoritarian, his reforms simply arouse resistance and create a vicious circle of control, sabotage, confusion and discouragement.

In the past, the French model of authority has had a certain value. It has allowed people to maintain their professional autonomy and to protect their private lives, while in some areas, such as the railways, centralisation has been remarkably effective. But now that private life is increasingly forced to yield ground to the demands of public and social life, the pattern of authoritarianism-cum-resistance simply blocks progress and breeds conservatism and mediocrity. Much of the malaise that has haunted French life since the Second World War is the result of this conflict: '... entre les aspirations des Français et leur attachement d'un modèle de comportement qui rend impossible leur satisfaction.' (26) It is arguable that many of the psychological frustrations of French society are caused by the way the authority works and the attitude of people towards it.

How, then, should change be approached? To reform structures would be a revolutionary undertaking since the very deepest ideas of order and authority of each group affected would be thereby undermined. The circulation of information, on the other hand, would seem reactionary since it means challenging laboriously acquired privileges. However, if both were to be undertaken simultaneously, as social distance lessened, informat-

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ion would be able to pass more easily. The two levels - of structures and of mentality - must obviously be tackled together. But the decisive factor lies in the creation of a new style of human relations:

By means of participation itself, resistances will be overcome and people will adapt more easily to new modes of social relations.

The parallel between Crozier's analysis of the pattern of authority in French society and Pascal's negative formula of internal resistance combined with external obedience to authority needs hardly to be stressed. Indeed, Crozier's theory is its sociological formulation. His explanation, for instance, of how equality is maintained within an authoritarian power structure inevitably recalls Pascal's lucid realisation of the importance of force in social relations. I am equal to another. Yet he has more laquais than I so I am beaten. This does not make him superior; it is merely an outward sign of his power. It is wise, then, to defer to this power externally; but, inwardly, there is no reason to respect it. Equally, Crozier's employee does not directly attempt to challenge the authority structure weighing on him. But he is able to preserve his autonomy within it because he only accepts but does not respect it and in so doing he robs it of any effective power to act.

The direct confrontation that Pascal so prudently avoided in the seventeenth century, according to Crozier's theory, is still being refused in modern industrial society.

Because he believed that the core of the problem lay in the Frenchman's desire for personal autonomy and control of his environment, Crozier
tried to convert the old negative impulse into a positive one by full-scale participation. Since he had never read Proudhon, this may well be how he reached many of the same conclusions as the latter; he was following the same logic.

The State.

The Club Jean Moulin was acutely concerned with the ways and means of providing France with a stable and effective political regime. It was created, after all, in the wake of the collapse of the weakened Fourth Republic and besides, included a high proportion of civil servants among its members. But an equally fundamental preoccupation, on the basis both of Crosnier's analysis and the practical experience of the civil servants, was to break with the traditional pattern of the over-centralised State. The habit of appealing constantly to the State must finally be broken; social groups must learn to act on their own initiative, to accept their responsibilities. The question the Club asked itself was: how to reconcile efficiency and democracy? The answer it gave was a combination of decentralisation and an American-style presidential regime, a scheme that was quite close to those proposed by the reformers of the 1930's, except that it was worked out in much greater detail.

Many of the reformers of the 1930's had supported a strong executive; some had even envisaged a presidential regime. But before the war, as a general rule, presidentialism interested only the Right and it cared little enough about democracy so long as the executive was strong. For the Left, on the other hand, the identification of democracy with parliamentarianism was no less than an article of faith.

It was during the Resistance and in reaction against the weakness of the Third Republic that many left-wing supporters overcame their prejudice
against a strong executive for the first time. A few Resistance groups openly advocated a presidential regime and the subject was sympathetically treated by Leon Blum in A L'Echelle Humaine. Yet at the Liberation it was never seriously proposed as a constitutional solution. In part this was because the Socialist Party was still deeply attached to parliamentarianism, while the Communists tended to treat constitutional problems as irrelevant. But presidentialism was rejected mainly for historical reasons: memories of Napoleon and Boulanger surged back. France had too strong an authoritarian tradition, so the argument ran, to run the risk of giving herself a governing president. Another more technical objection lay in French centralisation: in the United States presidentialism was balanced by federalism - the sting was removed from the scorpion. Then, according to Duverger (28), there was the presence of de Gaulle. A presidential regime, it was felt, would suit him too well and so the idea was definitively compromised. The identification of democracy with parliamentarianism made the founders of the new constitution look finally to Britain as a model. And the new political system was in essence an attempt to create by artificial means the stability and coherence assured in England by the two-party system. (29)

The possibility of France's adopting a presidential regime was not seriously broached again until 1955 and then only in restricted academic circles. This renewed interest coincided with the final failure of constitutional reforms, such as the new power of dissolution, to provide governmental stability. But more directly inspiration came from the comparative institutional studies undertaken after the war. The new protagonists of presidentialism were law professors: Georges Vedel; Maurice Duverger; Georges Lavau.

Vedel opened the debate in the review Fédération in August 1955. But more important was the report he made to the Comité d'Etudes pour la
République, a group of unorthodox socialists interested in Europe, in planning and institutional reform, led by Christian Pineau (to some extent the comité was a continuation of his Nouvelles Équipes of the 1930's). However, Vedel made few converts there or in the group around Demain, a left-wing pro-European weekly. (30) At the same time, his writings, together with those of Duverger and Lavau, stimulated controversy and the presidential idea began to be considered more seriously within the limited circles of the reformist Left.

The contribution of these comparative studies was, first, that they allowed the French to grasp correctly how other political systems actually worked for the first time; and, second, they indicated a general line of development within all modern democratic regimes. (31) Before the Second World War, French constitutional lawyers had understood the American system to be a rigid separation of powers and a quasi-dictatorship of the executive. They had seen the British system, even more curiously, as a flexible separation of powers between legislative and executive and also between the House of Lords and the House of Commons. They believed the Britain of 1939 to be governed as it had been before Queen Victoria. This was due partly to their excessively mechanistic method of analysis, and partly because of their ignorance of English language and law. Their own law being closer to German than English law, French lawyers and academics usually understood German but no English. This explains why Bagehot, for instance, was unknown in France. (32)

The impact of comparative studies was, broadly, to make the French realise that there was no flexible separation of powers in England and that the political regime there operated on the basis of a rigid two-party system that Frenchmen could never hope to emulate short of becoming biologically transformed. In America, on the other hand, they saw that the executive interacted with the legislature and was not excessively predominant;
and also that the two American parties were in reality, loose coalitions. Congressional representatives did not owe unconditional loyalty to their party nor is the President obliged to govern with a stable, unchanging majority. Here, it seemed, was a system within the constitutional reach of the French and one, moreover, that might be grafted on to the French one artificially, unlike English institutions which just existed mysteriously without even the support of a written Constitution. A clinching argument for the presidential regime was provided by the observation that in all modern industrialised countries the chief of the executive tends to depend more directly on outside public opinion than on the constellation of forces within parliament. Why should France be an exception? Duverger, in addition, argued that a strong executive was essential in a modern State, to curtail the power of both pressure groups and the technocracy. (33)

The Algerian War brought the new presidentialist current to an almost halt. It did not re-emerge until 1960, when rumours began to circulate that de Gaulle intended to make the presidency directly dependent on universal suffrage. By then Vedel, Duverger and Lavau were all three members of Jean Moulin and that is how the Club came to be the spearhead of presidentialism on the Left. This development was slightly paradoxical. For like the other clubs, Jean Moulin was fundamentally hostile to the old thesis that political virtue and stability may be assured by the right kind of institutions; it insisted that the vigour of society itself if the decisive factor. But then the case for a presidential regime was never advanced by the academics as a panacea for all French political ills; they were always careful to point out that it would not in itself create of a more stable political regime but only help one to develop. (34) Moreover, while they were able to win over the majority of the Club's members to the presidential idea, a minority remained hostile or undecided. Despite the fact that Jean Moulin came to be thought of as a main advocate of
presidentialism on the Left there was no more unanimity within the Club
than on any other (on this issue).

Before 1958 the preoccupation of the presidentialists had been to
find a form of government capable of making decisions; after 1958 their
concern was to limit the power of the head of State. The Constitution
of 1958 was not presidential but definitely severely cut back the power of the
Assembly, while the constitutional revision of 1962 further increased
those of the President. There was no point, thought the presidentialists,
in trying to apply the 1958 Constitution correctly, for under de Gaulle
it had enabled the presidency to rely on plebiscites and in other circum-
stances it could mean a return to parliamentary impotence. What was
necessary was a 'real' - i.e. American type - presidential regime.
Practically, this meant reducing the president's term of office to the
same length of time as that of the legislature and suppressing the largely
mythical responsibility of the prime minister and cabinet before parliament
even suggesting the premiership altogether. Since the executive could
not be overturned by parliament, the President should lose the right of
dissolution. Parliament, on the other hand, would recover many of its
former legislative and financial roles. The executive, for instance,
must not be able to prevent it discussing any subject or to dispense with
its vote. In the case of stalemate between the legislature and the
executive, an appeal could be made to the country.

Although they tended to vary in detail and emphasis, these were the
main proposals advanced over the years by Jean Moulin to curtail the power
of the presidency. They are set out in a number of the Club's bulletins
and explained in detail in the book, Un Président pour quoi faire? which
appeared in 1965. (35) The Club's earlier work and main doctrinal
statement, L'État et le Citoyen, advocated a presidential regime, but
only briefly, without emphasis or detailed justification; its principal
Decentralisation was the cornerstone of the Club's intellectual beliefs; the message of *L'Etat et le Citoyen*. It was regarded both as the first condition of efficiency in the modern, interventionist State as well as the ideal training ground for responsible citizenship. Yet, for all its decentralising enthusiasm, the Club in its hey-day in the early 1960's was not very precise about how to begin decentralising in practice. As in the case of the presidential regime, there was a hard core of supporters for the idea in the Club while many were only slowly groping their way towards it. Nonetheless, the criticism made of centralisation and the administration and the fact that decentralisation was even envisaged, however imprecisely, are of particular interest because those involved were neither poujadists nor intellectual liberals but civil servants themselves. The very specific proposals for administrative reform advanced in the late 1960's, when the Club was on the downgrade, were also the work of civil servants — led by Crosier. But they are hardly representative of what the majority of administrators in the Club were thinking between 1958-65.

Jean Moulin's principal argument for decentralisation was simply that the State was no longer functioning efficiently. Both the communes and the departments were too small for economic or administrative purposes, while the latter were too numerous to be effectively supervised by Paris. In addition, the ministries in Paris created their own provincial offices that by-passed the local prefect. The result was confusion, incoherence and chronic delays. Examples abounded: a provincial school kept waiting for months by the Ministry for a replacement mathematics master while one
could have been found at once on the spot; a hospital service with immensely expensive equipment forced to close down for lack of permission to employ two nurses. The civil servants concluded that the State, had become 'un père pesant':

Il... apparaît, à la fois, comme boulimique et indécis, obèse et faible, tendant à devenir comme ces très grosses bêtes des temps préhistoriques qui ont péri, dit-on, après avoir dévoré tout l'environnement. Ses contours étendus font qu'on ne sait même plus où il est ou n'est pas, qui il est et n'est pas. Chargé de tâches hétérogènes, manquant de la souplesse et la rapidité qu'exige la réponse à des questions nouvelles, multipliant les contrôles qui se contrôlent les uns les autres, il est ressenti trop souvent comme un écran, plus que comme un relais, entre les citoyens et le pouvoir. (36)

Decentralisation had become an administrative necessity. But it was also - and more fundamentally - a means of changing political attitudes and habits, particularly at a local level. Traditional political behaviour is roundly condemned in L'Etat et le Citoyen. Significantly enough, people in the provinces demonstrate not before the mairie, symbol of local power, but before the prefecture: '... simple figuration d'une autorité lointaine et mal déterminée.' (37) Where strong local liberties exist, the political class usually plays a double role: of governing but also of interceding at the level of central power. In France, the second function totally eclipses the first. The State and the municipalities are linked so intimately that the first thing a mayor has to know is not how to administer his commune, but how to deal with the distant ministries that distribute the subsidies which minister to lunch with and when. In general, the energies of those who become involved in local politics are dissipated because they have no real power to act. Lacking a practical outlet, the political activist tends to become either sectarian and dogmatic or to see politics as a means of saving his soul. 'Cette atrophie du métier politique est peut-être une des causes de la médiocrité du personnel.' (38)
If centralisation were not such a potent demobilising factor, France would have had her own La Guardias. The State need only begin to delegate its authority for the whole tone and texture of local political life to become transformed. Power is not and must not be thought of as indivisible, was a persistent theme of the Club.

Decentralisation as a general theme—meaning the devolution of some measure of central power—met with the approval of the great majority of civil servants within Jean Moulin. Decentralisation, as Crozier understood it, in terms of financially autonomous areas with their own locally elected executives, undoubtedly shocked a good many of them. (39) And it was not until 1967 that a small, inner group of administrators—connected mainly with the Plan (40)—set to work under his guidance on a blueprint for decentralisation. The result of one and a half years work was Les Citoyens au Pouvoir.

Outside of rare intellectual groups of federalists, in the post-war years regional decentralisation was first seriously explored within the framework of the Economic Plan. But this was because from the Second Plan onwards problems in this connection intruded themselves rather than because the planners had themselves regionalist sympathies. On the contrary, regionalism was still linked in most people's minds with the ideas of the Extreme-Right and so automatically dismissed as reactionary. (41) It was the obvious inadequacy of the commune and department and the excessive national preponderance of Paris that led the planners to create larger and more effective administrative units at a provincial level and subsequently to think about the possible political implications of economic decentralisation. Debate on this point grew from the early 1960's. (42) One school of thought, represented by Debré and Frey, saw regionalism primarily as a device for more efficient administration. Others regarded it as an opportunity to widen the scope of political
decision-making and to transform the nature of the State. Their banner was taken up by the Club Jean Moulin.

The proposals put forward in *Les Citoyens au Pouvoir*, then in *Quelle Réforme? Quelles Régions?* (43), were extremely radical. On the basis of administrative and economic criteria as well as on the evidence of foreign experiences, the reformed commune must, they asserted, have a population of at least 8,000. The number of communes in France must be reduced from 38,000 to 2,000. However, unless new institutions were created at an intermediary level between the communes and Paris this reform in itself would be neither effective nor, probably, democratic. The solution was to create a small number of regions — say, twelve — which would eventually dispose of their own financial resources and have their own directly elected assemblies.

The means outlined by the Club for putting these propositions into practice were altogether typical of its general approach: the public needed only to be enlightened to see where its own best interests lay. First it was necessary to provoke a strong popular reaction by the 'definition claire et publique des objectifs et des moyens d'une réforme' (44) — i.e. by the book itself. Next a class of people competent to deal with the problems of regional and local administration must be trained both within the universities and by an institute especially founded for the purpose. Against the background of this ferment, agreements on reorganisation and fusion — with precise objectives and fixed time limits — would be drawn up between the State and the communes. After a certain period, maybe six years, fusions might have simply to be imposed. The Club was perfectly aware of the conservatism of the communes and of the probable resistance to its reforms. But once again it assumed that difficulties only have to be faced to be surmounted — as is apparent from a subtitle to the book's conclusion: 'Difficultés du problème et nécessité de l'attaquer de front.' (45)
Society

In as much as the Club Jean Moulin had a vision it was of a pluralist society where liberty would be assured by the diversity of groups and social relations, while order within this diversity would be achieved through discussion, bargaining and education. Within this schema the State was neither omnipotent nor excluded. Its relation to other social forces was a contractual one; its role was to instigate, stimulate, give leads and pointers but to command as little as possible. This is the force of the word 'dialogue', probably the most recurrent word in the Club’s vocabulary. But ultimately the dynamic element ensuring change and progress lay less in the State than in a participating society. These conclusions are supported by three themes which the Club treated in some detail: economic planning; industrial reform; and housing policy.

Although there were undoubtedly many liberals in Jean Moulin, the overall approach of the Club to social reform cannot be defined as liberal except in the general sense that it was tolerant. If de Tocqueville was copiously quoted this was because of his observations on the lack of grassroots democracy in France rather than because he was the Club’s principal intellectual reference. Pluralism for Jean Moulin meant the direct participation of all of the citizens in all affairs directly concerning them, social and economic as well as political. The Club had its own way of being paternalistic but this was never in relation to mass participation in politics. Besides, it had very little sympathy with the values of individualism. Jean Moulin was never quite so enthusiastically community-minded as some of the more Catholic groups, but implicitly it regarded individualism as anarchical and anti-social. This is particularly evident in its support for economic planning. It was never uncompromisingly anti-capitalist in the manner of the 1930’s intellectual movement, but it
still had an instinctive urge to rationalise and socialise the market economy.

On one level, the Club Jean Moulin became a centre of support for and thought about economic planning simply because a large contingent of planners had happened to gravitate towards it. At the same time, planning fitted neatly into its general intellectual schema.

Capitalism had rehabilitated itself since the 1930's. It had permitted the striking successes of the Fourth Republic beside which the achievements of the Eastern European economies were none too impressive. At the same time, the flexible system of planning employed in France after the war - operating within growth forecasts for the whole economic system but dealing with only a restricted number of targets, established usually for branches of industry rather than for individual firms - was thought to offer a number of important advantages. In helping to avoid waste and imbalances and to promote steady economic expansion; planning was a shield against inflation. (46) It was also a way of dealing with the collective needs of the community which were not satisfied by the market itself. Most important, the Plan, if properly organised, could become a further means of democratising society and taming the powerful modern State:

Il ne s'agit donc pas d'exclure la contrainte, mais de la limiter au minimum nécessaire: la planification économique le permet justement. Pour rendre supportable le monde de l'organisation, il faut tenter de le rendre cohérent, c'est à dire de l'ordonner suivant des fins explicites et des moyens définis. L'admettre n'est pas s'incliner devant les impératifs de l'efficacité, mais simplement reconnaître que la société n'est pas réductible aux individus, qu'elle suppose aussi des interdépendances. (47)
Also, the general methodology of the Club was inspired by the Plan. Jean Monnet's objective when he became first Commissaire of the Plan after the war was modernisation; his means of achieving it was harmonisation. What he wanted to avoid were the barren ideological confrontations that had hitherto dominated social and economic relations. The method by which he chose to do this was to direct discussion towards future developments and concentrate, as far as possible, on concrete choices. (48) Certain options, argued Monnet, could be taken outside of and in spite of conflicting ideological positions. Now that the war was over, it was impossible for the government to control everything; social groups must be ready to assume responsibilities by themselves without constant recourse to State intervention. Monnet always attached the greatest importance to the modernising committees where, for the first time in France, different social and professional categories could meet informally but systematically. Their task was to discuss and modify the preliminary proposals of the administrative bodies responsible for preparing the Plan. But they had no strict rulings about representation and no majority votes were taken. (49) The originality of the modernising committees lay in their flexibility.

Under Monnet, the Plan became a kind of educational centre that taught and encouraged the type of attitudes and behaviour - dialogue, compromise, responsibility, initiative - that Jean Moulin advocated so earnestly at a later period. The big innovation of the Plan, as Pierre Masse has pointed out, was in replacing:

les ordres par la persuasion, le commandement par l'influence, l'autorité des personnes par celles des idées. Il s'adresse, non pour leur imposer une conduite, mais pour les animer à modifier d'eux-mêmes leurs attitudes... (50)

Jean Moulin even went so far as to hope to transplant the methods employed by the Planning Commissariat to other social and economic spheres. (51)
The theme of economic planning occupied a notable place within the Club for purely ideological reasons. But there were also practical and historical grounds for the very considerable concern with it in the period roughly between 1958-64. For one thing, the foundation of the Club coincided with an upsurge of enthusiasm for economic planning both on the part of the government and, to some degree, among the diverse non-Marxist groups of the Left. Then the Plan had itself reached a critical stage of its development. Planners felt the need to stand back from their daily routine to reflect on what they were doing. And so, for a period, the Club Jean Moulin became a kind of after-hours annexe to the Commissariat in the Rue de Martignac.

Suddenly in 1958 the Plan had come to be seen by the government as the project to unite all Frenchmen. Michel Debré, the Prime Minister, favoured it. General de Gaulle christened it 'an ardent obligation'. (52) For as long as the Algerian War lasted, the hostility of the unions towards the regime was largely neutralised by the necessity for supporting de Gaulle against the more extreme Right and the atmosphere of social peace this situation helped to create was favourable to economic planning. Moreover, planning was one of the principal items on the platform of the minority that finally triumphed at the CTFU Congress in 1959 and it was, in general, a popular idea among the Catholic groups that were now emerging more clearly as a political force. (53) Mendès and the Cahiers de la République rallied to the planning idea. (53) And even Esprit for a moment called a truce in its war against technocracy and gave its blessing. This general interest in the Plan as well as the sense of its having become an asset of the regime, in turn, lent the planners verve and audacity in facing up to the new problems confronting them.

The principal characteristic of the French Plan was that it had developed pragmatically. The two trends perceptible at this time were
a broadening of the scope of social concern and a democratisation of the procedures for consultation and decision. These - and principally the latter - were the themes most discussed in the Club. The more strictly economic and technical problems were left at home in the Rue de Martignac.

By the late 1950's it had become apparent to the planners that the requirements of planning were not easily compatible with the parliamentary system. Legislation only required that a report on the execution of the Plan should be presented to Parliament each year as an annex to the Finance Bill. (54) Not even a debate, far less a vote, was obligatory. Only the second of the three first Plans was voted on and this only in March 1956, although the period covered by the Plan was 1953-57. Mendès France had himself initiated programme laws that allowed the Planning Commissariat to obtain public funds outside the annual budget. (55) All this, evidently, was undemocratic. Even so, it was not immediately apparent, even to those who wanted to see the Plan more closely controlled, how a set of such complex and mutually dependent proposals could be handled in a genuinely democratic way, given that just one modification could upset the whole delicate mechanism and since, besides, it was frequently necessary to modify the plan in the course of execution.

By 1962 criticism of the government's authoritarian procedures in the planning sphere had become widespread. So that when the debate on the Fourth Plan came up the Prime Minister announced that the parliament would in future be more closely associated both with the execution of the Plan and with the initial choice of key policy options for the Fifth Plan. (56) But Jean Moulin had been preoccupied with the problem as early as 1959-60 when L'État et le Citoyen was written. And the pamphlet it published in 1961, La Planification Démocratique (56), was the first substantial analysis of the problem to be published.
The proposals for reform contained in the pamphlet are precise and interesting, although as usual they tend to overestimate the public's readiness to be educated. But by far the most striking aspect of the pamphlet was that the loudest and most articulate criticism of the undemocratic nature of planning procedures came from the planners themselves. Far from revelling as technocrats in the support of a strong State, the administrators in the Club were urgently insistent that they themselves be democratically controlled. Economic development, it is asserted in *La Planification Démocratique*, is not just a question of coherence but implies choices:

> certains d'entre elles sont si fondamentaux pour la survie et le bien-être de la collectivité qu'ils revêtent un caractère politique et échappent de ce fait aux critères du marché ou des techniciens de la planification. (57)

These choices must be conscious and based on political principles rather than on pragmatic calculations. Moreover, there is an inherent value in participation and the possibilities offered by the Plan to democratise society should be fully explored.

First and foremost, Parliament must be more closely associated with the Plan. Before the detailed phase of working out objectives sector by sector, there should come a global phase of discussing in parliament the major options proposed by the government. At this stage choices could be made between such fundamental social and economic alternatives as an increase in consumption or a reduction in working hours; between private consumption and collective facilities; between the income of the working population and the means of inactive sectors, such as the old or ill. During those periods when parliament is called upon to pronounce on the Plan, the Economic and Social Council could become its adviser and participate in parliamentary commissions. In general, the civil servants at the Planning Commissariat and the chairmen of the Modernising Committees...
should regard it as their duty to keep the deputies — and also the public at large — informed about the progress of the Plan.

The pamphlet put forward various suggestions for enlightening the public. All political organisations might, for instance, create 'political planning cells' to study the problems of their own area. Unions, in particular, ought to be more intimately associated with the planning process and have at their disposal more accurate economic information, so as to be able to discuss with employers on equal terms. Consumers should be better represented in planning commissions, especially in such non-economic sectors as culture, education and communications.

Finally, technical progress in the future should allow a large number of hypotheses to be reduced to a few simple choices. As Pierre Massé put it:

... le bon usage des mathématiques peut favoriser la démocratie contre la technocratie, car le recours à un modèle dit 'formalisé' oblige dès l'abord les planificateurs à énoncer clairement et complètement leurs hypothèses, et ne leur permet pas d'introduire certaines d'entre elles d'une manière subreptice, sinon même inconsciente, au cours du développement des approximations. (58)

Here again, curiously enough, the planners were anxious to safeguard against their own possible tricks.

Another theme worthy of note, if only touched on briefly in the pamphlet, is nationalisation. The Club's attitude on this subject was completely in line with its vision of a pluralist society and belief in the need for different centres of power as a guarantee of liberty. Nationalisation, consequently, was never for the Club the panacea it constituted for the rest of the Left. It was prepared to envisage State control or ownership of industry, but only on a non-ideological basis; each case must be judged on its own merits. For purely pragmatic reasons Jean Moulin advocated that the State take over three sectors: banking; building land; and the automobile industry.
It was also of the opinion that regional development, in certain cases, might justify nationalisation: for instance, where to provide financial incentives for private firms would prove more expensive than simply to create a State concern.

Although it is not treated in the pamphlet, one more point might be mentioned in connection with the Club's policy on nationalisation. This is the decentralisation of ministerial power advocated by Simon Nora in his report: Essai de bilan de l'Expérience des Nationalisations en France. (59) This report was basically a reaction against the longstanding tradition of bad relations between unions and management in the public sector. The reason for this was that the heads of the various different nationalised branches could not bargain effectively with their unions because they were themselves too closely supervised by their ministries. As the unions were perfectly well aware of this, negotiations became a ritual farce. Nora's hope was that the granting of greater autonomy to the heads of the public sector would make it more efficient and generally improve social relations.

To grant the unions more rights and bargaining power, in turn, was a fundamental part of the Club's social strategy. For only their improved position within the national community could change what Jean Moulin termed the 'irresponsibility' of the unions. On the one hand the unions accepted the political system as an objective reality and on the other they resorted to revolutionary language and passive resistance, thereby depriving themselves of any influence on it. Working together with the natural tendency within modern society for the worker to become increasingly integrated into his firm, a conscious policy of improving social relations could, so thought the Club, break the old vicious circle of conflict and stagnation. (60)

The Plan, for a time, became the framework within which all social
and economic relations were examined and judged both in the Club and more widely among the political factions of the Left. And a trend of planning apparent in the late 1950's and early 1960's, it has been observed, was the increase of social concern over purely economic criteria of rationality. This social concern was reflected, to a degree, in Jean Moulin. A theme at the annual congress at Royaumont in 1961 was: Peut-on fixer les Objectifs sociaux du Plan? And in 1964 the possibility of an incomes policy was discussed at Royaumont. But, in general, social affairs were much more the province of the Club Citoyens 60. They began to assume a more central place in Jean Moulin only after 1965, by which time the Club was already in decline. (61)

The book on company reform, Pour une Réforme de L'Entreprise, published by Francois Bloch-Laine in 1962 was not strictly part of Jean Moulin's publications. However, he did write it in collaboration with the Club - about fifty members read and revised it. (62) This and the interest in the Club for what was termed 'industrial democracy' are a justification for examining the ideas in it within the framework of Jean Moulin's work. 'Ce livre rassemble des idées qui sont dans l'air' wrote Bloch-Laine. (63) They were certainly very much in the air at Jean Moulin.

Bloch-Laine's basic premise - the gap between new realities and old modes of thinking was very much in line with the Club's own approach. Legally, private companies are subject to the will of their owners, public companies to that of the State. But these regulations, drawn up in the nineteenth century, have very little application to the modern situation.
where both have become highly complex institutions, subject to varying pressures. What are the real factors on which new modes of thought and behaviour must be based?

One of the most important developments of recent decades has been the dissociation of property and management. Industry is no longer controlled by shareholders, but rather by autonomous and occult minorities. This destroys the relevance of the argument that the owners of property have a right to control it. The domination of a small group, owning only a fraction of the capital of a company, is much harder to justify. The solution, in the circumstances, is either to go back to first principles and reinstate the power of the shareholders, or else to adapt to the realities of the new situation which are that company managers have as much responsibility today to their employees and to the community as a whole as to their shareholders. Equally, employees no longer consent simply to supply their labour in exchange for a more or less 'just' wage. Growing mechanisation and specialisation lead them to seek a compensation for the meaninglessness of their work in increased participation within the company. To promote this participation practically is to recognise that a nation develops not just by means of increased production but also through the human satisfactions of greater liberty and responsibility. At the same time, of course, liberty can never be total. The opposition between those who command and those commanded will always remain to some degree. The immediate practical problem - solved neither by the post-war French comité d'entreprise nor by German autogestion - is how to allow employees both to participate in industry and at the same time to maintain their right to oppose the management on certain points. Finally, the company also stands in a different relation to the community where, as in France, there exists an economic Plan. For then the objective of the company becomes not just to make a maximum profit but to fit into the
general framework of the expansion of the whole national community.

Yet for all his faith in the Plan as an instrument to resolve the antagonisms between company and community, Bloch-Laine never saw the State as imposing some kind of national will. He concurred with the Club's own view that independent centres of power are a source of liberty and that, therefore, political and economic institutions should be separated as much as possible. Where private property is not an actual social inconvenience, it should be maintained in the interests of liberty. This preoccupation with the independence of the company vis-à-vis both political and economic authority (i.e. the Plan) led Bloch-Laine to an important conclusion. If the company remains a relatively autonomous centre of decision-making subject to the criteria of economic efficiency, then its hierarchical structure of command must be retained. The power of the management is not to be shared but rather to be influenced both by employees and the community at large:

Il s'agit moins de changer de propriétaires que de sanctionner le fait que l'activité de l'entreprise intéresse une société plus vaste, plus composite que celle des propriétaires. Cette sanction peut être l'établissement d'un contrôle multiple, plutôt que la substitution d'un contrôle unique à un autre contrôle unique. Le contrôle des pouvoirs publics et celui des salariés devraient se conjuguer avec celui des détenteurs du capital. (64)

Ultimately, this multiple control is only workable if people's attitudes and behaviour change. But in the meantime new structures must also be created. These structures will have three roles. One is to allow responsibilities to be more precisely attributed. For this reason, industrial society like political society will have two types of leader: those who have delegated authority but are not responsible and those who draw their authority from the consensus of those to whom they are responsible. The former will be merely a consultative body, while the latter, the college of directors, are to run the company on a day-to-
day basis. The power of the employees, on the other hand, will be reinforced by increased union rights and the built-in opportunity for both participation and opposition within the new structures. The necessary function of conciliation, finally, will be fulfilled by the creation of a body of 'social and economic magistrates.' Their task will not be to regulate wages nor to supplant regulatory bodies already in existence, but to act as impartial witnesses and counsellors. Mainly, they will examine and 'dire le vrai' on the company's accounts. (65) They could also form a court of appeal, the application of whose jurisdictions would be voluntary except where parties agree to accept it in advance.

These structures could, of course, only be constructed progressively. Also the type of constitution need not be followed to the letter. Unlike the public administration, private companies may experiment and should do so.

Claude Alephandery's, Pour une Politique du Logement (66), follows much the same line of general argument as the previous book. It is necessary to change structures but in itself this is insufficient unless mentalities are also transformed. And second, social innovation should be substituted for the Left's traditional panacea of State intervention.

The French government, the book points out, finances more public housing than any other western country. Taking HLM building and war damage reconstruction together, the Ministry of Finance directly financed one-third of all housing in 1960. Only ten per cent of all houses built did not benefit from State assistance in one form or another. Despite
this the housing shortage was serious. Moreover, although HLM housing in principle was reserved for families of limited means, in practice such families were often bypassed. For the difference between market prices and those of subsidised housing is so large as to direct the middle classes towards the latter. The solution, in the circumstances, lay neither in the increase nor in the reduction of public spending, but in the creation of a _marche hypotécaire_ or low-interest mortgage loans. This recourse to private capital must, however, be controlled to some degree and a balance struck between the means of the borrowers and the expectations of investors. Above all, there are no magic solutions to the housing crisis, such as the nationalisation of all urban building land. This may well be indispensable on occasion, but compulsory purchase orders are preferable.

The concern to prune the State's activities is accompanied, as ever, by an impulse to streamline and democratise those remaining. An important element in the incoherence and inefficiency of housing policy being the existence of too many separate centres of decision-making within the administration - the Plan, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Land Development - an independent commission on housing could be created. Its role would be to keep in touch with various different sectors of opinion, to lay down guidelines and to supervise execution. But so as to avoid ' _l'escauf technocratique_ ', this commission would only propose maximal and minimal objectives, while the ultimate choice would remain with parliament.

Public opinion itself could be more directly associated with construction and urban policy at a local and regional level. Interest only has to be stimulated by schools and universities, at present remarkably deficient in this respect. Neither the _Ecole Polytechnique_ nor the _Ecole National de l'Administration_, for example, teach urbanism. At
the same time, instruction will not attain its objective unless it is practical rather than academic and linked to the daily problems of existence:

Ainsi envisagée, la politique du logement ne vise pas seulement à atteindre ses propres objectifs... elle est également un banc d'essai pour le renouveau de la démocratie. (67)

Foreign Policy.

Jean Moulin was never happy about its achievements in the field of foreign policy, even although its books on this subject sold well enough. Internal Letters abound with bleak references to the work of foreign relations committees. One reason for this was that there were few people in the Club with any expertise in this domain and Jean Moulin hated to start anything without its experts. But the main reason for its failure to produce the display of intellectual fireworks it felt to be one of its obligations, was that by and large it supported General de Gaulle's foreign policy. (68)

The one major exception to this general rule concerned supranational institutions. The Club called for a policy of more active support for the United Nations and advocated a federal Europe controlled by an elected Parliament. (69) There were, however, few enthusiastic federalists in the Club, apart from Etienne Hirsch. The majority of those who supported a strong, integrated Europe did so only for reasons of realpolitik. In the long term, France needed Europe to escape American domination.

Simon Nora's, Pour une Politique Étrangère de l'Europe, is a plea for a strong, united Europe including Britain and independent of but not
in conflict with the United States. He approves the General's anti-atlanticist policy in so far as its aim is to make France independent of America, but he rejects it in so far as it is France-centred. If France is to rally her European partners effectively, then she must be able to provide some alternative to American domination which does not turn out in practice to mean French hegemony. Nora's final judgment on de Gaulle's position is succinctly put:

Dans la mesure où les refus de la France s'appuient sur les motifs nationaux, ils renforcent le nationalisme de ceux qui ne veulent pas concéder à la France, en Europe, le rôle que celle-ci refuse légitiment aux USA dans le monde atlantique. (70)

While Simon Nora's book was probably broadly representative of opinion in the Club, Le Socialisme et l'Europe was not. (71) A view widely held on the French Left in the 1950's and early 1960's was that the French must construct socialism in their own country before considering integration into the European Community. A cartelised Europe would otherwise block the road to socialism. What Le Socialisme et l'Europe did was to reverse the argument. It advanced the view that only within the enlarged context of Europe would France find the necessary scope for the construction of socialism. This order of priority had the support of most of the membership of the Club and the book was allowed to pass for this reason. But the author's concept of socialism was violently disputed. Many believed they were really advocating a rationalised version of capitalism. (72) Of all the books Jean Moulin published, this one is no doubt least representative of the mass of its membership.

Another publication on which there was very little general agreement was La Force de Frappe et le Citoyen. It proposed to integrate French nuclear weapons into a European-cum-British force and to pool scientific research for peaceful purposes. On the other hand, a good many members of the Club supported outright disarmament, while others hesitated between
disarmament and the view advanced in the book. Disarmament was one of the most frequently discussed topics in the Club but the outcome of these debates was invariably inconclusive. (73)

Aid to developing countries also stirred a good deal of interest and, in some cases, passionate feeling; the moral nature of the problem stirred the Club's ready conscience. Hessel, in particular, felt deeply committed on the subject. But the book written under his aegis on France's relations with her overseas territories was never finished.

What, historically, was the significance of the Club Jean Moulin? Like the Jacobin Club, it can be said to have covered two orders of reality. On one level, it simply represented what each of its individual members took it to represent. To some it meant no more than the opportunity to work on some particular subject which interested them, whether decentralisation, fiscal reform, education etc. To others it was a means of social and professional advancement. Others, again, were interested in updating socialist ideas.

But at a deeper level, within the diversity of tendencies and motivations represented in it, Jean Moulin also had an essence, an inner coherence and a sense of purpose which were stamped on each of its works and identified these as the product of the Club. This essence was created by the coming together of two separate forces: one was the modernising sector of the French administration at a time when its influence was at a peak, the other was a set of ideas which had acquired currency within certain limited and mainly intellectual sections of French society.

The civil service, it has been observed, played a major role in the
modernising process which took place under the Fourth Republic. Since ministries were perpetually changing hands, administrators were fairly independent in the face of political pressures even then. But in the period 1958-62, their power was probably at a height. The opposition parties in parliament had been decimated at the elections in the autumn of 1958. De Gaulle, who saw himself as 'above' the parties was ignoring even the UNR-UDT. Later, after his rather mediocre showing at the referendum of 1962, the President was forced to take more account of his own party and this, in turn, again brought the administration under the control of politicians and the pressure groups they supported. However, in the meantime – that is to say until around 1962 – France was certainly very close to being 'a technocrats paradise'. (74)

In these circumstances, the Club Jean Moulin represented both the administration's realisation of its own power and the aspiration of certain circles within it to employ this power for the General Good. One of the Club's first newsletters, a tract defending civil servants against the accusation of connivance with the regime, is revealing in this respect: certainly, the tract admitted, the influence of civil servants had increased under de Gaulle, but this was proof neither of their complicity with the events of May 1958 nor with the ideas of Gaullism. (75) The reign of technicians above the parties was a Gaullist slogan rather than the ambition of the administration. The stream of legislation it was able to pass with little or no democratic discussion was, of course, unhealthy. At the same time, neither the previous paralysis of the legislature nor the void left by the political parties was the fault of administrators:

Dans le déseinglement des fonctionnaires, il n'y a ni ambition de caste, ni haine de l'institution parlementaire, mais plutôt désir, mal utilisé, mal canalisé par une démocratie défaillante, de faire quelque chose d'utile. (76)

There was no such thing as a civil service ideology. If there was a
reproach to be made against the recent spate of reforms, it was rather their lack of coherence. Civil servants, who fear and hate void above all things, have been concerned only to fill it. It was true that previously under Vichy they had shown a predilection for authoritarian government; but now their one desire was to be able to work for a stable, non-partisan regime - for docility, lastly, was the basis of their characteristics. Yet, not all administrators approached the problems of government from a narrow, technical standpoint. Many of them, particularly those who had been trained at the École Nationale d'Administration, were dissatisfied with purely empirical solutions and searching for a system of values to which to refer.

Why civil servants should be moved to look for a humanist model the tract does not explain. So far as left-wing Catholics, such as Ripert and Gruzon, were concerned, no doubt the Church's insistence on the need to control the modern technological environment played a part in stimulating such an impulse. (77) More generally, there was the moralising influence of the Saint Simonist tradition, with its vision of enlightened technicians dedicated to the public welfare. Whatever the reasons, the Club Jean Moulin was something more than a collection of administrators interested in the problems of modernisation. It was also a centre of reflection about humanising the process of modernisation. Externally, the members of the Club were not infrequently stigmatised as technocrats. Internally, within the Club, technocracy was condemned out of hand.

Some members of the Club, it is true, were interested only in its modernising style. However, in so far as the works it produced represented what it stood for, Jean Moulin adhered to an ideology which was at once libertarian and humanist. Specifically, this ideology was Proudhon's system of social and economic democracy. Jean Moulin's ideal was a society of mutually dependent, self-regulating groups, where the State existed to
stimulate and initiate rather than to command or to execute, where order and progress were ensured by discussion and education and where social and political change was brought about by the double approach of changing both structures and values. There were minor differences. Jean Moulin was less anti-parliamentary than Proudhon. Also there was some ambiguity in the Club’s thinking on the role of the State. It is certain, for instance, that the executive envisaged by the presidentialists was far stronger than the power conceded to the State in *Du Principe Federatif*. On the other hand, the idea for a Ministry of Administrative Development advanced by Crozier in *Sept Projets pour Enter en Democratie* was directly in line with the Proudhonist concept of the executive. According to Crozier’s project, the Ministry was to be charged:

non pas tant de preparer des mesures legislatives et reglementaires de reforme mais surtout de devenir un centre permanent de recherches d’animation et de formation dont la tache consisterait a aider toutes les administrations a s’adapter aux exigences du monde moderne. Un tel organisme n’agirait pas par voie d’autorite mais par les services, les conseils et par la pression de l’opinion publique qu’il pourrait mobiliser pour la cause des reformes. (78)

The Club Jean Moulin never admitted its intellectual debt to Proudhon. In fact, it never explicitly set down the system of values which underlay its thinking in all the great body of its works. It tended to imply that its working principles were entirely original. The Club Citoyens 60, which was more Proudhonist even than Jean Moulin, also omitted to acknowledge this influence, but then since it referred constantly to Personalism and Moulier the sources of its ideology are clear. In the case of Jean Moulin, they are not. The Club occasionally cited X-Crise, but never Personalism. (79) Some Jacobins had read Proudhon but not, apparently, the members of Jean Moulin. (80) One direct line of influence between Personalism and the Club can be traced: through the group which came from Esprit. But, in general, one is
forced to the limited conclusion that if the political system the Club was operating was quasi-anarchist, this was both because such ideas were in the air and because the value system of many members predisposed them to accept it. It has already been observed with reference to the reformers of the 1930's that even to the non-Catholics among them, the values of capitalism and individualism seemed less right and natural than a degree of dirigisme and a concern with the 'general welfare'.

'L'Economie commence à devenir consciente' as the Club observed, with obvious satisfaction, in relation to the idea of an incomes policy. (81) Also, of course, the aspiration for personal autonomy and the impulse to control the State which were the basis of Radical doctrine were not just confined to the Party but part of French culture more generally.

The Proudhonist aspect of Jean Moulin's work has been stressed because it was ignored by the Club itself; and also because reference to this ideological system was the linking factor between itself, the 1930's reformist movement and other post-war clubs. But practically and politically - as opposed to intellectually - Jean Moulin's Proudhonism needs to be considerably nuanced. Proudhon's doctrine is quite unambiguously socialist. The Club Jean Moulin's politics were no such thing. Certainly, it harboured quite a high proportion of socialists, but whether they were ever in the majority remains an open and somewhat irrelevant question; probably they were not. (82) For it was not Socialism which provided the Club its innermost motivation, but the reform of the State and the modernisation and to some degree, the humanisation of society:

Le Club n'a jamais parlé de 'socialisme'; il ne s'est pas prononcé en principe pour la socialisation des moyens de production et d'échange. Il n'a jamais prétendu disposer d'une doctrine pure et dure. Bien au contraire; parti d'une Charte rappelant les principes classiques de la démocratie il a orienté toute sa réflexion sur une hypothèse de travail simple: la démocratie n'existe pas réellement
In reality, the Club picked out and used these elements of the Proudhonist system which suited its purposes. However, between smoothing the sharp edges of a dehumanising technological system and creating an egalitarian society, this is a gap. Although it not infrequently invoked egalitarian principles, Jean Moulin, in reality, never strove to bridge this gap. And it is arguable that one of the Club's faults - a tendency to indulge in generalities - was the outcome of the discrepancy between the beliefs of the majority of its members and the intellectual system it was operating; to have followed the logic of this too carefully would have carried Jean Moulin too far.

The Proudhonist system presupposes a consensus on the final ends of society. In the Club Citoyens 60, there was a realisation that those who benefit least from the social system, those at the bottom of the scale, need to be catered for before such a consensus can exist; that a radical redistribution not only of power but also of wealth is needed. In the Club Jean Moulin, the outlook was somewhat more simplistic and tended to take one of two forms. The affluence of the working class means that a consensus has virtually been achieved: 'Le club pense peut-être qu'il n'y a plus de classe ouvrière en France.' (84) Alternatively, a consensus will be created automatically by the increase of participation. Bloch-Lainé, typically, commented in his book on industrial reform that the 'truth' should be the same for all parties to his constitution: capital, the personnel, the Plan. But neither Bloch-Lainé nor the Club Jean Moulin seriously asked themselves under what conditions it would be. This is not because they were less intellectually perceptive than the Club Citoyens 60. Quite simply, they cared less about
such issues; their essential preoccupations lay elsewhere.

The other qualification to be made with respect to Jean Moulin's Proudhonism concerns the Club's style of political approach: neither its bright optimism nor its total unshakeable faith in rationalism were in the least Proudhonist. Jean Moulin was unbothered by contradictions. It did not care to recognise that some problems were not solvable however much will, knowledge and public education might be expended on them. Difficulties have only to be confronted squarely to be resolved, might have been the Club's motto. This particular combination of optimism and rationalism was partly connected with the tendency of civil servants to sweep aside and ignore the intractable political aspect of problems: 'let them take public transport' they were liable to pronounce, satisfied that they had found the 'right' answer. Equally, the Club had very little understanding for the importance of tradition, imagery and irrational elements in politics: these would be dismissed in exasperation as 'myths'. It is difficult to avoid Rettenbach's conclusion that Jean Moulin's optimistic view of democracy was lastly a trifle unreal: 'On ne peut se défendre, à l'analyse de la conception que se fait le Club de la Démocratie, de la temptation d'y voir un optimisme un peu irréal.' (85) Within a Proudhonist body, the Club Jean Moulin had a Saint-Simonist soul.

By the late 1960's, when it had disappeared, it became fashionable to say that Jean Moulin had been much less influential than the Club itself or other people had estimated. It is very hard, in fact, to gauge its impact. Its publications sold well enough. (86) It probably helped to popularise certain themes - the presidential regime, decentralisation, housing and industrial reform - among the public at large or within the administration. It might even have won de Gaulle over to
But, by and large, these ideas would have made - and were making - their way anyway. The plea for decentralisation, Pour Nationaliser l'Etat, which made a considerable impact precisely because it was written by top civil servants, would have been produced even if the Club Jean Moulin had never existed.

There are innumerable areas in which the impact of Jean Moulin might be minutely and inconcisively charted. But the most interesting thing about the Club is not, in reality, its influence, but its existence. It acted not, as a helm steering society by a body of new ideas but as a kind of compass, enabling the spread of these ideas within different social categories to be calculated and their progress since the 1930's to be measured. For all its proud belief in its own originality and the dismissal by others of it, the Club Jean Moulin was, in fact, a small part of a much larger whole. Therein lay its significance.

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Chapter 13.

The Club Citoyens 60 and its Origins in the Vie Nouvelle

Au début était le scoutisme et le scoutisme était à droite. (1)

In so far as it was politically concerned - which was very little - the Catholic mainstream of the French scout movement in the 1930's was conservative and even reactionary. Yet by the mid-1960's, the political Club associated with the Vie Nouvelle, originally an adult extension group for former scouts, was unambiguously and openly Socialist. (2)

In this respect the Club Citoyens 60 was not isolated or even exceptional. A tiny-avant-garde just three decades ago, the Catholic Left was by now more than a movement; it had become a subculture.

Outside of a very few elites, the evolution of Catholics towards the Left was as gradual and hesitant as a cat venturing into water. The intellectual foundations of this evolution had been laid in the 1930's, and the war and Resistance played an important role in turning Catholics into democrats and preparing them for political commitment on the Left, but the process itself did not begin seriously until after the Liberation. And even then it was held up, at least for a time, by the religious school question and anti-communism. The anti-political tradition, still strong in Catholic circles, also slowed the pace of change.

Nevertheless, throughout the 1950's, a Catholic Left was gradually emerging which was separate from and often hostile to the MRP. And by the late 1950's and early 1960's a watershed had been reached. The political clubs that appeared at this time were predominantly - but far from exclusively - Catholic. (3) However, in so far as they were Catholic, these political clubs marked the point at which many Catholics had either partly or fully overcome their hesitation towards political commitment in general and towards the Left in particular. They were no longer
satisfied with the conferences and loose *ad hoc* groupings, sometimes around reviews or else at a local level, that had usually constituted their only previous political activity. (4) Instead they now joined clubs, considering them to be a far firmer and more demanding form of political commitment.

The next step was to elucidate and put in order the rather imprecise political ideas they had inherited, and in particular to decide what exactly was meant by the term Socialism. A considerable number of Catholics had voted for the Left for the first time in 1956 which seemed an act of some temerity at the time. Thereafter the pace of progress quickened. And in 1959 the CFTC Congress declared itself for Socialism: 'Deux ans plus tôt le terme de socialisme eut soulevé une tempête contradictoire; cette fois ce fut une houle mais unitaire'. (5) This is not to say, of course, that the Catholic Left advanced as a body; it did not. The minority movement in the CFTC, grouped around the review *Reconstruction*, was prepared to embrace Socialism as soon as 1953, while until 1962 *Témoignage Chretien* talked only in terms of 'socialisation'. (6) But, in general, the Catholic groups that had been moving leftwards were sufficiently secure in their Socialist beliefs by the early 1960's to start reflecting on the precise implications of these beliefs in greater depth. 'Democratic Socialism' became the predominant theme within the Catholic Left at this period. Even the *Semaines Sociales* of 1963 took it up. The formula was all the more popular for being easily distinguishable from Marxism; and this no doubt partly ensured its success.

How is one to define this Catholic Left? Dansette has described it in these terms:

Nous désignons par ses mots non pas une organisation déterminée - il n'y en a pas - mais un ensemble de forces hétérogènes. Elles exercent par la valeur de leurs élites et la qualité de leurs moyens d'action une influence considérable, disproportionnées à leur importance numérique. (7)
Broadly one could include as part of it such reviews as *Esprit*, *Témoignage Chrétien*, *Economie et Humanisme*, *Reconstruction* and perhaps peripherally - but this is debatable - *France-Forum*. (8) Groups and parties, apart from the *Vie Nouvelle* itself, would include the *Jeune République*, a minority of which the *CFCF* became the majority in 1959 and carried out the deconfessionalisation of the union in 1964, the JEC (but only a very small percentage of the JCC and the JAC (9)), the *Mouvement de Libération Ouvrière* and sections of the *Nouvelle Gauche*. A particular characteristic of this milieu was the ease and rapidity with which ideas circulated within it; the communications system was highly effective. (10) Also - and herein lies the justification for applying the term subculture to the Catholic Left - it shared a common system of values: the values that underlay the Personalist systems of the 1930's. (11) Ironically, the French Left recovered its libertarian tradition largely through Catholic groups.

Intellectually, of course, the MRP shared a similar system of values. But in practice, it usually failed to act on it. Contact between the Left of the MRP and the Catholic Left continued to be maintained on a personal level, but as time went on relations between the party and the left-wing groups became increasingly strained and distant. Quite apart from their wide-ranging differences in social, economic and above all colonial policy, the two sides also diverged in their general political approach. The MRP accused the left-wing groups of being excessively moralistic, while they, in turn, upbraided the MRP for going to the opposite extreme. They contended that the party threw moral considerations overboard altogether on the assumption that politics, by its nature, is a dirty game and then congratulated itself on its own 'realism'. (12)

The Club Citoyens 60 was an integral part of what has been referred to as the subculture of the Catholic Left. It was, besides, one of the
movement's most articulate expressions, for the clientele attracted by the Club was middle-class and usually well educated. But fully to understand Citoyens 60, its themes, form and interests, it is necessary first to trace its evolution from within the Vie Nouvelle.

The French scout movement of the 1930's had none of the civic trappings of its English counterpart. Such political awareness as it had was the product of Catholic integralism with its nostalgia for the hierarchical and integrated world of the Middle Ages. Before 1939 it did not occur either to leaders or to rank and file to question the social order or the Church's teaching. However, it did have one feature that later influenced reformist movements in both politics and religion. This was its particular style, concrete, community-minded and activist. Scouts worked and lived, prayed and sang together. In the 1920's and 1930's it had become popular over the whole range of Catholic opinion from Right to Left to talk of a return to community values. But in terms of their own life-style, as opposed to their professed beliefs, French Catholics were no less individualistic than their secular compatriots. The scouts actually lived their ideals and in so doing made an important contribution to the currents of change within Catholicism:

Plusieurs traits aujourd'hui constitutifs du catholicisme français seraient impensables sans l'apport du scoutisme. Il a introduit un souffle de plein air qui a renouvelé l'atmosphère un peu confinée où s'enfermait le catholicisme, une pédagogie concrète, active, adaptée à l'adolescence, un style de vie à bases d'exercices physiques, de marche, de jeux, de chant... Les jeunes catholiques lui doivent encore l'habitude de la vie d'équipe, de l'amitié de la bande, le respect des valeurs communes. (13)
When the war started, the scout movement was naturally Vichyist. With its back-to-the-land mythology and authoritarian mystique, the new regime fully accorded with the scouts' conception of the world. But a turning point came with the extension of the occupation and the drive to draft Frenchmen to work in German labour camps. Hitherto many Catholics had behaved as if they believed politics did not exist, or would cease to exist if they no longer thought about it. In 1942-3 they learnt that to ignore politics is no guarantee of escaping its consequences. (14) Faced with the agonising personal choice of going to Germany or being prosecuted, a good many Catholics went into hiding or joined the Resistance, usually against the advice of the clergy. It was largely patriotism that turned Catholics into Republicans.

The scout movement, although itself profoundly transformed - it had become far more serious and thoughtful (15) - did nothing dramatic. It continued to exist with the approval of the regime. But its aims henceforth were subversive: they were to create a positive, non-defeatist current of opinion that later, after the Liberation, would contribute to build up different and purer political structures and ideals. From the outset, Catholics were all the more ardent to forge a new France for having had so small a political stake in the old one.

The Vie Nouvelle, formally founded in 1947, although it had existed clandestinely since 1942, was a direct outcome of war-time experience. The two former scouts who set it up, aimed to impress the necessity for political commitment on circles which still thought that devotion to the family was the first and last duty of a Christian and citizen. The Vie Nouvelle, they stressed, was not meant to be a mere extension of the scout movement; its task was to educate Christians about their responsibilities in all domains, but especially towards the community.

The new organisation had two important sources of support: Catholic
youth organisations and the intellectual capital that had gradually been accumulated by Catholic groups over the past decades. The youth organisations had a membership rate that for France, in particular, was quite exceptionally high: according to a survey carried out in 1959 33% of all young people between the ages of 18 and 33 had at some time belonged to a Catholic youth organisation. (16) They provided the Vie Nouvelle with a constant stream of recruits over the years - no less than 25,000 people passed through the movement between 1947 and 1965 - and enabled it to become independent of the scout movement as early as 1948-9. (17) In short, they ensured the movement's survival and success.

Intellectually, the Vie Nouvelle's course was determined partly by the humanism that had re-emerged in the 1930's and partly by practical community experiments that had taken place under Vichy. True to its inheritance, it condemned capitalism and individualism and advocated a return to community values. The major influence on it just after the war was the quasi-anarchist review Economie et Humanisme but later, in the 1950's Mounier's Personalism was more influential. Both Labourie and Lastavel, who followed Crisiat as leaders of the organisation, were deeply impregnated with Personalist thought. But on Crisiat himself, who was no intellectual, such community experiments as Boimondeau made more of an impact. (18)

Boimondeau - standing for 'Boîtières de montres du Dauphiné' - was the name of a self-governing community formed on the basis of a company manufacturing watch cases. Suitably enough it started out in 1939 in Besançon, Proudhon's birthplace, within a profession with a strong anarchist tradition. The founder, Marcel Barbu, was a former worker. His character with its strange blend of practicality and moralism, even messianism, was reminiscent of Proudhon himself. His aim was not merely to end the dissociation of capital and labour, but to build up a genuine
human community. By 1945 he had achieved his end: Boimondau was honey-combed with study groups on every conceivable subject from singing to technology, with nurseries, sports teams and management committees. Barbu was a powerful personality and his enterprise was helped along by the religious zeal of many of his employees, but he probably owed his success at least in part to the war. The degree of solidarity that grew up in Boimondau through opposing the occupation forces - the workers unanimously refused to go to German labour camps and went into hiding as a body - would have been much harder to create in peace-time. (19)

More immediately relevant just after the war than political ideas themselves - these, like seeds, were important mainly for the future - were the changes in approach and attitude that had already occurred. Serious-minded young Catholics now tended to see religious as well as social questions in a different light. They accepted religious pluralism and realised that the real danger to the Christian faith was no longer heresy but indifference. (20) Many were prepared to adopt a new strategy: they were ready to renounce the formal domination of the Church in order to infiltrate society the more effectively with the values the Church stood for. In practice, this involved a shift of emphasis away from the private religious life of the individual towards greater concern with social conditions, a trend that was reinforced by war-time experience. Post-war Catholics felt duty-bound as Christians to meet the challenge of the modern world - and to meet it on its own ground. Having learned, whether by the teachings of Aquinas or Péguy, to think of man as a being with material as well as moral needs, their approach to moral as well as to social problems was resolutely concrete and pragmatic. Representative of these new-style Catholics, was Père Lebret, one of the founders of Economie et Humanisme. A naval officer and a Dominican, Lebret began Catholic Action among seamen - but on the basis of their needs rather
than of the righteousness of the Church's message. When he discovered
the lack of adequate information on fishing, he set out to provide the
information himself. Another, more eccentric, example was the Abbé
Pierre. A priest from Grenoble who organised one of the first Resist-
ance units, he was elected after the war as a MRP député. Later, he
broke with the party and in the suburbs of Paris founded a community
of rag-picker whom he taught to support themselves by making intelligent
use of garbage. (21)

The post-war French Catholic might well be a conservative, but he
was no longer automatically one. He had become accustomed to change:
'.. et du même coup, il n'est plus sûr de rien; ni sur sa manière de
vivre, ni sur l'évolution politique, ni sur l'évolution de l'église'.(22)
This was the source of the intellectual vitality displayed by many left-
wing Catholic groups particularly in the decades since the war: during
a period of great social and political upheaval, they regarded it almost
as a moral obligation to be aware of and receptive to change. They had
lost faith in past creeds without as yet having acquired a new one. To
some extent this applied even to their religion, but it was particularly
true in the domain of politics.

The most striking political feature of the Vie Nouvelle when it
started in the late 1940's was its openness. Admittedly, the leaders
had personally - but not publicly - opted for Socialism, whilst the
general run of members, being middle-class, tended to be MRP voters. (23)
But then the leaders were none too clear as to the meaning of their
Socialism and the members were far too deeply imbued with a Christian
sense of responsibility to support the MRP - or any other party - un-
conditionally. Most members concerned themselves with politics out of
duty rather than by natural inclination. Their primary motives for
joining the movement were religious or social and quite often both.
This makes the evolution of the Vie Nouvelle all the more interesting to observe. Since politics was only a secondary preoccupation for the majority of its members, for the first five years or so at least, the movement registered the thinking of young middle-class Catholics much more accurately than a more highly politicised group would have done.

The Vie Nouvelle was above all a group of Catholics who took their religion seriously. And paradoxically what they sought on the spiritual plane, was a Catholicism which was both freer and more demanding, less formal but more authentic. There was nothing new about this. The demand for greater personal liberty and a more internal religion had revived in French Catholicism at the turn of the century. Hitherto, however, the demand had been confined to limited circles, generally to intellectuals and to theology students. Now, it had begun to spread to wider circles of the middle-class. Here again the war played a vital role in lessening the hold of the clergy on Catholics. By its support of Vichy, the Church hierarchy, in particular, had lost a great deal of prestige - to the extent that it was not even consulted in the creation of the MRP. (24)

In essence, the creation of the Centre de Liturgie Pastorale which was separate from but parallel with the Vie Nouvelle represented an anti-clerical revolt. The creation of the Centre by Criuziat and others - some of them Péguyists (25) - was partly inspired by the scout movement. It agitated for a shift of emphasis away from the formal external aspects of religion to a greater concern with internal spiritual life and also for a more communitarian style, for more participation by the laity both in the act of worship and in parish affairs. Agitation is not too strong a term, for these Catholics, whether of the Centre or the Vie Nouvelle, were prepared to stand their ground and fight against the priests for
what they considered their rights. In fact, some priests refused to admit them to their parishes. (26)

This reaction against the narrow individualism as well as the authoritarianism of the past was reinforced by social developments. Life-styles changed greatly in France after the war. Many more people now lived in cities. The extended family group of former times was broken up and young couples were living by themselves without the support and help of relations. Not a few of its members joined the Vie Nouvelle at least in part to solve their baby-sitting problem. (27) Then there was the changed position of women. Husbands wanted to do things together with their wives more than in the past. Also those who had been through a Catholic Action youth group had become accustomed to community life and felt little inclination to be on their own after they had left. (28) All these factors contributed to bringing people together in the Vie Nouvelle and to confirming its preoccupation with the idea of community.

The first exercises in commitment of the members of the Vie Nouvelle were in what were called fraternities and they were very much in line with the preparation they had received in Catholic Action. These neighbourhood communities were small, containing between eight and fifteen members. Their purpose was to enable people to help each other and to discuss problems, even their most intimate ones, together. Only later, in the 1960's, were income-sharing schemes started. (29) Outside of the fraternities, there was some involvement at a social and municipal level—often as a way of avoiding involvement with the political parties. (30) In the late 1940's the traditional Catholic distrust of politics was still strong, despite the new vocabulary of commitment and community:

Faire de la politique était pour beaucoup se salir les mains, accepter les combinaisons tactiques, les compromis qui
laissent l'esprit sinon la conscience insatisfait. Ainsi beaucoup de chrétiens parmi les plus généreux ont-ils préféré pendant longtemps se lancer dans l'action sociale: éducation populaire, associations de locataires, gestion d'organismes culturels, associations familiales, aide aux habitants des bidonvilles, aide au tiers monde etc. A un autre stade beaucoup se sont engagés dans l'action municipale et dans le syndicalisme. (31)

Moreover, the political equipment of the average member of the Vie Nouvelle at this point was sparse, consisting mainly of a sentimental communalism, a belief in an economy based on need, a generous concern for the Third World and general anti-colonial sentiments. (32)

At first, the leaders did not attempt to force the pace of the political side of the movement, fearing that if they did they would simply drive people to join the MRP. (33) Instead, they contented themselves with driving home two particular points: the necessity to separate politics and religion and the inevitability of politics - that people are involved in politics in virtually all they do even if they do not realise it, was a persistent theme. Then, gradually, around 1952-53, interest in politics grew. Rene Pucheu, a civil servant and intellectual, began a political group within the organisation that provided its members with their first notions of Marxism and economics. Like Jacques Maritain in the 1930's, the Vie Nouvelle was anxious to teach Catholics that politics is an independent domain with its own rules. There was a parallel evolution within Témoignage Chrétien, one of the most widely read papers at the Vie Nouvelle:

Témoignage Chrétien fit peu de politique sous les premières années de la IV République. Il se contentait de réaffirmer régulièrement les fondements moraux de ses jugements et préférait se placer sur un terrain colonial, social. Son attitude se changea dans les années 1952-53. La politique devint une de ses préoccupations essentielles. (34)

The reasons behind this change lay partly in the decline of the regime,
which was resembling the III Republic more closely every day, and partly in the emergence of Mendès France as a political leader. The *Vie Nouvelle* and *Témoignage Chrétien* approved of the dynamism and moral style of Mendès France and also, of course, of his criticism of French colonial policy. It was colonial policy more than any other issue that separated them from the MRP and this rupture began as early as 1950. (35) For them, the MRP had irredeemably compromised itself by its responsibility for colonial repression in Madagascar and Indochina. After the Resistance itself, anti-colonialism was the next most important factor in the leftward migration of young Catholics.

Finally, it must be said that this gradual slide towards political involvement and towards the Left was not entirely spontaneous. It was helped along by the systematic purges of Criuziat, a large, powerful, somewhat authoritarian man with a strong sense of organisation and great moral enthusiasm for politics. "Camarades, le communisme, c'est chouette" he announced to the movement in its early days. (36) He himself serenely justified these purges on the grounds that without them, members of the *Vie Nouvelle* would have continued to shy at political fences. Criuziat's rule, was little short of theocratic; having decided that politics was good for his flock, he was prepared to force-feed them if need be.

Within this gradual process, there was one marked turning-point: the elections of 1956. For the first time, many members of the movement, as well as other Catholics outside it, voted for the Left. Naturally, members were free in their choice. But a special supplement to the *Vie Nouvelle* 's paper appeared before the elections and paved the way for Mendès. It began by declaring, somewhat defensively, that if its language was thought to be more political than before, this was not the case: readers had only to turn back to make a comparison with the issues of 1951. Clearly, politics for the movement's leaders was a bitter medicine.
that they felt justified in dispensing — but were still nervous of over-prescribing. Their support of Mendès was based mainly on his modernisation programme and was hedged with reservations about how he would be able to realise the programme, given his coalition partners. They also expressed some doubt whether the economic forces behind the coalition would support decolonisation. As for the MRP, it was criticised for its 'pathological' anti-Mendésism, its colonial record and its part in the strike-breaking of 1953, and was ultimately dismissed for having turned increasingly to the Right since 1951. Socially, it was given only a meagre pass-mark. This failure, the paper was careful to stress, was not moral but political: the honesty of the politicians was not in question, only their competence and basic choices. (37) Then two lessons were read, one on the relative nature of politics and the other on the need to distinguish politics from morality. The will to create a new world should not be thought of as 'une pure marche à l'étoile'. It necessitated a clear understanding of what was possible and what was not, as well as the acceptance of delays and imperfections. Of course, politics could at any time degenerate into sordid wheeling and dealing. On the other hand, a revolutionary or absolutist approach that placed all hope in the future as a means of avoiding compromises was merely indifferent to the present sufferings of humanity. Also, politics must be understood as a domain with its own rules into which moralist may enter, but without becoming the prime consideration.

However, having written all this, the paper then went on to fall into the very trap of confusing morals and politics that it had just been warning its readers against. It mentioned a satirical paper that had already published a list of elected candidates — by which it intended to indicate that those already in control would remain in control. The Vie Nouvelle asked indignantly: 'Trouvez-vous cela normal? Trouvez-vous cela moral?'
This example is altogether representative of the double-thinking in the *Vie Nouvelle*. It was perfectly well aware, as well as critical, of the tendency of Catholics to approach politics not just as moralists but often as moralists obsessed by the absolute. It agreed wholeheartedly with the diagnosis of another Catholic paper:

Les catholiques ont souvent tendance à aborder la politique en idéalistes assoiffés d'absolu. Consciemment ou non, ils se conduisent comme des prophètes qui vont proclamer la Vérité et établir la Justice. Ils se veulent purs et affichent le plus grand mépris pour l'organisation qui canalise l'action, pour les opérations tactiques, pour les compromis. Ils parlent avec dédain du 'réalisme' politique. (38)

Certainly, the *Vie Nouvelle* was always careful to temper idealism with a strong dose of realism. But it constantly identified morals with politics itself. When it talked of separating politics and religion, all this meant in practice was the separation of politics from the official position of the Church. This is particularly apparent in a discussion on the definition of socialism held by the leaders of the movement in 1956. Having begun by 'doubting' whether Socialism was a philosophy of man as opposed to a conception of social and economic organisation, they then went on to define it in purely moral terms. (39)

The discussion began with the question whether the term community Socialism should replace the old term *Personnalisme Communautaire*. This move was rejected because of what Socialism had come to stand for, namely the suppression of individual property, materialism, anti-clericalism, class dictatorship and the curtailment of individual liberties. At the same time, the word community was also held to be ambiguous as it might represent what were referred to as the 'right-wing' communities of Christian Democracy. Pucheau — and it becomes gradually clear why he should have chosen the pseudonym Pascal — then attempted to clarify what was meant by community in the *Vie Nouvelle*.
As a Utopia, that is to say as an ideal, a community is a society of people, an association of free and responsible persons; it is concerned not with happiness but with liberty. In his own words:

La Communauté est l'agencement social permettant à chaque citoyen d'être pleinement conscient du fonctionnement et de l'évolution de son groupement politique, et pleinement consentant à la ligne d'action qu'il suit pour se construire et collaborer avec les autres groupements politiques.

A community is not any specific group, it is a yardstick by which social relations may be measured - 'une ethique politique'. Any kind of group - a union, a party or a State - could be a community. Its basis is man as a creative force called upon to choose and dominate his own destiny.

There are, however, two types of humanism, the one submissive, the other creative. The first is traditional Catholic humanism characterised by a respect for established custom. The second - the one the Vie Nouvelle stands for - is a 'revolutionary' humanism: it is a means of emancipating the individual, of enabling him to dominate his destiny effectively. It stands for the will of all to control the mechanisms of power. (40)

This 'revolutionary humanism' is the noblest expression of democracy. But it has one drawback and that is that it may not be fully expressed institutionally. Its tragic aspect is that it raises problems that are not easily soluble: how to find a power structure that allows each person the degree of initiative he needs for his fulfilment and how to ensure that the governed do not accept authority passively but demand the effective responsibility and participation which are the very condition of their liberty? Since neither free individual acceptance nor, probably, a common ideal or policy appear to be possible, failure seems inevitable.

All politics is a matter of compromise and as such a negation of the personnaliste-communaute type of humanism. The choice before humanity is between a prophetic and a political vocation; either one is whole-
heartedly devoted to values and therefore ineffective, or else one is effective at the cost of partly denying values. But this does not mean one should renounce values; for without a utopian dimension politics is only superficial agitation: (41)

Etre politiquement majeur, c'est relativiser le terme de son action et lutter pour la Révolution, bien qu'elle tende à l'échec; pour la Communauté, bien qu'elle soit sans issue... Une vision réaliste est une vision tragique; elle postule du courage, un courage farouche, parce qu'elle est partiellement absurde. Une démarche dialectique est utile, précisément pour surmonter, malgré tout les contradictions, l'absurdité tragique du réel et la dominer... La politique, c'est en cet univers casé le destin dominant et dominé.

Apart from one slight change in emphasis, this is pure Pascal.

The special characteristic of man in an absurd world, where all truth is confused and ambiguous, is his uncompromising demand to know absolute values. In spite of being aware that these may never be attained in an imperfect universe, he continues to struggle to know them against the forces of habit and inertia both within himself and in his environment, thereby dominating the material world and transcending absurdity by asserting the dignity of humanity. This non-conformism was the source of what is referred to here as 'revolutionary humanism'. The non-conformist orientation comes over even more clearly in another of the Vie Nouvelle's political declarations of faith:

L'évolution des techniques et des sciences métamorphose peu à peu les conditions de vie et de pensée des hommes mais l'avance humaine n'en découlera pas nécessairement. Seul l'effort des hommes peut dominer et orienter l'évolution; seul un choix des hommes en faveur d'une libération des hommes donnera un sens au déploiement de l'humanité dans le temps... La lutte par l'homme contre le destin absurde est toujours précaire. (42)

For Pascal, it was the self-surpassing quest for absolute truth that gave the world a meaning; but this applied only to private life; politics was always merely superficial agitation. Here politics is taken into
the realm of private morality and raised from its lowly level by utopian goals. These utopias need not be realised - indeed, they cannot be realised - but, like Man's demand for absolute values, they are the basis of human dignity and salvation in the political domain. (43)

It would be inexact to give the impression that all of the Vie Nouvelle's thought was along such sophisticated and somewhat tortuous lines. Moreover, as early as 1955 Pucheu handed over the direction of the political groups to Jacques Delors, an altogether different type of personality and, above all, more practical in his approach to politics. In the wake of Pucheu's Pascalian diatribe, he contributed a statement entitled, significantly: Socialism, Possibilities and Limits. In it he replied to a recent issue of Esprit condemning the history of Social-Democracy as demoralising in its lack of ideals and permanent readiness to compromise. Socialism may not always have brought the right solutions, admitted Delors, but the ideas it has generated have helped to shape the world in recent decades. And he quoted Jean Lacroix to the effect that it is not possible to construct an ideal Socialism but only one adapted to time and place. Finally, however, Delors himself subscribed to the notion that Socialism is a question of personal morals since it involved self-transcendence - 'un certain dépassement' - as against individualism and security. When it was not patriotism it was an unquiet conscience that reconciled Catholics with Republicanism. The profession of Republican faith made by Francois de Menthon during the Resistance, for instance, was founded on the same type of thinking as was current in the Vie Nouvelle:

Car la liberté innove là où on voudrait bien conserver, la liberté absolue là où on voudrait bien dormir, la liberté dérange là où on voudrait bien stationner, la liberté pour tout dire est créatrice, tandis que la servitude peut s'arranger pour être doublée confortable... (44)

The anarchist orientation of the Vie Nouvelle, if watered down by
some people more than others and at some periods more than others, was nonetheless persistent. It is difficult to decide exactly why this should have been so. It was certainly not because the leaders consciously supported anarchist doctrine. (45) Was it, then, because instictively identifying morals and politics and being, for the most part, of a libertarian caste of mind, they naturally found their way to anarchism? Or did the vocabulary and approach they derived from Mounier's Personalism play a determining role? Beyond odd references to Pascal, Rousseau, Marx or Laborthonnieré (46), the most frequently quoted writers were the Personalists of the 1930's, mainly Mounier himself or else Lacroix. Again the struggle of the laicity against the clergy and theme of decolonisation might have contributed to the libertarian bent of the Vie Nouvelle's Socialism - but this will be discussed at a later point in the chapter.

Whatever the sources or the reasons, one thing is clear: when the Vie Nouvelle talked of Socialism it meant not just reforms or a better standard of living for the less well-off but a "new style of civilisation" to use one of its own well-worn phrases. The social structure of this civilisation would bring to an end the exploitation of man by man. (47) More positively defined, the essential preoccupation of Socialism is to reduce the exercise and role of force and the role of power to a minimum and to ensure that each single person has the maximum possibility to develop the potential in him:

C'est donc un impératif essentiel d'une politique socialiste que de s'acharner à promouvoir chez chaque homme des forces de plus en plus grandes de liberté et de conscience. (48)

In this light, affluence is to a degree a distraction and a danger in that it tends to precondition people to the comfort and conformism of modern mass society and thereby reduces their liberty. "Do you really
think' one of the sections of the *Vie Nouvelle* asked its members, 'that your internal being (être intérieur) is not dependent on external pressures?' (49) Anarchist Socialism thought primarily in terms of 'internal being', the quality of people's lives at work and during their leisure hours, and this explains the preoccupation of the *Vie Nouvelle* over the next decade with the struggle against bureaucracy, materialism and mass civilisation. Its own vision was of a 'civilisation de travail' diametrically opposed to the money-mindedness of present society. (50)

It has been suggested that the early evolution of the *Vie Nouvelle* was determined by a combination of ideas and practical pressures, especially by the experience of the war and the Resistance. The same can be said of the 1950's period. The progress towards commitment to democratic Socialism was prepared not just by a maturation of ideas but by several more concrete developments. First, many Catholics who had become involved in social or municipal activities had gradually come to see the importance of basic political choices and were ready by the 1960's to make the transition from civic to political action. (51) Then the Algerian War - and, in particular, such moral issues as torture - was another strong incentive for Catholics to seek some active form of political commitment. Finally, there was the conflict with the Catholic hierarchy. How significant this was is difficult to say. But it is arguable that the struggle for the right to self-determination of colonial peoples, combined with active opposition against the authoritarianism of the Catholic hierarchy, greatly reinforced the libertarian bias of the democratic Socialism which Catholics were professing in the 1960's.

In 1956 the leaders of the *Action Catholique de la Jeunesse Francaise* (ACJF), the directing body of the Catholic Action youth groups since before the turn of the century, resigned. This was followed in May of 1957 by the resignation of the entire team leading the *Route*, as the older
branch of the scout movement was called. The immediate cause in the Route case was the refusal of its board of directors to sanction the publication of the letters of Jean Mülle, a scout who, before his death in Algeria, had sent home reports of torture and other malpractices in the French army. The board’s argument was that the letters were unfair to the army and that the subject, anyway, was outside the competence of a Catholic organisation. (52) This was the crux: the competence of a Catholic organisation. For two decades and more the Catholic Church had been preaching personal responsibility and commitment to the community. The logical outcome was that young Catholics had become increasingly politically conscious and were now prepared to assert their personal responsibility against the authority of the Church itself - which is not at all what the Church had intended. In an attempt to halt the drift towards political involvement in the youth organisations, the hierarchy came down with a heavy hand on the ACJF, declaring that it should concentrate its efforts in those areas where the unity of young Catholics could be easily achieved - for example, in housing and social charity. The ACJF’s leadership, in turn, criticised the intellectual paternalism of the clergy. (53). The Route team also defended itself in a document that the Vie Nouvelle - which was much concerned by the crisis on account of its past links with the scout movement - published and supported. (54) The purpose of commitment, observed the Route, is not to produce aesthetes or noble souls but responsible adults who by the term ‘commitment’ understand not abstract casuistry but the relation of principles to the burning issues of the day. Obviously this approach displeases, as it is accompanied by a disdain for authority. But what is to happen now to all these young people trained in such generous principles? They may either drift towards some aimless form of anarchism or else take refuge in resignation and indifference. With heavy irony, the Route challenged the hierarchy:
In 1959, the success of its political education courses combined with the stimulation of events - notably the fall of the IV Republic and the Algerian War - led the Vie Nouvelle to extend its political activities by the creation of a review. The Cahiers d'éducation politique, économique et sociale was in fact a follow-on of Tribune Politique, the paper of the Jeune République that Delors had helped edit while a member of the party; its circulation was around the 4,000 mark and it advocated Swedish-style Socialism with a strong public sector. (55) The new review was rapidly successful with a circulation of between 3-4,000 rising to 6-10,000 on special issues. This encouraged Delors to go one step further and transform the Vie Nouvelle's political groups into Clubs.

Why Clubs? It was very hard at this point for a left-wing Catholic activist to find a suitable political party to join. The MRP was considered too right-wing; there were few supporters of the party left in the Vie Nouvelle by now. The Communist Party was rejected as being Stalinist. This ruled out a Popular Front solution. (56) The Socialist Party was at least partly responsible for the war in Algeria and was Marxist into the bargain. The Radical Party had turned out Mendès and was anti-clerical. Also, as the Cahiers complained, none of the major parties had made any real changes in doctrine or personnel since the Liberation. (57) Nor was the Left any closer to creating a large, united Party now than it had been then. Clearly, there was nothing to be expected from the official opposition. (58) Most members of the Vie Nouvelle could have joined the UGS, Union de la Gauche Socialiste - which Delors
helped to found - as it was in the beginning. But as the party developed, several features irritated them: its economic ignorance and underestimation of formal democracy, also the opposition to de Gaulle no matter what he did. The UGS refused to believe that he intended to make peace in Algeria, and it was on this point that Delors personally broke with it. (59)

On Algeria, Citoyens 60's views were very similar to those of Jean Moulin. It believed, as early as 1959, that peace could only come through independence. (60) It also believed that only de Gaulle could bring about this peace, given the weakness of the Left, and therefore it refused to identify the struggle for peace with a struggle against the General. This did not prevent the Club from criticising de Gaulle's methods when it felt them to be deserved - his 'ambiguïtés manœuvrières' as the Cahiers put it; but at other times, as after the Putsch of 1961, it supported him to the hilt. On the whole, Citoyens 60 made a great effort to be fair towards de Gaulle's colonial policy. But as far as home affairs were concerned, it was far more openly critical of the regime than was the Club Jean Moulin. Seeing the Algerian war at least partly as a crisis of adaptation, Citoyens 60 considered that the first task of the government was to replace false conceptions of French grandeur with what it referred to as a 'new humanism'. (61) And on this score it felt that de Gaulle had failed entirely: the agricultural and working classes had not been integrated into the community, while the modernisation process had not been taken firmly enough in hand. (62) The Club never modified the opinion that: .. la V République n'a pas réussi les problèmes posés par l'évolution économique et sociale de notre société.' (63) There was one further respect in which its criticism of Gaullism was strong: the way it personalised power and crushed or ignored intermediary groups. This authoritarian style of government was as great
a danger to French democracy, in the Club's view, as the Algerian war itself.

The Club, then, represented an amalgam of all these various grievances. It was a protest against the war, against the unadaptability of the left-wing political parties, against the concentration of power both of the Gaullist regime and more generally with modern societies and, finally, against the lack of awareness, on both Left and Right, of the need to modernise political and social structures. The term 'Club', which was a result of Delors' contacts with the Jacobins, distinguished the group from a party, while Citoyens stood for the need to revive democracy at a grass-roots level throughout the country. Carrefour was rejected as being too French. Democratic behaviour being considered as an essentially Anglo-Saxon attribute, it was felt that an English word such as club would be most suitable for the new group. There was also, of course, the memory of the nineteenth century clubs which were considered to represent the French democratic tradition and this further increased the acceptability of the term. (64)

The Club Citoyens 60, it is clear, was primarily a continuation of the Vie Nouvelle: to attempt to understand one without taking into account the other would be to make a very artificial separation. At the same time, some important distinctions should be made. Citoyens 60 was not integrated in the Vie Nouvelle but parallel with it. There were around 30% of outsiders, many of them non-Catholics, in the Club. Also it was more interested in the quality of life than in actual fraternities and communities; more rigorous and technical in approach than the Vie Nouvelle, and much less sentimental and philosophical. Above all, there was not a vestige of theocracy about Citoyens 60. It set out to be and became a form of Fabian Society. In part this overall change was due to circumstances; in part to the personality of the man who founded and formed the Club, Jacques Delors.
It has been observed that post-war French modernising circles were resolutely concrete and practical in approach. After 1956-7 this anti-ideological trend was further reinforced by what might be called the post-Hungary mood, pragmatic and mistrustful not just of dogmas and high-flown ideas but of words themselves.

After the Liberation, many left-wing Catholics, who were in no way associated with Communism nor believed, as did the Progressistes, that Communism was inevitable, were to some extent under its spell. Having met few Socialists and Radicals in the Resistance they tended to see the country divided between the Communists and themselves. Also the Communists had a political education and a theory of historical evolution while they, who were equally anxious to serve humanity, had no political knowledge to speak of. In general, it is probably true to say that left-wing Catholics were at once wary of and magnetically drawn towards Communism: their attitude was an odd combination of intoxication, seduction and fear. (65)

It was finally Russian behaviour in Eastern Europe, in Hungary and Poland, together with the resilience shown by Western capitalism that broke the spell of Marxism. One result of this was to stimulate research on what Socialism might be, if it were not Marxism. This research was self-consciously practical in reaction to the excess of ideological conflict in the recent past. Esprit, as already noted, no longer believed in the 'Revolution' as from 1956-7 and determined to return to its own Personalist sources— and to reflect more in future. Citoyens 60 stemmed from a milieu that had been less influenced by Marxism than had Esprit. But it decided also that Hungary proved the need to re-examine and update left-wing ideas. All of a sudden people were far less sure than they had been of what Socialism stood for. Delors wrote:
... nous avons connu les flammes de Budapest, les affaires de Poznan, les Conseils ouvriers en Pologne... Tout ceci pèse sur le socialisme. Tant que le socialisme n'était pas incarné, tant qu'il n'avait pas connu d'échec, tant qu'au nom de notre conception de l'homme nous ne pouvions pas contester certains de ses actes, à vrai dire le choix était facile. Nous avions d'un côté un monde capitaliste sur lequel portait une critique radicale et d'autre part, l'espoir d'un monde nouveau. Aujourd'hui c'est moins simple... (66)

After Budapest, as the Cahiers observed somewhat caustically, it was understood that the Communist system was less new than had originally been feared in the West. (67)

Another determining influence on Citoyens 60 was the character of its leader. For Delors dominated his Club as completely as Hermu and Hessel did theirs. His background, which is interesting because of the light it throws on his political ideas, was strongly Catholic. As a youth he took part in a pre-JOC group at parish level, then in 1939 he joined the JEC. During the war, while still an adolescent, he carried messages for the Resistance and attended the renowned Catholic training centre of Uriage, a medieval castle where the Socialism of Proudhon and Peguy was laced with both a strong dose of patriotism and a scout enthusiasm for open air and community activities. (68) In 1945 he joined the MRP, only to leave it one year later. He realised that the Party would move to the Right and objected anyway to the unanisme or obsession with unanimity of MRP Catholics: opposition to party policy he regarded as hopeless, since leaders like Bidault or Schuman only had to appear for the party to close ranks behind them. For some years Delors continued to be politically unattached. During this time he studied for an economics degree - in the evenings, since he worked at the Bank of France during the day - and read copiously, mainly Mounier but also Blondel and the works of X-Crise. Then, in 1952, he joined the Vie Nouvelle and shortly afterwards the Jeune République party. Much later, when the
Jeune République fused with other groups of the Nouvelle Gauche, he helped to found the new party, the Union de la Gauche Socialiste, before leaving it for reasons already outlined. He was not without a party political affiliation again, but in his spare time he ran the economic bureau of the CFTC-DT, the BRAEC (69), and was also seriously involved in the work of the Conseil Economique et Social of which he had become a member. In 1962, just after creating the Club Citoyens 60, he left the Bank of France to join the Planning Commissariat where he became head of the social affairs section. (70)

In contrast with other club leaders, like Hernu and Suffert, Delors had considerable technical skills: in the domain of social and economic affairs he was an expert. At the same time, and in contrast with many other experts, he was exceedingly wary of technique, for his own thinking was cast in the mould of the anarchist humanism with which he had come into contact through Mounier and the Vie Nouvelle. However, this particular blend of rationalism and morality was not what distinguished Delors and set him apart from other reform-minded administrators; quite a number of the people associated with Jean Moulin, François Bloch-Lainé in particular, similarly combined top-level technical expertise with humanist political convictions. Delors' special characteristics were other. They were a personal passion to change society, springing partly from his own social origins, and an understanding of and feeling for politics. Most of the members of the Club Jean Moulin came from middle and upper middle class backgrounds; to them poverty was an abstract problem. Delors, on the other hand, did not come from a bourgeois family - his father was a bank messenger - and it was his personal knowledge of the conditions in which ordinary working-class people live and work, rather than simply a concern with modernisation, that inspired his own commitment to bringing about social change.
Moreover, a good many administrators both within Jean Moulin and outside of the Club tended either to regard politics with distaste or else to dismiss it as irrelevant. A major contribution of Delors to the *Vie Nouvelle* over the years was to stress the complexity of social organisation, to assert that generous impulses and moral convictions alone were not enough and that politics needed to be approached on its own ground and with knowledge. Politics, he argued indefatigably—and sometimes in curiously Pascalian phraseology—was important:

Il y a toujours des écrasés... Seul la politique, dimension essentielle de l'existence humaine, seule la politique, avec ses ambiguïtés, son double visage d'ange et de bête, permet à l'homme d'accéder à la maîtrise de son destin, de lutter contre la violence, de résoudre les contradictions, d'apporter sa médiation suprême aux tensions de la vie collective. (71)

It is unfortunate that it was a moralist like Kounier and not someone more politically aware, like Delors, who introduced Catholics to libertarian Socialism at the vital junction of the 1930's.

Delors transcended the milieu of the *Vie Nouvelle* by the force of his personality and his intellect. But in some ways he was also very much its product. Whilst he was the last to denigrate politics, he had no patience with political extremism and condemned the constant preoccupation of other left-wing Catholics with morals at the expense of concrete action, he often identified morals with politics himself. Hence the importance of his character in explaining his politics. There was the same relation between his moral temperament and political beliefs as frequently appears in the libertarian tradition of Proudhon and Peguy. True to this tradition, Delors had a powerful tendency towards absolutism balanced and toned down by a streak of melancholy that was existential rather than pessimistic. He thought naturally in terms of contradictions and believed the power of reason to be strictly limited. And unlike
Hernu and Suffert, jovial, optimistic characters both, there was in his nature a deep-rooted, anxious puritanism. This was the driving force of his intensely conscientious political activism; the element that provided him with the will power - his essential characteristic - and the energy to run his political Club at the same time as fulfilling the obligations of a demanding profession. His Personalism, consequently, was not merely intellectual; it was visceral. Not believing in the possibility of absolute truth, he was a firm advocate of pragmatic action and social dialogue. At the same time, his puritanism made him wary of total social integration: Socialism, for him, was a system of perpetual personal and social transcendence.

Unlike Delors and his predecessor as political instructor of the Vie Nouvelle, René Pucheu (alias Pascal), not all of the other members of the movement were weighed down by a tragic sense of the unattainability of total purity and perfection. There were some who would brook no compromise. And it is clear that the distinction between compromisers and non-compromisers was a vital political dividing line both in the Vie Nouvelle and Citoyens 60, as it had been previously in the New Left. Domenach, editor of Esprit, wrote characteristically

La nouvelle gauche naît dans les combats de la cité, dans les luttes ouvrières..... elle ne fabrique pas dans les antichambres du ministère de l'intérieur ou dans les laboratoires de la publicité... qu'ils y allaient en pleine lumière, par la grande porte, qu'ils ne servent pas à d'étranges cartels, à de déséquilibres regroupements. La nouvelle gauche est révolutionnaire. Elle a appris de la social-démocratie que si l'on commence par le reformisme, on passe vite à la compromission. (72)

The robust optimists tended to be supporters of the 'Revolution' that was to usher in a new and perfect world. They were likely to join the PSU and generally criticised Citoyens 60 as being 'reformist' and 'technocratic'. (73) In fact, the identification of political reformism with moral compromise comes out strongly in a passage written by Delors
himself - a dialogue between his reason and his soul. It is evident from this that even he, ever a firm advocate of political reformism as opposed to Revolution, considered that compromise might potentially hold moral and political dangers. First, his reason outlines the need for social integration and a moderate, cautious approach to Socialism:

Notre raison nous invite donc à plaider, comme nous le faisons depuis des années, pour la recherche d'un consensus minimum entre les Français, pour le développement d'un dialogue au sein d'institutions multiples et décentralisées, pour la recherche d'un compromis.

At this point his soul counters his reason:

Effectivement, notre âme montre ses inquiétudes devant les risques de cette attitude que nous qualifions, pour faire vite, de réformiste et de gestionnaire.

Socialism, after all, is not merely a matter of good management; it is, above all, a vision of what human relations might be:

La démocratie et le socialisme, nous rappelle notre âme, c'est quand même autre chose. C'est la recherche patiente et difficile de l'amélioration des rapports entre les personnes, la conquête progressive de la liberté et des libertés par une plus grande maîtrise de son destin personnel et la participation au destin collectif. C'est donc la faculté pour chacun de préserver son autonomie, de garder une certaine distance psychologique entre ses maîtres et lui; le conflit est donc nécessaire au progrès d'une société vivante ....... Notre âme nous invite donc à ne pas succomber aux tentations d'une société parfaitement huilée et totalement intégrée. Prenons garde de ne pas nous guérir de la division systématique pour sombrer dans le conformisme? (74)

The fundamental distinction between compromisers and non-compromisers in the Vie Nouvelle and Citoyens 60 seems to have revolved around their differing views of the nature of truth. The non-compromisers were optimists who believed in the possibility of attaining perfect truth and saw it as incarnated in the Revolution. Those with a more pessimistic outlook thought of truth as a never-ending personal struggle to reach
the unreachable. And since the latter's starting point was the subjective truth of each individual, they were more conscious of practical realities. At the same time, reality was partly in conflict with their non-conformist ethics. They were led, therefore, as Delors was here, to try to maintain a fragile balance between utopianism and realism, between socialism conceived as a system of total liberty and the practical physical limits of time and place. The optimists, on the other hand, disregarded such limits and ultimately even condemned those who observed them for making an intolerable moral compromise.

The team that helped Delors to run the review and the clubs was young—most were in their early 30's—and drawn mainly from two overlapping circles: the administration and the Catholic Left. The administrators, it should be added, often signed their articles in the review with pseudonyms as a precautionary measure. There were three members of the Cour des Comptes, Pierre Lavau, Serge Antoine and David Dautresme, and one member of the Conseil d'État, André Kerever. All but Dautresme had formerly been in the Jeune République. The Ministry of Labour had two representatives, Yves Chaigneau and Michel Courcier, head of the planning section on internal commerce. Both had been active at the Vie Nouvelle. René Pucheu, also of the Vie Nouvelle, worked at the Gas Board and Alain Cedel at the Bank of France. Two young civil servants, Join-Lambert, just out of ENA, and Beghen joined the Club sometime after it had started. Pierre Avril, who edited the Cahiers de la République and was also a member of the Club Jean Moulin was something of an odd-man-out since he was neither an administrator nor a Catholic.

Gabriel Bergougounoux, who was employed on a full-time basis to look after the daily running of the Club once he had completed his military service in 1962, was a former member of both the Vie Nouvelle and the Jeune République party. Henri Bourbon was editor of the review France—
Forum. Paul Thibaut, who attended the Club's meetings for some
time, was Domenach's adjoint at Esprit. Gerard Adam, who later took
over from Bergougnoux, was a journalist at La Croix, as was Jean
Boissonat who came to the Club intermittently for a while. Lucien
Douroux was the director of the CNJA. Bernard Goutet, the son of
one of the Vie Nouvelle's founders, worked at the CFDT's economic
research bureau, the BREAC. But with both groups - and with the CFDT
in particular - there was always a wide if informal exchange of men and
ideas. Dumonnet from the CNJA and Gonin, Marion, Picard and Detras
from the CFDT often joined the Club's meetings and contributed to the
Cahiers, while Delors, Lavau and Kerever often acted as instructors
at the courses provided by the unions and contributed to Formation,
an educational review attached to the CFDT.

Sociologically, Citoyens 60's membership closely resembled that of
the Vie Nouvelle, except that it was slightly better educated and less
Catholic. About half of the members of the Club held their baccalaureat
and one third had studied beyond this stage. A quarter were teachers,
another quarter professional people and roughly half were medium and
high level executives in industry. The executives tended to be aged
between 45-50 and were often the victims of the domination of old men
in business: their modernism, consequently, was all the fiercer for
having a partly personal inspiration. (75) Politically, the Club was
fairly mixed, although more homogeneous than Jean Moulin. If there
were few party members in it (for no more than about 10% joined the PSU),
over the years a high proportion went to the CFDT. The great majority
of the members of the Club were happy to follow the path of moderate,
libertarian Socialism taken by Delors. This left two dissatisfied
extremes: those, usually from a Vie Nouvelle background, who objected
that the Club was too 'political', and the Utopians, or the faithful
of the 'terre promise' as Delors called them. For as long as Delors personally ran the Club, until 1965, neither of these two categories had any influence. However, this changed after he left.
The Club Citoyens 60, although unswervingly secular in most respects, had a persistent weakness for the figure three which was derived, doubtless, from the Trinity. It had three aims. The first was to continue and to intensify the political education undertaken in the first instance by the Vie Nouvelle. This objective was further subdivided into three: the Club was to be the 'école, carrefour et laboratoire du citoyen' which simply meant that it intended to give courses, organise debates and set up social experimentation groups. Then it was concerned to coax Catholics out of their ghetto and to bring them to mix politically with non-Catholics: 'Il s'agit aussi de sortir les groupes de leur habituel ghetto catholique et de repliement sur les fraternités trop souvent sur-valorisées.' (2)

The Club always emphasised that its inspiration was in no way religious and that it was open to all. Also, like Jean Moulin, Citoyens 60 hoped to influence external circles, such as political parties, unions etc. About one third of the issues of the review were distributed outside of the Club. The assumption was that if opinion could be mobilised around certain themes the process of modernisation would be thereby facilitated. The Club saw itself as a kind of launching pad for new ideas which, once in orbit, would bring about a new constellation of political forces.

Apart from the review, Citoyens 60 consisted of ten Clubs and eight political 'équipes' or teams as they were called, mini-Clubs in effect. (3) At the time the Club was created, the Vie Nouvelle had over fifty political
teams, each with a membership ranging between five and thirty. These were not all transformed into Clubs, either because they were too small to produce serious work or else because some other group, like the Club Tocqueville in Lyon and the Club Democratie Nouvelle in Marseilles, had already started up, in which case Vie Nouvelle troops would be directed to join it. Also the decision on whether or not to found a Club would often depend on the emergence of a dependable local leader. While its branches were autonomous in principle, Citoyens 60 nevertheless kept track of their activities so as to safeguard the reputation of the organisation as a whole. When a Club under the name of Citoyens 60 unexpectedly appeared at Pau, Bergougnoux wrote with some irritation:

... un club Citoyens 60 n'est pas n'importe quoi. Il est animé par les gens dont nous devons connaître à Paris les noms et les qualités. Il doit avoir un programme bien défini dont nous devons avoir connaissance; il doit régulièrement nous tenir au courant de ses activités. (4)

Like both the Jacobin Club and the Club Jean Moulin, Citoyens 60's organisation was highly informal. Financially, it too was run on a hand to mouth basis. Its principal source of revenue was subscriptions and since these were not high, Delors would sometimes be obliged to pay the Club's secretary out of his own pocket. (5) In Paris, there were three Clubs, organised respectively by a school-teacher, an engineer and a municipal counsellor. Independent of these, there was also a central secretariat which shared the premises of the Vie Nouvelle. The secretariat included an executive committee numbering about a dozen and a variety of specialised groups - containing about fifty people in all - whose task was to help prepare the review. Like those of the Jacobin Club and the Club Jean Moulin, the executive committee of Citoyens 60 was flexible in membership and tended to meet around meals: its members lunched together once a week - on this occasion people from outside, often unionists from
the CFDT, would be invited - and every three weeks they dined together before settling down to plan the review. Once every six months the directing group would meet with its parent organisation to discuss progress - or rather to inform on progress because there was no question of the *Vie Nouvelle* handing out directives.

The procedures of the Club were a good deal more democratic than those of the movement; there were no purges. Certainly, Delors was the undisputed leader but this was because, like Hernu, he led in the direction people wanted to go. Also his technical expertise, pedagogic gifts and capacity to handle the leaders of the *Vie Nouvelle* automatically ensured him a special position. This position was never challenged; at the same time, the malaise on internal democracy that eventually destroyed the Club Jean Moulin never developed in Citoyens 60. Partly this was because Delors was not an authoritarian or manipulative personality - if his team had any complaint it was that besides over-working himself he also drove them too hard. Partly it was because the under-current of religious fervour in Citoyens 60 fostered a durable atmosphere of cooperation and communal effort. On the other hand, because each Club enjoyed a large measure of autonomy, the degree of internal freedom within them - as opposed to the secretariat - depended to some degree on the personalities of their leaders. There was never any trouble on this score. However, given the background training of so many members of Citoyens 60 in the *Vie Nouvelle* and the high proportion of school-teachers among them, it would have been surprising if all of the Clubs had been irreproachably libertarian... (6)

The criteria for the creation of a provincial club were the agreement of the local branch of the *Vie Nouvelle* and an intellectual output of high quality. A Club starting up in Caen received strict instructions. It must have a team of activists made up of members of the *Vie Nouvelle*
and people from outside the movement in agreement with the contents of
the review. Also it should be prepared to undertake three types of
activity: public meetings with the aim of informing local opinion on
the major issues of the day and making the Club known regionally; regular
social, economic and political courses; the organisation of committees
to work on local or regional problems. On the subject of formal pol-
itical activity the directives were guarded and almost arch:

... en ce qui concerne les prises de position politique,
c'est au club de décider au plan local, mais en prenant bien
garde que notre vocation première est l'éducation politique.
Ceci bien entendu ne nous interdit pas les engagements
qu'exige le contexte ou la conjoncture. Il est cependant
nécessaire que notre action n'apparaisse jamais liée
directement à celle de telle ou telle formation politique. (7)

Citoyens 60 was itself anxious to avoid becoming involved in party
politics, believing that clubs could have an influence only if they
preserved their independence and acted externally on the political
parties as pressure groups. But the real brake on political activity
was the Vie Nouvelle - although it was not as successful in this respect
as it would have liked. The movement feared that if the Club became
politically involved its own influence would be lessened and so it used
all its influence to restrict the Club's activities as far as possible
to political education. Also, as the Vie Nouvelle identified influence
with numbers, it was none too happy when Citoyens 60 left the field
clear for other clubs. On occasion it even reacted sharply when its
clientele moved in too great numbers to the Club; at one point it
accused the Club at Dijon of 'stealing' its members. (8) In theory,
the Vie Nouvelle gave Citoyens 60 a free hand. In practice, it sometimes
tried to interfere. Cruziat's successor, Labourie, went so far as to
write to Toulouse, where there was some possibility of a Club being
created, to say that the majority of its leaders should be drawn from
the movement. (9) And on another occasion, when Citoyens 60 conceded
Marseilles to Democratie Nouvelle, local leaders were reminded rather
coldly of how the Vie Nouvelle saw the Club's mission:

Citoyens 60 est un service de la Vie Nouvelle, ce qui
signifie que la Vie Nouvelle considère Citoyens 60 comme l'instrument privilège de formation politique... Il s'agit pour les militants de la Vie Nouvelle d'agrandir le rayon
d'action du mouvement pour augmenter l'efficacité de sa
culture personnaliste et communautaire. Par conséquent,
le lancement de l'opération Citoyens 60 entre dans une
stratégie nationale. (10)

Through conflicts of this order, relations between the Club and the
movement grew gradually more strained. It was mainly on account of
Delors and the confidence that the leadership of the Vie Nouvelle
placed in him as a former member of the movement that an open breach
was avoided.

If Citoyens 60 declined, politely, to confine itself to political
education, this was nonetheless a principal activity of the Club and
one which it carried out with great vigour and verve. Among the main
characteristics of the members of the Vie Nouvelle were their drive and
will power. And now in Citoyens 60 they settled down to learning about
politics with the same earnest determination they had formerly debated
sex when the topic was still taboo in polite, middle-class Catholic
circles. Like conscientious visitors to a foreign land, they displayed
great energy and determination in coming to grips with their unfamiliar
environment. In the easy-going Jacobin Club, a general discussion on
the problems, say of Algerian decolonisation, would rank as political
education. In the Club Citoyens 60 such a discussion would be prefaced
by a detailed social, economic, demographic and political survey of the
country, possibly also by an analysis of the prospects for Socialism in
it, and then followed up by an exceedingly long bibliography with works
expounding different points of view on the subject. Moreover, these
bibliographies were actually consulted by members of the Club.
If leaders and activists made heavy demands of the rank and file, they also drove themselves very hard. Few Communist Party militants were more active than they were. Besides running their Clubs, they attended an intensive twelve-day course on politics once a year. They also helped to organize and participated in an annual conference on some particular theme – those on Socialism and urbanization were the most popular, attracting between 1 - 1,500 people. Then, during their holidays, they would go off quite often on some educational trip, usually to North Africa (décolonisation) or Brussels (EEC). The members of the executive committee in Paris led the most strenuous lives of all; many of them sacrificed at least one week-end in four to give conferences or courses at the provincial Clubs. (11)

The attendance at provincial Club meetings, when an outsider was present, would range between one and two hundred if the public were admitted and between eighty and a hundred and fifty if the session was a closed one, that is to say if it included only club members and other activists close to them, CFDT or CNJA militants more often than not. (12) The themes that roused most interest in the provinces were decolonisation, economics, Socialism and current home affairs. (13) On the other hand, any topic might be discussed. The following programme, outlined in the Cahiers of March 1964, is fairly representative: at Dijon there was a conference on East-West relations by the diplomatic correspondent of the Monde, a group was working on the town budget and the political cine club was showing the film, Come Back Africa, on racial segregation; at Le Havre Jacques Delors was giving a course of six lectures on economics and a week-end meeting was being organised on the subject of the affluent society; at Toucing there was a meeting on regional structures and decentralisation; at Tours a week-end study group was being held on democracy in industrial society; at the west Paris Club there was a talk by a CFDT leader on union
problems, at the east Paris Club the topic of debate was nuclear energy; in addition, the former was organising a working committee on the theme of European integration. (14)

A more specific example of how the individual branches of Citoyens 60 operated is provided by the *Rive Gauche* Club in Paris in the year 1966-7. (15) Its general meetings were attended by about 250 people, one third of whom were not members of the *Vie Nouvelle*. At a special course on politics, lasting for six sessions, there were between 24-50 people. Its working committees came under three headings: economic problems, social problems and political commitment. The committee on political commitment, significantly, was subdivided into two work groups, one analysing the nature of commitment in a party, the other in a union. In general, Citoyens 60 was always stressing that while involvement was absolutely essential, a party was only one among several different possible forms of political expression. 1967 was an election year and the *Club Rive Gauche* organised a number of meetings on the serious issues behind the elections: '...derrière les affrontements des Partis et les combinaisons électorales qui sont le lot de toute élection, il y a des intérêts plus graves...' And, as ever, it was struggling with the meaning and nature of political activity. Several meetings were held around the general theme:

Le mot politique est ambigu; est-ce jeu ou combine? un domaine de spécialistes à qui il faut s'en remettre? Est-ce le champ de combat de partis bureaucratisques et sclérosés?

Then a questionnaire was circulated with a long list of questions such as: do you think apoliticism must gain ground, and if so why?; what does the word democracy mean to you?; what difficulties does the average honest citizen encounter in trying to participate in politics - lack of results, ignorance of the factors involved, difficulty in making tactical choices?
are you among those people who avoid politics because:

La politique est le secteur des combines, des tractations, des compromissions, dans lequel 'on se salit toujours les mains'; si on est honnête, il vaut mieux se tenir à l'écart parce que: ou bien on est roulé ou bien on est contaminé.

The Rive Gauche's constant denial that politics is an unworthy profession suggests that many people must have thought so. Lastly, it is worth noting that the Club was still loyal to the doctrine of Personalism: in 1966 it issued a lengthy tract on the subject.

The focal point of all the branches of Citoyens 60 was the monthly review, the Cahiers d'éducation politique, économique et sociale. Although the Cahiers only once published an article on a religious theme - on the encyclical Pacem in Terris (16) - the original spiritual inspiration of the review was betrayed by its presentation. Interspersed among the long, often highly technical columns on economic planning, decentralisation or European integration were short moralistic quotations, generally from Mounier or Lacroix but also from others such as Peguy - whose renowned distinction between mystique and politique came up periodically - Marx Jaurès, Blum or even Camus, and bad drawings of human figures clasping each other by the shoulder or holding each other by the hand, representations of the Club's preoccupation with the notions of fraternity and community. However, this was the one concession that Citoyens 60 made to the sentimentalism of the Vie Nouvelle. The articles were of extremely high standard, for those who contributed to the review, outside the Club's own members, were often leading civil servants or unionists, friends of Delors whom he had drawn into the venture. Indeed, if there is a criticism to be made of the review, it is that the intellectual level of many of its articles was too advanced for the average member of the Club.

This criticism was made repeatedly by the Vie Nouvelle and was partly
justified. Citoyens 60 had originally set itself the goal, disapproved by the movement, of influencing political elites, as well as furthering the political education of the members of the Vie Nouvelle. This meant that it had to cater for people at very different levels of political understanding: there were some who knew nothing whatever about politics, others who needed support and advice in their own particular sector of involvement, and, finally, the politically sophisticated circles that the Club was hoping to influence. (17) To strike a balance between the needs and demands of all three groups was difficult. At the beginning, in particular, there were some excellent introductory courses, for example on economics, and simple instructive articles on such subjects as social security or municipal politics. Also branch Clubs sometimes sent in contributions of their own on some aspect of local politics: the Club at Pau wrote about the municipal budget and the Club at Le Havre on secondary education in the town. (18) In 1964 committees were set up to produce reports on their own regions. (19) It cannot, therefore, be said that the leadership neglected the needs of the rank and file. At the same time, it is certainly true, as the Vie Nouvelle contended, that it was interested principally in communicating with circles whose thinking was as advanced as its own and that at least half and probably nearer two thirds of the articles in the review were directed towards this end. In a sense, this imbalance was inevitable given the composition of the leading group. Most had heavy professional commitments and no journalistic experience; they tended, therefore, to treat subjects that were familiar to them in the manner of the civil service reports they were accustomed to writing. Their articles were clear but far too long, at times somewhat indigestible in style and generally too demanding in the background knowledge they expected from the reader. When the Vie Nouvelle objected, which it did periodically, it received the answer that if it wanted a political
Club it would have to content itself with what was within the capacity of those people who were prepared to give up their time to it. (20)

Also, as the editors of the *Cahiers* pointed out, the clientele of the Club, particularly those who stemmed from the *Vie Nouvelle* itself, were not of the type to be discouraged by difficulties; they were ready to settle down and work seriously on what they did not understand. (21)

When the movement reproached Citoyens 60 for its too intellectual orientation, the complaint was generally accompanied by a demand for more local and community politics — which is why Bosworth's accusation that its view of politics was too abstract is somewhat unjust. (22)

From the outset the *Vie Nouvelle* had been involved in street and local action politics — usually by way of the fraternities — and it was interested in exploring the path further. This preoccupation had several sources. First, Catholics were used to action through the Church and had a tradition of social work going back to the nineteenth century. Their anti-political bias also led them to devote their activities to social and cultural domains. Finally, there was Personalist doctrine which underlined the alienations of the modern urban, industrial environment and strongly urged that people should take up their 'responsibilities' at whatever level was within their reach, whether at their work or within their street. The most urgent problem of modern politics, according to this critique, was the incapacity of liberal parliamentary systems to control the increased power of the State and the failure of the political parties to adapt to the new situation. Hence the importance for the *Vie Nouvelle* of what it called 'underground democracy' by which it meant the controlling action of miscellaneous socio-political groups. (23)

The vision that the *Vie Nouvelle* had in mind was realised in 1965 in Grenoble by a Catholic engineer by the name of Dubedout. Dubedout began his political career by solving — as a private citizen — a problem.
to do with the city water-supply. The city had grown at a great pace since the war and the old water system could no longer cope with the increased pressure of demand. From the nucleus of associations of water consumers and street action committees, Dubedout formed his **Groupe d'Action Municipale** (GAM) and went on to win the municipal election of 1965 with an apolitical list of **forces vives**, by which were meant non-party activists who were often involved in a union, association or civic group of some kind.

Citoyens 60 was not less enthusiastic about community politics than the **Vie Nouvelle**. One of the first issues of the **Cahiers** urged members of the Club to set up urban action committees - **comités de quartier** - stressing how private groups could humanise public service. (25) Also it took part itself in two projected community ventures. In 1963, the Club, together with the CFDT, the CNJA, FO and the PEN planned form associations for people travelling on public transport in the Paris region. But unity proved impossible to achieve, partly on account of the political stresses created by the Algerian war. (26) Earlier, Citoyens 60 had been involved in the **Groupe de Recherche Ouvrier-Paysan** (GROP), once again with the CFDT and the CNJA but also with other clubs such as Jean Moulin, Rencontres and Tocqueville. The aim of the GROP was to build up closer relations between agricultural and industrial workers' organisations, but also to undertake practical work with a view to creating a 'genuine social, economic and political democracy'. (27) This attempt failed, partly from lack of unity and partly because the unions involved began to hold back their support when the GROP became caught up in manoeuvres to advance Gaston Defferre as the Left's presidential candidate. However, the **Vie Nouvelle** and Citoyens 60 succeeded in presenting common lists of candidates at the municipal elections of 1965, and a fairly high percentage of the candidates were typed as **forces vives**. (28)

The real difference between the **Vie Nouvelle** and Citoyens 60 was one
of emphasis. The former wanted the Club to devote itself exclusively to community politics, while Citoyens 60 wished to divide its energies between practical action and the definition of the anarchist vision of 'economic and social democracy' that such action was presumed to be leading towards, with emphasis on the intellectual task. For deeply embedded in the most pragmatic of its members was the notion that politics is primarily about ideas and that the precondition for its practice is knowledge - hence the Club's self-appointed role of providing 'formation et information'. Whether derived from the nineteenth century club experience or from anarchist doctrine or from both, this was the element that crystallised the reformist and innovatory forces of the 1960's in France into political clubs, while in Britain and elsewhere similar forces found expression in the less intellectual domain of community action.
Chapter 15.
Citoyens 60's Project for a Social and Economic Democracy.

... au commencement est l'homme et c'est bien ça le message profond du personnelisme. (1)

Il ne faut pas que le progres technique et la publicite nous imposent un avenir en quelque sorte predetermine. (2)

The originality of the political thinking of the non-conformists, as it has been observed, lay in the synthesis of anarchist ideas - more specifically the Proudhonist system of social and economic democracy - and the realities of modern technological and industrial society. At the same time, the non-conformists were mainly philosophers and intellectuals and the merger they devised left much to be desired from a technical point of view. It was as if they had constructed a pool which was well designed and effectively laid out - but which could not hold water. Imaginatively they were able to conceive how industrial structures could be impressed with libertarian values, but they lacked the tools and skills to make their scheme viable.

The practical skills needed to transform social and economic democracy from a vision into a project were eventually furnished in the years after the war by technicians: economists, engineers, civil servants, managers. Yet, closer concern with technique and greater respect for reality, if very necessary, also led to other drawbacks. Absorbed by their own speciality or else intent on achieving practical results, the technicians tended to lose sight of the total vision of a new society which had fired the non-conformists. The Club Jean Moulin, for example, was pre-occupied principally with State reform, whilst other clubs and groups subscribing to the same libertarian ideology were interested in furthering participation within a limited area, such as municipal administration, more often than not. Only the Club Citoyens 60 stood back
at frequent intervals to measure its practical researches - in the fields of planning, decentralisation, incomes policy, etc. - against the overall view of how a libertarian industrial society might look. Those in the Club who were tempted to immerse themselves in economic or administrative detail were urged by Delors to link their close-up analyses with a global vision of society. 'Il importe de sacrifier ni le terme, ni le horizon' he would insist. (3) Citoyens 60, mainly for this reason, can be considered as being most directly in the line of research begun by the non-conformists of the 1930's.

'Vive l'irréalisme', the Cahiers once pronounced. (4) However, this should be taken to symbolise the determination of the Club's members not to be discouraged by the obstacles in the way of their political ideal rather than as a tendency to indulge in utopianism. For, the interest of the intellectual output of Citoyens 60 resides above all in the fact that a group of people with a high level of practical competence were able to sketch the contours of an anarchist industrial society without either sacrificing their values or - just as vitally - violating reality.

The Club's method of work was not usually to write books, but rather long articles devoted to a single subject: the economic plan, social policy, urbanism. Each of these articles was like a section of a mosaic, painstakingly executed in itself, but meaningful essentially within a larger pattern. This chapter will not, therefore, attempt to reproduce the economic and administrative minutiae of the Club's work. It will aim instead to show the coherence of the ideas the Club put forward. This is not to say that the system of social and economic democracy envisaged by Citoyens 60 was a perfectly tailored political blueprint. To represent it as a machine with every nut, screw and bolt in position would be most misleading. True to its Proudhonist inspiration, the Club's system was an approach and a faith - based on knowledge and morality - and not an
answer. The essence of Proudhonism was perhaps captured by a remark of Mounier's quoted in the Cahiers: 'Je crois à l'utopie, non pas celle où l'on s'évade, mais celle où l'on se projette avec une volonté de fer'.

At the same time, of course, the Cahiers were also intended to inform club members on the day to day problems of internal and foreign policy. Consequently, in narrowing down the area of analysis this chapter glosses over a good deal of the Club's writings. This may be justified on several counts. In the first place, on all foreign policy issues - even on European integration - the Club was divided. Although Europe was a topic that recurred persistently in the Cahiers, and although the articles were quite often sympathetic to the idea of integration, this was because Citoyens 60 believed that the ignorance and scepticism surrounding the subject should be counteracted rather than because there was any clear consensus favourable to integration within the Club.

Again, a considerable amount was written on the problems of the Third World, but none of it was in any sense noteworthy. Unlike the Jacobin Club, which defined itself in relation to the Radical Party by its stands on internal and foreign policy issues, Citoyens 60's positions on such matters really contribute very little to one's understanding of what the Club represented.

However, one theme which cropped up fairly frequently in the Cahiers - and which was partly in contradiction with the Club's intellectual system - should be mentioned briefly. This was the theme of the presidential regime. Citoyens 60 considered that the election of the President by universal suffrage offered a solution to France's political problems in that it would force the political parties to overcome their paralysis and so contribute to simplifying and stabilising political life. But it was in no sense an enthusiastic advocate of the project, being mistrustful both of mechanistic constitutional devices and State power. Like Ordre
Nouveau in the 1950's, Citoyens 60 considered the very existence of the State as a necessary evil; it could not, therefore, but be reluctant to reinforce the power of the executive:

... la question est alors de savoir si nous vivons une époque assez paisible pour nous passer d'une autorité politique forte. L'auteur de ces lignes ne le pense pas. Sans mécenaitre les risques il ne voit pas qu'il y ait d'autre solution que de le courir. (9)

It should be pointed out, finally, that the Club was quite unaware that the system it was manipulating was Proudhonist. Proudhon was mentioned in an article on workers' control by Albert Detras of the CFDT, but on the whole references to him were rare. Most of the members of the Club, particularly those who had previously been in the Vie Nouvelle or some other Catholic Action group, considered themselves as Personalists and automatically linked Personalism with the name of Emmanuel Mounier. However, the Personalism of Citoyens 60 was no longer quite the same thing as the Personalism of Mounier: the values were not essentially different, but the tone and emphasis had changed. This is apparent from the issue of the Cahiers which appeared on Socialism in 1963. Labourde, leader of the Vie Nouvelle at this time, was still referring to 'socialisme communautaire', whilst Delors and his team had switched to democratic socialism.

This term had by now a wide currency in left-wing Catholic circles in general: it was, in fact, on the way to becoming a new orthodoxy. But in the case of Citoyens 60 the use of the term testified also to the influence of Paul Vignaux (President of the SG3N and a professor of medieval history at the Sorbonne) and his review Reconstruction. Although a considerable number of the CFDT-DT activists who surrounded Vignaux and his review subscribed to the doctrine of Personalism - meaning, essentially, the aspiration to personal autonomy (10) - he was himself no supporter of Mounier. Having lived outside France for many years during the war, Vignaux had a more cosmopolitan view of socialism than had many of his
compatriots in the CFDT union. And despite his close association with Jouhaux, a life-long anarchist at heart, his own sympathies went with the European social democratic parties, and especially with the British Labour Party. Reconstruction's references were not to Peguy and Mounier, but to Aneurin Bevan, R.H. Crossman and the Fabian Tracts. The trend within the review was away from anarchism and more in the line of social democracy.

Specifically, democratic socialism as propounded in the review stood for the opposition to the old confusion of religion and politics, support for the idea of economic planning, the determination to construct a strong, independent union movement and a general insistence on the need to respect democratic procedures and accept the relativism of politics. (11) These ideas which entailed a shift of emphasis away from the rather over-moralistic tone of Mounier's brand of Personalism had a strong appeal for Belloc and subsequent to this initial introduction to Personalism through the Vie Nouvelle, Reconstruction was undoubtedly the most determinant influence on his political development.

There is, however, one further point to be made on democratic socialism. Despite all attempts to deck it out in the clothing of social democracy, democratic socialism stubbornly wore its new garments in the old way. Such quotations as appeared in Reconstruction from British Socialists, such as Crossman for instance, tended generally to be in line with the traditional pre-occupations of French libertarian socialism: "Après tout, ce n'est pas le bonheur mais l'accroissement de la liberté qui est le but le plus élève du socialisme." (12) While Galbraith's work was singled out for attention because it underlined the 'essential frivolity' - to repeat Reconstruction's very anarchist turn of phrase - of consumer, industrial and business society. (13) To redistribute wealth without, at the same time, redistributing power and transforming the values of
society did not represent socialism as the review understood it.

In a sense, the conflict within democratic socialism was between faith and reason. Reason was on the side of a large, united French Labour Party, a numerous, well-organized union movement and a high level of productivity leading to greater affluence for the working class. At the same time, faith in the value of anarchism was not dimmed, nor was the fear of such ancient demons as authoritarianism, bureaucracy, materialism and social and personal conformism, allayed. Reconstruction, in numerous passages, revealed its uneasiness about the 'success' of the British Labour Party. The only solution to the contradiction between libertarian ideas and social and political realities seemed to be to relativise values:

Le socialisme exige l'éfficacité économique, la prévision rationelle des besoins, la discipline de la production et de la consommation, la mise en place d'une bureaucratie... Mais il y a plus; dans la mesure même où elle réussit (comme on le sait en Angleterre) une politique travailliste transforme le prolétariat en une classe moyenne, pourvue d'un relatif bien-être et sans cesse menacée par le conservatisme et l'inertie (cet 'ennui' socialiste que Berdiaeff comparait à l'ennui des paroisses chrétiennes installées dans le conformisme moral); et pourtant il faut conserver l'élan pour aller plus loin dans le sens de la responsabilité et des valeurs sociales... il n'y a pas de système qui réalise la justice intégrale. (14)

To retain the religious parallel, one might say that democratic socialists of the school of the Catholic Left were not unlike the pagans who became Christians in early times. These would integrate Christianity loosely into their own traditional beliefs and then revert to the latter, sometimes periodically, sometimes totally.

However, this reversion from democratic socialism to anarchism - and sometimes to a very un-Proudhonian form of optimistic anarchism - came only later. In the early 1960's, Citoyens 60 (and to some extent other groups of the Catholic Left) was engaged in integrating anarchist values with technological and industrial structures on the one hand, and with
Schematically, social and economic democracy, in its Proudhonist form, meant a pluralist society, libertarian - in the sense of enabling each individual to realise him or herself as far as possible - and anti-materialist. Order was secured within it by the existence of a minimum State machine and a broad agreement on the ends of the system; liberty by the limited conflict between mutually dependent participant groups. The prevailing mode of social regulation was through discussion and bargaining, backed by education. There was no final end to society, no perfect state of justice. But progress was ensured by the ethic of personal and social nonconformity, a continual straining towards moral and intellectual self-transcendence, which would lead to an ever greater degree of justice - that is of morality and consciousness - both within individuals and within society at large. The line of approach to social and political change was double: to transform structures, but also values.

Such was the broad schema which inspired Citoyen 60's political project. Social and economic democracy - to trace it first in outline - was envisaged in the following manner. Order was secured partly through a State whose role was to execute as little as possible, but instead to organise and stimulate social groups, notably by means of an economic plan and a prices and incomes policy. Order was further reinforced by a national political consensus - the necessary precondition of both plan and incomes policy. This consensus, in turn, was obtained by a far-reaching social policy with the fundamental objectives of bringing about a radical redistribution of wealth, encouraging the rapid growth of
community services and, finally, of protecting the consumer and bettering the 'quality of life'.

By means of this public participation in and control of the economy, the citizen was protected in some measure from the encroachments of mass consumer society and State authoritarianism. More positively, his liberty was safeguarded by active participation at every level and in all areas of society - street, city, factory, region. Participation, however, was not regarded as a panacea in itself. The process of 'social dialogue', to cite the Club's watchword, had to be kept well oiled by an exact and permanently up-dated knowledge of the social, economic and political conditions in any given society. Also a general acceptance of the aims and values of the community had to be balanced by the opposite pole, a permanent watchful resistance against the pressures bearing on the individual to become totally integrated into society. The Proudhonist system was essentially based on balancing contradictions, the central ones being between the individual and society, liberty and order. (15)

For the Catholic Left, as for socially-minded Catholics more generally, economic planning was nothing so simple as a limited regulatory device. Politically, socially and economically, it was no less than the way, the truth and the light, the way in fact, to moralise the whole domain of politics at one fell swoop: to rationalise choices, control political and economic power, succour the needy. As Charlemagne baptised pagans by driving them en masse through a river, so the Catholic Left, with equal abandon, seemed sometimes to believe that, to be purified, political issues had only to be channelled wholesale through the planning process. Support
for the Plan, it should be stressed, was an act of faith as much as
and even often before it was a rational option in Catholic circles.
From the early 1950's onwards, it was the foundation of their socio-
economic doctrine. Then later, from about 1959 to 1965-66, it became
the centre-piece of democratic socialism.

Around 1952-3, when Catholics were beginning to move leftwards,
the main topic that preoccupied them was decolonisation. But as they
had something of a guilty conscience in the field of politics - born
of long neglect - this was felt to be insufficient. They, therefore,
looked to the social and economic domain. From the 1940's, Catholic
socio-economic doctrine had been given to sentimental theorising on the
humanisation of relationships in industry, the conciliation of the
individual and the State, the generalisation of social security, but
without providing any clear indication as to how such transformations
were to be achieved in practice. In addition, the MRP's reforming seal
soon petered out in this domain. And Mendes-France, who might have acted
as a guide to young Catholics in their economic wilderness, was too much
taken up with the problem of ending the Indochinese war to be able to
direct the economy at the same time.

In the circumstances, the Plan was not just an answer, it was the
only answer. As Beuchet has observed, planning was successful essentially
because it filled an ideological vacuum. (16) Rather like Pascal's God
who had to exist because man strives towards the Good, the Plan had to
provide the solution to a more just and humane industrial society because
left-wing Catholics demanded a solution. For them, capitalism without
the Plan - like the world without God for Pascal - was quite simply absurd.
Without the saving grace of values, materialism (with which capitalism
was identified) was meaningless.

However, before going on to discuss the values that led Catholics of
the Left in general, and Citoyens 60 in particular, to support planning, it is necessary to trace the line of influence that came from the Planning Commissariat itself. The first few French Plans had evolved pragmatically and this evolution had a decisive impact on how Citoyens 60 - which was closely linked to planning circles through Delors - shaped its own social and economic policy. In this domain, as in others, the Club was constantly engaged in balancing theory and principles with practice.

There had been two main developments in French planning after the war: one was the democratisation of planning procedures, the other was the broadening of the scope of social concern. The Clubs Jean Moulin and Citoyens 60 were interested in both developments, but the intellectual contribution of Jean Moulin tended to be in the first domain and that of Citoyens 60 in the second.

In the immediate post-war period, Plans paid more attention to economic requirements than to social needs. They exceeded overall targets as a whole, but obtained only poor results as regards the fundamental equilibrium of the economy. Planners soon found themselves faced with a shortage of manpower and the growth of inflation. Consequently, they increasingly came to see social policy not simply as a corrective for economic trends, but as being closely bound up with economic development. Also they seriously began to consider the necessity of making conscious choices with respect to the 'problems of civilization' posed by economic and social development. The IVth Plan was a watershed in this respect. Pierre Masse has described it as introducing the notion of quality alongside that of quantity:

Il repose sur 'une idée moins partielle de l'homme' que celle d'un simple consommateur de biens et services individuels, et donne en conséquence à l'amélioration de l'environnement une valeur comparable à celle du développement du niveau de vie. (17)
These new 'Galbraithian' considerations - which, in fact, arose quite independently of Galbraith's ideas - allowed public investment to grow twice as rapidly as production under the IVth Plan. Community services were accorded priority and new programmes of cultural and urban investment made their way into it. Also such problems as the modernization of the structures of production and the orderly development of prices and incomes now began to receive a good deal of attention. (18)

The interest for an incomes policy and concern for the quality of life were stimulated in the first instance by the evolution of the Plan itself. For it seemed apparent to the planners that disorderly growth was both socially and economically counter-productive. (19) But thinking on these issues was also developed and deepened because of the existence of certain men, Pierre Masse, who was Commissar of the Plan at this time, Jean Ripert, his second-in-command, and Jacques Dolors who was head of the Social Affairs section. As Catholics of the Left, the last two were naturally predisposed to be dirigistes to a degree and Galbraithian, not because of the influence of the American, but on account of their own system of values. (20)

Even within the MRP, but more particularly on the Catholic Left, the values of capitalism and individualism were either implicitly and just as often explicitly, condemned. This was less for directly political reasons, it should be said, than on moral and religious grounds. Citoyens 60, although never as uncompromisingly critical of capitalism as the non-conformist groups of the 1930's, could still be very severe in its judgments on it. This was ultimately because its own vision of a society in which each individual would be able to express his or her own creativity and consciously control their fate was incompatible with the capitalist system. Capitalism, in the first place, was seen to represent the rule of materialism - 'L'Ame passe dans les choses' (21) - while what the Club demanded was, in
the language of the 1930's, the primacy of spiritual values. Then again it was harmful to self-realisation since it meant the separation of capital and labour or man from his work, and to human relations since individualism bred selfishness at the expense of social solidarity. (22) Politically, capitalism was deceitful since it enabled economic elites - 'centres privés irresponsables' (23) - to pull the strings of power and direct the destiny of the community uncontrolled, behind the facade of parliamentary democracy. (24) Socially capitalism was unjust, since it created impoverished minorities within a framework of general affluence and led to great inequalities both between groups and between regions. From a purely rational point of view it was to be condemned as 'anarchic' and wasteful. Finally, through the comforts it had undoubtedly contributed to society and the means of social pressure, such as publicity, it did not hesitate to employ the capitalist system held that greatest of all dangers: the danger of social and moral conformism.

Moreover, to consider as Scampeter did, that neo-capitalism was gradually evolving into socialism was, in the view of the Club, quite erroneous. Socialisation was one thing, socialism quite another; and the latter could only be willed and worked for. (26) But the transition from capitalism to socialism must not entail the abandonment of democratic values. It was in this sense that planning was an invaluable source of inspiration not just to Citoyens 60 but to democratic socialism generally, for it seemed to be a means of modifying capitalist values without compromising democratic principles: 'on sort du capitalisme sans abandonner la démocratie.' (27)

A central argument advanced in support of economic planning, and not just in the circles of the Catholic Left, was that it was a means
of rationalising the economy, reducing waste and creating conditions of greater and more harmonious growth: 'La planification procède donc directement d'une exigence de l'esprit humain - des exigences de la raison. Elle est avant tout le propre de l'individu 'conscient et organisé'. '(29) In addition, for Citoyens 60 in particular, planning was also a way of bringing about greater social justice in that it allowed needs to be detected which were not catered for by the market, it facilitated the redistribution of wealth in so far as it also promoted growth and it offset 'selfish individualism' through a new ethic of social solidarity created by greater social equality, a concern for community facilities and the quality of life:

The positive participation of social groups in the economic process necessary to the French style of non-rigid economic planning permitted economic power to be brought under political control. Also planning countered the tendency of modern mass consumer society to impose a style of thought and life from above in that it provided an instrument for taking society in hand and consciously shaping it into a 'civilisation de travail'. The cause for a freer, more humane and less materialistic society was not yet lost. 'Allons, le néo-capitalisme, la publicité et le conformisme ne nous ont pas encore émasculé!' (30) Then, the style of the Plan, pragmatic and concrete, was in line with the Club's own line of approach. (31)

In Citoyens 60, as in the planning circles with which it overlapped, an incomes policy was seen as a means of reinforcing both the rational
and the moral aspects of the Plan: it was indispensable aid to non-inflationary expansion and the Club doubted whether the less favoured sectors of the community could be helped and protected without it. (32) Greater and better organised growth, it was calculated, would create a bigger cake which would make it easier to distribute wealth (people would be readyer to see their income increase less rapidly than to accept an actual decrease in their standard of living) and this equalisation of living standards in turn would make an incomes policy more acceptable to the unions. (33)

Citoyens 60 was not prepared to see an incomes policy forced on the unions - nor was it under the illusion that they could be forced to accept one:

C'est tout d'abord l'aptitude des représentants du patronat et de l'administration au dialogue social qui devrait... être la pierre d'achoppement de l'économie concertée... (34)

Economic democracy, which involved both planning and wage regulation, was only attainable, in the view of the Club, if a broad consensus both on the end and means of society - a 'projet collectif' - were to be mobilised and the opportunity provided for discussion, bargaining and limited opposition within this broad consensus.

The objective of economic democracy was a more egalitarian society brought about by protecting the victims of anarchic growth and re-distributing the fruits of present growth, by allocating resources increasingly to community services, by controlling publicity, protecting consumers and generally bettering the quality of life rather than just increasing affluence. This was the core of the argument advanced in the book: *Pour une démocratie économique.* (It also included a plea to widen the scope of the Plan and to strengthen procedures for intervention in the private sector which were currently insufficient and badly used - but this was the work of Ullmo and Ripert of the Club Jean
There was, however, a fundamental divergence of views on the projects for the redistribution of income as advanced by Pierre Lavau of Citoyens 60 and Simon Nora of the Club Jean Moulin: the former demanded sweeping egalitarian measures which should be imposed if need be, while the latter advocated only a minimal reform. Eventually both views were included in the book. Jacques Delors, who was on the way to becoming a leading French expert in this domain, did not support Nora but he felt that Lavau's ideas were Utopian and would not be acceptable to the public. On the whole, however, the articles in the Cahiers on an incomes policy were fairly radical in approach, demanding more government control of investments and self-financing, the strict curbing of housing speculation, the fiscal publishment of firms refusing to obey the general lines laid down (35), the reduction of very large incomes and publicity on profits so as to create a mood of public confidence (36), the protection of workers against unemployment by large-scale re-training schemes. (37) For all its non-conformist doctrine on taking risks, Citoyens 60 never saw any justification for exposing people to the involuntary insecurity imposed on them by anarchic trends of the economy. (38)

If the end of economic democracy was a social consensus, the means was participation. For the unions this meant involvement at a national level through the Plan and at an intermediary level through the firm. At the level of the Plan they would have a voice in major budgetary options, particularly in the domain of social development which most concerned them. Social development was difficult to define, ranging from the growth of average consumption, the satisfaction of vital needs to greater equality of revenue and to satisfactory human relations. Since it was obviously not possible to realise all of these objectives at once, choices would have to be made — as between a strong rate of
growth and shorter working hours, as between the length of daily work and yearly holidays, as between resources allocated to the economically underprivileged, to collective services and to backward regions. The balance between the logic of the market and the 'vouloir collectif' on the kind of civilisation desired was a difficult one to achieve, but without the active participation of the unions it was altogether unworkable. (39)

Citoyens 60's general line of argument was that wages regulation in some form was bound to become a major political issue and that the unions would be better employed to develop a strategy of participation in society rather than to continue in their present line of conduct; at a theoretical level their attitude was almost systematically negative, while, in practice, they were frequently forced to back down before governments and employers. (40) At the same time, the Club stressed that the unions would appear to be dupes unless compensated for their participation. The government first, must treat them as equal partners, guarantee them access to economic information and generally commit itself to 'open' dealings with them: 'L'essential est, en définitive, de passer de consultations plus ou moins confidentielles, à des discussions 'au grand jour' à partir desquelles serait annoncée une pédagogie de la démocratie'. (41) As ever the cohesive element in Citoyens 60's contractual policy was open discussion and education. As for employers, they must recognise the unions and grant them full rights within industrial firms. Finally, unions must retain their right to strike and to combine participation with resistance against the regime generally as against employers otherwise they would simply find themselves confronted with break-away opposition groups. (42) Here again Citoyens 60 found itself trying to
balance contradictions; in this case as between participation and opposition.

Social and economic democracy, generally, involved striking a balance between order and liberty. Order was secured by means of a non-authoritarian State machine and a social consensus, liberty through participation at every level of society and not just within the political parties. 'Real' democracy as opposed to 'mere' political democracy had to be: 'à la portée de la main.' (43) Specifically, this entailed public participation at every stage of urban planning and administration, and at a professional and regional level. Partly, participation was justified on rational grounds. Democracy was no longer functioning as it should in modern industrial society which had become too complicated and too far removed from the ordinary citizen; large-scale popular involvement, in these circumstances, was a means of righting the balance. (44) But at the same time, participation was also intimately linked to the Club's ideal of self-realisation:

La participation à la décision est un facteur nécessaire à l'accomplissement de la personne, besoin essentiel de l'homme. Il doit donc être satisfait bien qu'il ne découle pas d'exigences économiques et bien que la vie industrielle ne postule pas qu'un pouvoir de décision soit donné au plus grand nombre. (45)

It must be said, however, that Citoyens 60's proposals in this domain were less precise or far-reaching than on social affairs. There were two main reasons for this. In the first place, many of the administrators and unionists who contributed to the Cahiers were professionally involved
in shaping social and planning policy. The other reason had to do with the Club's general political approach which tended to be the cautious and pragmatic one of taking a few steps and then waiting to see what would happen. Unlike the Club Jean Moulin, it had only a limited respect for the powers of reason and because of this would never have embarked on so ambitious a project as Les Citoyens au Pouvoir. Although it strongly favoured decentralisation, Citoyens 60's approach was to begin the process on a very modest scale and then let it find its own level; only time and experience would reveal what types of decision should be taken by whom and where. (46) On the theme of professional decentralisation - by which it meant exclusively workers participation or control - the Club was again cautious, generally taking the line that industrial power should be conquered gradually by specific, limited agreements. (47) On urbanisation it was more abandoned. A whole issue of the Cahiers devoted to the subject developed the theme that voting at municipal elections was largely insufficient, that democratic control could only be created by general public awareness of and knowledge about urban problems, pollution, housing etc.; by grass-roots participation at street and ward level; and, finally, by the use of the media and even modern audio-visual methods. (48)

No detailed criticism of the Club Citoyens 60's work will be undertaken in this chapter since the issues it tackled are both topical and highly controversial; and, besides, the Club never made any claims for its researches but, on the contrary, always stressed that it had no answers, only an approach and some basic working principles.

However, it is perhaps worth drawing attention to one notable feature
of the Club's system of values; that it was fundamentally and profoundly hostile to both capitalism and modern mass consumer society. When one remembers that the middle-class members of the Vie Nouvelle and the Club Citoyens 60 were the parents of the generation of students of the late 1960's, the slogans of May 1968 are not so hard to understand.
The Forces Vives.

La France est dans une période de transition. Mais de transition vers quoi? (1)

The common usage of the term forces vives, meaning broadly grass-roots democratic groups, in French political circles began during the early 1960's, concurrently with the appearance of the political club movement. (2) More specifically, it covered activists whose political training had been provided by a non-party group - quite often by a union, or else by some social cultural or educational association - and whose involvement in community affairs often continued to be outside the political parties. Admittedly, this definition is general to the point of being meaningless. But then even the academic journal, the Revue Française de Science Politique, which took the subject of the forces vives seriously enough to start a regular commentary on it from 1963 did not attempt to go into detail. The notion, as the Revue was forced to admit, was exceedingly shadowy. (3)

The analysis of the Club Jean Moulin, (which took great interest in the forces vives) was scarcely more enlightening. Its own attempts at definition generally tailed off into such helpless generalities as:

Il est inutile de tenter de donner une définition claire. Ils existent au dedans et au dehors des partis, plus souvent en dehors qu'au dedans. (4)

Significantly enough, the words that cropped up constantly in the Club's preoccupation with the problem were 'obscurely' and 'confusedly': Obscurément ils nous créditent d'une capacité de synthèse... (5) Georges Suffert was often heard to observe wisely: "Confusément, ça bouge." (6)
The forces vives were politically elusive, but they could be tracked down to their sociological lairs. According to the Club, they were 'dispersed' in youth movements, trade unions, regional and professional organisations, educational associations and 'various centres' - including, of course, in clubs. (7) They were relatively numerous, very interested in modern problems, but more accustomed on the whole to dealing with local and economic matters than national issues such as foreign policy for example. Politically, they were fairly incoherent, having neither a common leader, slogan, programme nor ideology. At the same time, one was bound to be struck:

...par la convergence des préoccupations, la similitude des réactions. Une sensibilité commune s'est développée qui peut porter des fruits à relativement court terme. (8)

This common sensibility consisted broadly of an interest in practical problems and technique, a general concern for modernisation in all its aspects and a strong distaste for the revolutionary language and ideological bickering of the traditional parties of the Left. This new generation - for another important characteristic was their youth - were deeply committed to and inseparable from the new industrial structures that France had recently given itself. Their political effect would begin to become apparent in around ten years time. (9)

If this kind of analysis had been current only in the clubs themselves, one might be inclined to treat the forces vives as one more example of the intellectual Left's habit of wishful thinking. In fact, even such seasoned politicians of the SFIO as Georges Brutelle and Gaston Defferre believed in their existence. Brutelle, who at this time was leading a movement to reform the Socialist Party from within, even counted on the forces vives, in particular on the union wing of the movement, to bring his own efforts to a successful conclusion. Again, he seems not to have
identified them concretely, but rather to have sensed them. In his view, 
they were Catholics in the main and of the generation of the Liberation.(10) 
As for Gaston Defferre, it was partly the assurance of the Club Jean 
Moulin and of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber that the *forces vives* could 
be brought in to support his campaign that led him to accept to stand 
as presidential candidate. (11)

The one vital element missing in Jean Moulin's long characterisation 
of the *forces vives* was that the majority of them were Catholics. 
Catholic Action groups both fed the movement with members and were to a 
large extent the source of its style and vocabulary. (12) Although 
everyone involved was perfectly well aware of the fact, it was rarely 
explicitly stated, at least not openly in the press or even in academic 
reviews. But in private letter to Mendes-France, Hernu wrote:

La plupart des animateurs de ces *forces vives* 
appartiennent à l'origine à des mouvements d'action 
catholique....leur politico-phobie est démesurée.. (13)

The reason for this rather strange silence was that no one wished to 
resuscitate old religious quarrels. Also left-wing Catholics, who were 
still regarded with some suspicion by the parties of the traditional Left, 
were anxious not to draw attention to themselves.

The aim of this chapter is not to explore the full significance of 
the term *forces vives* or to measure the idea against reality. It is 
first to outline how the *forces vives* became involved in the political 
action that eventually broke the impetus of the first wave of clubs, 
notable Jean Moulin itself and also Citoyens 60. (14) Second, it is to 
draw some tentative conclusions - on the basis both of the three particular 
clubs that have been examined in detail and the general movement of the
forces vives — on how political parties are perceived in France.

During the first years of the Fifth Republic, a number of political clubs, apart from those already mentioned, came into existence. But until the end of the Algerian war was in sight they remained separate and isolated from each other, centred sometimes on a region, occasionally on a profession, immersed in their own work and preoccupied by the war. Then as French internal problems could again be given priority, they began to contact each other. In 1962 Jean Moulin arranged to meet the Clubs Tocqueville in Lyon and Democratique Nouvelle in Marseilles just as the latter was itself taking steps to meet other clubs. They agreed to collaborate and Jean Moulin took the initiative to send out a questionnaire on the subject of how democracy functioned in France. (15)

Few answers were received and even these were slow in coming, so that it was not until the beginning of the following year that another effort was made to launch inter-club co-operation. By this time the aims of the movement had changed, at least for Georges Suffert, Jean Moulin's ebullient and enterprising Secretary-General. Following a dinner in February 1963 with Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, he now saw the clubs as the take-off base that would launch the presidential candidacy of Gaston Defferre. Servan-Schreiber, who had conceived of the idea of backing Defferre, the mayor of Marseilles and a personal friend, in the first place, sought out Suffert mainly for two reasons. One was Suffert's position in the Club Jean Moulin, which by this time had acquired considerable fame. The other was his contacts in Catholic circles. Suffert was
friendly with a number of people whom Servan-Schreiber himself would like to have known, people like Jose Bidegain, for instance, a leader of the young Catholic employers organisation. Like Brutelle, Schreiber had come to the conclusion that there were a whole host of young and dynamic activists, most of whom were Catholics, not being used on the Left. As for Suffert himself, he had no use for Christian Democracy - while working on Témoignage Chrétien he had consistently attacked the MRP. His ambition was instead to inject 'old' Social Democracy with new blood by means of Catholic groups. The deal between the two men was thus not hard to clinch and the next day Suffert joined Servan-Schreiber's review, l'Express. (16)

Suffert did not reveal this meeting or its consequences to the Club in general, but only to a small inner circle of friends within the executive committee: Crosier, Chevrillon, Nora... On any level, this was an unforgivable breach of confidence and quite indisputably the central element in the decline of the Club. But at the time Suffert felt that his action was justified on two counts. There was the fact that the civil servants - or at least some of them - enjoyed the feeling of being directly involved in a great political enterprise, while not actually wishing to know its exact nature in case they might be led to disapprove. Also Defferre's candidature accorded with the intellectual analysis that the Club had made of the possibilities of a presidential election in France during its annual meeting at Royaumont at the end of 1962. This analysis appeared in an article written by Suffert in a December issue of the Observateur as a postscript to the crushing electoral defeat of the Left in November. It was also one of the reasons that led Servan-Schreiber to contact Suffert.

The left-wing parties, wrote Suffert, had probably deserved their
defeat for having been so naive as to think they could shake off de Gaulle easily now that the war was over. Besides, their narrow dogmatism, artificial alliances and divisions could scarcely be expected to earn them the confidence of the public. At the same time, there were grounds for measured optimism. Continued economic expansion had increased the floating vote to around the level of four to five million. Also the elections had shown that the voting discipline of the Communists and Socialists was good. But of central importance was the fact that the presidential elections that would take place in France for the first time at some point in the near future could be used as a lever by the non-Communist Left to raise itself to compete on equal terms with the Gaullists. If the non-Communist Left succeeded in capturing more than 25% of the vote in the first round - a perfectly realisable figure - then the Communist vote would probably follow on the second round. One problem was to find the right candidate - young, attractive on television and appealing to Catholic voters - to complete this tour de force.

The other problem lay with the parties themselves. If each party presented its own candidate, then the very large potential for change inherent in the presidential election would be wasted. On the other hand if the parties met together and tried to come to some agreement on a single candidate the possibility of failure would be very great. While the bargaining and haggling that would inevitably accompany any such agreement would remind people only too vividly of the methods of the Fourth Republic. As for the possibility of the parties uniting and forming one single group, that could be excluded a priori. All things considered, it was dangerous to leave the parties to their own devices.

Some of the arguments of this analysis were extremely debatable - notably the assumption that the Communists would support a left-wing
candidate who would not even deign to bargain with them on the second round. Suffert and his friends, however, suffered no qualms and went ahead with their plans to out-manoeuvre and by-pass the political parties. Their chosen instrument was the Front d'Organisations Civiques (FOC) as Suffert rather grandly christened the proposed amalgam of clubs. The climate of change - 'dynamique de changement' to use Crozier's own expression - created by the presidential election, it was calculated, would draw the forces vives into the political arena and the role of the FOC was to mass them behind Defferre. The premise which underlay this plan, namely that the Club Jean Moulin could succeed where the political parties would be bound to fail, was altogether characteristic of the thinking of the period and was based on an implicit manichean distinction between the purity of the forces vives and the clubs on the one hand and the degeneracy of the political parties on the other.

The FOC got off to a very inauspicious start. For there were not, as Cayrol has maintained, one hundred answers to the questionnaire sent out by Jean Moulin, but only fifteen. (17) Most of these did not even come from clubs but instead from such shadowy groups as Le Mouvement français pour l'Abondance or isolated individuals like a certain Henri Muller from Grenoble. Also the Clubs Tocqueville and Democratie Nouvelle baulked the very first time that Defferre's name was slipped into a conversation. Tocqueville which, like Citoyens 60 was strongly Catholic, specialised in political courses, notably on municipal administration. In principle, the Club favoured the idea of presidential elections but had no wish to become directly involved in the campaign of any one candidate. Democratie Nouvelle was even less politically inclined than Tocqueville and, besides, included a contingent of Gaullist sympathisers. Their reaction should have been a warning to Suffert, for the other clubs
were cut of much the same cloth. Positions was openly Personalist. The Association de Jeunes Cadres was made up mainly of former Members of the JEC. (18) and around half of the troops of A.D.E.L.S. came from Catholic Action groups. (19) Technique et Democratie was more Saint-Simonist in character and as such believed that political problems could be solved rationally by study and research. Apres-Demain was similar to the Jacobin Club. The members of these clubs were politically extremely heterogeneous: either they were not quite ready to take on a firm political commitment, or else they were not Socialists or if they were Socialists they might be members of the PSU or simply not care to support Defferre. At any event, the leaders made no attempt to hide their unwillingness to let the clubs be thrown into the political fray. Members could make up their own minds on an individual basis whether or not to support Defferre, as they observed quite reasonably, but the clubs themselves should stand aside. Suffert, who was an incorrigible optimist, still hoped that he could bluff and muddle his way through. Undaunted by the opposition on all sides, he conceived of the plan to create an 'assises' of democracy (Assises de la Democratie), which would terminate with the triumphal announcement of the clubs'support for the presidential candidacy of Gaston Defferre. (20)

The preparatory meetings of the Assises, due the following year, took place in the spring of 1963. Almost immediately tension grew up between Suffert and the Jacobin Club. Suffert was determined to have the Jacobins excluded from the Assises and succeeded in doing so. It must be said that his manner, intellectually condescending and autocratic, was representative of Jean Moulin at its worst. For one thing he asked the club to produce its'studies'- when it was common knowledge that the
Jacobin Club was not particularly strong on studies (at this insolent request Hernu flew into a rage and threatened to produce all the works the Freemasons had ever undertaken! (21) ) Suffert also branded Hernu as being too much of a 'political' personality whose presence would upset and contaminate the proceedings - there was much virulent anti-party talk during these preparatory meetings so it was easy to play on this theme. (22) In fact, the real reason for the exclusion of the Jacobin Club was its connection with François Mitterrand.

It has already been explained how Hernu, after his exit from the PSU party, came to join forces with Mitterrand and his League pour le Combat Républicain. At this point, in 1962, Hernu had been won over to the idea of presidential elections. Mitterrand himself remained sceptical for some time, then gradually began to change his mind. (23) And in the spring of 1963, at about the same time as the Defferre campaign was being planned, the Centre d'Action Institutionelle was created by the friends of Mitterrand and Hernu as a tentative first step towards launching the latter as presidential candidate. It is not, therefore, surprising that Suffert should have wanted to keep Hernu at a distance.

Hernu, however, was furious at the rebuff. And on the premise that anything Catholics could do Jacobins could do better, he now set about founding clubs with a vengeance. To the Master of the Grand Orient of France he wrote in April 1963:

En fonction des Assises de la Démocratie... le Comité Directeur du Club des Jacobins, contrairement à ce qu'il a fait jusqu'à maintenant, a l'intention de donner feu vert à ses amis en province .... Ces clubs pourront être soit des filiales du Club des Jacobins, soit des cercles Jean Jaurès, Léon Blum etc....... Notre Comité Directeur est persuadé que le Grand Orient de France, dans la mesure où il pourrait extérioriser, sous une forme à laquelle nous avons refléchi - et sans bien sûr que notre club apparaîsse

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The majority of the clubs in what came to be known as the Convention des Institutions Républicaines; the organisation which emerged from the meeting the Jacobins and Mitterrand's Ligue, arranged to rival the Assises in 1964, were no more than an elaborate form of bluff. (25) But within the bluff there was also a hard core of reality. This consisted of around 30-40 provincial groups, amounting to one thousand people in all, most of whom were former Mendesists and/or Freemasons. (26) Such, together with the large contingent of school-teachers that appeared later after Mitterrand challenged de Gaulle at the presidential election of 1965, was the sociological basis of the Convention. (27)

But in 1963 Mitterrand's initial bid to set himself up as presidential candidate failed. A projected series of dinners - to have culminated in a huge banquet in Paris with Mitterrand 'emerging' as candidate - had to be called off after the first one at St Honore des Bains. For in September the Express began the Monsieur X campaign, a series of articles on a mysterious, supposedly unknown candidate who, to no one's surprise, turned out by December to be Gaston Defferre. Quite apart from its own commitment to Mitterrand, the Jacobin Club had misgivings on both the personality and the politics of Defferre. As mayor of Marseilles he was known to be a remarkable administrator. But as a man he was considered by the Jacobins to be rather authoritarian as well as lacking in flexibility and warmth. Also the Club feared - with reason as it turned out - that Defferre was likely to be harsh and unbending in his attitude towards the Communists. But as it was vital for the left to present a single candidate, the Jacobins formally gave him their support in February 1964. (28) Hernu wrote to Mendès:
L'avantage que je vois à la candidature Defferre c'est qu'elle peut permettre d'éclipser Guy Mollet, de modifier les structures du parti socialiste, de permettre la création d'un grand parti, style travailliste, de simplifier la vie politique française.

However, Mitterrand and Hernu did not dismantle their own campaign organisation. On the contrary, they went on creating more clubs. (30)

In case the Defferre candidacy should flounder it was as well to be in a position to fill the gap.

In fact, Defferre withdrew in June 1965, at which point Mitterrand replaced him. (31) But his forces vives support, in as much as it had ever existed, had disintegrated long before. In February 1964, the CFDT voted against supporting Defferre's candidacy. For all the frenzied efforts of Suffert and his friends in Jean Moulin, the juiciest plum of the forces vives proved impossible to pluck. This should have been apparent - and was in fact pointed out to them by Gonin, the unofficial CFDT representative, from the start. (32) Moreover, the attempt made in the previous year to attach left-wing and centre-left Catholics to Defferre's campaign by means of a political programme had failed. (33) The Manifesto that appeared in Le Monde in December was no more than a high-sounding statement of principle with no real content; it was signed by just a handful of clubs and by the CFDT only indirectly through the CROP. The extreme reticence displayed at this point both by the clubs and the union was ominous, but Suffert insisted on being optimistic. In December, when he informed all the Club members of Jean Moulin's role in launching Defferre's candidacy, he was still promising that CFDT support could be obtained. (35) But, of course, it was not obtained. Nor did the Assises in April 1964 back Defferre.

Still, the damage had been done in the sense that Suffert and his friends had forced the members of the clubs to take a position on whether
the clubs themselves should become directly involved in partisan political activity. The anger and resentment and divisions this created - for the political opinions of the members of the clubs were very varied - eventually breaking the impetus of the club movement. Jean Moulin itself joined the Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste (FGDS) in 1966 and limped on until 1970, but in reality it had been destroyed as soon as 1964-5 by the rows as to whether or not it should openly commit itself to one candidate. Citoyens 60 had only two unofficial representatives at the party headquarters of the FGDS, but it too was fatally affected by the arguments for and against active club support of any one party and disappeared in 1968. As for the Jacobin Club, it became a constituent part of the FGDS through the Convention des Institutions Républicaines - without, however, renouncing its own separate identity and still exists in 1973.

If the forces vives - and of course the clubs which were a part of them - carried one clear message, it was that politics and political parties were scarcely if at all more respectable in some circles, notably Catholic ones, than they had ever been. It is true that clubmen, on the whole, spoke of politics in a much more moderate manner than had the non-conformists of the 1930's; but they were also capable of dropping a sudden remark which showed that attitudes had not fundamentally changed. '..... l'on a parlé d'exorcer le démon de la politique' observed Cluzel, leader of the Club Positions, in his speech on the objectives of the Assises. (36) Moreover a long study made by Esprit in 1962 of the political attitudes of the forces vives is immensely revealing in this
respect. (37) In it examples abound of the out-of-hand rejection and total condemnation of political parties:

Dans leur forme actuelle et leur façon de travailler, nous n'attendons rien ni des partis ni de la politique

Je refuse à priori tout lien avec les hommes et les partis politiques ... leur influence ne peut être que vicieuse.

J'attends pas grand-chose de la politique des partis; ... je pense qu'ils sont trop engagés dans des voies qui n'ont bien souvent rien à voir avec le rôle qu'ils ont à jouer, le rôle de service envers leurs électeurs, envers la nation entière. Je crois et ne suis pas le seul, qu'ils sont bien plus soucieux de leur carrière que de nous...

Je ne crois plus pour ma part... à un parti de type classique fait par et pour les gens qui aiment discuter et 'faire de la politique', qui se plaisent dans les jeux politiques de tendances... (38)

Criticism of politics and political parties was not always so direct and open. At times it would be indirectly expressed, as when people were recommended on the grounds of never having belonged to a political party.(39) At other times, assumptions were made that left no doubt whatever as to how politics was viewed in certain circles:

Or, cette campagne risque de dégénérer, si on laisse le jeu politique se développer naturellement, en une mêlée confuse et dérisoire, ou s'affrontent deux traditions aussi anachroniques l'une que l'autre...(40)

The term 'game' cropped up constantly, implying of course that the whole business of politics is simply not to be taken seriously:

Les jeunes refusent le jeu des partis politiques et préfèrent dire leur mot directement, sans intermédiaire... Cette démocratie directe sera un modèle pour les institutions politiques. (41)

However, this apoliticism was not a sign that the forces vives were
indifferent to the affairs of the community. On the contrary, those in particular who had been through a Catholic Action group were imbued with a keen sense of social responsibility. In fact, 'responsibility' was the key term in their political vocabulary. (42) Apoliticism was not absolute but relative, to use Fougeyrollas' distinction. The **forces vives**, like opinion under the Fourth Republic in Fougeyrollas' analysis, were disaffected not towards the community itself but rather towards the political means normally destined to permit it to control and influence national political life - that is to say towards the bureaucratic mass political parties. (42)

The **forces vives** evidently hankered after some form of political expression other than the existing parties: 'Notre motivation essentielle est une motivation politique, ce qui n'oblige pas à faire le travail des partis politiques.' (43) There was nothing new or original in this. Mounier had already been dreaming of creating 'autre chose' in the 1930's. **Ordre Nouveau**, equally, had been insistent that it was not a party, but an 'order'. Then at the end of the war, the MRP came back to the same idea and promised to found something quite other than a political party: a fraternal order, a movement... (44) Again, at the Colloques Socialistes of 1964, where the structures of a future socialist party were discussed, Suffert was giving vent to a widespread sentiment among the **forces vives** when he demanded:

Est - ce le parti, la solution de demain, ou quelque chose qui n'eurrait que de lointains rapports avec ce que l'on baptise de ce nom aujourd'hui? (45)

The kind of 'party' that the clubs and **forces vives** had in mind, it seems justifiable to conclude, was closely linked to their belief that democracy should be economic and social and not just narrowly parliamentary. Cluzel stated as much at the Assises:
Par rapport à la vie politique, nos clubs ont pour conviction commune que le caractère exclusivement parlementaire et politique de la démocratie libérale de type occidental ne répond plus aux exigences de la société moderne. Nous pensons que les Français doivent participer à la détermination de leur destin...

(46)

Moreover, it is also evident from Esprit's analysis that a high proportion of the forces vives had a vision of: 'une démocratie économique où chaque homme puisse prendre ses responsabilités et s'épanouir.' (47) They clearly believed that they would be able by this means - by means of spontaneous, direct democracy - to purify and restore a political system that the parties had degraded.

Schematically, the model of political action that accorded with this anarchist spirit was a 'party' or group which was 'open' to other groups, where all could participate freely and reflexion was regarded more highly than elections, and which, finally, was not narrowly 'political' but might be inserted in any social or economic sphere. Here again the use of the term société de pensée has obscured the fact that a club was not merely a think-tank but a specifically non-hierarchical and non-authoritarian form of organisation which took no account of traditional distinctions between politics and society. Clubs were the opposite of and, in a sense, the answer to what Alain disdainfully termed the 'Parti-Tyran'. Positions and Objectif 72 (Robert Buron's club) implicitly recognised the falsity of the identification of club and société de pensée in objecting that the latter terms did not apply to them. (43) Buron's club wrote:

OBJECTIF 72 ne se veut ni parti - aujourd'hui en tout cas - ni club encore moins ... nous ne sommes pas seulement des chercheurs et des philosophes; nous nous voulons hommes d'action et c'est pourquoi nous nous sommes décidés à employer les méthodes du monde de l'action. (49)
No doubt a detailed analysis of the documents and declarations of the forces vives would provide an interesting and informative picture of how politics and parties are perceived by a considerable section of French people. Such a study is beyond the scope of this short summary, but it is possible, nonetheless, to draw attention to a few basic themes.

A constant preoccupation of the forces vives was to create an open party - that is to say a party made up of a variety of different kinds of groups which would maintain lines of communication with other groups not necessarily specifically political. (50) This ideal was clearly set out in Jean Moulin's Un Parti pour la Gauche. And even the plans to turn the SFIO into a 'new socialist party' made by the Convention incorporated it. The new party was to be constructed: 'à base de multiples structures d'accueil, structures spécialisées; clubs, cercles d'études, groupes d'entreprise...' (51)

Another aspiration that cropped up persistently was for freedom of expression. One document of the Union des Clubs pour le Renouveau de la Gauche (UCRG) even went so far as to demand total liberty of expression. (52) Clubs themselves were commonly termed as 'carrefours où puissent dialoguer librement les militants' (53) and clubmen and forces vives were always suspecting the parties of wishing to rob them of their autonomy, even to enslave them mentally:

Comparaison de notre manière de faire et celle des partis: c'est le jour et la nuit. On essaie de rendre le public lucide, les partis essaient de le rendre docile; on essaie de le rendre mordant, agressif, critique; les partis fidèle à la ligne... (54)

Les partis politiques forment-ils leur public? La lecture des journaux politiques invite à penser qu'ils le conditionnent, qu'ils le déforment ... Une véritable formation consiste, sur le plan de la connaissance, à faciliter l'autonomie du jugement. (55)
The project conceived by the U.C.R.G. for new structures for the Socialist Party is interesting because entirely representative of forces vives mentality. It was, of course, to have numerous 'structures d'acceuil'; local and regional groups were to have 'maximum' liberty; the renewal of the leadership was to be ensured by limiting periods of office holding; a considerable number of talks and conferences were to be held and research groups organised; all of the members of the party were to be associated 'as directly as possible' in the definition of policy decisions and the choice of candidates. (56) Another U.C.R.G. project, this time for a federation of clubs, allowed, like the Club des Clubs of 1843, that each individual club should be left what amounted to virtually total autonomy. (57) One is irresistibly reminded, by the clubs' projects for party structures, of Mounier's observation that it was quite permissible and even positively beneficial to join a political party - just so long as membership was consistent with the constant exercise of independent judgement. No doubt Catholics would have been much surprised - and even indignant - if it had been pointed out to them, but the political model they had in mind was actually very close to the Radical Party.

Another point that deserves to be mentioned was the clubs' assumption that politics is about ideas and should, therefore, be a disinterested occupation; and also the corollary of this which was a disdain for electoral procedures. Lavau has observed that the role of ideas and doctrine among the small groups and parties of the Left was to act as an antidote against empiricism and opportunism. In this light 'electoralisme' was a cardinal sin for it led to the adulteration of doctrine. (58) This was, in fact, a major bone of contention
between the Jacobin Club and the Nouvelle Gauche in the 1950's, for the latter groups were forever accusing the Jacobins of the crime of 'électoralisme'.

The preoccupation with ideas also explains why clubs should have considered disinterestedness as a political virtue and their concern to remain small. The Jacobins frequently drew attention to their own disinterestedness for, in their view, interests marred the purity of principles. This was no doubt the idea behind the expression 'porter témoignage' which was so often used by the clubs:

Il s'agissait pour Positions de porter témoignage pour une certaine formule de recherche et d'action... En durant, Positions a prouvé que les objectifs de ses membres étaient purs de toute arrière pensée. (59)

Equally, the concern with ideas, quite different from the concern for personal liberty, was a factor which argued for small groups. As the Association Jeunes Cadres observed:

Nous n'avons pas pour objectif premier d'accrocher le plus de monde possible autout de l'A.J.C. Nous avons beaucoup plus essayé de trouver des thèmes de réflexions autour desquels s'agrégerent un certain nombre de gens qui partagent la même expérience, les mêmes exigences. (60)

There were a number of other reasons why most clubs made little serious effort to recruit large numbers of members, but this obsession with ideas and the inability or unwillingness to compromise them was certainly a central one.

Leaving aside momentarily such contingent elements as the Algerian war, one might argue that the clubs were essentially the outcome of the contradiction between the drive towards social integration of the new technical, salaried classes of post-war France and an enduring social and
personal ethic of non-integration. 'Et puis, jamais il ne faut se réconcilier profondément avec le monde' as Citoyens 60 put it. (61)

It is certainly striking that most of the clubs specifically stated that one of their major aims was to provide a meeting-place for people from different kinds of background who, otherwise, would have little opportunity of meeting each other. (62) The Socialists among the clubmembers, from the Jacobins to the members of Citoyens 60, also claimed that what they hoped for politically was a large, united 'Labour Party'. In practice, however, the anarchist bent of their libertarian ideology militated against such a solution. What really interested the forces vives was community politics. And had the club and forces vives' clientele not been convinced that they were duty-bound to define social and economic democracy prior to building it, no doubt most of them would have begun to work in this area. As for the political parties they were conveniently disposed of by sweeping moral condemnations and the flat statement that 'in their present state' it was quite impossible to join them. Fortunately for the forces vives who, one feels, could not have put up with a large united 'Labour Party' for one minute, the parties were not, in fact, particularly attractive and the unity of the Left not an immediate prospect.

Lastly, however, one must conclude that the clubs and forces vives were themselves partly responsible for the 'degradation' of the parties - such as it was. And that the lack of change within the French political system, a fact they were constantly bemoaning, was largely due to attitudes such as their own. But their fault lay not so much in the creation of reflexion groups and their wish to keep clear of active
political involvement. In itself this was perfectly understandable. What was less justified, in view of their violent criticism of the political parties, was the refusal to join them on an individual basis. On the other hand, there are, in fact, two excuses that might be put forward by the *forces vives*. One is that fact that during this particular period, in the early and middle 1960's, Catholics were really very unwelcome in the orthodox parties of the Left. The other is a belief in the power of ideas in politics - a belief that was not confined to the libertarian Left, for the Right very successfully formed its own clubs on this basis. (63) In view of the fact that they considered that political parties might be transformed totally by the external pressure of ideas, the tendency of the *forces vives* to attack the parties whilst refusing to try to change them from the inside looks rather less politically irresponsible than it otherwise would.

Since the Second World War there have been two occasions in France when a major political party has been open to change at the same time as a considerable number of political activists have been available to take them in hand. The first time was in the mid-1950's when Mendes tried to capture the Radical Party. The second time was in 1962-4 when Georges Brutelle, supported by an important section of the party, tried to eliminate Guy Mollet and renovate the S.F.I.O. In the case of the Radical Party, as was explained in an earlier chapter, very little serious effort was actually made to organise and control the party machine. The man in charge of party organisation was a busy minister who rarely put in an appearance at the Place de Valois headquarters. And on the second occasion, although the great majority of the local sections of the S.F.I.O. were more or less inactive or moribund, Brutelle was able to secure very
little practical support from the *forces vives*. (64) Moreover, what happened within the Horizon 90 groups, as Deferre's campaign committees were called, was altogether typical. The *forces vives* were unwilling to join the committees because of the presence of SFIO members, while the latter were eventually allotted more than their fair share of power because the un-aligned kept away. It was a vicious circle. (65) The same kind of vicious circle, one feels, has been in operation since the Liberation and accounts for the divorce, remarked on by Pierre Avril, between the impotent vitality of the clubs and the triumphant inertia of the parties. (66) One might also add that the distinction that the *forces vives* persistently made between their own modernism and the obsolescence of the traditional political parties, between their own youth and dynamism and the age and decay of the latter, was in fact an up-dated version of the traditional manichean contrast between the essential purity of the people and the worthlessness of their institutions. As Adam has observed on the over-deliberate modernism of the *forces vives*:

Les linguistes ne manqueront pas un jour de relever le manicheisme des *forces vives*, opposant le 'nouveau' et le 'moderne' à 'désuet' et à 'l'anachronique', le 'jeune' et le 'dynamisme' à 'dépassé', 'périme' ou 'vieilli'... (67)

It seems justifiable to observe, finally, that the political system of values of a considerable sector of French people is fundamentally at odds with the parliamentary and party system of democracy. However, in an age when the effectiveness of this system as a means of controlling power is being increasingly questioned, it may well be that French libertarian values will at last come into their own.
Abstract.

1. The works which had appeared on political clubs by 1967 were:
   Cayrol (Roland), *Les Tentatives de Coopération entre les Clubs Politiques en France*, 1965. (This book is accurate but leaves much out.)
   Faucher (Jean-André), *Les Clubs Politiques en France*, 1965. (The information in this book should be treated with some caution.)
   Lipiansky (Eduard) et Rettenbach (Bernard), *Ordre et Démocratie*, 1967. (Only the second half of the book is on clubs. Rettenbach's contribution is on Jean Moulin and mainly a summary of *L'Etat et le Citoyen*.)
   Oliver (Vincent), *Les Clubs Politiques en France*, 1967. (This thesis relies heavily on reproducing the club's documents without, however, acknowledging the fact.)

Introduction.

Chapter I.

1. The Oratoire was the most renowned Jesuit seminary in France. As Tellier’s accusation indicates, Jansenist influence was strong even there. Justin Godart, Le Jansénisme a Lyon, p3.


4. André Siegfried, Tableau des Partis en France, p 42.

5. Thibaudet, p 19.


7. Neither ever accepted that representative democracy was a sufficient guarantee of personal liberty and sought to complete it; Alain negatively by resistance towards power and the control of deputies, Proudhon positively by regional and professional decentralisation.

8. 'Si le radicalsime est le parti du Francais moyen, si, comme le disait Barrès, la France est probablement radicale, c'est que, dans un pays catholique, le jacobinisme trouve précisément autant de points d'attache que le bolchévisme en a trouvés en pays tsariste'. Thibaudet, p 169.

9. Quinet, quoted in Soltau, op. cit., p XXVIII.

10. Ibid., p XXIII.


12. René Taveneaux, Jansénisme et Politique, (selected and commented texts), p II.


15. 'Les plus grands des maux sont les guerres civiles'. Pascal quoted in M.J. Denis, Vues Politiques et Sociales de Pascal, p 16.

16. A sense of nationhood only began to take root in France in the seventeenth century, see Robert Laffont, Sur la France, p 171. It would be interesting what influence this had on religious dissent which, in previous centuries, had always sided with local particularism. Early Jansenists, such as Berulle in Mars Gallicus (1635), supported the unity of Catholic Europe against Richelieu’s policy of alliance with Protestant powers. How far was this type of reaction determined by fear that national unity was, in fact, threatened by their own doctrines—an over-compensation, so to speak? On Berulle see Taveneaux, pp 13-14.

17. Louis Cognet, Le Jansénisme, p 123.
18. On the geographical location of libertarian religions - especially between the Alps and the Pyrenees - see Siegfried in Latreille and Siegfried, p 208.


20. 'Port-Royal (mi-clerical, mi laique) et Pascal ont introduit dans le catholicisme français ce qui en est demeuré non seulement la marque propre, mais le levain actif: la parole donnée aux laïques, sur les mêmes matières qu’aux clercs, et avec la même efficacité un laïcisme para-clérical qui se fera parfois anticlérical.' Thibaudet, p 88.


22. For an account of the particular characteristics of French Protestantism see Siegfried in Latreille and Siegfried, pp 211-15. Both Protestantism and Jansenism had a particularly communitarian concept of Christianity. On this aspect of Pascal see Gilbery, Marxiste peut-il comprendre Pascal?, p 24.

23. Sainte-Beuve, Vol 1, p 657. But on questions of religious ceremonial Jansenists seem to have differed widely. Quesnel, a leading seventeenth century Jansenist, was opposed to reciting the Liturgy in Latin. Some Jansenists used the French Bible; others said the prayers in mass aloud together. There was a tendency also - although limited - to do away with the cross and candles on the altar. See Antoine Adam, Du Mysticisme à la Révolte, pp 334-5.


25. Taveneaux, p 17.


28. The Provinciales were sent to all towns in the kingdom and were so popular that they had to be printed in ever greater numbers. Although 10,000 copies of the 17th number were printed even more were needed. Sainte-Beuve, Vol 2, p 84.

29. Renan quoted Ibid. (Vol I) p 43. The public were coming in pilgrimage to Port-Royal as late as 12 years after its destruction, Leon Seche, Les Derniers Jansenistes, Vol I, p 36.

30. For an account of Arnauld and Nicole's political ideas which were opposed to Pascal's radicalism see Lucien Goldmann, Le Dieu Caché, p 164; pp 170-171. Also Taveneaux.


33. Quoted Ibid., 89.

34. Goldmann, Weltflucht und Politik, p 39. This book contains a clear and concise summary of Pascal's philosophy and has been used as the basis of this chapter.
35. 'L'homme n'est qu'un roseau le plus faible de la nature, mais c'est un roseau pensant. Il ne faut pas que l'univers entier s'arme pour l'écraser; une vapeur, une goutte d'eau suffit pour le tuer; mais, quand l'univers l'écrase, l'homme serait encore plus noble que ce qui le tue, parce qu'il sait qu'il meurt; et l'avantage que l'univers a sur lui, l'univers n'en sait rien.' Quoted in the original old French in Sainte-Beuve, Vol I, pp 858-9.


37. This is a highly controversial phrase. Some argue – and others dispute – that Pascal used the word bet because he was discussing faith with a gambler. His religious belief in general will be discussed later in the chapter. On faith as a bet see Ibid., p 54.

38. Goldmann distinguishes between two attitudes current among Jansenist extremists: 1) A total rejection and turning away from the world and towards God; 2) A conscious and positive opposition to the world - 'refus intramondain' – and wager on the existence of God. According to Goldmann, only Pascal and Racine's Phédre fall into the latter category. See Goldmann, Le Dieu Caché, pp 62-3.


40. Goldmann, Le Dieu Caché, p 90.

41. Ibid., p 203. For an account of Pascal's concept of nature see Etienne Borne, Passion de la Vérité, pp 35 ff.

42. The pessimism with respect to the material world behind this formula, Tavenaues ascribes to Pascal's reading of Hobbes and Frene writers and also to tragic contemporary events such as the 30 Years War, p 24. But while Pascal's strict opposition of the machiavellism of society to the purity of Christianity (which is exalted precisely on this account) may have been influenced by historical circumstances, it should be borne in mind that there existed a precedent to this type of reasoning in the Albigensian heresy. The Albigensians will be discussed in more detail at a later point but the principal characteristics of their faith consisted of an absolute distinction Good and Bad, God and World, spirit and matter.


44. Albert Beguin, Pascal par lui-même, pp 29-30.


46. Pascal quoted in Goldmann, Le Dieu Caché, p 191.

47. Pascal quoted in Beguin, p 137.

48. Ibid., p 54.

49. Ibid., p 42.
51. Pascal claimed that 'cette belle raison corrompue a tout corrompu', quoted in Taveneaux, pp 22-23. However, it should be noted that well before Pascal's time Jansenist priests believed justice to be unobtainable and politics a vain occupation, p 18.

52. Ibid., p 23.

53. Quoted Ibid.

54. 'Sans doute l'égalité des biens est juste; mais ne pouvant faire qu'il soit juste d'obéir à la justice, on a fait qu'il soit juste d'obéir à la force'. The laws of succession, as Pascal saw them, were founded on the sole will of the legislators. On the principle of property he wrote: '...ce chien est à moi, disaient les enfants; c'est là ma place au soleil. Voilà le commencement et l'image de l'aspiration de toute la terre.' Denis, pp 23-30.

55. Quoted Ibid., p 17.

56. Part of Pascal's text on the two orders of grandeur appears in Taveneaux, pp 62-4.


58. Goldmann, Le Dieu Caché, p 90.

59. An essential aspect of Jansenism was the resistance to the notion of human self-sufficiency. On grace and the denial of free will see Sainte-Beuve, Vol I, pp 97-98. Also Godart, p 10.

60. For an account of the Albigensian heresy see Fernand Niel, Albigeois et Cathares.


64. Evidence of these jacqueries - which had been carefully concealed by official historians of the period - was uncovered by a Marxist historian in Russian archives in the thirties. The French translation of his original post-war work appeared in 1963. See Boris Porchev, Les Soulèvements Populaires en France de 1623 à 1548.

65. Ibid., pp 320-1.

66. Ibid., p 324.

67. Most of them apparently retracted in that they signed the condemnation of Augustinus that the Church demanded - this is the accepted view. See A. Feron, Contribution à l'Histoire du Jansénisme en Normandie. However, this conclusion seems rather rash in view of the spirit of internal revolt in which Pascal himself signed the formula. Pascal, moreover, was in contact with mystics at Rouen during this period, Taveneaux p 61.
68. For a brief account of Jansenist parliamentary theorists, see Taveneaux, pp 42-4. Some of whom ended up, like Le Gros, in advocating the inalienable power of the people, whilst others merely supported parliament against the absolute and arbitrary power of the Monarchy.

69. Ibid., p 38.

70. This theory is developed in all three of Goldmann's works used in this chapter.

71. Taveneaux, p 20.


73. Ibid. Unfortunately neither Mury nor Taveneaux explain on what evidence they base their claims regarding the influence of Jansenism.

74. Adam, p 7.

75. Ibid., p 331. Even three-quarters of the Parisian police were Jansenist according to Adam, p 7.

76. On the Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques, see Seché, Vol I, p 70 ff.

77. Adam, p 331.

78. Ever since the beginning of the seventeenth century Jansenism was accused of Richerist influence. Richer's idea was that priests and bishops were different only in function and not in nature - a conception which was potentially democratic. And in the eighteenth century when the top ecclesiastical positions were being increasingly reserved for the noble families, while parish priests on fixed incomes in a period of rising prices were suffering real poverty, such a doctrine may well have contributed to radicalising the lower clergy. See Taveneaux, pp 39-40.


80. Ibid.

81. Emile Boutroux, Pascal, p 197.

82. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Confessions, p 230. For other references as to the influence of Jansenism on him see pp 221, 226, 231.


84. A description of Deville's ideas and his conflict with the Jesuit, based on original documents at the Bibliotheque Nationale, is given by Ernest Seilliers, Du Quietisme au Socialisme Romantique.

85. Daniel Halévy, La Vie de Proudhon, pp 402-3.

86. Proudhon wrote later in his life that he had become a metaphysician at the age of fourteen after reading Fénélon. Ibid., p 28. On Proudhon's
late interest in politics and his work as a printer, see Henri de
Lubac, Proudhon et le Christianisme, pp 114-9.

87. Quoted in Pierre Haubtmann, P-J Proudhon Genèse d'un Antithéiste, p 222.

88. 'Je suis dans un palais enchanté où tout s'exécute avec une précision
marveilleuse... mais je vois personne, je ne sais si cette magnificence
cache une menace, si je suis un objet d'amour ou de haine? est-ce
un ange, est-ce un monstre qui prend soin de moi? Que lui ai-je fait?
Que me veut-il?... Ah, qu'il parle, ou qu'il me rende la liberté...
plus je rencontre de merveilles, plus les tortures de mon âme augmentent.'
Quoted Ibid., p 219.

89. Ibid., p 225.

90. 'Je vois de mes semblables qui chantent leur bourreau; moi je le hais!
Je veux te voir, dis je, ou je t'insulterai jusqu'à ce que tu me tues.'
Quoted Ibid., p 220.

91. Indicative of Proudhon's religious mentality is the comment: 'Un Dieu
qui gouverne et qui n'explique pas, est un Dieu que je nie, que je
hais par dessus toute chose...'
Proudhon, Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire, p 20.

92. Haubtmann, p 223.

93. Jean Lacroix, La Crise intellectuelle du Catholicisme français, p 15.

94. Protestantism, as Proudhon saw it, was a source of social atomism.
Catholicism in its principle, he maintained, was identical to socialism;
the two differed only in form. See Georges Guy-Grand, Pour connaître
la Pensée de Proudhon, pp 100-2.

95. Haubtmann, p 39.

96. Ibid., pp 226-7.

97. The Boutteville papers are to be found in the appendix of Haubtmann's
book, Ibid., pp 236-243. Haubtmann's own interest in them is due to
Proudhon's final concession, after a life-time of claiming that justice
may only be based on human-willed morality, that transcendental morality
might also be the basis of justice.

98. Quoted in Lubac, p 269.


100. Quoted in Lubac, p 271.


102. Guy-Grand, p 76.

103. 'Nous ne marchons pas à une perfection idéale, à un état définitif...
Nous sommes emportés avec l'univers dans une métamorphose incessante,
qui s'accomplit d'autant plus surement et glorieusement que nous y
developpons nous-mêmes plus d'intelligence et de moralité. Le Progrès
reste donc la loi de notre âme...' Quoted. Ibid., pp 111-2.
104. Proudhon made three statements: 1) God exists. 2) Humanity is not an end in itself but has a supernatural destiny. 3) Dialectical methodology and experience prove that God is 'anti-civilisateur' - hence the need to combat him. Haubtmann, pp 213-4. Haubtmann's own explanation of Proudhon's God - hatred is that it was a reaction against the socially conservative Church of the nineteenth century, pp 18 and p 225.

105. Quoted in Guy-Grand, p 51.

106. Of other socialists Proudhon wrote: 'Ils ne rêvaient que d'une révolution politique et mystique alors qu'il eut fallu préparer les esprits à la seule révolution véritable: la révolution économique, scientifique et morale.' Quoted Ibid., p 53.

107. 'Tout ce qui est matière de législation et de politique est objet de science, non d'opinion'. Quoted Ibid., p 10.

108. Quoted Ibid., p 162.

109. On Proudhon's view of democracy as a form of middle-class government, materialistic in outlook, see Soltau, p 276. For his opinion on universal suffrage, see P-J Proudhon, Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire, pp 210-11.

110. Proudhon, Ibid., p 34.


112. Proudhon, Ibid., p 212.


114. On the state's role in Proudhon's initial anarchistic system see Proudhon, Ibid., p 227.


116. Proudhon, like Pascal, was keenly aware of the limits of reason: 'L'homme a beau étendre le cercle de ses idées, sa lumière n'est toujours qu'une étincelle promenée dans la nuit immense qui l'enveloppe... Il faut à notre âme quelque chose de plus que le nombre et la mesure, quelque chose au-delà même de l'idée.' Quoted in Guy-Grand, p 168. On Proudhon's attempt to define a faculty of understanding beyond reason or intelligence - somewhat similar to Pascal's notion of 'cœur' - see Soltau, p 288. He rejected the idealist notion of first principles: 'la science de la Justice et des mœurs de peut sortir d'une déduction dialectique de notions; il faut la dégager de la phénoménalité que ces notions engendrent, comme toute loi physique se dégage de la série des phénomènes qui l'expriment'. Quoted in Guy-Grand, p 44.

117. Ibid., p 131.
118. Quoted Ibid., p 45.


120. Quoted Ibid., p 115. On series ordering contradictions Proudhon wrote: 'Otez l'antinomie, le progrès des êtres est inexplicable. Otez la série, le monde n'est plus qu'une mélée d'oppositions terribles.' Quoted p 112. The series, because based on reality, Proudhon regarded as a means of refuting Idealism. Proudhon had no patience with Idealism - which he blamed on the Church - for he saw it as diverting Man from knowledge and justice by substituting 'des images resplendissantes et pures, auxquelles il s'efforce de ramener ensuite les réalités.' Quoted in Guy-Grand, p 124.

121. Bancal, pp 112-3.

122. Ibid., p 22. He also wrote: 'DÉ systeme, je n'en ai pas; j'en repousse formellement la supposition. Le système de l'humanité ne sera reconnu qu'à la fin de l'humanité.' Quoted in Lubac, p 152.

123. Quoted in Lubac, p 157.

124. For an account of Proudhon's theory of property see Guy-Grand, pp 195 ff.

125. Doltau, p 272.

126. Quoted in Guy-Grand, p 197.

127. For Proudhon's own definition of his Federal Contract, see Proudhon Du Principe fédératif, pp 316-7.

128. Proudhon, Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire, p 57.

129. Lubac, p 172.

130. Quoted in Halevy, La Vie de Proudhon, pp 392-3.

131. 'Cherchons ensemble,... les lois de la société... mais, pour Dieu, après avoir démoli tous les dogmatismes à priori, ne cherchons point, à notre tour, à endoctriner le peuple... faisons-nous une bonne et loyale polémique, donnons au monde l'exemple d'une tolérance savante et prévoyante, mais, parce que nous sommes à la tête du mouvement, ne nous faisons pas les chefs d'une nouvelle intolérance, ne nous posons pas en apôtres d'une nouvelle religion, cette religion fut-elle la religion de la logique, la religion de la raison.' Quoted in Guy-Grand, p 38.

132. Quoted in Lubac, p 56.

133. Jacques Kayser who regularly attended the Radical congresses of the inter-war period claims that he never once heard a reference to Alain during one, Jacques Kayser, Le Radicalisme des Radicaux, in Touchard, Tendances Politiques dans la Vie Française depuis 1789, p 70.

135. Ibid., p 290.


137. Quoted, Ibid., p 282.

138. Ibid., pp 49-50.

139. 'Cette vertu des vertus, je la nomme foi... Bien distinguer ici d'avance la croyance. La croyance a pour objet un fait, une réalité, quelque chose qu'on ne peut pas changer. Et il est très remarquable qu'une croyance naïve en un Dieu absolument déterminé conduit à un fatalisme... ce qui est proprement impie, et cette impiété menace toujours la religion. Il faudra examiner en quel sens l'idée de Dieu peut s'accorder avec la foi en soi.' Alain, La Conscience Morale, p 93. Alain also wrote: 'Car si toute puissance est de Dieu, c'est l'esclavage.' p 77.

140. Quoted in Giraud, p 224. On Man's grandeur in finding moral without God see p 279.

141. Alain, La Conscience Morale, pp 75-6.

142. Ibid., p 85.

143. This is preceded by a significant allusion to religion: '... je remarque un mot du prêtre 'Souviens-toi que tu m'as juré d'être un honnête homme'. Ce mot est inutile et même imprudent; c'est vouloir engager l'homme; ce n'est pas attendre qu'il s'engage de lui-même... l'homme est ainsi fait que la moindre tentative de forcer risque de l'irriter, de le détourner, au fond de lui faire oublier sa propre puissance libre, inviolable, indomptable, qu'il s'agit justement d'éveiller.' Ibid., p 100.

144. 'Avoir conscience, c'est se penser, mais penser, c'est résister, examiner, douter, gouverner. Qu'est-ce que s'éveiller sinon refuser de croire. Et dès que la coutume me reprenâs, je dors, Dès que je suis d'accord avec moi-même, je dors... Il n'y a pas de conscience paisible.' Ibid., p 18.

145. On conscience versus passion in Alain's moral system, see Giraud, pp 217-227.

146. 'Imitation, coutume, peur, abrutissement profond, délire, fureur, redin de tout cela ne peut faire la moindre vertu. Nous voilà donc à l'intention, au régime intérieur, au drame incomunicable, mais y cherchant la forme universelle. Alain, La Conscience Morale, p 13.

147. Alain, Elements... p 285. See also pp 268-9: 'Ainsi le Radicalisme trouve des ennemis partout, et en lui-même, et non pas seulement à un moment de l'histoire, mais dans chaque individu de moment en moment; car on ne peut penser toujours... La nature est toujours la plus forte, et le catéchisme vaincra toujours assez.'


149. After a discourse on moral leadership Alain wrote: 'Et c'est bien
ce qu'auraient pu être les papes, les évêques et les curés, des arbitres de l'ordre moral, sans hallebardes, sans prison, sans bûchers. Mais le pouvoir Catholique bénit les armes, et adore le vainqueur.' Alain, *Eléments*, p 69.


151. On the distinction between Jansenists and Jesuits, Ibid., pp 88-90.

152. On Alain's definition of the monarchical and republican spirits, see Giraud, p 84.


156. Alain, *Eléments*, p 308. See on the necessity of upholding liberty and equality: 'car l'ordre humain est une victoire sur l'ordre aveugle'.

157. Ibid., p 286.


159. Alain, *Eléments*, p 312

160. On Alain's belief in the necessity for order and guile, see Giraud, pp 72-73. 'Je cède, et il le faut bien; mais je parviens souvent aussi où je voulais, comme le bateau qui tire les bordées; il cède à la nécessité; mais il avance enfin contre le vent.'


162. Ibid., p 277.

163. Quoted in Giraud, p 19.

164. Alain always placed the rich on the side of power and believed it to be the duty of deputies and the electorate to prevent them from adding political to economic power. See Alain, *Eléments*, p 198. On the duty to hold out against Clericalism and Capitalism, see p 248. Elsewhere he identifies Radicalism with the lower classes p 303.

165. Ibid., p 250.

166. Ibid., p 69.

167. Ibid.

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168. Alain, La Conscience Morale, p 80.
169. Ibid., p 82.
170. On the instinct of self-preservation of political parties, see Alain, Eléments, pp 180-1.
171. 'Ce que j'appelle un radical, c'est un homme qui aime le droit et l'égalité.' Ibid., p 179.
172. Ibid., p 201.
173. Ibid., p 287.
174. Ibid., pp 208; 196; 198. Also '.. le Parti-Tyran sera toujours tyran...' p 198.
175. 'Il y aura toujours deux politiques: celle des politiques, et celle des citoyens.' Ibid., p 207.
176. Alain, La Conscience Morale, p 100.
177. Alain, Eléments, p 289.
178. Ibid.
179. The terms mystique and politique will be retained since they are not easily translatable.
180. Adereth sees the influence of Peguy as particularly strong currently with the influence of Sartre in the early nineteen-forties. See M Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p 55.
181. Quoted in Daniel Halevy, Peguy et les Cahiers de la Quinzaine, p 210. (Referred to here as Peguy)
182. Soltan, p 417.
183. Halevy, Peguy, p 41.
184. Peguy remained profoundly marked by and glorified his provincial peasant origins. Industrial workers, in his eyes, were contaminated by the materialism of the bourgeoisie. Adereth, p 58.
185. On Peguy's attitude to intellectuals Ibid., p 59.
186. Ibid., p 68.
188. Halevy, Peguy, p 211.
189. Ibid., p 248.
190. Adereth, p 73.
191. Emmanuel Mounier, Marcel Peguy, Georges Izard, La Pensée de Charles Peguy, p 118.
192. Quoted in Peguy, Actes du Colloque International d’Orléans (here referred to simply as Actes) 7, 8, 9 September 1961, p 148.

193. Ibid., p 68. Péguy's link with Proudhon is discussed here.

194. Quoted, ibid.

195. Quoted in Halévy, Peguy, p 113.

196. Ibid., p 68. Péguy's link with Proudhon is discussed here.

197. Ibid., p 113.


199. Ibid., p 73. Péguy, moreover, accused Jaurès of materialism.

200. Adoréth, p 57.

201. On the tendency to compromise within a party Péguy wrote ironically: 'Quand je vois une doctrine, un parti devenir pernicieux, dangereux autant que possible je m’en mets. Mais généralement comme j’y suis j'y reste.. J'excelle dans le travail des commissions, dans les petits complots, dans les combinaisons, dans le jeu des ordres de jour, dans les petites manigances, dans les commissions et les compromissions et ententes, dans tout le travail souterrain, sous la main, sous le manteau.. Enfin au bout d'un certain temps de cet exercice il n’y a plus de programme, il n'y a plus de principe, il n’y a plus rien..quand je suis resté dans un parti pendant un certain temps..tous le monde comprends que je les ai trahis'. Quoted in Peguy, Actes, p 73.

202. For an account of Herr’ conversation with Péguy on this point, see Halévy, Peguy, p 84.

203. Actes, p 60.

204. Quoted Halévy, Peguy, p 99.

205. Quoted in Peguy, Actes, p 143.

206. Ibid., p 251.

207. This concept is outlined in Charles Péguy, Notre Jeunesse. The book was originally published in 1910 as a poetic commentary on the Dreyfus Affair.

208. Mounier, p 121.

209. Ibid., p 106.

210. '... l'homme qui veut demeurer fidèle à la vérité doit se faire incessament infidèle à toutes les incessantes, successives, infatigables renaissantes erreurs.' Péguy quoted Ibid., p 122.

211. 'Tout commence en mystique et finit en politique.. Tout commence par la mystique, par une mystique, par sa (propre) mystique et tout finit par de la politique'. Péguy quoted Ibid., p 115. It has been suggested that Notre Jeunesse - and its content - is more useful to
understanding Peguy's Christianity of 1910 than his socialism of 1898. See Peguy, Actes p 178. However, it is impossible to deny that there was a certain opposition between conscience and power/politics in Peguy's mind from the start; but it might, perhaps, have been less radical than in 1910.

212. Quoted in Soltau, p 418.

213. Moreover, Blum refused to believe 'that anybody could be as miserable as that'. On Peguy's attitude to the affair of the schoolmaster, Jean Coste, see Halevy, Peguy, pp 89-90.


215. Quoted in Mounier, p 120.

216. Quoted Ibid.

217. Adereth, p 68.


220. Peguy quoted Ibid., p 78.

221. For a summary of Peguy's first poetic version of Jean of Arc, see Halevy, Peguy, pp 53-67.

222. That Peguy initially believed social organisation to be the source of evil is a hypothesis also advanced in Peguy, Actes, p 67. This also appears to be the thinking behind the poem quoted: the 'République socialiste universelle' as an antidote to evil.

223. The passage from which this quotation has been taken is to be found in Halevy, Peguy, pp 94-96.

224. This conclusion seems justified in the light of the previous sentence which indicates that a sinning world, abandoned by God, is incompatible with socialism.

225. Quoted in Halevy, Peguy, p 113.

226. Quoted Ibid.

227. This explanation would account for rather an odd political phenomenon which lasted in France until the thirties: the not uncommon switch of allegiance from the anarchist Proudhonian extreme left to the patriotic extreme right. An element of romanticism and mysticism often accompanied this type of political behaviour, which will be examined in greater detail in a later chapter on Personalism.

228. The term 'fraternity' only replaced 'unity' in 1848.

229. This is not to say, of course, that the Revolt of May 1968 was exclusively anarchist. The Trotskyists, for instance, were also very much in the picture - although it must be said that the general flavour of May 1968 was anarchist.
230. This remark is based on personal observation. But it is also brought out in Epistemon's book, Les Journées de Mai.


232. Alain, Éléments, p 304.

233. Taveneaux, p 49. But he also goes on to remark: 'La Révolution devrait ainsi marquer, avec les drames qui déchirèrent l'Église, la division du mouvement janséniste, son affaiblissement et finalement son déclin; il subsistat long du XIX siècle, mais comme une attitude morale ou un fait de mentalité, sans incidence directe sur les comportements politiques.' However, he nowhere justifies this opinion by evidence.

234. Meeting with the Curé de Criqueboeuf, 4 June 1972. The Curé refused to give his name.

235. Jean-Pierre Six, La Véritable Enfance de Thérèse de Lisieux, p 139. On the puritan sermons preached in Normandy, see p 163.

236. Interview Père Chemi (dominican priest), November 19, 1971.

237. This will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 6.

238. This was discovered in discussing the question with a number of old Catholic families, notably the d'Anthonays. Also a considerable number of cases cropped up accidentally as a result of revealing the subject of this thesis to different people. A typical case is of a chance acquaintance in a train, Georges le Roux, who knew two priests in Chad who claimed to be Jansenist 'par opposition'. Also François Mitterrand has admitted in a newspaper interview on his family background that his father's family were 'Jansenist' - but in this case no opposition to the Church was implied. See Expansion, July-August 1972, p 119.

239. Such an experience was admitted by a correspondent of Le Monde, whose great-uncle was a Jansenist, a self-professing Catholic who hated the clergy and never went near a Church.

240. The only time the Pensées disappeared from school syllabuses was for a period of some years in the 1830's. This information was obtained from the French Ministry of Education.

241. Siegfried, p 65. He has a good section on the ambiguities of people's attitudes towards religion and anti-clericalism, see pp 63-66.

242. There are around a dozen monographs on the local influence of Jansenism in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Practically all, however, are bad, biased (written by Jesuits) and virtually undocumented. But the general impression they give is that Jansenism was still extremely influential in the eighteenth century and in some places, notably in the north of France, underwent a strong revival towards the end of the century. See Chanoine L. Mahieu, Jansénisme et Antijansénisme dans les diocèses d'Arras et de Cambrai. Also, on the same theme,
A Bachelier, Le jansénisme à Nantes. The best work - and the most carefully documented - is by Pierre Ordoni, La Survivance des Idées Gallicanes et Jansenistes en Auxerrois de 1760 à nos jours. It will be discussed at a later point.

243. Quoted in Ivan Tochmoff, La Parti Républicain sous la Monarchie de Juillet, p 43.

244. Ivan Tochmoff, Associations et Sociétés Secrètes sous la Deuxième République, p 5.

245. Religious dissent was strong especially in the Languedoc, the Rhone area, Normandy, the Ile de France, see Daniel Ligou, Le Protestantisme en France de 1598 à 1715. As will become clear in the next chapter clubs and secret societies flourished particularly well also in these areas.


248. Jansenism was tremendously influential in Auxerre and the region around it throughout the eighteenth century - the schools, for instance, were both free and Jansenist. And even after the Revolution, Pierre Ordoni writes, a little chapel was built to recapture the peace and calm of Port-Royal. Then new priests took over who were not Jansenist with the result that the people: '... s'échappèrent à la direction spirituelle de l'Eglise Catholique', p 12. He also observes the separation between faith and the Church: 'D'Ailleurs il y avait dans les populations, une sorte de séparation de l'Eglise et la foi', p 226. Jansenist ideas continued to be strong in the countryside and as late as the Second Empire, there was a priest still preaching Jansenist doctrine in this region, p 227. As for Normandy, it is evident from the Abbé Six's book that Jansenism was still strong here at the end of the nineteenth century, during the lifetime of Saint Theresa of Lisieux.

249. ACJF stands for the Action Catholique de la Jeunesse Française.

Chapter 2.

1. Daniel Hornet, Les Origines Intellectuellement de la Révolution Française, p 473. This section on the pre-revolutionary climate is mainly derived from Hornet.

2. Ibid., p 282.

3. Ibid., pp 282-3.


13. The information in this chapter on the origin and early development of the Jacobin Club comes from F.A. Aulard's introduction to his collection of documents, *La Société des Jacobins*.


18. An example of a club acting as a pressure group during the Revolution was the Club de l'Hôtel de Massiac, a gathering of rich settlers from St Domingue, that stood in opposition to the Société des Amis des Noirs and tried to win over the Assembly to their side. Ibid., pp 67-68. Then the Parisian clubs, in particular the Jacobin Club, took part in the elections of 1791 and were thus briefly electoral committees.


22. 'L'idée républicaine qui se trouvait à l'origine des sociétés secrètes n'apparaît presque jamais au dehors.' See Georges Weill, *Le Parti Républicain en France de 1814 à 1870*, p 15. The description of the pre-1848 clubs and secret societies in this chapter are all based on information taken from Weill and also Ivan Tchernoff, *Le Parti Républicain sous la Monarchie de Juillet*.

23. Free-Masonry was not yet Republican and it was precisely for this reason that students joined it - to escape police surveillance. Weill, p 12.

24. Tchernoff, p 51.
25. One of the former leaders of the Charbonnerie described the Jacobins of this period, polite and gentle young men, as having adopted: 'un jacobinisme d'imagination et de sentiment, un anachronisme sans conséquence et sans réalité, une sorte de poétique réminiscence de l'indomptable fermeté de nos pères, accompagnée de vagues ressentiments de la fièvre des trois jours.' Weill, p 80.

26. Ibid., p 68.

27. Tchernoff, p 37.


29. Ivan Tchernoff, Associations et Sociétés Secrètes sous la Deuxième République 1848-51, pp 3-4. (Here referred to as Associations et Sociétés)

30. Even the moderates often had a penchant for verbal violence. Raspail one of the leaders of the Amis du Peuple who was a gentle humanitarian and deeply moral man who hated the Convention was often carried away verbally.

31. Heine attended one of the public meetings of the Amis du Peuple and described it in some detail. See Henri Heine, De la France, p 58 ff. The society, in his view, was more concerned with defence than attack: 'Il s'y trouvait plus de quinze cents hommes serrés dans une salle étroite, qui avait l'air d'un théâtre. Le citoyen Blanqui, fils d'un conventionnel, fit un long discours plein de moquerie contre la bourgeoisie... Ce fut un discours plein de sauvage, de droit et de colère. Malgré la sévérité républicaine, la vieille galanterie ne s'est pas démentie, et l'on avait, avec une attention toute française, assigné aux dames (aux citoyennes) les meilleures places auprès de la tribune de l'orateur. La réunion avait l'odeur d'un vieil exemplaire relu, gras et usé du Moniteur de 1793. Elle se composait guère que de très-jeunes hommes et très-âgés... Au reste, jeunes et vieux, dans la salle des Amis du Peuple, conservaient un dignes sérieux, comme on le trouve toujours chez les hommes qui se sentent forts. Seulement leurs yeux étincelaient, et souvent ils orient: 'C'est vrai, c'est vrai quand l'orateur articulait un fait....'

32. The Amis du Peuple had circa 600 members; the Droits de l'Homme 4,000. (mainly students at first, then joined by workers)

33. At the same time the organisation always had a para-military side and at one point it offered the paper Tribune 4,000 fighting men.

34. A full description of the law and its application can be found in Octave Festy, Le Mouvement Ouvrier au Début de la Monarchie de Juillet 1830-34, pp 342-9.

35. Festy, p 350.


37. Tchernoff, p 379.

39. Four chiefs made up a month and together with a leader called July they formed a group of 29 people. A season was composed of three months and led by a chief named spring. Four seasons made up a year which, in turn, was commanded by a revolutionary agent.

40. Tchernoff, p 377.

41. Ibid., p 394 on provincial attitudes towards Paris.

42. The Seasons, Familles, Droits de l'Homme among others all had provincial affiliates. In Lyon, to take one example, there were the following popular societies: 1) Les Mutuellistes in 1830 had 25,000-30,000 members in the Rhone department. 2) Les Droits de l'Homme had 2,000 members between 1830-34. Independently of these about 4,000 mutualists also belonged to the society. 3) The Carbonari had 2,500 members in the Lyon area in 1834. 4) The Voraces which recruited among beggars, prisoners and social outcasts had about 8,000. It was founded in 1846. In addition there were also numerous industrial associations such as the Association fraternelle de l'Industrie francaise, Association des guirs, des façonnées, des velours etc. All of these were dissolved by the prefect. Thereafter industrial and political societies transformed into secret societies but without entirely losing their educational role. See Tchernoff, Associations et Sociétés, pp 30

43. See Tchernoff, Le Parti Républicain, p 399.

44. The Provisional Government, notably, did not advocate the creation of one mass party but a series of fraternal and protective institutions: '.. propres à conférer régulièrement à toutes les conditions de dignité individuellement d'instruction, de lumières, de salaires, de moralité, d'éléments de travail, d'aisance, de secours et d'avènement à la propriété qui suprimassent le nom servile de prolétaire, et qui élèveraient le travailleur à la hauteur de droit, de devoir et de bien-être...' Ibid., pp 468-9.

45. Alphonse Lucas, Les Clubs et les Clubistes, p 1. Lucas lists and gives an account of each of the main 1848 clubs. For another list see Tchernoff, Associations et Sociétés, pp 206-9.

46. Ibid., p 253.

47. Suzanne Wassermann, Les Clubs de Barèges et de Blanqui en 1848, et cic p 1.

48. 'On se figura donc à cette époque... que tous les citoyens devaient participer à la conduite des affaires publiques, diriger le pouvoir exécutif; qu'il y avait entre le gouvernement et le premier vên une égalité parfaite.' Lucas, p 24.

49. Ibid., p 2.

50. '... aucun d'eux ne veut se renfermer dans le cercle des discussions purement constitutionnelles ou politiques. Tous prêchent et prêchent avec violence les doctrines en vertu desquelles la société doit être renouvelée.' Tchernoff, p 217.

51. For an account of Blanqui's political ideas see Wassermann, pp 3-4.
52. 'Cette partie de la s\'ance a \'\^et\'\' rempli de murmures et de cris' -
this remark recurred constantly in the Club's reports.


54. Ibid., pp 33-4 on the internal organisation of Barbes' Club.

55. Ibid., p 83.

56. Ibid., p 80.

57. La Palombara and Weiner, p 6.

58. The demonstration had started out ostensibly in support of Poland
but also had social undertones; the workers had thought that the
establishment of the Republic would immediately lead to social
progress. By a curious turn of events it was the moderate Barbes
who eventually took charge of events and directed the mob who took
over the Assembly, while Blanqui spent most of the day hiding in a café.

59. On the July law see Tchernoff, Associations et Sociétés, p 10 ff.

60. Ibid., p 5.

61. Ibid., p 302. In the Midi the Republicans met in chambres, ad hoc
gathering at some secret rendez-vous.

62. For accounts of the various clubs in Prades, Ibid., pp 27-28 and 86.

63. Ibid., p 308. For Tchernoff's conclusions on club and secret society
activity between 1848-51, see p 367.

64. Ibid., pp 378-385 for the list of the secret explosives and munitions
factories discovered by the police. These usually appeared where
the secret societies were most enthusiastic, especially Montpellier,
Aix, Lyon, Dijon.

65. Ibid., pp 305-6 and 315. The network around Avignon and Orange
was in contact with a central directing committee in Paris. Their
role was to collect arms and to wait for the signal for insurrection.

66. Ibid., p 42.


68. Ibid., p 122.

69. Ivan Tchernoff, Le Parti Républicain au coup d'Etat et sous le
Second Empire, pp 569-583. (For an account of the divergences in the
Republican camp see)

70. For a description of the clubs of this period see Jean-André Faucher,


72. Daniel Halevy, La République des Ducs, pp 16-17.
74. Victor Hugo, Chooses Vues, 1830-1846, p 110.
75. LaPalombara and Weiner, p 17.

76. Universal suffrage was accorded for the first time for the elections held for the Convention of 1792. But out of 7 million electors only 700,000 voted since both the Royalists and moderates abstained. In 1795 the Directory established indirect suffrage; at the first level there were circa 5 million electors. The Empire changed back to universal suffrage - but at different levels. The electorate under the Empire was extremely restricted: 102,000 electors in 1820; 82,000 in 1828. It was very slightly increased by the Orleans Monarchy: 172,000 electors in 1832; 248,000 in 1845. See J.P. Charney, Le Suffrage Politique en France.

77. On Guizot and Thiers and the causes of the discredit of the parliamentary regime see Ivan Tchernoff, La Parti Républicain sous la Monarchie de Juillet, pp 204-221.
78. On the various sections within the Republican Party in parliament and their tactics, Ibid., pp 128-191.
80. It is notable that the Droits de l'Homme, in common with many other societies, maintained that workers were purer and more devoted than any other class. While Gabet, Louis Blanc, Blanqui and Proudhon all considered that power was by nature oppressive and hoped to replace it by moral obligation, association, liberty and equality. Nor, like Rousseau, did they believe in the beneficial effect of laws. Even Babeuf hoped in the end to abolish power, once a new generation could be differently educated. The Travailleurs Égalitaires, a secret society linked with the Saisons, looked forward to: 'un état de chose ou la vie sociale serait complètement extirpée' and where 'seule régnera l'égalité parfaite'. This kind of example could be endlessly repeated.

81. Weill, p 488.
82. Pierre Avril, Politics in France, pp 48-50 on the influence of Montesquieu's doctrine and the actual experience of French deputies throughout the nineteenth century.
83. Thibaudet, p 140.
84. Avril, p 76.
85. On the place of newspapers in the Radical Party and the habit of buying cards for congresses see Philip Williams, Politics in Post-War France, pp 94-5.
86. Thibaudet, p 147.
87. Avril, p 78.
Chapter 3.


4. Ibid., pp 504-543 for a summary of Blondel’s doctrines and impact.

5. All information on Laberthonnière and Sanson was gained from various interviews with the theologians Chenu and Bouillard, both young priests in the 1930’s, and from Robert Buron.

6. The admiration of many modernists for Pascal is noted in a letter (undated) from Etienne Borne to the writer.

7. See the introduction to Emile Poulat, *Histoire, Dogme et Critique dans la Crise Moderniste*.

8. This has been testified both by Chenu and Bouillard and Robert Buron.


10. The leader of *Action Française*, Maurras, had a particularly strong dislike for Pascal.

11. In 1911 the leaders of the Sillon movement founded the political league: *La Jeune République*. In 1919 Sagnier became a deputy, elected on a right-wing list. Later, he supported the Popular Front. See M. Einandi and Francois Goguel, *Christian Democracy in Italy and France*, pp 113-4.

12. Thibaudet, p 91.

13. When the radicals tried to revive anti-clericalism for the elections, they found that they could not fire their committees, most of whom simply voted laic and not anti-clerical motions. However, Church and State were still at loggerheads; the Assembly of Bishops and Archbishops that met just before the elections adopted a text which
amounted to a declaration of war against both the ruling Radical Party and the secular State. Touchard, *Le Mouvement des Idées Politiques*, p 69.

14. 'La condamnation de 1926 arrache des Catholiques à la contemplation souvent morose du passé. Tous n'abandonneront pas leurs opinions conservatrices mais ils savent que celles-ci ne sont pas un prolongement inéluctable de leur foi et que bon nombre d'énergies se trouvent libérées pour d'autres formes de pensée et d'action spirituelles, intellectuelles, sociales ou politiques. On ressent une extraordinaire impression de libération: l'avenir pouvait être du côté de ceux qui avaient été jusqu'à là traités en suspects.' Aline Coutrot and Francois Dreyfus, *Les Forces Religieuses dans la Société Française*, p 69.


17. André Latreille et René Remond, p 602.


20. For a list of the various Catholic specialised or professional organisations that appeared between the wars, see Latreille et Remond, p 579.


22. On the divergent views of democracy of the new Catholic extreme Left and the Christian Democratic tendency, Remond wrote: 'Source de malentendu entre générations, cette divergence est aussi un sujet de dissentiment entre la démocratie chrétien et une tendance qui se cherche encore, qui ne discerne pas clairement ce qu'elle veut, mais qui s'attache celle dont elle ne veut point: entre autres choses, la démocratie chrétienne, jugée trop molle, trop encombrée aussi de préoccupations morales.' Ibid., p 126.


24. For an account of Compte's and Taine's theories, see Lecanuet, pp 448-456.

25. Quoted in Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station*, p 38.

26. Lecanuet, pp 448-456. For an attack on the narrow rationalism of the nineteenth century and an account of the reaction of youth against it, see Raissa Maritain; also Henri Massis, *L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Sorbonne*.

27. Quoted in Latreille et Remond, p 534. On the general phenomenon of conversions see pp 532-35.

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29. Latreille et Remond, p 536.
30. Féguy quoted in Actes du Colloque International d'Orléans, p 185.
31. For an account of Bergson's philosophy see Jean Guitton, Profils Parallèles, pp 405-457.
34. On the new phenomenological and existential studies see Albert Ratil, Merleau Ponty, Existentialist of the Social World.

Chapter 4.
2. Emmanuel Mounier has described his feelings at Christmas 1929 as follows: 1) Le sentiment ... qu'un cycle de création française était bouclé, qu'il y avait des choses à penser qu'on ne pouvait écrire mille part; qu'à nous autres, pianistes de vingt-cinq ans, il manque un piano. 2) La souffrance de plus en plus vive de voir notre christianisme solidarisé avec ce que l'appellerait plus tard 'le désordre établi' et la volonté de faire la rupture. 3) La perception, sous la crise économique naissante, d'une crise de civilisation.
This is taken from a draft chapter on the 1930's from a book being prepared on Emmanuel Mounier by Jean Marie Domenach.
3. From an article in the Revue Française by Maxence, quoted in Loubet Del Bayle, pp 56-57.
5. Quoted by Pierre Andreu in Les Idées Politiques de la Jeunesse Intellectuelle de 1927 à la Guerre, p 19.
6. Pierce, p 72.
7. Loubet Del Bayle, p 82.
8. Ibid., p 100.
10. On the attempts of the extreme Left and the extreme Right to fraternise, also the talk of a return to Proudhon in the CGT see Guy-Grand, p 212. Also Loubet Del Bayle, pp 47-48.
11. For different classification see Touchard, L'Esprit des Années 1930 in Tendances Politiques dans la vie française depuis 1789, p 97.
12. All the reviews cited here are examined at some length by Loubet Del Bayle.
13. On the factors that separated the French non-conformist intellectuals from fascism see Pierre Andreu, Les Idées Politiques de la Jeunesse Intellectuelle de 1927 à la Guerre, p 27.
14. On Ordre Nouveau see Eduard Lipiansky and Bernard Rettenbach, Ordre et Démocratie.
15. Homme Nouveau appears to have been even more ambiguous than the others. It was strongly anti-capitalist, cited Proudhon, Henri de Man, Jaurès and Renan. But eventually some of the team, notably Marcel Déat, ended up as fascists.
17. Cited by Domenach in a draft chapter on Personalism.
18. 'Il y a deux réalités: l'individu et la société. Réalités non pas distantes, séparées par un no man's land qui règne entre les idées pures, mais, au contraire, à ce point teintées et contaminées l'une par l'autre que tout effort pour les disjoindre taille dans les tissus les plus vivants et les plus essentiels de la conscience humaine'. Arnaud Dandieu et Raymond Aron, La Révolution Nécessaire, quoted in Loubet Del Bayle, p 340.
19. Most of the non-conformists saw America as the source of the world wide cancer of capitalism, a materialistic society, coldly rationalistic that stifled all the spontaneous impulses of Man. Anti-Americanism was very vehement: 'L'esprit yankee n'est pas autre chose que l'exploitation en série, sur une échelle gigantesque, de la plus lamentable erreur que l'Europe ait jamais commise, de l'erreur rationaliste'. Touchard, Tendances Politiques dans la vie française depuis 1789, p 101.
20. This example is illustrative of the way that the political differences among the non-conformists often tended to be moral in essence.

26. In 1951 in France, there were only 17 cities of over 100,000 people, and 39 between 50-100,000.


29. This will be discussed at greater length in the later chapters on political clubs.


31. It is interesting that various members of both *Ordre Nouveau* and *Esprit* brought out books on Proudhon just after the War. But this subject will be treated later in the chapter.

32. Loubet Del Bayle, p 106.


34. Ibid., p 150.

35. Loubet Del Bayle, p 85.


37. Ibid.


39. These anti-political remarks are constant: pp 10; 21; 24; 89; 127.

40. Interview Madame Mounier, 7 June 1972.

41. Loubet Del Bayle, p 413.


44. Ibid., p 34.

45. Ibid., p 50.

46. Talking of the 'real' values of the Left, Mounier wrote: 'Nous travaillons à faire admettre que l'on puisse opter pour elles, par une vocation raisonnée, sans être à aucun degré solidaire des idéologies ou des politiques qui s'y mêlent'. *Court Traite de la*
47. Ibid.


50. Ibid., p 122.

51. Ibid., p 119.

52. He also says that authority is 'à la base', Ibid., p 125.

53. Ibid., p 144.

54. 'Un régime personnaliste... est un régime qui assuré à chaque personne réellement et non par délégation collective, son poste d'autonomie et de responsabilité efficace dans l'organisme collectif, et qui ne refuse à aucune, même réticente sur le régime, le minimum des droits de la personne. ... Démocratie, si l'on garde le mot, et peu m'importe, ce n'est pas nous le régime du nombre anonyme, voire la sanction de l'unanimité, mais le régime de la responsabilité vivante dans le droit vivant'. Quoted in a book being prepared on Mounier by Jean-Marie Domenach.

55. *Anarchie et Personnalisme*, in Mounier, *Communisme, Anarchie et Personnalisme*, p 126.

56. In the mid-seventeenth century, the Dauphine, with around 700,000 religious dissenters, was one of the most strongly protestant areas of France. See Daniel Ligou, *Le Protestantisme en France de 1598 à 1715*, p 126. And it may be that with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when many protestants were forcefully converted to Catholicism, the Catholicism of the region was invested with a dose of libertarian puritanism. This would certainly explain Mounier's particular brand of religious puritanism.

57. Quoted in Moix, pp 17-18.

58. This is sometimes indicated, but never actually said.

59. All the characteristics of Mounier's religion as described here were corroborated by Madame Mounier in an interview 7th June 1972. However, she would probably reject the parallel with Jansenism.


61. Loubet Del Bayle observed that at *Esprit* there was a kind of mystical confidence in the people, p 377.

Mounier's dialectical approach is commented both by Moix, p 28; and Pierce pp 77-9.

Espirit no. 150, November 1948, p 692.

Mounier, Introduction aux Existentialismes, p 62.

In his early twenties Mounier wrote: ' Toujours plus encore je m'enfonce dans Pascal', Mounier et sa Génération, p 22.

Madame Mounier tended to dismiss Mounier's interest in Pascal but emphasized instead his interest in Saint Augustin - to whom, it will be remembered, the Jansenists looked for their inspiration.

See Anarchie et Personnalisme, in Mounier, Communisme, Anarchie et Personnalisme, p 118.

This account of Mounier's attitude towards the Pope and the Church comes from Madame Mounier.

Quoted in Moix, p 23.

Anarchie et Personnalisme, in Mounier, Communisme, Anarchie et Personnalisme, p 88.

Communisme, in Ibid., p 62.

Anarchie et Personnalisme, in Mounier, Communisme, Anarchie et Personnalisme, p 88.

More under the influence of the Communist Party after the War, Mounier began to look on anarchism as romantic. See the appendix pp 190-1, Ibid.

Communisme, in Mounier, Communisme, Anarchie et Personnalisme, p 76.

The fact that Mounier saw the problem is indicated by the fact that he reproached the Christian Democrats: ' ... leur tendance à gauchir le spiritual plutôt qu'à spiritualiser la gauche ... '. On this subject see Court Traité de la mythique de Gauche, Ibid., pp 16-9.

Quoted in Moix, p 22.

Ibid.

Ibid., p 24.

Ibid., p 166.


In fact, Saint-Simon modified this theory in a more libertarian direction towards the end of his life, but the theory as it stands is the one habitually associated with his name.

84. Proudhon envisaged Europe as a confederation of federations in De la Guerre et la Paix.


86. Esprit, for example, published a special edition on the subject of 'Argent'.

87. Mounier welcomed machine technology on the condition, see Emmanuel Mounier, La Petite Peur du XX Siecle, p 394.

88. On the non-conformists' concept of planning see Loubet Del Bayle, p 394.

89. Quoted ibid., p 116.


91. Quoted ibid., pp 104-105.

92. Francois Coguel, Positions Politiques in the special number of Esprit, Emmanuel Mounier 1905-50, December 1950, pp 797-819.

93. Ibid.

94. Domenach also stresses this point, quoting such remarks of Mounier as: 'Il faudrait, dirions nous, être dans la politique sans jamais être du politique...' in his chapter on commitment in a book he is preparing on Mounier.

95. Quoted in Moix, p 22.

96. Typical of one of these ambiguous remarks of Mounier was: '.. l'action... celle qui a incidence sur la vie publique, ne saurait sans se déséquilibrer se donner une base plus étroite que le champ qui va du pôle politique au pôle prophétique'. Emmanuel Mounier, Manifeste au service du Personnalisme, pp 110-111. See also pp 113-114 on the dialectical nature of political action. And in Le Personnalisme he stated: 'Du moins au départ, l'indépendance à l'égard des partis et des groupements constitués est nécessaire à une nouvelle mesure des perspectives. Elle n'affirme pas un anarchisme ou unapolitisme de principe. Aussi bien, partout où l'adhésion individuelle à une action collective laisse à l'adhérent une liberté d'exercice suffisante, elle est préférable à l'isolement', p 118.

97. Pierre-Aime Touchard, Dernier Dialogue, in the special number of Esprit, December 1950, pp 784-5. This is an excellent account of Mounier's attitude towards politics. Touchard.

98. Quoted in Edmund Wilson, To the Finland Station, p 40.

100. Ibid., p 43 ff.

101. Ibid., p 118.

102. Mounier, *Qu'est ce que le Personnalisme*, p 14.

103. Lipiansky et Rettenbach, p 89.

104. This is Loubet Del Bayle's estimation, p 399.


106. A list of the new Catholic papers of the inter-war years is to be found in René Rémond, *Les Catholiques, le Communisme et les Crises*, pp 269-274.

107. Ibid., p 256.

108. Quoted by Aline Coutrot, *Un courant de la Pensee Catholique l'hebdomadaire 'Sent',* p 39. On the cover of the review, in large letters was the following declaration: 'Nous restons au-dessus de la melee. Ni de droite, ni de gauche, independant de la politique pour mieux servir la cite, louant le bien, denoncant le mal, nous n'avons de comptes à rendre qu'à la Verite.' Ibid.

109. See P-H Simon on the State as the balancer of other social forces, p 106, Ibid.

110. The various reviews they contributed to are listed in the short biographies of these people in Loubet Del Bayle, pp 458-471.

111. The impact of the non-conformists both on the Resistance and Vichy is described in Del Bayle's final chapter, Ibid.


113. The anarchist current was, of course, far from being the only one on the young New Left in the 1960's. A revolutionary current, often Marxist and far from anti-rationalist, was also strong.

Chapter 5


3. Ibid., p 191.

5. For an analysis of the utopian socialist leanings of the Grandes Ecoles, especially the Polytechnique, in the nineteenth century see Rene Remond, Originalité au Socialisme Français, p 50 in Jean Touchard (ed), Tendances Politiques dans la Vie Française depuis 1789.


7. Ibid., p 63.

8. After the metaphysical revival of the 1890's: 'Une sorte d'évangélisme vague flotte dans l'air qu'on respire autour des grandes écoles', Lacamet, pp 457-50. Later, in 1927, a call to Easter communion circulated among the Grandes Ecoles collected 9,574 signatures - an indication that the evangelical movement had not yet subsided. Latreille et Rémond, p 576.

9. Interview with Jean Ullmo, a teacher at the Polytechnique and former member of X-Crise, 9 May 1971.

10. On the lack of associations and intermediary groups see Stanley Hoffmann, In Search of France, p 11.

11. Avril, p 213.

12. Thibaudet quoted in Siegfried, p 160.


15. Andrew Shonfield, Le Capitalisme d'aujourd'hui, p 84.


17. Ibid., p 24.

18. For an account of how many of the ideas of the 1930's reformers were used under Vichy see Ehrmann's chapter on Organised Buiness under Vichy, pp 58-100.


21. De Jouvenal joined the Radical Party because he believed it represented the Jacobin tradition of State authority: 'J'ai eu lieu de croire qu'il y avait un "complot jacobin" pour renforcer l'autorité étatique, une fois celle-ci entre les mains d'un homme; c'était Édouard Daladier.' Daniel Halevy, La République des Comités, pp 172-3.

24. A professional break-down of the members is to be found in Banchard, p 20.
25. Interview Jean Ullmo.
27. According to Pierre Masse not all the members of X-Crise were unreservedly expansionist. Interview Pierre Masse, 9 September, 1971.
29. The impact of these personalities will be discussed at a later point.
31. Avril, p 223.

Chapter 6.
2. Williams, Crisis and Compromise, p 11.
5. Ibid.
7. Williams, Crisis and Compromise, p 35.
8. Ibid., p 20.
10. Williams, Crisis and Compromise, p 27.
11. Ibid., p 399.
12. See Avril, chapter 1.
13. The early scandals of the Third Republic - the Panama Affair, for instance - were not really so very grave. Yet public opinion was shocked and outraged, to an excessive degree perhaps, precisely because they expected total public morality now that the Republic was established.
15. Ibid., p 61.
16. Le Jacobin, 1.
17. Ibid.

19. All information on Hernu himself and on the Club contained in this chapter was collected in a considerable number of interviews and discussions over a long period.

20. Francis de Tarr, The French Radical Party from Herriot to Mendes France p 64. However, some Young Turks, notably Cot, were thinking on these lines even before the war, p 67.


22. Williams, Crisis and Compromise, p 105.

23. Hernu, p 84.


25. Letter of Charles Hernu to person unnamed, 17 June 1963: 'Tout nouveau membre du comité directeur doit connaître notre action passée, y avoir été associé, être indépendant vis à vis des mots d'ordre d'un parti, être maçon, pouvoir nous rendre service, avoir un titre extérieur représentatif, avoir développé au plus haut degré l'esprit d'équipe.'


27. This subject will be treated in some more detail later on.


29. All these people, of course, held their positions at various different periods of the Club's life and not just when it started out.

Chapter 7.


2. Le Jacobin, 14.

3. This period of the Club's existence will be treated in the next chapter.


5. Le Jacobin, 42.


7. Hernu, p 34.


10. Le Jacobin, 3.
11. The most representative articles on social and economic affairs are to be found in Le Jacobin, 8, 12, 31.

12. Le Jacobin, 1.


14. Esprit

15. Ibid., pp 779-780.

16. 'Il y a un hiatus en France entre la Révolution des faits et la stagnation des idées. La France se doit de retrouver son idéal révolutionnaire... Les faits à la suite des bouleversements techniques ont été profondément modifiés mais les structures, politiques, économiques... de la France n'ont pas su s'adapter.' Le Jacobin, 8.

17. '... il ne suffit pas de changer les institutions si les mêmes hommes continuent à commettre les mêmes erreurs.' Hernu in Combat, 23 May 1958.


19. This book was written by Jacques Fauvet. Jacobin: The Ideas and Life of the Club... 2.

20. Esprit, December 1957, p 634.


23. Ibid., 8.

24. Ibid., 1.

25. Ibid., 33.

26. Ibid., 41.

27. Ibid., 22.

28. Ibid., 16.

29. Ibid., 8.

30. Ibid., 7.

31. Ibid., 25.

32. See quote footnoted 37. Also the disinterestedness of the young people who will undertake the regeneration of the country is always stressed, Ibid., 14.

33. Quoted in Esprit, December 1957, p 661.

34. Le Jacobin, 14.

35. Ibid., 25.
36. Ibid., 8.

37. Ibid., 33. For another example of the use of the word: several former Resistance members were now in the Club, according to the paper: '... en qui ils retrouvent le même élan', Ibid., 17.

38. Quoted in Faucher, p 46.

39. The Club was always insisting, for instance, on the intellectual aspect of a political party: '... notre Club maintient son double objectif: le regroupement des démocrates et la création d'un grand parti, moderne, qui utiliserait tous les moyens d'information possible; en plus de l'habitude expression militante.' Hermu in Combat, 23 December 1964. (italics mine). On independence see quote footnoted 41. Jacobins: The Ideas and Life of the Club... 3.

40. Undated mimeographed document of the Club. The survey was carried out for the Club in 1965 by Combat.


42. On the Club's regional policy see mimeographed document of the Club; it appeared in October 1971. A congress on 'autogestion' was held in the Vaucluse a year later but although the idea was warmly supported - it had been already in the 1950's - it was held to be a long-term project.

43. Hermu, p 273.

44. All the information on the Club contained in the following pages was gleaned from numerous interviews with its members, in particular Charles Hermu; P-A Falcoz; Jacques Nisen; Gaston Maurice; Roger Charmy.

45. Le Jacobin actually ceased publication at the end of the Fourth Republic and but for this brief exception never reappeared again. However, Combat allowed the Jacobins to use a page of the paper throughout most of 1964.

46. Letter Falcoz to Bonnet, 21 October 1955.

Chapter 8.

1. Quoted De Tarr, p 186.


3. Nicolet, p 42.

4. Mendès was more hostile to the Communists. Also in early 1955 he was totally against Tunisian independence: 'Nous n'en voulons, ni pour aujourd'hui, ni pour plus tard.' The Jacobins were more realistic in this respect and quite prepared to envisage the prospect of an independent Tunisia.

5. Le Jacobin 33.

6. Ibid., 6. See no. 16 for an article arguing that Mendès success was likely to unleash a counter-offensive but was not complete enough to operate a psychological shock that would rally the growing opposition.


9. This is the overall consensus of various Jacobins interviewed on the subject.


12. The number of new members the Radical Party acquired at this time varies greatly according to each separate source, but Nicolet's 40,000 is about average, see p 114.

13. The word attached is used here because although Anxionnaz often came to the Club no one remembers whether he was actually a paid up member.

14. The themes treated at the Ecole were often impressively resonant e.g.: Rôle de la France dans une perspective historique. But not all of its conferences were so general. It would have long, detailed sessions on agriculture, for instance, or electoral tactics. Undated mimeographed document.

15. Nicolet, p 117.

16. Letter Mendès France to Hernu January 1956. (exact day of the month illegible.)

17. This was the excuse given by Kollet, but what exactly happened just after the elections and why has not yet been clarified.

18. De Tarr, p 199.

19. The 'élus protestataires' were: Hernu; Panier; Hovnanian; Naudet; Masson; Lipowski; Dumas; Leclerc; Rolland; Clostermann; de Basellecourt; Nord-Giafferi; Raguès. The last five were not Jacobins. This list was provided by Charles Hernu.


22. On the Club des Montagnard, see Faucher, pp 55-59.

23. Letter Mendès France to Hernu, 1st of April 1957.


26. This feeling of dishonest dealing was mentioned by very many Radicals and Jacobins interviewed but they do not wish to put their names to the accusation.

30. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p 538.
33. Reconstruction was the organ of the minority in the CFTC, favouring deconfessionalisation and more left-wing in tendency, that eventually took over the union.
34. For a list of the groups of the New Left see *Témoignage Chrétien*, 14 January 1955, p 3.
35. The PSA was principally made up of dissidents from the SFIO while the UGS included both Marxists and humanists a large percentage of whom were from Catholic groups like the Jeune République and the Mouvement de Libération du Peuple.
36. What was meant at this time by new social classes will be discussed in greater detail in the final chapter.
38. On 23rd March 1959 Hernu wrote to Mendès France: 'Certaines réunions radicales, qui ont lieu à Paris et en province sont tellement décevantes que bien des militants vont nous lâcher... il faut grouper des amis, pour lesquels il n'est plus possible d'être Place de Valois mais ne conçoivent pas de rester isolés.'
39. Bulletin 2 of the CAD spells this out quite clearly: members of the CAD must on no account enter the PSA on their own for this would only weaken their hand in the long run.
40. Interview Roger Charny, 18 September 1969.
42. Letter September 1959 (exact date not marked.)
44. Letter 3 October 1959.
47. Interview P-A Falcoz 18 March 1969.
49. '... je n'avais pas l'intention de devenir dans le sein du PSU le chef de tendance bataillant contre une autre tendance'. Letter Mendès France to Hernu 1 June 1961.
50. Interview Hernu 14 October 1969.

51. Ibid.

52. The creation of clubs by the Jacobins will be treated in the final chapter.

Chapter 9.


2. Quoted in Michel et Mirkine-Getsevich, p V.

3. Ibid., p 74.


7. Ibid., p 422.


9. The information here on Cordier was obtained in an interview with him on the 13th October, 1971.

10. Cordier is quite firm that Jean Moulin was never actually a member of any party. However, an article by a former friend of Moulin's in *Le Petit Bleu des Côtes-du-Nord*, no 931, 9 January 1965, contradicts this: "Il était radical-socialiste de stricte obédience. Un pur laïc, au sens donné à ce terme aux temps héroïques de la III République." Whatever the truth of the matter, it is symbolic of the attitude of the Club that Cordier should so vehemently deny that Moulin was ever a member of a political party, for parties were definitely looked down on.


14. The source on Jean Moulin used here is Laure Moulin, *Jean Moulin*.


21. An unsigned letter dated 3, 10, 59 to the Ministry of Education. Youth and Sport refers back to a note sent on the 21 of September of a list of people with ideas in line with those of the Club. Suffert would approach quite unabashedly — perhaps because he had information/
on their sympathies - top members of the administration to join Jean Moulin. On the 19th of February 1959 he wrote inviting Laloi, European Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join in the following terms: 'Le club est né pourrait-on dire dans un couloir du Quai d'Orsay.'


24. Interview with Bloc-Laine 19 April, 1970. Suffert also used Bloc-Laine as a bait to attract other influential people such as Beuve-Mery, editor of the Monde, to whom he wrote a letter 6.1.61 mentioning that Bloc-Laine was to be present at a meeting to which he was inviting Beuve-Mery.

25. This aspect will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter.


29. Avril, p 163.


31. Quoted in Elgy, p 421.

32. Interview Jean Ripert, 19 October 1970.


34. INED is the Institut National d'Etude Démographique. On Sauvy see Avril, p 225.

35. Interview Sylvian Lourie, 13 August 1970.

36. There was a division in the Club on this issue. Loyal republicans like Hessel tended to regard de Gaulle as a usurper and the Gaullist regime as an historical parenthesis. Others, such as Ripert for instance, regarded Gaullism as marking a new phase of French national development and accepted it with greater ease.


39. Ibid., p 474.

40. Interview Olivier Chevrillon, November 16 1969.

41. Interview Jean Ripert, 19 October 1970.
42. Crozier, modestly, has denied the importance of his own role in the Club, Interview 9 March 1970. But it has been confirmed by many of his friends, notably Olivier Chevrillon and Georges Lavau.

43. Interview Olivier Chevrillon, 16 November 1969.


45. Ibid., p. 19.


48. Gilbert Dru took a leading part in drawing up early plans for the MRP before being shot by the occupying German forces during the War. Much influenced by Hounier and his brand of Personalism he envisaged a party uniting Catholic and non-Catholic republicans rather than the purely Catholic force that the MRP eventually became. See Jacques Daquesne, Les Catholiques sous l'Occupation, p. 375.

49. Interview Stephan Hessel, 28 November 1969.

50. Interview Stephan Hessel, 26 October 1970.

51. Sehil and Espirit had, for instance, held a clandestine meeting during the Resistance, together with Reuve Nery, future editor of the paper, Le Monde.

52. Neuschwander, Mignot and Fraderie were all members of the J.E.C.


54. Both are professors of Law.

55. Interview Michel Rocard, 18 February 1971.

56. Interview Stephane Hessel, 27 November 1970.

Chapter 10.

1. Internal Letter (mimeographed), September-October 1964.

2. Jean Moulin's commentaries on the Algerian War generally ended with a pep-talk on democracy in this style: 'Ceux qui voient dans la démocratie la chance des nations modernes doivent s'interroger aux événements comme des spectateurs à une pièce de théâtre, se contentant d'applaudir ou de siffler suivant que la vedette est plus ou moins 'bonne'. Ce n'est pas parce que le pouvoir tient à l'écart les démocrates que ceux-ci doivent s'isoler. Il importe au contraire qu'ils se groupent dans les organisations... Au moment où s'ouvrent les pourparlers d'Evian, les Français en distinguant mal l'enjeu et les difficultés. Étudier, expliquer les conditions et les conséquences de la paix, voici une tâche urgente pour les démocrates.' The Club's Bulletin, no 22, May 1961.
3. Interview Olivier Chevrillon, 4 March 1963.

4. The second Bulletin of the Club (December 1958) argued that the maintenance of a stable democratic regime in France was dependent both on the health of the economy and the rapid resolution of the Algerian conflict which, besides holding the threat of civil war, was also a dangerous drain on French economic resources.

5. Nos Equivoques, mimeographed note to the directing committee from Yves Ullmo, November 1962.


7. Ibid.

8. This is the estimation of Yves Ullmo, Interview 9 December 1970.

9. Rocard was an administrator and future leader of the PSA; Jacob a journalist at Le Monde; Vulpian a sociologist. The information on the Centre in this chapter comes from an interview with Vulpian, 18 October 1969.


11. 'Qu'on le veuille ou non, les Français d'aujourd'hui ne croient plus que la grandeur de leur pays dépende de l'Algérie française. De plus en plus, ils misent sur le progrès technique, la croissance économique, la diffusion de la culture.' Bulletin du Centre d'études et d'Information pour l'Afrique du Nord et la Communauté, no. 16, May 1961.

12. Interview Fauchon, 8 September 1969. The Club Rencontres itself was created by a member of the Cour des Comptes, Jean Miallet, and other friends who had been deported to Germany with him during the War in the course of a dinner some time prior to May 1958. Initially, the group simply planned to remain in contact with each other. Then as it was overtaken by events, its aim became to break down such major ghettos as the army and the administration by organising meetings where officers and civil servants could come into contact with other social categories.

13. In the Internal Letter of 1962, the functions of the Centre were ascribed to the Blué Bis. Few of the Club's members were ever informed of the Centre's existence.


15. Interview Alain Bacquet, 4 September 1969.

16. The book was published by Seuil. The second part contained an analysis of future economic co-operation between France and Algeria.


18. Interview Olivier Chevrillon, 4 March 1969.

19. Georges Suffert refuted this accusation before the Club's General Assembly in December 1963. The account is to be found in a mimeographed document dated 12.1.63.
20. The change of attitude towards de Gaulle is evident when the Bulletin number 4 of March 1959 is compared with the later one of September 1959 (number 7) which was written after the General's speech envisaging independence.


22. Jean Moulin strongly criticised the Government for the brutality of the police during a demonstration in the Monde, 10th February 1962.


24. Interview Oliver Chevrillon, November 15th 1969.


Chapter 11.

1. Letter 24th December 1963 from Philippe Viannay to the Executive Committee of Jean Moulin.

2. Mimeographed memorandum from Yves Ullmo to the Executive Committee.


4. Letter 27th February 1959 from Georges Suffert to Mme Citron.

5. This happened to Royer (see Internal Letter, February 1963) when he joined the Bureau of the UDR-UNR.

6. Typical of Jean Moulin was this kind of sentence, a call for a campaign of confidence in the country: 'Une campagne qui dénoncerait les derniers freins, les erreurs à ne pas commettre: nationalism défensif, jeux politiques périmés, faiblesse de l'Etat devant les intérêts particuliers, anticommunisme hystérique.' Internal Letter July 1962.


8. Interview Stephane Hessel.


12. Letter Roland Cayrol to Alain de Vulpian, 18th March 1963.

13. This is suggested by Williams and Harrison, p 244.
14. This has been testified by numerous members of the Club, but as with other criticism made in this chapter, people do not wish to see their names specifically mentioned.

15. The circulation of the Bulletin was around 2,000. It was sent out as propaganda and dealt either with current news or general themes such as the Presidential regime. The Internal letter was, in reality, looked after by the Secretary-General and dealt with the internal matters of the Club, meetings, fees, policy etc.

16. Letter 24th December 1963 from Philippe Vianney to the Executive Committee.

17. The Internal Letter of February-March 1965 admits that fees only cover half the Club's expenses. However two million francs had been earned by the Revue Structures et Conjunture Economique. This economic review, published by the Club, was mainly a means of earning money. For members of the Club who were leading figures either in the administration or in industry would subscribe large sums of money to it and persuade others to do so. But the Club was supported to a large extent by donations from unspecified sources. Hessel, for example, often contributed to it from his own pocket in the first few years when he was still in France.


24. Out of 251 members voting on the Referendum, 138 did not want the Club to take any firm stand but just to enunciate its principles, 68 wanted it to vote NON, 19 were for OUI and 23 for total silence. (3 blank votes were returned.) Mimeographed document October 1962.


27. Interview Georges Lavau 2nd January 1969.

28. This much is admitted in the Internal Letter of September-October 1964: '... nous sommes un peu court d'idées; nous avons un peu peur de ce que nous publions, du fait de notre notoriété; nous voulons trop bien faire.'


30. This criticism, again, was voiced anonymously.

Chapter 12.

1. L'Etat et le Citoyen, p 20. (referred to henceforth as L'Etat)


5. Ibid., p 5.


7. Sept Projets pour une Société Renovée p 1, (internal document typed).

8. 'Nos projets se fondent sur une vision à la fois réaiste et utopique de la société à laquelle nous voulons parvenir dans 15-20 ans; réaliste car il ne s'agit pas de rêver, mais de raisonner en fonction des données contraignantes de notre société française actuelle; utopique, car nous ne voulons pas extrapolier à partir de tendances déjà reconnues, mais penser sur l'évolution au maximum de nos possibilités. Ibid., p 4.


12. Ibid., p 19.

13. On this subject see Alain Berger (pseudonym for Jean Ripert) in Esprit December 1957, pp 639-641.


15. This strategy is spelled out in the Internal Letter, September-October 1964: 'Si le renouvellement de la démocratie française passe
d'abord par un renouvellement des idées et des structures de la gauche, si le point central de la gauche continue d'être le SFIQ, s'il est impossible de la rassurer et peu sérieux d'imaginer de substituer une autre force à sa place, alors nous avons fait ce que nous pouvions dans la seule ligne réaliste. Nous avons bombardé avec des idées du dehors et du dedans. Désormais nous existons."

17. Interview Yves Ullmo, 14 April 1970.
18. However, Yves Ullmo notes it in Note to the Executive Committee, 8 November 1962 (mimeographed): "certains d'entre nous sont nationalistes, non pas certes au sens péjoratif du terme... ils pensent que la France en tant que telle peut conserver au niveau de l'éthique une certaine mission de 'Témoignage' universaliste.
20. This appears in L'Etat, pp 187-199.
25. Ibid., p 786.
27. Sept Projets pour entrer en Démocratie, p 69.
29. For an account of attitudes towards the idea of a presidential regime during the Resistance and after the War, see Hughes Tay, Le Régime Présidentiel et la France.
30. Interview with Georges Vedel, 2 May 1970.
32. Interview Georges Vedel, 2 May 1970.
33. Maurice Duverger, La VI République et le Régime Présidentiel, p 18 ff.
34. Un Président pourquoi faire?, p 150.
35. The Club's bulletins were sometimes slightly at variance with each other. Pour un vrai régime présidentiel which appeared in June/July
is strongly and exclusively presidentialist. L'Heure du Parlement which came out in October is clearly a concession to the parliamentarians in the Club in that it places much greater emphasis on the importance of parliament - although without going back on its original support for a modified presidential regime.

36. Pour Nationaliser L'Etat, p 9. This was collectively written by a group of 19 civil servants the great majority of whom were at one time members of the Club Jean Moulin and a few belonged to the Club Citoyens 60.


38. Ibid., p 286.


40. The planners on this commission were, Ullmo; Hirsch; Roulier; Germain; Rousselot. (The latter was in charge of the regional and urban section of the Plan.)

41. Interview Jean Ripert, 5 March 1970.

42. See Philip Williams and Martin Harrison, p 261.

43. This book was brought out in 1969 before de Gaulle's referendum on the regions. The main difference with the previous Les Citoyens au Pouvoir was that it proposed 8-10 and not 12 regions.

44. Les Citoyens au Pouvoir, p 137.

45. Ibid., p 135.

46. L'Etat, p 362.

47. Ibid.


53. The attitudes of Catholics towards economic planning will be discussed in the next section on the Club Citoyens 60.

54. Pour une Démocratie Economique (edited by the Groupe de Recherches ouvrières et paysannes and written jointly by members of the Club Jean Moulin and Citoyens 60), p 148.

55. Schonfield, p 133.
56. La Planification Démocratique (Projets présentés aux journées d'études de Royaumont, 11 et 12 Novembre 1961), 43p was published by the Cahiers de la République.

57. Ibid., p 2.

58. Pierre Massé in his Introduction to Schönfield, p 22.

59. Mimeographed document. It was never published by the Club.

60. This theme is advanced variously in L'État, Les Sept Projets pour entrer en Démocratie, Bulletin 36.


62. Interview François Bloch-Laine. He had also worked previously on the subject with Jesuits.

63. Pour une Réforme de l'Entreprise, p 7.


65. 'Ils auraient pour fonction principale de certifier les comptes; de dire le vrai en expliquant les conventions comptables adoptées par les directeurs et la politique que ces conventions traduisent, en explorant les zones d'ombre; d'éclairer le dialogue entre les partis intéressés, en s'efforçant d'éviter les procès d'intention. La vérité doit, en effet, être la même pour tous les intérêts en cause: capital, personnel; Plan. Ibid., p 20.

66. This was published in the Jean Moulin collection in 1965 but under Aléphandère's own name as he was a known expert on the subject of housing. The project put forward in the book for low interest loans was eventually taken up by administrators who had been influenced by Aléphandère's ideas. But these ideas, it should be said, would have had an impact even if the Club had not existed.

67. Aléphandère, p 137.

68. Interview Stephane Hessel.

69. Sept Projets pour Entrer en Démocratie

70. Nora, pp 63-64.

71. Interview Yves Ullmo

72. Ibid.


74. Philip Williams and Martin Harrison, p 125.

76. Ibid.

77. Claude Gruzon book *Renaissance du Plan* has a very strange, evangelical final chapter. The combination of mysticism and economics is altogether Saint-Simonist and reminiscent of the style of X-Crise's leader, Jean Coutrot.


79. X-Crise is cited in the bibliographie of *Pour une Démocratie Economique*.

80. None of the members of Jean Moulin interviewed—not even Crozier—claim to have read any of Proudhon's works, or even secondary sources on his ideas.

81. Yves Ullmo gives a description of the different types of socialists in the Club in his Note to the Executive Committee, 8 November 1962.


83. Suffert's speech to the General Assembly, 12 January 1963.

84. Internal document of Jean Moulin, undated. (mimeographed)

85. Lipiansky and Rettenbach, p 172.

86. Number of copies of the Club's books sold:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Copies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L'Etat et le Citoyen</td>
<td>20,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deux pièces du dossier Algérie</td>
<td>6,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La force de frappe et le citoyen</td>
<td>8,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un parti pour la gauche</td>
<td>7,051</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pour une politique étrangère de l'Europe</td>
<td>5,752</td>
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<tr>
<td>Les citoyens au pouvoir</td>
<td>17,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que faire de la Révolution de Mai</td>
<td>50,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quelle réforme, quelles régions?</td>
<td>17,832</td>
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<td>Pour une politique du logement</td>
<td>6,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socialisme et l'Europe</td>
<td>13,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un président pour quoi faire?</td>
<td>4,610</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This list was provided by Seuil, 18th September 1970.

87. Rousselot suggested that there was some evidence for this in that the book *Les Citoyens au Pouvoir* appeared just before the General's first speech on regionalism, while he had not, apparently, ever raised the subject before.

Chapter 13.


2. Citoyens 60 had a considerable number of provincial branches but, for convenience's sake, the Club will here be referred to in the singular.
3. This point will be discussed in greater detail in the final chapter.

4. Témoignage Chrétien, for instance, held no less than 46 meetings in 1957-8, all attended by between 100-150 a piece. Gault, p 89.


7. Dansette, p 133.

8. France-Forum was in fact associated with the MRP, but its editor, Henri Bourbon, was always anxious that it should remain open to outside influences.


11. There were, of course, some groups with strong Marxist leanings on the Catholic Left - the Mouvement de Libération du Peuple, for example. But these have been excluded from the list composed above. In any event, it was the humanist tradition that predominated.


13. Latreille and Remond, p 605.


15. Interview Andre Criuziat, 3 April 1970.

16. Coutrot and Dreyfus, p 161. Another survey dated 1952, shows that 17% of baptised adult Catholics were members of a Catholic Action group.

17. Interview Andre Criuziat, 3 April 1970. William Bosworth put the membership of the Vie Nouvelle at 5,000 in his section on the movement in Catholicism and Crisis in Modern France, pp 161-5. But Criuziat maintains that this figure is incorrect as there was a total renewal of the organisation about every 4-5 years.

18. Ibid.

19. For an account of the community see Boimondau: 100ans d'expérience communautaire (special number of the review Communauté, 1951)

20. 'Heresy is not the threat; Christianity no longer excites people enough for that. The real menace is a silent apostasy made up of surrounding indifference. The signs are not deceptive: death is near. Not the death of Christianity but the death of Western, feudal, bourgeois Christendom. A new Christianity will be born tomorrow or the day after, based on new social groups and new extra-European grafts.' Father Montaclard quoted in Jean-Marie Domenach, The Catholic Avant-Garde, p 21.

22. Suffert, p 45.


24. Duquesne, p 376.

25. The two Péguyists were Fathers Duploye and Donceour — the second was an anti-clerical anarchist.


27. Interview André Kerever, 14 March 1969.

28. Interview Yves Chaignau, 6 April 1970.

29. Interview André Criuziat, 14 September 1970.

30. Interview Yves Chaigneau, 6 April 1970.

31. Informations Catholiques Internationales, no 395, 1 November 1971, p 9. This article Les Catholiques dans la Gauche Française is a very good short résumé of the Catholic evolution to the Left.

32. On anti-colonialism among Catholics in this period see Domenach, The Catholic Avant-Garde, pp 184-209.

33. Interview André Criuziat, 14 September 1970.

34. Gault, p 119.


37. 'Ce n'est pas de faillite spirituelle qu'il faut parler, mais d'une faillite politique. L'honnêteté des hommes n'est pas en cause, mais leur compétence et leur orientations profondes.' Supplément to the paper vers La Vie Nouvelle, no 6, 1955.


40. Community politics is also described in the following terms: 'Elle s'oppose à toute police technocratique qui reconnaît à quelques initiés le droit de mener le troupeau humain. Elle est négation de la vision du Grand Inquisiteur et l'aristocratisme.' Ibid.

41. 'Non, évidemment. Ce serait trop simple. Que deviendrait la pesanteur sans la grâce? Que deviendrait la politique sans l'utopie: une agitation artificielle.' Ibid.

42. Ibid., no 3, November 1957 (La Cité et Notre Combat).
43. 'L'utopie est le levier de l'action créatrice, l'échec même n'est guerre absurde. Il est voie vers rebondissement.' Ibid., no 5, October 1956.

44. François de Menthon quoted in Duquesne, p 369.

45. Criusiat has explicitly denied that Personalism is in any way connected with anarchism on the grounds that Mounier denied it. Interview 3 December 1972.

46. Laberthonnière was a Pascalian whose works were condemned by the Church prior to the First World War. Vers la Vie Nouvelle identified his notion of authority with its own. There was no progress, it observed, other than through individuals with the: '.. hardiesse d'affronter, à leurs risques et périls, la routine et le snobisme.' Vers La Nouvelle, no 5, October 1956.

47. Ibid., no 3, November 1957.

48. Mimeographed internal document on Socialism entitled: Introduction Prudente (undated.) Its own Socialism is defined in the following terms: 'Est communautaire toute politique qui a pour but la création de l'humanité; pour moteur le consentement et la participation des citoyens; pour moyens, ceux comportant un moindre coût humain.'

49. Mimeographed internal document, 30 April 1965 of the Club Citoyens 60 of the 6th and 7th wards in Paris.


52. See Domenach, pp 96-7.

53. Ibid.

54. Mimeographed internal document, undated.


58. This point is made repeatedly in Cahiers no 6, 1962; no 2, 1964.


60. Cahiers, no 5, 1959.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid., no 4, 1961.

63. Ibid., no 3, 1964.
64. Interview Jacques Delors, 30 October 1971.

65. Ibid.

66. Cahiers, no 1 and 2, 1963. He also made the following point: 'La capacité d'adaption du néo-capitalisme comme les flammes de Budapest ont jeté à bas les illusions de l'inductabilité du socialisme comme du socialisme par la propriété collective et la dictature du prolétariat. Mais elles ont initié d'innombrables courants de recherche, à actualiser la pensée socialiste en tirant parti de ces expériences.' At the time of Budapest he as well as numerous others wrote passionate articles against the Russian invasion in Tribune Politique.

67. Ibid., no 4, 1965.

68. On Uriage see Dunoyer de Segonzac.

69. Bureau de Recherche et d'Action Economique.

70. All information on Delors was obtained during general interviews with him over a long period.

71. Cahiers, no 1 1959. Pascal defined man as neither angel nor beast — between these extremes.

72. Témoignage Chrétien, no 549, 14 January 1955, p 2.

73. Interview Pierre Avril 6 October 1971.


Chapter 14.

1. Letter from Cabaniols to Bergougnoix 4 March 1964.

2. Letter from Labourie to Cabaniols 8 April 1963.


6. The basis of this supposition was a number of personal attendances in 1968 at the Rive Gauche branch of Citoyens, run by a school-teacher.


15. Documents for this period were provided by the Club's leader, Mlle de Loebardy. But none, unfortunately, were available for earlier periods.
21. Ibid.
27. See Cong-Huyen-Nu Phung-Tien, Le Groupe de Recherche Ouvrier-Paysan, (typed document Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Grenoble.)

The lists presented were as follows:
- 15 apolitical
- 11 centre Right
- 10 centre or centre Left
- 10 Left (without CP)
- 10 'Popular Front' (with CP)
- 18 of these went under the label forces vives

Chapter 15


12. Quoted Ibid., no 35.

13. Ibid., no 48.

14. Ibid., no 35.

15. The Club's general political and philosophical assumptions were more or less explicit in all of its writings. But they are particularly clearly stated in Cahiers no 6, 1962 and the special issue on Socialism, Cahiers, no 1 and 2, 1963; also no 3, 1964.


17. Massé in his Introduction to Schonfield, p 21.


19. See the section Finalités de l'Expansion in Pour une démocratie économique.

20. Delors, for instance, claims that Galbraith's ideas coincided with his own but were not a revelation.

21. See the article Propos Evocateurs sur l'anti-capitalisme in the Cahiers, no 4, 1965.

22. On the alienation of man from his work see La Participation à la décision dans l'Entreprise, in the Cahiers, Ibid. On the need for social solidarity in society see Sur les Finalités de Développement in the Cahiers no 3, 1964.


24. 'Par rapport au capitalisme, dans le néo-capitalisme:
a) le profit est encore moteur, mais c'est surtout la puissance économique.

b) il y a une façade démocratique etc.

Toutefois : l'on constate
- des injustices et des inégalités de plus en plus fortes.
- la non participation aux décisions engageant le destin collectif
- le pouvoir économique échappe au contrôle démocratique et investit le pouvoir politique.

This is taken from a mimeographed document issued by Rive Gauche (a Parisian section of Citoyens 60) on the Plan, Les Forces Économiques et le Plan.


28. La C.F.D.T., p 64.

29. See the article Le Degre d'Engagement des Syndicats dans la Planification, Cahiers no 4, 1964.


31. The CFDT also favoured planning for this reason, stressing its own 'volonté de coller à la vie, d'apporter des réponses concrètes aux problèmes concrets que se posent les travailleurs.' La C.F.D.T., p 47.


33. See the article Faut-il une Politique des Revenus, Cahiers no 8, 1963.


36. See the article Mieux repartir les Fruits de l'Expansion, Cahiers, no 8, 1963.

37. See the special issue l'Emploi, no 4 1967.

38. See the article Sur les Finalités du Développement, Cahiers, no 3, 1964.

39. The theme of social development is developed at some length by Jacques Delors in the section Finalités de l'Expansion in Pour une démocratie économique.

41. Ibid., p 37.

42. On the need for unions to continue to oppose the system as well as participate in it, see Albert Detraz, *Les Fonctions du Syndicalisme* in the *Cahiers*, no 8, 1963.


44. *Cahiers* no 6, 1962.

45. See *La Participation à la Decision dans l'Entreprise*, *Cahiers* no 4, 1965.

46. See the article *Faut-il Décraliser?* (by Citoyens 60's Regional Research Team) in the *Cahiers*, no 2, 1964.

47. There were, however, a very large number of articles on this topic in the *Cahiers*.


**Chapter 16.**

1. Projet de Chartre pour les Clubs (mimeographed document of the Comité Peronant des Clubs).

2. The term *forces vives* will be maintained throughout this chapter in French as there is no really suitable translation.

3. 'En inaugurant une chronique sur 'les forces politiques en France' nous ne nous dissimilions pas combien était fragile la consistence de la notion que nous prenions comme catégorie d'analyse'. Georges Lavau in the *Revue Française de Science Politique*, no 3, September 1963, p 689.

4. Projet de Rapport General (mimeographed document Jean Moulin, 6 December 1962)

5. Suffert's speech to the General Assembly of Jean Moulin, 12 December 1963. (mimeographed)


7. Suffert's speech to the General Assembly of Jean Moulin. (as before)

8. Ibid.


14. By the first wave of clubs are meant the mainly Catholic ones that came into being in and after 1958. Later, from the mid-sixties clubs were created on the whole range of the political spectrum.

15. For an account of how the clubs came together see Roland Cayrol, *Les Tentatives de Coopération entre les Clubs Politiques en France*.


17. Jean Moulin hand-written document listing all the groups who sent in an answer. Also interview Suffert.


25. Interview Charles Hernu, also Claude Estier, 17 June 1972.


27. Apparently the Convention succeeded in obtaining a mailing-list of school-teachers' names which is the explanation for the rather odd fact that 60% of its members from 1965 were school-teachers. Interview Charles Hernu, 16 June 1971.


30. 'Par ailleurs nous veillons à ne pas nous faire déborder sur le plan des clubs. La parution régulière de notre page dans Combat annonce la création de nombreux groupes jacobins...' Letter from Charles Hernu to Mendes France 24 February 1964.

31. See Georges Suffert, *De Baffres à Mitterand*; also Janine Mossuz, *Les Clubs et le Politique en France*.

32. The anti-political tradition of the Charter of Amiens was still strong in the CFDT; and, besides, many members of the union were supporters either of the MRP or the PSU.

33. Interview Michel Crozier, 18 May 1972.

35. Interview Georges Suffert, 4 May 1971.


38. Ibid., p 349.

39. Letter from Guy Rivière to Alain de Vulpiian, 25 May 1964. In recommending a certain Grandon to take over one of the Horizon 80 committees - mixed groups of clubmen and Socialist Party members who helped to organise Gaston Defferre's campaign - Rivière noted as advantageous points:

Il est jeune: 44 ans.
Il exerce des fonctions électorales (Maire d'une petite commune)
Il n'a jamais appartenu a une formation politique.

40. Cahiers (Citoyens 60), January-February 1964.


42. Pierre Fougeyrollas, La Conscience Politique dans la France Contemporaine, p 173. On the distinction between absolute and relative apoliticism, see p 324. Fougeyrollas made this distinction on the grounds that according to IFOP polls people claimed to be interested in politics, but had very little belief in the influence and role of political parties. Only 14% believed parties to have a big influence, while 26% saw them as having little influence, 37% no influence, and 27% gave no answer. See p 179 ff.


44. See Georges Lavau in Esprit, June 1958, p 45. This article is an excellent account of how many of the small left-wing groups of the 1950's perceived politics and, in particular, political parties.

45. La Pensée Socialiste Contemporaine, p 234. (This is a summary of the Colloques Socialistes in 1964)

46. Les Objectifs des Assises, Jean Cluzel, mimeographed document.


48. See Positions (a summary of the ideology and background of the Club) p 13.

49. Objectif 72, no 7, January 1965.


55. Ibid., p 362. For further examples see p 361.


57. Undated mimeographed document of the U.C.R.G.


59. See Positions, p 3.


62. This was especially the case of Les Groupes Rencontres. See Janine Mossuz, Les Clubs et la Politique en France, pp 17-19.

63. On the Right-wing Clubs, see Ibid. Also, an article by Janine Mossuz in the Revue Française de Science Politique, no 5, October 1970, pp 964-973.

64. Interview Georges Brutelle, 18 November 1971.

65. Ibid.


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It was fairly easy to obtain access to the private files of each of the three Clubs examined in this study. However, the value of the material they contained varied greatly. Each was, of course, in possession of a full set of the papers they had published. But, in the case of the Jacobin Club, all the files contained, apart from *Le Jacobin*, were two folders of correspondence, mainly from Charles Hernu to Mendes France or vice versa. The Club Jean Moulin, on the other hand, kept very complete records of its work and internal functioning. Also, it possessed a considerable amount of material pertaining to other clubs, since it had, at one point, partly directed the club movement. While Citoyen 60's files included a considerable number of documents on the work of its parent organisation, *La Vie Nouvelle*.

But it was still necessary to elucidate and supplement the material found in the files of each club by interviews. Only the most valuable of these are here recorded.

Interviews.

Avril (Pierre)

Bloch-Laine (François)

Brutelle (Georges)

Bergougnoux (Gabriel)

Bouillard (Père)

Buron (Robert)

Bidegain (José)

Bidegain (Michelle)

Criuziat (André)

Chenu (Père)

Chevrillon (Olivier)

Crosier (Michel)

Chaigneaux (Yves)

Charny (Roger)

Cayrol (Roland)

Cordier (Daniel)
The works consulted in the course of writing this thesis have ranged over a very wide field. For convenience's sake, they have been listed in three wide and, to a degree, overlapping categories. Section A deals with works on Jansenism and anarchist doctrine — broadly with works on the themes covered in the first chapter. Section B lists books on political clubs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and on the theory of political parties. Section C has been subdivided into two parts, 1 and 2. Part 1 is devoted to works either specifically on political clubs or else by them. Part 2 contains the books which have been found generally useful, both on the pre and post-war periods.

The reviews most frequently consulted were:

*Ésprit*

*Témoignage Chrétien*

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