

## PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL SYSTEMS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Dr. Arnold J. Zurcher

### NOTICE

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Reviewed by: Colonel J.H.M. Smith, USAF, 16 November 1962

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Parliamentary Political Systems in Western Europe

27 August 1962

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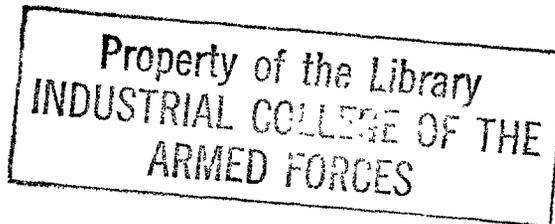
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27 August 1962

COLONEL MORGAN: Our subject this morning is entitled "Parliamentary Political Systems in Western Europe." Any study of government must consider the historical development of political thought and organization in this vital area.

Our speaker to talk to us on this subject this morning is Dr. Arnold J. Zurcher, Professor of Political Science, of New York University.

Dr. Zurcher, it is a pleasure to welcome you back to this platform.

DR. ZURCHER: Thank you, Colonel Morgan.

Admiral Rose; Gentlemen:

It's a very great privilege to have this chance to come back to the college and talk about the subject that Colonel Morgan has identified. I think that someone here not very long ago, probably to justify the invitation to return, referred to me as an authority on this subject of parliamentary political systems in Western Europe. And perhaps, paraphrasing Mark Twain I might say that I always suspected that I was quite a guy, but having had this explanation, I now knew that I was.

I do want to warn you against the word "authority." As you know, an authority is a chap who knows more and more about less and less. If you will get out a little draft paper and draft this definition, putting more and more upon the Y axis, and less and less upon the X axis, and draw the necessary curve, you will inevitably find that geometrically - in geometry, at any rate - an expert; an authority is a man who knows more and more about nothing. And I wouldn't be surprised

that you've had some empirical demonstrations of the wisdom of that extrapolation - geometric extrapolation - from this rostrum. Nor would I be surprised if you had a second demonstration of that this morning. As befits a gentleman who doesn't know anything, I want to handle this subject this morning more or less on a philosophical basis, and reserve the facts and statistics for what is called the question hour.

Concern about democracy and its institutions is perhaps not as widespread nor as intense as it was during the two decades after the First World War. During the '20s and especially after the advent of the Great Depression in 1929 the world was treated to a veritable flood of books and pamphlets about democratic government and parliamentary institutions. These books and pamphlets sought to diagnose the apparent breakdown of such institutions, and to provide a prognosis for the future. Needless to say, that prognosis was gloomy. Even the titles of the volumes that emerged from the presses were enough to cast a pall over democracies. They were such titles as: "Crisis Government," "Democratic Dictatorship," "Emergency Government," "Government by Decree," "The Passing of Parliament," and one that I especially liked - one that appealed to me - namely, "House in Ferment."

I also had a manuscript about democratic institutions about this time, around 1929, which I had brought up on the aims of the First World War, as I had. I had tentatively entitled it "The Triumph of Democratic Institutions in Europe After World War I." But, my university press was a little slow about getting the proof out, and by the time that it was ready to send the proof to the bindery, Hitler had won over 100 seats in the Reichstag. And he was busily conniving to rig the

Reichstag elections of March 1933, and briskly engaged in burning the Reichstag itself. So, I and the Press became prudent and we called the book "The Experiment with Democracy in Central Europe." Maybe I ought to be a little careful with these years; I might be revealing a little more than I intended to.

But a few years were to prove that we had been prudent indeed - just a few years were to demonstrate it. In 1936 many competent observers believed that popular government with its parliamentary institutions couldn't survive. The scenic success of dictatorships of the left and the right, and the constant erosion of the authority and competence of parliamentary institutions where they still functioned, at least nominally, led many to conclude that such institutions weren't adapted to the harsh political realities of the 20th Century. Certainly, on the Eve of the Second World War only the confirmed optimist would have ventured to say that parliamentary institutions could ultimately adjust to the needs of our century and could survive. But even the optimists were not saying things like that in 1939.

Sober realists were suggesting that the wave of the future as respects matters governmental required some sort of totalitarianism or technocratic bureaucracy from which popular authority and its institution would be ousted in everything but name.

The years since the Second World War have, however, given some respite to the fears of those who lost heart and book royalties on the theme of democracy during the '30s. At any rate, the feeling of crisis about parliamentary government and democratic institutions, generally, so acute during the interbellum period, has not persisted in the years since 1945.

The reasons for this growing optimism, or rather, decline of pessimism, are various. Of course, the difference between pessimism and optimism, as you know, is not very much. A pessimist is a fellow who says his glass is half empty, and an optimist is a fellow who says his glass is half full. I want to make sure that I'm not over-emphasizing this distinction.

The success of the military forces of the traditional democracies over the dictators Hitler and Mussolini, is one of the more obvious reasons for the tentative optimism. So too is the reestablishment of formal parliamentary institutions in both Italy and West Germany, and the apparent success they've had since 1950.

A less obvious but nonetheless persuasive reason is the economic and military commitments which America made after World War II to bolster the democratic regimes in Western Europe, and the apparent success of that policy.

Equally important in explaining this new-found confidence, especially during the past decade, is the declining fear in Western Europe, of the Russian Bear. To be sure, the Soviet brought many erstwhile free and democratic lands under the hammer and sickle between 1944 and 1948. But after the fall of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of NATO Western Europe began to discount the possibility of the forceful substitution of Sovietism for Parliamentarism. And parallel with this growing confidence that Russian power could be contained was an increased confidence that the autonomous ideological thrust of organized Communism could also be successfully resisted.

Indeed, Western European democracies became contemptuous - perhaps too contemptuous for their own safety - of the competing appeal of Communism as an

ideology. to their citizenry, even when Communism has developed formidable local organization in their trade unions and as a political party as in France and Italy. These and other considerations explain, in part, the decline of the pre-war pessimism about parliamentary institutions. These same considerations justify the assumption that such institutions may have secured a new lease on life and that the interbellum cassettes were too quick to write off such institutions for the 20th Century.

At the same time it would be an error of major proportions if we were to assume that this restoration of parliamentary institutions after World War II in Western Europe, and their relative vitality, indicate that we have solved or somehow eliminated all the problems which have plagued such institutions in the years between the world wars. Some of these problems are persistent and deep-seated. They arise out of the very evolution of democratic institutions, and out of the values and out of the challenge of the technical industrial culture of our century.

Hitler and Mussolini, and even Stalin and Khrushchev are, in a sense, mere symptoms of these secular long-term problems. And it is these that have to have a reasonable solution or adjustment if parliamentary institutions are really to survive. Hence, in the minutes that remain I should like to deal with a selected few of these more deep-seated and persistent - one might refer to them as endemic - phenomena. It's not too strong an adjective; difficulties, that is, of parliamentary institutions; and appraise the progress or lack of progress which the West has experienced in overcoming these difficulties. I shall do this on a general or comparative basis, with only an occasional or specific reference to national institu-

tions, and then only primarily for purposes of illustration. Thereafter I should like to appraise the more immediate outlook in certain of the West European states. And then finally, if time permits, I shall indulge in some concluding remarks about the future of parliamentary institutions in Western Europe. These concluding remarks I shall make highly personal and they will therefore be highly objectionable and they will also be easily refutable.

Of the very few institutional forms which popular government has assumed in our age, certainly the most widespread is the form we call "parliamentary." We are accustomed to define it as a system in which the powers of government are formally centralized in a popular assembly or parliament. The actual direction of policy and administration in such a system is confided to a cabinet or collective body of ministers, which maintains its tenure and power as long as it remains in possession of majority support in parliament. This, of course, is the conventional definition. A more realistic description would suggest that the parliamentary form of government is one in which a group of party leaders - either a single party or a coalition of parties - conducts the government; giving that government domestic and foreign leadership so long as the group is able to command a majority in parliament. If, at any time it lacks a majority, the governing group of ministers must recement its majority within parliament by making the appropriate changes in the groups own composition, or in its policies, or both; or seek vindication for its existence, at the polls. The alternative is resignation and the transfer of power to another partisan or coalition group which can presumably offer alternatives and programs.

Whatever the variations in the system, the characteristics which I have described are essential to the existence of what political scientists call "Parliamentary Government." If these characteristics do not exist as respect either form or behavior, the system of popular government does not fall within the parliamentary classification.

With variations, this system exists in every nation of Western Europe that considers its political system democratic, from the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean. There are no exceptions, unless, indeed, Switzerland can be so considered. And, of course, at the moment, France. Moreover, where political democracy does not exist, as for example in Spain and Portugal, those who look forward to the establishment of political democracy in such states, or its reestablishment, take for granted that the institutional form will be parliamentary.

This popularity of the parliamentary system is readily explained. Both the democratic revolutionists of the late 18th Century, and such political philosophers as Locke and Rousseau, looked to the legislature, or to the parliament, or its medieval predecessor, as the proper repository of the popular will. Hence, therefore, in the 19th Century, when the dictum that the voice of the people is the voice of God, saw institutional expression. It was the legislature or parliament that became that institutional expression. As a result, the parliament became, to all intents and purposes, either the legal or political sovereign, or both, in government.

A classic example of this evolution occurred in France in 1789, when the three estates of France's medieval parliament were transformed into a single national assembly consisting of the third estate. The national assembly, according to the

Abbe Seeay, who was the officiating intellectual mid-wife at the time, gave corporate expression to the people and to the nation.

But an even more important reason for the popularity of the parliamentary form of government was the intensely practical one; that by asserting the popular ascendancy of parliament and insisting that bureaucrats and ministers have parliament's confidence, it became possible, historically, to make a democratic conquest of all the erstwhile royal offices, both of policy and administration; including, as a matter of fact, even the royal office itself. By a relatively peaceful means, the substance of power was transferred to the new masters; that is, to the people or to their party leaders, without doing formal damage to an existing constitution, and with the added advantage of keeping intact for service under the new dispensation, all of the legal concepts and offices that antedated the democratic take-over. How valuable this survival sometimes was, is illustrated by the role of the British Crown - the role which the Crown has played in providing about the only formal constitutional link among the independent Commonwealth countries. As a matter of fact, the British Crown has provided the executive power in most of the Commonwealth countries - the legal executive power.

The evolutionary process resulting in a parliamentary form of government is perhaps best illustrated by the history of such a system in England where it has received its classic form. Here the process began at the time of the Puritan Revolution in the 17th Century. Thus, the changes which have produced the 20th Century system of parliamentarism in Britain, have evolved almost imperceptibly over a 300-year span. By the time of Walpole in the middle of the 18th Century,

the idea of collective responsibility of a ministry, to parliament, and largely independent of the king, had already been established. But it was not until another century had elapsed - the middle of the 19th - that Mr. Walter Badgett, an enterprising newspaper man, who also fancied himself as an essayist, made the dynamics and mechanics of the parliamentary system reasonably clear to all Englishmen who bothered to read his essays.

Because the British Parliamentary System was, in a sense, the first to achieve classic form, because so many have talked and written about it, and because since the days of Montesque and Voltaire, so many have associated it with British ideals of civil liberty and the rule of law. The British system had more than a little influence in molding parliamentary institutions elsewhere as democracy advanced; especially was this true in Europe. On the other hand, the Continental European systems by and large had largely a nationally autonomous and indigenous development. Particularly was this so in the low countries - the Netherlands and Belgium. And in Scandinavia; that is, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

The conditions of historical evolution, of course make a difference in the product of that evolution. So do tradition and precedent. Hence, there are differences in contemporary national parliamentary systems. These differences are sometimes more than mere nuances. These differences are especially discernible when measuring the influence of national electoral laws; the behavior of parties; the role of the Executive; and the status and influence of the Civil Service.

It is this system of popular government in Western Europe which, despite the vitality demonstrated by its recovery after 1945, continues to display certain deep-

seated secular weaknesses, some of which I now want to discuss, and perhaps, if time permits, I want to appraise. Doubtless the most serious of these weakness results from the impact upon the state, of a peculiarly 20th Century issue which I shall call the "Social Issue." It is the issue posed by those who want to use the state for positive purposes on the one hand, and those who believe the state should be used for negative purposes on the other hand. More specifically, it is the issue posed by those who would promote the economic well-being and the welfare of the individual by governmental action, and those who believe that direct governmental action, in the economic realm particularly, would be inefficient, wasteful and unjust.

Put differently, it is the issue between Socialism or Collectivism on the one hand, and on the other hand the advocates of a pleural and competitive economic order, and the preservation of free enterprise and a free market economy. At issue, of course, is not only the structure of the economy and of society as a whole, or the question of pleural versus collective management, but also the system of material rewards, whether they shall remain unique, or tend toward equality.

It is democracy's evolution in the 20th Century, the enfranchisement of all adults; the evolution of mass parties with goals of economic amelioration, combined with a material promise inherent in our technical industrial Western society, that is responsible for the development of this great issue. During the past half century this social issue has driven a deep rift in our Western<sup>political</sup> society. Left and Right became militantly opposed in our parliaments. Both in our parliaments and at the polls ~~even~~ the moderate center parties found compromise

difficult. It was this social issue more than any other which fractured and often destroyed the moral unity of society and made differences among parties and social groups so acute, that government by discussion and compromise, the very essence of the democratic process broke down and thus raised the spectre of dictatorship or authoritarianism.

The problem of securing a consensus that can compromise this social issue and of regaining moral unity in our democratic societies is still very much with us, and there are still many who despair of the future of parliamentary institutions because we have not solved that problem. On the other hand it also seems to be reasonably clear that we have gone quite a way toward its solution. In Western Europe particularly we have moved along way toward a basic compromise on the social issue. The solution is coming about in several ways.

In the first place we have gradually perfected the various kinds of social welfare legislation and centralized its administration in the national government. Even conservatives, those who look askance at governmental action - positive governmental action - seem willing to accept the high tax rates and the public controls which go with this development, although the American Medical Association might not agree with this statement.

A second development entering into this solution and possible new consensus is even more significant. It is the gradual acceptance by the moderate left in Western Europe, including most of the Marxian Socialist Left, of the structure of private capitalism, and the consequent rejection of the idea - long held by much of the left - that the state should run most of enterprise, and that political means

should be used to secure greater economic returns to the working-classes. One of the most recent formal renunciations of the Marxian baggage was, of course, that by the Social Democrats in the development of the Göttesburg Program - German Social Democrats.

This apparent decision of the Moderate Left in Europe to foreswear nationalization and direct intervention by the state in the processes of the economy, has been greatly aided by the dynamic, booming quality of West European Capitalism since the end of the war, and by the apparent trend of European Capitalism toward the more social and distributive character of American Capitalism. It has also been aided by such movements as the European Economic Community, which can assure in the future, the kind of territorial scope in the way of resources and markets, that the more dynamic capitalism of Western Europe requires if it is to fulfil contemporary social expectations.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the potential contribution to the future viability of parliamentary institutions that inheres in this new consensus of which I speak; this new unity in the socio-economic field which I have suggested is coming into being in Western Europe. Increasingly, the entire spectrum of parties in parliament can agree that there are basic issues on which they will not disagree. Parliamentary oppositions can at least be loyal oppositions in the future and not remain hostile to the state itself, as has been so true in so many cases in the past.

The possibility of durable coalitions in parliament has greatly enhanced primarily the burden of compromise and of administration which would have become unsupportable under pure collectivism or Socialism, as it is today in Soviet

Russia, and can become manageable within the limitations of parliamentary government. At least that's the hope.

Let me now shift from the basic moral problem of parliamentary institutions to a question of testing the mechanics of such institutions - such parliamentary institutions. This also has a bearing on their future. Elsewhere in an essay I have pointed out the detrimental effect of the concern manifested by the constitution-makers after World War I, with model parliamentary institutions, and their desire to define the processes of popular government according to abstract principles. Such preoccupation, I suggested in the essay, led them to ignore national habit and empirical considerations.

In the constitutions and electoral laws which were drafted in the 1919 period their rejection of what might be called "use and want" caused them to create constitutions ill-suited to the needs and capacities of those who were to be governed. And hence they prejudiced to an extent, the future stability of the popular regimes which they were attempting to organize with their constitutions.

There are undoubtedly many aspects of the contemporary parliamentary systems in Western Europe, including the ones newly established since 1945, that reflect this rejection of political empiricism of use and want so characteristic of 1919, and which aim at some sort of logical consistency with models. Nevertheless, the product of '45 reflects far less of that feeling than the product of 1919. Less attention has been paid to the experts in public law and the latest Ph.D. theses. More attention has been given to national traditions, and for that matter, to national weaknesses and even prejudices.

Logical perfectability has been sacrificed to empirical practicability or practicality. Perhaps no where is this more evident than in the rejection of the radically democratic and mathematically exact proportional representation electoral laws which became the bane of many political systems set up under popular auspices in 1919. These PR electoral laws placed a premium upon political adventurers played into the hands of the militant and uncompromising left and right, splintered<sup>the</sup> moderate parties who, alone, were willing to govern, and hence delayed and often defeated attempts to provide governing coalitions.

Virtually all Western European parliamentary states, and especially Germany, Italy and France, have made their post-'45 electoral systems more conservative, as you know, and in so doing, have doubtless contributed somewhat to the greater stability of their respective parliamentary systems. Universally, moreover, there is evidence that mechanical and procedural changes have been made in the parliamentary systems to adapt them to contemporary needs. At a time when so many issues become the grist of politics and legislation is virtually a way of life it is important to relieve the great public organs - Executive and parliament - of much of their potential agenda. Hence, no Western European has failed to witness the transfer, in effect, of much of its activity to legislative committees which have become increasingly autonomous and professional in their functions. Expanding decree legislation, whether it be ministerial ordinance or what the British call a provisional order, has kept much of the statutory load away from parliament.

If this process leads to legislation by irresponsible bureaucrats whose actions are sanctified by the alleged responsibility of the minister - the bureaucrats

nominal chief - the answer is that this is the part we must pay for aggrandizing the power of the state over society. Tacit acknowledgment of this need to delegate much of the policy-making discretion of the great organs of government in parliamentary states is to be discerned also in the growing activity of special investigating commissions like the Royal Commissions so frequently observed in Britain and the Commonwealth; the growing dependence of ministerial cabinets on special committees of their own members, or on ad hoc committees; the experimentation with special advisory economic councils on labor and industry; the establishment of essentially autonomous public corporations to handle specific public responsibilities, and the recognition even in such states as France, Italy and England, that centralization of responsibility must be arrested and that some sort of regional devolution that is more than merely administrative, must be brought into existence if the parliamentary institutions at the center are to survive and have more than merely pro forma significance.

Thirdly, and finally, in this brief survey of some of the more fundamental aspects of parliamentary decay or survival, let me turn to still another essentially moral or psychological problem. This is the problem of maintaining ideological support and loyalty to democratic values. Militancy in the support of political ideologies seems to exist solely on the left and right, which are opposed to parliamentary institutions. As for the democratic state itself and its institutions, its political leaders and citizens alike, far too often seem to look upon them as a huge welfare establishment which purveys material security.

Its governmental apparatus becomes an apparatus manipulated by parties and

lobbies to bargain and compromise for material advantage. Indeed, the attitude and practice of many of the citizens of contemporary parliamentary states illustrates the conception of the state upon which Edmund Burke heaped such scorn when he sought to excoriate the political conceptions of the French Revolutionists of 1790. Burke charge the latter with looking upon the state as, "Nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties."

We tend to lack what Burke identified as reverence for the state; what others call patriotism; and what still others call democratic ideology; in short, a lack of militant belief that the moral, spiritual, and educational values of the democratic polity transcend the purely secular service rendered by such a state in adjusting competing claims to power and wealth. The latter service is important, but it cannot be an enduring basis for a commonwealth, as Burke said in sentences that will be quoted as long as Irishmen continue to use the English language and Englishmen continue to read Irishmen who use the English language.

This intensely secular and materialistic attitude toward the parliamentary state and the absence of militant democratic ideology inevitably afflicts adversely the operation of parliamentary institutions. It explains much of the corruption in popular, the relatively low level of leadership, the failure to identify national interests that transcend the interests of parties and lobbies, the indifference of youth to the democratic heritage, and conversely, the attraction of youth by the extremist ideologies. No one could confer greater blessing upon contemporary parliamentary

systems in Western Europe or elsewhere, than by providing a successful demonstration of a way to lift the sights of the citizens of a democracy from the all too-prevalent level of passive materialism. The likelihood that anyone will be successful in doing so, in my opinion, is remote, for the tragic paradox - and this is probably the most enduring weakness of parliamentary and all popular systems - modern popular systems of government - and the rock on which they'll founder if they founder, is the fact that the more success ~~which~~ a political system and any social organization experiences in meeting the material aspirations of its citizens, the more apathetic those citizens become in matters of faith and patriotism.

Militant ideologies are apparently for the have-nots of this world; not for the haves. Here, then, are some of the important political and constitutional developments since World War II which will measure the probability of parliamentary government in Europe surviving and adjusting.

I'd like now, briefly, to speak of three or four of the Western European states, Britain, France, Germany, Scandinavia and Italy. It will be quite brief because I'm well aware of that clock that you do not see.

By all odds the state which has made the best adjustment of its parliamentary institutions to the demands of the new day, is Britain. The historic strength of her parliamentary institutions, the reasonable and apparently durable adjustment made to the social issue of the century, the well-known capacity of the British to study and to think things through very carefully and to make the necessary adjustments while they allegedly muddle through, is a trait that has become almost a tradition since the days of Macaulay and Trevelyan. These suggest British

parliamentarism is not likely soon to lose its vitality.

The Scandinavian countries have also apparently made a durable adjustment in the needs of the new century. They too have handled the social issue with relative success. Especially is this true of Sweden. It is also true, to a lesser extent, of Norway and Denmark. With little interference, or major dislocation from war or other disaster, these states have been able to evolve gradually into the technological 20th Century with its social expectations. As a consequence, they have developed the appropriate machinery. Along with their governmental agencies which are dominated by partisan majorities that are oriented toward a collectivistic solution of the social issue, these states have also perfected instruments of economic discipline outside both the areas of political bureaucracy and private enterprise, which lighten the burden of the former and provide discipline for the latter. The cooperative movement has been especially important in this connection.

As Mark E. Childs says, in speaking primarily of Sweden, "Capitalism has been controlled in two ways; first, consumers' cooperation has been developed slowly during the past four decades, until today approximately a third of retail trade and more than 10% of wholesale trade, plus a small percentage of manufacture, are carried on by cooperatives without profit. Second, the state has competed so efficiently in many fields that private enterprise has been prevented from establishing an extortionate monopolies." He goes on to say that these developments are more apparent in Sweden than elsewhere, although they are also apparent in Denmark, the rural marketing cooperatives, and in Norway, the Cooperative Fisheries.

If we allow for the prejudices of an angry man - an angry young man - at least

he was young when he wrote the book back in '34 - what he has to say is undoubtedly important in explaining the stability of the democratic and parliamentary governments in those northern countries. At any rate, it provides a contrast to the remarks on these Scandinavian states - or rather, "A Scandinavian state," I think is the phrase - made by a former President of the United States, who, since, has had other opinions.

Less confidence is apparent when one approaches the parliamentary systems of Germany, France and Italy. The first of these states has enjoyed a remarkable stability in its operation during the past decade; partly because of the homogeneity of that part of Germany allotted to the Western area, partly because of certain institutional reforms, particularly a conservative electoral law, partly because of a legal suppression of extremist groups, the Bonn Regime has often been contrasted to its distinct advantage with the parlous record of Weimar. But this stability may be only a surface stability. Much of it depends on the octogenarian chancellor and his personal ascendancy. It is an ascendancy that has been facilitated by certain constitutional provisions, especially the provision that the opposition cannot unseat a chancellor unless at the same time it can provide a majority for a main successor. Added to that, of course, is the special provision that has been made as regards the leadership of the chancellor over the cabinet - the Bismarkian concept of Prime Minister leadership; the fact that the Prime Minister is, to all intents and purposes, the cabinet and can hire and fire his assistants.

The difficulty in Germany stems, also, of course, from the question of a successor. It is the lack of a successor plus the decline of the chancellor's party in the federal and recent land elections, combined with a rise in the Free Democratic

Party, that raises a question about the future stability of government in West Germany. Along-side these complications we sense the peculiar apathy of the Germans for the system of Bonn and its politicians. The outlook is far from reassuring.

Post-war Italy like post-war Western Germany, has also experienced a system of one-man rule or the approximation thereto, under the deceased Acide de Gasperi, the former Christian Democratic leader. That system of rule, moreover, is uncomfortably reminiscent of the pre-Fascist role of the dominators in Italy. In other words, not even under de Gasperi did Italian parliamentarism escape from the tradition of one-man rule that reached its zenith in liberal Italy under Giolippe. True, de Gasperi had the support of a mass center party, the Christian Democrats. That party almost gave de Gasperi a majority in the Deputies and the Senate, the kind of partisan authority which, in normal times at least, no Italian Prime Minister has ever been able to enjoy. The trouble was and is, that the Christian Democracy in Italy, no matter how large and dominating numerically, on the parliamentary scene, and though a vast aggregation is split into warring factions, especially on the social issue, sometimes its wings are farther apart than Christian Democrats and Marxists.

De Gasperi had to supplement his own party with other resources in order to carry Italy forward. These were the influence of America whose economic aid in the early post-war years was rather blatantly used as a club to maintain the government's ascendancy, the thinly-veiled discipline of the church, which is the Christian Democrats' chief ally, and the support of certain of the middle-of-the-road minor parties. The successes of de Gasperi are caught in the same dilemma.

At the moment, under Fanfani, the Christian Democrats, despite the loud opposition of the right wing, have opened their window to the left in a pact with Nenni Socialists. The Italian Socialist Party is the most militant Marxist Party in Europe and is the most openly anti-democratic. The price that Fanfani will have to pay will probably be more than the nationalization of the Italian power industries.

Of course, the great question mark as to parliamentary government in Western Europe continues to be France, the classic land of a new ministry every month and a new constitution every year. France's parliamentary system is one in which, as one of its leaders pointed out, privately to me some time before DeGaulle, the only majority that could be constructed was a negative majority, preferably one to house the government. The medicine which DeGaulle has prescribed for this system is not as extreme as some have suggested. It is somewhat less than dictatorship, but it comes perilously close to one-man rule and the destruction of effective independence and of parliamentary majority. Officially the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, which, conveniently enough was formulated by DeGaulle's Prime Minister, Messieur DeBres, is a mixture of parliamentarism and what we call the "Presidential System." It provides a dual Executive, one - of the Prime Minister who has specific responsibilities to parliament and may theoretically be ousted. The other is the President - DeGaulle - who has real power, especially in foreign affairs, quite independent of parliament, and who owes responsibility not to parliament, but to France.

In times of crisis, as you know, the President wields additional legislative power. Everyone doubts that the regime which exists in Paris can continue to

function unless after DeGaulle there is a competent successor. But it is agreed that there is no successor. There is no one with the prestige, moral authority and national following, of the general. Some appear to think that the success the general has had in solving some of the more perplexing problems that have faced France such as Algeria and the franc, may make it possible for lesser men to govern successfully. The likelihood is, however, that the Fifth Republic will crumble with the man and France will face either a return to the unstable parliamentary system that pre-dated the general, or move forward into a Presidential type of regime or what the French call "an administrative" type, with all the dangers such a regime suggests to any historically-minded Frenchman, of slipping over into some sort of authoritarian regime for which the symbols have been provided by the two Napoleons - by Boulongais and by Marshal Petain.

As I said when I began this discussion, I had a conclusion - a kind of peroration - but we can dispense with that. Inexorable time has saved you from it. I'm sure it's a good thing because, as I look it over it sounds very chauvinistic to me and reminds me a little bit of the kind of prescription as to the image of America that the John Birch Society would like to have the USIA give to Castro. I think I'll just stop at that point.

Once more, gentlemen, may I express my pleasure in being here this morning, so early in the morning for you, and discussing a problem which is a little technical, but which I have attempted to handle, as I said at the beginning, a bit more philosophically and perhaps a bit less mechanically than you may possibly have expected I ought to handle it. I thank you very much.

QUESTION: Sir, I'm very much disappointed that we didn't hear some of your concluding remarks. I wonder if you could indulge in a few of them.

DR. ZURCHER: I was going to say that Colonel Morgan was being very optimistic when he suggested that I was ready for your questions. One ought to be ready for this one at any rate.

Well, the concluding remarks had to do with the brittle nature of our system of parliamentary government, with the extreme difficulty of making it function according to the parliamentary model, according to the idea of pleural groups participating in the formulation of policy. This is an expensive procedure, it's a complicated procedure, and what's more, it strikes me that if it is to persist successfully it probably won't persist unless the economy of a nation is able to produce the kind of returns that will make possible the satisfaction of the kind of conflicting claims to wealth and power that arise in a regime such as this. My conclusion, therefore, has been that democracy is primarily for wealthy states and not for poor states. This is a rather obvious sort of conclusion.

I think about the only variation from the conventional observations along that line have been the adjectives that I have employed for the purpose that I told you about.

This is the second conclusion. I felt also, in the conclusion I felt also this was the chauvinistic feature, that so far as the success of this regime was concerned it was pretty largely allocated to Western Europe, to Britain, the Commonwealth, and the West. We are, in a sense, the preceptors of that type of political system if it is to exist elsewhere in the world. I feel that fairly strongly.

Well, these were in the nature of the conclusions - there is nothing very startling about them - that I had organized for presentation in the paper that I had.

QUESTION: You discussed the political situation in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. What about the future of Finland for a democratic form of government?

DR. ZURCHER: Well, as you probably are aware, the Finns have become almost a protectorate of the Soviet Union, officially at any rate. I believe that the price of the return of the naval base on which the Russians had a 50-year lease was a pact of friendship and non-aggression that was formed around 1954 or '55. And it's to run until about 1975.

The Swedes, of course, are very much interested in trying to maintain the integrity of Finland and are willing to make various concessions along that line, including, of course, the maintenance of their own neutrality. in the assimilation of Finland to the Nordic economic and cultural organizations. The Nordic Cultural and Economic Organization is the Nordic Council. The Nordic Economic Organization, of course, is EFTA, the European Free Trade Association.

Finland has succeeded - up to now, at any rate - in being made an associate member, I believe, of that organization. What's going to happen to Finland now that the Free Trade Association has been broken up and the decision has to be made by the Scandinavian countries as to what they're going to do with respect to the Common Market, this is something of a question. I think it's very much on Sweden's mind. I think the Swedes have been extremely important in acting as a sort of counter to the Russian tendency toward the absorption of Finland.

Actually, I think the Finns have demonstrated that there is vitality in a care-

fully studied effort to try and walk the plank, and still not fall into the water. And they've done it very successfully. I have an extraordinary respect for Finnish leadership in the course of the last 20 years. As you know, so far as their economy is concerned, it's booming. They have one of the highest growth rates in Scandinavia. It was 6% last year as compared to about 3.5% in the United States; about 4.5% in Sweden; about 6% in Norway; the Finns are doing all right. If just left alone they'll do very well indeed. But they're caught; being the sandwich between West and East - their geographical position more than anything else; although, there is, of course, as you know, 100 years of association with Russia, from 1809 to 1919; as a Grand Duchy with foreign affairs in the hands of the hands of the Russians. And actually, the period since 1919 until 1945 has been the only period in which the Finns have been relatively independent in the last 500 years.

I'm not sure I have answered your question. It seems to me that the Finns have indicated a very great capacity for stability if their foreign organization will permit. I don't think they're quite masters of their foreign organization or of their diplomacy in international relations, for reasons that are apparent to all of us. And they have done awfully well in view of that fact.

QUESTION: Would you compare the policy role of the Civil Service in the United States with that of countries such as France, Italy, Austria and the Netherlands?

DR. ZURCHER: The Civil Service policy role in America with France?

QUESTION: France as it used to be, Italy as it is now, and the Netherlands.

DR. ZURCHER: I'm not sure that what I'd have to say on that would be

particularly valuable, because I don't know too much about it. The role of the Civil Service insofar as the Europeans are concerned is, of course, essentially the role of a professional Civil Service. It has been professionalized for a considerable time and that is especially true of the French Civil Service, from the days of the Bourbon period down to the present. The French Civil Service has been a group of experts that have moved very far into the determination of general governmental policy.

In America we have had, I think, something of a revolution in the role of the Civil Service in the course of the last 50 years. We have professionalized it to a very considerable extent. The tendency, therefore, in America it seems to me, is to move forward, toward the kind of level that most European Civil Services that the British, the German, the French and the Italian, had acquired perhaps a hundred years ago. To just what extent these agencies control policy is a subject that would be difficult to answer. It seems to me it depends partly upon the area we're discussing. Technical areas are becoming increasingly important in government, and obviously the Civil Service becomes dominant so far as the determination of policy is concerned.

It's very difficult indeed for amateurs to determine policy outside the area of alternatives that are supplied, I think, by the experts. In foreign relations, agriculture, defense, and almost all of the areas that modern science and technology are producing, the Civil Service is becoming the agency for the determination of policy. This is as far as I think I care to go in attempting to answer that question.

QUESTION: What is the possibility of Western European countries combining

politically and economically to form a third force competing with Russia and the United States?

DR. ZURCHER: Well, of course, that has been the bogey of this Western Union movement from the very beginning. That plus the economic competition that might develop from that organization have been the two bogeys that have been called to the attention of policy-makers on this side of the Atlantic. How seriously one should take this question of their becoming a third force is difficult to answer. I think we had a lecture here on the vital role of Western Europe the last time I was here. I suggested that perhaps it wasn't too bad an idea to develop a kind of polarization of power in the world alongside the American authority on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other.

I think it's their ambition so far as Western European leaders are concerned along this line; that is, ambition to make it an instrument of authority that could conceivably control American policy in the Free World. Surely this is one of the ideas that our friend DeGaulle unquestionably has. How far he can go one can't say, but I'm sure he's looking for what he calls an "equilibrium" between France and America, as between Western Europe and America, that places a great deal more discretion upon the Europeans than they have hitherto been able to exert in organizations such as NATO.

I think here there is associated with this idea on the part of DeGaulle, and also on the part of Adenauer, the notion that perhaps we're a little young; a little youthful to assume the responsibilities that we have, and therefore it wouldn't be a bad idea at all if Europe could develop through organization the sort of sanction that

is necessary to acquire leadership in the Free World, a leadership that is equivalent in authority to the leadership of the United States.

I have no doubt, finally, in answer to your question, that among the European leaders, particularly Adenauer and DeGaulle who have been articulate on this point - they haven't pulled any punches on it; they've said it again and again - but not on the part of let us say, the peripheral group - Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries - they're primarily concerned with the commercial implications of this thing. But on the part of the central group; that is, France and Germany, I say they have left us in no doubt that they believe that Europe, through organization, economic organization, leading ultimately to the sort of thing they have in mind is something supra-national in form and character, could become a force in the world, politically, and it would be good for the world if it did. That's about as far as I care to go on that one.

QUESTION: Doctor, in some of the readings that we have read, and a word or two that you just stated, I get the impression that parliamentary institutions in democracy are more the result of a material fact of life of current history rather than the intangibles such as the makeup and nature of the people concerned. And as a result, we feel that if we simply export enough aid to newly developing country "X" democracy will flower as we know it and like it. Don't you feel - or, do you feel - that this success or failure of democracy - if I might use that term - is more the result of the makeup of the people concerned; for example, in France where it's had a hell of a time as compared to England where it seems to function so smoothly. Doesn't this reflect the nature of the people involved rather than

the economics and geography?

DR. ZURCHER: I don't quite know what you mean by "the nature of the people." The French difficulty, of course, has been that they've had a few too many revolutions and therefore too many causes to compromise to start with. The French never made up their mind in the 19th Century what kind of a political regime they were going to have. In the process of trying to decide on what kind of political regime they were going to have - whether it would be a monarchy, an empire or a republic - they postponed, shall we say, decisions on other issues that were accumulating; issues in the social sphere. And those issues, as well as the regime, caught up with the French in the <sup>beginning of the</sup> 20th Century. That might be one way of explaining the problem the French have faced, rather than some psychological reason, if that's what you have in mind; some peculiar characteristic of the Frenchmen as Frenchmen.

I do think the French are perhaps less capable of organization, at least in the social sphere, than perhaps we are. I think that they came to regard the fruits of organization which is, of course, discipline, the organized movement forward of government and other social organizations, they look upon that as less desirable or less valuable than the assertion of the individual personality. However, I take that sort of thing with a grain of salt, because the Frenchman can organize just as well as a German or an American. I'm certain of that; you can find all sorts of illustrations of it.

It is difficult, therefore, to come to any conclusion about the French such as you have raised. I don't think for a moment that you can export democracy in the

sense of raising people's levels through economic aid. In fact, I don't think you can raise levels by economic aid. But assuming that you could, I don't think you're going to get very far by an attempt to improve the economic establishment of peoples. I think a dynamic type of economy that can produce a distributive type of capitalism, these are important, shall we say, in the making of a system of parliamentary government; of government by the people; a government that relies on organizations that express popular sovereignty. I think this is a symbol of the success of the parliamentary system.

But at the same time I feel very strongly that the background of tradition, the gradual growth and evolution of ideas, the establishment of a strong Civil Service that has the right kind of motivation; that knows how to serve masters instead of grabbing power; these are extremely important. Also, they rely on a variety of sources for leadership instead of just an educated group, let us say, of trained officers or something of that sort. It's one of the problems that some of the new countries face. There's nothing very generous about the base upon which they can rely for leadership; there's just one kind. All of these are factors of the greatest importance, it seems to me, in the solution of the problem of the solidity, perseverance and progress of a popular regime.

That's one of the reasons why I think it is so brittle. It's really a kind of equilibrium that's established by a great number of forces for the success of a popular system; economic, educational, Civil Service, you can name it.

QUESTION: Doctor, we are constantly reminded, and you have reminded us again this morning, that the stability of France and Germany rests upon two

mortal beings. What is going to happen in the next few years when these two gentlemen pass from the scene, and what can the U. S. do about it? If anything.

DR. ZURCHER: I don't think the U. S. can do much about it, except perhaps talk about it in groups like this. I wish I had that kind of union with the stars which would permit me to say something that might be regarded as semi-intelligent in answer to your question. The great difficulty, as you know, is that there really isn't any personal alternative to these two leaders; there doesn't appear to be.

We were discussing it just before we came in here for the question period. The tendency on the part of Adenauer, as you know, has been to push people down when they stick their head above water as a possible candidate for the Premiership. There really hasn't been anyone groomed for the job. There have been two or three individuals who have been prominently mentioned, but no one who has been really groomed for the job.

The further difficulty, of course, is the coalition which has been largely responsible - the Christian Democratic Union - for keeping Adenauer there for his 10 or 12 years, has been losing strength, and losing it, apparently, rather rapidly, at least if one can project from their most recent elections in the lapidary and the last Bundestag elections. So, the combination in the reduction of strength on the part of the Christian Democratic Union - which is the most important of all the parties - the surging upward of the third party, the splinter party of Free Democrats, the failure of the Christian Democrats to provide an alternative to Adenauer, it seems to me to raise a rather parlous situation so far as Germany is concerned.

I think, however, that the German situation is far more promising than the French, because I really don't see anything on the horizon as far as DeGaulle is concerned. There just isn't anybody there. There are people who think DeGaulle has placed the French at a higher level because of economic employment in December of 1958, because of the very high level of prosperity in France at the present time, in the last two or three years. It's rather remarkable what's going on; because they feel that he has, perhaps, specified as to just what France can do as regards the relationship of that country to the Western<sup>ly</sup> Common Market, because of all these decisions, perhaps it will be easier for a successor to take over. But I personally doubt it. Your guess is as good as mine.

QUESTION: Does the existence of a monarchy, figure-head though it may be, exert some sort of influence on parliamentary governments in European countries?

DR. ZURCHER: Well, if one were to judge by the history of the British Monarchy, the answer would surely be in the affirmative. Whether all the British would agree that that influence has been good, is another question. But that it has been an influence, and that it has been an influence for the prolongation of the regime and for its stability, I don't think anyone would deny it. Now, how is it exerted? Well, it's exerted the way so much influence is exerted in all mature policies, like the British; not institutionally, not formally, but in the background; socially, on occasions where it does not meet the Press.

I think it was Badgett's observation that he could encourage, he could advise and he could warn; and that's about as good a summary it seems to me, of the British Monarchy's role in the operation of the British Government, as anyone could

formulate. Now there are occasions too where the monarchy acts as a kind of reservoir, particularly if it's popular and has a good background - a long, stark background, as does the British. For, when a real issue arises and the conventions of the constitution don't operate correctly, when it's difficult to determine who the leader should be, who should become Prime Minister, then the influence of the king or queen, the Royal House or its advisors, whoever that may be, channeled through that institution, it becomes exceedingly important in designating an individual. And that, therefore, is a kind of contribution to continuity and stability, in that sense.

There is another contribution that the British Monarchy has made which I might have touched upon in my remarks, and that is the fact that it has been extremely important because legally it represents the Executive authority of the British Crown. The British Crown's Executive authority is really the Executive authority of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, as you know. The ability, therefore, to disperse this authority over a variety of countries has made it possible to maintain a constitutional tie between the mother country and colonies, and now mother country and free dominion.

I'm not sure, however, that the same recipe could be applied, let us say, to the substitution of a monarch for Franco in Spain even though they went back to the Bourbon monarch. I don't think it would have the same effect because there have been too many interruptions in the Spanish monarchy; it does not have the proper following and therefore it does not have the prestige and insubstantial but nevertheless extremely influential authority in the government that the British

Monarchy has. It's a very delicate thing to formulate; it's almost intangible.

QUESTION: Should political union be brought about by the Common Market, what effect would this union have on the internal parliamentary systems involved?

DR. ZURCHER: Well, if it really became supra-national in character and if the great issues were to be decided by a new parliament which represented Europe, let us say, which is the ideal of the European Federalists and a good many of the Supra-Nationalists - and of people like the Belgian Prime Minister - if this actually happened, and it's conceivable that it could happen, of course, in the next 50 years or more, then I think you would see a very gradual shift from local parliaments to the Common Area Parliament of issues that heretofore had been essentially local issues, particularly issues involving commercial policy, issues involving internal organization, the movement of capital, the movement of labor; all of these things would be transferred, in a way, from the national parliaments to the central parliament, just as we had in the United States over the last 150 years.

It's inevitable if this continental organization becomes something more than merely a kind of confederate debating chain. That's a big if. I'm not at all sure that we're going to get over that hump in the course of the next half century. But I suspect we will. And when we do it's inevitable that this transfer of major issues will take place from local parliaments to national parliaments. The local parliaments will tend to have some of the same significance that is now attached, let us say, to state legislatures in the United States, which is quite different from that which was attached to the legislature of the State of New York when DeWitt Clinton was Governor, let us say; quite different.

But this is, as a former President of the United States used to say, an iffy question. It all depends on where this thing is going. I do believe, and the evidence is already apparent, that the party organization in Western Europe will begin to be an organization of professional groups and industrial groups, and will be on a common wheel basis.

The parliamentary organization that now exists, perhaps one ought not to dignify it with that title, but one does exist in the form of a parliamentary organization. It's already operating occasionally on the basis of conditions that are not mad but are socially destructible. You find national groups dividing against national groups. This happens. This is bound to happen if you're going to organize a continental party.

Well, this would be an interesting subject on which to speculate for another half hour; I'd like to, but I don't think it would be particularly fruitful.

COLONEL MORGAN: Dr. Zurcher, time has caught us and we want to thank you very much for joining us this morning.