

JULES FERRY AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

A thesis submitted to the Graduate School of  
the University of Wisconsin in partial fulfill-  
ment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy.

by

Lowell Lawrence Blaisdell

Date September 4 . . . , 1948.

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This thesis having been approved in respect  
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## INTRODUCTION

In the first twenty years of the Third Republic Adolphe Thiers, Léon Gambetta, and Jules Ferry in turn were the dominating political figures. Since Thiers' career encompassed virtually the whole of the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, and he was a participant in three political revolutions, he has been the object of much study by French historians. Likewise the versatile and popular Gambetta, the most ardent parliamentary defender of the Third Republic in its early years, has been an obvious recipient of scholarly attention.

More recently scholars, French and American alike, have sought to place Ferry in his proper niche in the facade of party maneuvering intermixed with statecraft in the Third Republic edifice. Here in the United States the actions of Ferry in completing the construction of the French overseas empire<sup>1</sup>, and his determining influence in shaping the first French laws for lay education in the years following 1879<sup>2</sup> have been the subject of doctoral dissertations written at Columbia University.

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1. Thomas V. Power, Jules Ferry and the Renaissance of French Imperialism (New York, 1944).  
2. Evelyn M. Acomb, The French Laic Laws (1879-1889) (New York, 1941).

The third and earliest phase of Jules Ferry's political career involved his apprenticeship in politics before 1870 and particularly his participation in the ill-fated Government of National Defense during the Franco-Prussian War. This proved to be a decidedly discouraging beginning in the art of governing for a man who subsequently achieved prominence, if never greatness, in the ranks of influential political leaders of the Third Republic. Ferry in the Government of National Defense personified the problem of the young, inexperienced, yet ambitious politician seeking, often blindly, to govern in a time of bewildering crisis. This introduction to Ferry's career provides a contrast to his later hard-won and ill-received successes in statescraft, and is worth study so far as it explains the man, his attitudes, his conduct, and his politics.

Part I. Republicanism under the Second Empire.

## CHAPTER I

### JULES FERRY - HIS EARLY LIFE, EDUCATION PERSONALITY

#### I

Jules Ferry was born in the town of Saint-Dié, on the Meurthe River and in the Vosges Mountains just east of Alsace, on April 5, 1832.<sup>1</sup> Ferry's father, Charles-Edouard Ferry, was a lawyer, son of an enterprising tile-maker,<sup>2</sup> his mother the daughter of a prominent judge named Jamelet who lived in Vouziers, not far from Reims.<sup>3</sup> Ferry's childhood home was one of the largest houses in Saint-Dié, and he grew up with a younger brother and older sister.<sup>4</sup>

The ancestry on the paternal side of Ferry's family showed his prosperous bourgeois, republican origins. Ferry stated that his father's family generations earlier had been of the Vosges peasantry.<sup>5</sup> But for some half-dozen generations the family had been artisans of bells. A family anecdote recounted that Ferry's great-great grandfather as a boy of thirteen had guaranteed to the abbot of Andlau in Alsace that he would complete a bell that his father had contracted with the abbot

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1. Alfred Rambaud, Jules Ferry (Paris, 1903), 1.
  2. Eugène Jules-Ferry, ed. Lettres de Jules Ferry, 1846-1893 (Paris, 1914), 568.
  3. Rambaud, Ferry, 1.
  4. Maurice Pottecher, Jules Ferry (Paris, 1930), 37.
  5. Lettres, 567; the information following on the family is from this source, 567-570.

to make, only to die suddenly. Ferry's grandfather, the tile-maker, whom he remembered well, was an enthusiast of the Great Revolution, and was mayor of Saint-Dié during the Directory. His father, in turn, remained republican, and was well-known in Saint-Dié as in opposition to Louis Philippe and Guizot.

Though both parents' families lived in the east and north of France, his father's family had intermarried with Alsatians, and throughout his life Ferry was regarded, and regarded himself, as closely attached to Alsace, even marrying an Alsatian girl while in early middle age.

Ferry's father intended to enter politics actively in 1840 had not his wife died; six years later the widower-father moved the family to Strasbourg, anxious to give his sons a good education.<sup>6</sup> There he and his brother received the equivalent of primary and secondary education in the local collège, while their father through some successful financial operations insured a modest fortune for the sons. In 1850 the family moved again, this time to Paris in order to continue the sons' education, Jules entering the Ecole de Droit in the following year.

The father died in 1856, momentarily bringing to a crisis the religious differences in the family, for neither father nor sons wished religious rites. The family had long

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6. Pottecher, Ferry, 40ff. All of the above factual information on Ferry's youth and young manhood is derived from this short biography, good on the personal aspects of Ferry's life.

been Catholic in faith, however, and the mother and the boys' sister were devoutly religious. The father's death and the boys' secular life in Paris caused the sister to move back to Saint-Dié, where she lived thenceforth. Despite Ferry's strong anticlericalism, he always retained a great affection for his sister.

The two great events of Ferry's youth were the Revolution of 1848 and the coup d'état of December 2, 1851. Living in Strasbourg, the sixteen-year old Jules followed events in Paris as well as the activity in his own city through reading Le Siècle. He liked Lamartine, and read his poetry as well as his L'Histoire des Girondins. While his adolescent sympathies were with the Republic, his brother's unedited notes affirm that Ferry garnered his dislike of excess and too rapid reform through reaction to some of the events of '48.<sup>7</sup>

Ferry, like many another youth, had an immediately unfavorable reaction to the Second Empire when he found one winter day in 1851 that the Ecole de Droit had been temporarily closed--it was the coup d'état. His father, very angry, remarked that they were to have the Empire again without even the saving grace of the glory this time.

Ferry moved steadily through to a law degree, and achieved his first moment of prominence when the famous Legitimist law professor, Berryer, chose him to give the introductory discourse before the Conference of Lawyers, December 13, 1855.

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7. Ibid, 51; Pottecher had access to Charles Ferry's notes on Jules' life.

Ferry's subject was "De l'Influence des Idées Philosophiques sur le Barreau au Dix-Huitième Siècle"; he contrasted the legal profession in the 1600's with it in the 1700's when the rationalism of the Enlightenment affected this as it did other professions, and he included several oblique references to the freedom enjoyed by lawyers in the eighteenth century as a result of the new ideas, by implication contrasting this to the state of the law under Napoleon III.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, it is evident that, like many others from bourgeois families, an important reason for his choosing the law as a career was due to the comparative freedom of expression enjoyed in this profession as contrasted to most other pursuits.<sup>9</sup>

The brothers Ferry lived a very comfortable existence in their bachelor apartments during the 50's and 60's; Charles Ferry abandoned the law at twenty-three and became a banker's apprentice, very quickly becoming well-to-do. In this fashion Charles was able to help his brother in his subsequent ventures into politics, while Jules, thanks to Charles' occasional assistance,<sup>10</sup> and the money left by his father, was able to dabble in politics as well as journalism, rather than having to devote himself solely to his practice in order to earn a living.<sup>11</sup>

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8. Paul Robiquet, ed., Discours et Opinions de Jules Ferry (7 vols., Paris, 1893), I: 4-23.  
 9. Jean Dietz, "Les Débuts de Jules Ferry" in Revue de France (Paris, 1932), V: 506.  
 10. Pottecher, op. cit., 77.  
 11. I. Tchernoff, Le Parti Républicain au Coup d'Etat et sous le Second Empire (Paris, 1906), 378.

## II

At this point it will be useful to interrupt this chronological sketch of Ferry's life at his early manhood in order to make an examination of the man's character.

Almost all political personages are the subject of contradictory character estimates by their detractors or apologists. Estimates of Ferry are especially contradictory and controversial, an unfortunate circumstance, for favorable or unfavorable analyses of his personality are used time and again to explain this or that political act or, more generally, his career as a whole. This is important to know in that, unlike Gambetta whose enemies condemned his actions while paying tribute to the amazing personality of the man, Ferry's undeniably chilling exterior has caused both his political career and his person to be damned as one and the other side of the same coin of narrow self-interest. Consequently, it is especially necessary in the case of this man to make a summary of his most obvious characteristics, so the observer can be aware of his somewhat baffling nature.

Opinion on Ferry's personality and therefore his career has divided into two widely diverging channels. The views held of him during his own lifetime were, with the exception of close friends and relatives, almost unanimously critical. Decidedly unlike some public figures who are revered even by their political opposites, Ferry seemed to be able to inspire nothing but deep hatred from his foes to the Right and to the Left. Even more striking was the fact that his political

friends--fellow republican bourgeoisie--were very often repelled by his personality.<sup>12</sup> The general public, republican and anti-republican alike, who knew Ferry only as a name in the journals or a face emerging from the Chambre likewise had a great distaste for the man. Most people dismissed Ferry, whatever his passing achievements, as a republican politician whose tactics of expediency and opportunism, together with his indifference before the public, as always the self-seeker, never the leader with vision embracing his country as well as himself.

In the years following his death in 1893 there appeared a movement in the contrary direction in interpreting Ferry's life. This began more or less with Robiquet's publication of Ferry's official papers,<sup>13</sup> and was continued in the semi-official biography of Ferry by Alfred Rambaud, chef de cabinet during Ferry's first premiership, 1879-80.<sup>14</sup> To some extent Tchernoff in his volume on republicans under the Empire<sup>15</sup> has done something to modify the familiar view of Ferry. More recently Pottecher in his short biography and in a popular periodical article on Ferry<sup>16</sup> has decidedly subscribed to this new

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12. See, for instance, Juliette Adam, Mesangoisses et Nos Luites, 1871-1873 (Paris, 1907), 287. This woman, mistress of one of the leading republican salons of the period, had wide contacts throughout republican circles.
13. Discours de Ferry, op. cit.
14. Rambaud, op. cit.
15. Tchernoff op. cit.
16. Pottecher, Ferry, and, same author, "Jules Ferry ou la Tragédie de l'Impopularité" in Revue Politique et Parlementaire, (Paris, 1931), CXLVI: 366-380.

view. And such a prominent historian as Gabriel Hanotaux<sup>17</sup> and to some degree Power in his work on empire-building in the 80's<sup>18</sup> have made efforts to destroy the old attitudes of equating his unpopularity with small-mindedness. This sort of Revisionism applied to an individual has sought to show that Ferry beneath an unprepossessing manner which inadvertently alienated acquaintances and general public was a man who possessed courage, imagination, and warmth, and realized objectives by his political program which entitle him to a much more sympathetic place in the ranks of the statesmen of the Third Republic than he has received.

Ferry's personal appearance was not altogether attractive. Though he was tall and always stood erect, his coldness of manner tended to offset this advantage. His facial contours were distinguished by a high forehead and Roman nose, and mutton-chop whiskers for which he was famous.<sup>19</sup> This latter feature long since out of fashion, was sometimes affected by lawyers in the last century, but an observer today would be likely to regard this as a disagreeable feature to a greater degree than Ferry's contemporaries of the 60's and 70's. Nevertheless, in no way could he be regarded as a handsome man.

Friends and critics alike almost unanimously agree that Ferry lacked a first asset of all politicians, the ability to

17. Gabriel Hanotaux, "Mon Temps" in La Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1937), xxxix<sup>e</sup>: 349-356

18. Power, op. cit.

19. See a typical portrait of Ferry in his 30's in Jules Claretie, Histoire de la Révolution de 1870-1871 (Paris, 1872), 433.

appear in a favorable light before a crowd. Close personal and political friends were aware of this lack. In 1869 Gambetta wrote Lavertujon a mutual friend of the two men, that Lavertujon positively should not have Ferry preside over a political meeting of Lavertujon's, for Jules, however close a friend, "had not enough action on the popolo".<sup>20</sup>

Anent this matter Lavertujon in turn remarked:

"His (Gambetta's) observation is exact..., a fact for which I have never been able to account. I have noticed it in the Legislative Corps and during the Siege, later during his great ministry, when newspapers, orators, caricaturists made of him an execrated being while he rendered great service to his country..."<sup>21</sup>

His enemies commented more acidly on this unhappy trait-- Etienne Lamy, a Catholic republican, recalled that his "oral words as well as his pen...were...massive, vulgar, heavy..."<sup>22</sup> and many others made references of a like kind.

As with crowds, so with individuals, Ferry had not the knack of impressing favorably passing acquaintances as distinguished from close friends. This was another serious disadvantage, for in politics it is the wide circle of formal acquaintances who form and spread impressions of a man, while the intimate friends remain just that. Thus Alfred Darimon, the Proudhonist turned Bonapartist under the Empire, while paying tribute to Ferry's ability as early as 1863, also ob-

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20. André Lavertujon, Gambetta Inconnu, Ouvrage Contenant Quinze Lettres Inédites de Léon Gambetta (Paris, 1905), 11,12.

21. Ibid., 142.

22. Etienne Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale--Les Idées et les Hommes" in Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1896), cxxxv, 740.

served that his "aggressive manner could create great perils"<sup>23</sup> for that which he served. And Hector Pessard, a republican publicist of the time, thought that if Ferry had "the manner of a Freycinet he would receive the approbation that his ability merited."<sup>24</sup>

A commonly held opinion during Ferry's own lifetime was that he was personally cold and unresponsive and indifferent to the feelings or ideals of others. But this view has been conclusively dispelled by a variety of evidence. Even a cursory glance at the volume of his letters shows him to be moved by the beauties of nature, the landmarks of history, contemporary or classical, and capable of strong feeling of affection or dislike for other people.<sup>25</sup> The fact that Ferry in his youth momentarily aspired to be a painter<sup>26</sup> suggests some feeling for the abstract beauties of life, while his acquaintance with Liszt and Wagner indicates a like attitude.<sup>27</sup> His close friends had a high regard for him, and evidence that he possessed warmth and feeling. That an inner warmth lay beneath the surface coldness is neatly illustrated in a perhaps apocryphal anecdote that Gambetta once reproached him for being a rose-bush which showed only its thorns, to which Ferry

23. Alfred Darimon, L'Opposition Libérale sous l'Empire (1861-1863) (Paris 1886), 287.

24. Hector Pessard, Mes Petits Papiers (2 vols., Paris, 1887), I:108.

25. As an example, see the letter to his aunt written from Constantinople, Lettres, 42-46.

26. Rambaud, op. cit., 3.

27. Pottecher, Ferry, 31, 79.

replied that his roses were within.<sup>28</sup>

There is a certain element of truth in the assertion of one of his biographers that Ferry's Vosgien origins contributed to his hardness of manner.<sup>29</sup> The montagnards of the east of France have been observed to have certain regional characteristics which distinguish them immediately from the Bretons or Gascons or Parisians or the people in any other strongly marked region of France. The life in the mountains, the long winters, the hard toil of the peasantry, do not contribute to outward warmth of disposition in some individuals. And the frequency of invasion from east or west of the mountains and the Rhine, it is said, could cause an unconscious attitude of suspicion toward others in people originating in this area. Ferry, originating from this environment in which his family had lived for many generations, may well have absorbed some of this into his personality from earliest childhood on. The family lived in Saint-Dié or Strasbourg until he was eighteen, and in these formative years the youth unquestionably was influenced by the local atmosphere in which he found himself. Thus in his adult life when one identified him as a Vosgien he had reference to fairly specific popular impressions of what a Vosgien might be in attitudes and disposition.

The cold exterior did perhaps reflect a trait of character that everybody noticed in Ferry, the will to lead, to dom-

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28. Ibid., 15; Pottecher, in turn, probably got the anecdote from Antonin Proust, "Mémoires du Temps Présent" in Le Figaro, June 29, 1895

29. Pottecher, Ferry, 16.

inate, to enforce his will imperiously. His brother, Charles, his most intimate confidant, recalled that in a heated argument he told Jules that he had the temperament of a blind partisan, whereupon Jules threw his glass of wine into Charles' face. Again, Jules had threatened to separate himself from his brother unless the latter agreed whole-heartedly with a viewpoint he had expressed in a newspaper article.<sup>30</sup>

Closely tied to this characteristic was a driving ambition to succeed in politics. Ambition is most often a necessary accompaniment of existence and is an absolute prerequisite to political success, so it is a trait hardly to be deplored, and yet Ferry's enemies invariably attributed the lowest possible motivation to his ambition, while even such an observer as Darimon, if anything inclined to be friendly to the youthfully aspiring Ferry, made frequent references to this trait in a manner suggesting ambition for its own sake.<sup>31</sup>

A characteristic which worked in Ferry's favor was his capacity for hard, unpretentious work. As a journalist in the 60's he showed himself able to undertake the inglorious spadework of heavily informative or polemical feature writings; thus he helped Darimon in preparation of an article on the evils of cotton manufacturing<sup>32</sup> or did the bulk of the work on an election manual for the 1863 elections.<sup>33</sup> Here he distinguished

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30. See Pottecher's article, op. cit., 367. Note this is in the author's article in Revue, op. cit., and not in his biography cited immediately above.

31. Darimon, op. cit., 329; Alfred Darimon, Le Tiers Parti sous l'Empire (1863-1866) (Paris, 1887), 5.

32. Darimon, L'Opposition Liberale, 295.

33. See "La Lutte Electorale en 1863", Discours 44-94.

himself from most French journalists of the time, at least in the republican setting, who were specialists in authoring burning editorials in political theory while showing small effort for the drudgery of preparing factual articles on current problems of the day. In politics as in journalism Ferry always applied himself doggedly to the duties of his position, and frequently proved willing to accept the most disagreeable of tasks with no apparent repugnance. This last trait of Ferry's was frequently remarked in the siege of Paris, and has caused his detractors to attribute his willingness to accept distasteful missions to his self-seeking ambition again--not able to achieve prominence through popularity or ability, said they, he attained the seat of power by accepting that which others eschewed. So, on the political Right, Pierre de la Gorce, conservative historian of the Second Empire, referred to "the greediness of his ambitions and his obstinate toil,"<sup>34</sup> while Arthur Arnould, one of the members of the Commune, wrote in 1878 that Ferry during the siege "had one idea, to become mayor of Paris", and he was the type who "would become a minister some day"<sup>35</sup>

These habits of persistent hard work and acceptance of unpopular duties could be attributed to another drive than simple ambition, however, for Ferry was also noteworthy for his tremendous desire for action. This was intermingled with, and

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34. Pierre de la Gorce, Histoire du Second Empire (7 vols., Paris, 1899-1905), V: 390.

35. Arthur Arnould, Histoire Populaire et Parlementaire de la Commune de Paris (Brussels, 1878), 39.

inextricable from, his will to lead, as well as his ambition, thus causing him consciously or unconsciously always to throw himself in the midst of trying and uncomfortable situations. So, in the midst of the most critical moment of the siege of Paris, with the city in the throes of short-lived rebellion led by the extremists in Paris, Ferry, a civilian, was to be found leading the National Guard to the rescue of his colleagues of the Government of National Defense held captive by the rebels.<sup>36</sup> Many other like incidents took place during the siege in which Ferry played a somewhat similar role, causing Gustave Lefrançais, another Communard, to refer to Ferry as the Government of National Defense's "handy-man".<sup>37</sup>

It is evident from this that Ferry was not lacking in courage, and, indeed, instances abound of his willingness to risk his person or his cause with the most striking indifference in moments of great danger. Gabriel Hanotaux, chef de cabinet in his second cabinet, recalled his conduct after the fall of the cabinet in 1885, when, leaving the Chambre, Ferry was all but mobbed by the crowds, who shouted, "Into the water with him!" as he crossed the Pont de la Concorde, but his icy calm permitted him to walk through the throngs unmolested.<sup>38</sup> It should be added that his courage, as will be seen, sometimes amounted to recklessness, thus bringing on him not respect but noisy denunciation.

36. For an appreciation of Ferry's part in this incident, see Jules Simon, Souvenirs du Quatre Septembre (2 vols., Paris, 1876), II: 170-172.

37. Gustave Lefrançais, Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire (Paris, n.d.), 403, 404.

38. Hanotaux, op. cit., 355-356.

As might be expected of such a man, one finds little evidence of a sense of humor. Examination of his letters shows him rarely witty or whimsical, usually serious and didactic. Ferry, though very quick on the retort, unlike his long-time political friend, Ernest Picard, was always sarcastic, never lightly ironical. One of the students of Ferry's career observed that as a boy he rarely played with the other boys,<sup>39</sup> and it is noticeable that throughout his adult life he took himself very seriously, not having the time for the lighter side of life, nor the temperament voluntarily to seek enjoyment for its own sake.

It would not be surprising if a man of this nature of intense will, ambition, courage, and a desire for intrepid action compounded together should have a streak of ruthlessness in him. Whether we take him at his friends' evaluation as the possessor of a hard surface beneath which lay the usual human feelings, or his enemies' judgment that the hard surface also had a hard core, one feels in studying the man's actions that a certain disregard for individuals in whom he had no personal attachment appears at times. Ferry, while thoroughly trained in the realm of ideas, was primarily a man of action. It has been observed since time immemorial that this type does not think primarily in terms of justice precised for each individual--the will to action usually turns the attention away from this direction. This tendency in Ferry was noticed by General Trochu years after they had been colleagues together in the Government of National De-

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39. Jean Dietz, op. cit., 502.

fense. Trochu, a complete wreck politically ever since the siege of Paris, wrote Ferry a congratulatory note on his first advent to the premiership in 1879, and wrote him one of commiseration in 1887 after Ferry was very nearly assassinated, but received a reply to neither.<sup>40</sup> Trochu would hardly have been disposed to tolerance in the piety of his religious convictions, especially toward the man who was completing educational reforms which were anathema to any Catholic, nor did he agree with Ferry's colonial program in the 80's, yet he was willing to forget these differences. Inasmuch as Trochu once had befriended Ferry by going out of his way to testify on his behalf during the investigation of the Government of National Defense,<sup>41</sup> his letters would seem to have deserved a response. In this instance the pietist gave the liberal a prime lesson in tolerance, and it can be accounted for in Ferry's inclination to overlook the casual acquaintance who did not bear directly on his immediate horizon.

All of this suggests that Ferry's was a complex personality, one not easy to identify correctly whatever the facile judgments of his own time. Hanotaux offered a number of reasons why, in his judgment, Ferry could never be anything but an unpopular politician. According to him, Ferry's personal traits militated fatally against his acceptance by the mass of the French people, always remembering that he was not what he

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40. General Trochu, Oeuvres Posthume (2 vols., Tours, 1896), I: 635-637.

41. General Trochu's testimony, Annales de l'Assemblée Nationale, 1874, vol. xxiii: 271; vols. xxi-xxvii constitute the official investigation of the Government of National Defense.

seemed to be. But equally important were other less obvious considerations: Ferry was a civilian without the military glamour at a time when the military still enjoyed great prestige in France. Ferry was a laic, an anticlericalist which automatically disqualified him among a large section of the French population. Then Ferry was a legist, and the law is cold--an interesting idea, but of dubious merit since many another lawyer has been left personally unaffected by the nature of the law. And, said Hanotaux, he was a man of action, not likely to endear himself to the populace by his conduct. Finally, there was within him an interior modesty which prevented him from seeking the popularity of the crowd.<sup>42</sup>

Hanotaux's explanation, like that of Ferry's biographers, has the merit of probing beneath the surface to discover more plausible and more just explanations for the life of Ferry, but it does not provide the complete answer to the puzzle of Ferry. Somewhere between the popular version of Ferry and the Ferry whom his friends and biographers have known lay the real man. At times, certainly, he did seem to be the shrewd, self-seeking opportunistic politician lacking only in grace and tactical experience, and on other occasions there was evidence that fine intentions went unnoticed or were grossly misconstrued in the hurly-burly of events. Which was uppermost in the man--the clever, ambitious politician privately interested in action always to advance his own career, or the misrepresented republican whose generous aims he had not it in him to reveal--each

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<sup>42</sup>. Hanotaux, op. cit., 356.

individual alone can decide on whatever basis he makes such decisions. About all that one can say for certain is that both self-interest and disinterest motivated Ferry, in exactly what measure one can only guess.

## CHAPTER II

A SKETCH OF REPUBLICAN IDEAS AND DEVELOPMENTS  
DURING THE SECOND EMPIRE

To appreciate the ideas and conduct of the men who succeeded to power at the birth of the Third Republic a fairly careful examination of the life and activities of republican thinkers under the Second Empire is necessary. Virtually all the men active in the first score of years of the Third Republic stemmed from the atmosphere of semi-respectability which prevailed toward the republican world in the time of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, and were profoundly influenced by these years spent in political disrepute. A general acquaintance with the actions and ideas of the republicans in the mid-century decades of the 50's and 60's naturally precedes a closer examination of Ferry's own political milieu, since without some knowledge of the republican world in toto, the observer lacks perspective in examining one of its parts.

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## I

The 1850's found the French republicans in the deepest despondency as a result of events surrounding the Revolution of 1848. The Republic, happily revived after approximately fifty years, quickly encountered repeated misfortune in the indecisions of the provisional government of the spring of 1848 and the unhappy June Days. The post-mortem of the June Days

was the first open indication that a reaction might be in the offing,<sup>1</sup> and by the date of the Constitution of December 10, 1848 the republicans represented a steadily declining minority.<sup>2</sup> President Louis Bonaparte prudently paved the road to Bonapartist absolutism by restricting through all manners of repressive activity any republican manifestations in a republican state.<sup>3</sup> The bewildered devotees of the new regime were altogether unfit to cope with the Bonapartist president, and their fate was sealed well before the coup d'état of December 2, 1851. Both of the leading authorities on republicans under the Empire agree that every possible measure to crush republican sentiment was taken by Louis Napoleon and his advisors beginning in 1849.<sup>4</sup> The republicans, especially the more advanced, made a brief comeback by sweeping most of the cities in the east and center of France in 1849, arousing the Monarchists' and Catholics' fear. Louis Napoleon seized this opportunity to enact decrees severely limiting the right of public assembly in 1850.<sup>5</sup> In a similar vein a Law of May 31, 1850 meant an end of universal suffrage in point of fact.<sup>6</sup> By this time Louis Blanc and Ledru-Rollin, among others, were in exile, while the famous

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1. Richard E. Gustafson, Louis Blanc and the Revolution of 1848 (unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1945), 236.
  2. Georges Weill, Histoire du Parti Républicain en France de 1814 à 1870 (Paris, 1900), 315.
  3. Tchernoff, op. cit., 21-23, 37.
  4. Tchernoff, op. cit., 23; Weill, op. cit., 343; these two volumes, especially the former, are definitive for this period in regard to republican history.
  5. Tchernoff, op. cit., 16.
  6. Weill, op. cit., 340.

Babeufist, Blanqui, and his former friend, Barbès, were in prison.<sup>7</sup> By the time Louis Napoleon and the Duke de Morny made their move in December, 1851 there was every likelihood of success.

Despite the many signs of what was coming, the republicans in Paris, most natural leaders in resistance, were taken by surprise. On December 2 the feeble resistance resulted in little more than the death of Baudin, whose memory was revived in an ostentatious fashion by the republicans in the declining days of the Empire. Further armed opposition in the several days following December 2 was to no avail, and much the same story was repeated in the provinces.<sup>8</sup> Though the Monarchists were as unhappy as the republicans over the turn of affairs, it is true that the only armed resistance, however disorganized, came from the republicans.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the blackest moment in Napoleon the Little's twenty-two years in power followed December 2. Mixed commissions were set up to try those deemed guilty of lèse majesté, and these commissions were guilty of a terroristic suppression of opposition<sup>10</sup> not surpassed until the twentieth century authoritarian regimes improved these methods.

The subsequent plebiscites of December 1851 and November 1852 could not but return enormous Napoleonic majorities; the

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7. Tchernoff, op. cit., 37.

8. Ibid., 37-46

9. Weill, op. cit., 356.

10. Tchernoff, op. cit., 72, 73; Weill, op. cit., 363; De la Gorce, op. cit., I: 9,10.

republicans, at least, were so intimidated by the mixed commissions that many feared even to abstain from voting in the plebiscites.<sup>11</sup> The Legitimists were little better off--a vote against Bonaparte was to them a vote for revolution; a vote for him a betrayal of the monarchist principle.<sup>12</sup> Therefore they very often abstained. The Orleanists, denouncers of Napoleon in the Assembly, were persecuted like the republicans, although somewhat less harshly.<sup>13</sup>

For the next few years the republicans were absolutely routed, and they never forgot or were able to account for the change in fortunes which had brought them to this pass in less than four years of the Second Republic. They could reflect ruefully that the worst days of suppression under Louis Philippe left them far better off than they now were<sup>14</sup>--the Orleanist Monarchy was at least constitutional, narrowly parliamentary, bourgeois.

After the coup d'état there was an exodus of republicans into the neighboring countries. Before December 2, 1851 the exiles and imprisoned were chiefly of the advanced, socialist republican flavor, but after this date exile became a way of life for hundreds of republicans who escaped. Those not so lucky were imprisoned, sometimes in Algeria, some, even, as far away as Cayenne.<sup>15</sup>

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11. Tchernoff, op. cit., 82-83.

12. De la Gorce, op. cit., II:97.

13. Ibid., II: 106.

14. Weill, op. cit., 326.

15. Tchernoff, op. cit., 97.

The handful of leaders remaining were unable to play any active part in politics, and the republicans could make no systematic effort to enter candidates in the completely rigged elections of 1852.<sup>16</sup> The leaders were compelled to be so moderate as to represent no opposition whatsoever. The republican press in Paris, as elsewhere, was for all practical purposes wiped out;<sup>17</sup> in Paris Le Siècle, Havin's republican organ, was toned down to the point of insouciance,<sup>18</sup> yet still hovered on the brink of suspension. These years from 1852 to 1857, when the first signs of revival came, found the republicans hard-pressed to exist in a formal sense, but never was there likelihood they would disappear.<sup>19</sup>

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## II

The republicans living away from France in the 50's have been the subject of considerable interest--the two detailed histories of the Second Empire by De la Gorce and Delord devote attention to these exiles, and naturally considerable emphasis is placed upon their activity by Tchernoff and Weill in their volumes. The years following the Revolutions of 1848 in France, the German states, the Hapsburg Empire, saw exiles of all vintage flock to the Low Countries and especially to England

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16. Tchernoff, op. cit., 263; De la Gorce, op. cit., I:56-58; after the elections republicans in the Corps Legislatif numbered three--Cavaignac, Hénot, Carnot.

17. Weill, op. cit., 404.

18. Taxile Delord, Histoire du Second Empire (6 vols., Paris, 1869-1875), II:183-184; this is still one of the best histories of the Second Empire, and neatly supplements the conservative De la Gorce.

19. Tchernoff, op. cit., 149.

and Switzerland. The French exiles, oracles of the republican party throughout the Empire, settled chiefly in Switzerland, Belgium, and England, while there was a small contingent in New York calling itself the Société de la Montagne. The few who went to Mexico soon bitterly reflected that nowhere was there escape from their bête noire, when he turned up there in new guise a few years later.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to know a little of the activity of the exiles, for in these years they exercised an influence on the republican world comparable to the political weight of the war veteran in America; they were the veterans of the Second Republic who had been banished for their faith.

Quite naturally the outlaws were unhappy living outside the homeland. Most nearly at home in Belgium or Switzerland, they found the former uncomfortable because the first of the Leopolds could be influenced by the last of the Napoleons.<sup>21</sup>

Among the most famous leaders, Victor Hugo resided at Guernsey, Louis Blanc, Schoelcher, Ledru-Rollin, Charles Delescluze, and Félix Pyat lived at different times in London; Charras and Edgar Quinet resided in Switzerland; and Barbès for a time lived in Holland.<sup>22</sup> Those in England enjoyed the great liberty, but, as De la Gorce described their feelings, England was to them "a double exile--the somber climate, the humor of the inhabitants, and the difficulty of the language creating a

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20. Weill, op. cit., 384.

21. Tchernoff, op. cit., 114.

22. Ibid., 125; De la Gorce, op. cit., IV: 181.

glacial solitude."<sup>23</sup> Louis Blanc alone adapted himself to the English environment and customs.<sup>24</sup> The others were dissatisfied: Delescluze, later one of the most famous Communards, could not stand English constitutionalism, so remained there only briefly; Ledru-Rollin felt no compunctions about authoring a volume called La Décadence de l'Angleterre.<sup>25</sup> Some of the French were friendly with other famous refugees in England, such as Garibaldi, Kossuth, and especially Mazzini.<sup>26</sup>

A noteworthy characteristic of the refugees' life in exile was their penchant for continuing at a greater pitch than their incessant quarrels over doctrine. These differences had helped to weaken the Second Republic,<sup>27</sup> but the exiles were like the Bourbons in their inability to learn--in London a duel was fought between two ardent followers of Louis Blanc and Ledru-Rollin.<sup>28</sup> Mazzini sensibly felt that the French factionaries were destroying themselves in such quarreling.<sup>29</sup> Generally speaking, the exiles in England, the most influential group, were advanced republicans--various shades of revolutionary outlook.<sup>30</sup>

The great day for most refugees came rather suddenly in 1859 when Napoleon III granted a general amnesty,<sup>31</sup> as one of the first steps in his vacillating way toward the Liberal Empire. The great figures like Hugo and Blanc and others refus-

23. De la Gorce, op. cit., IV:77.

24. R. Gustafson, op. cit., 248.

25. Tchernoff, op. cit., 125.

26. Ibid., 136.

27. Delord, op. cit., I:263.

28. Tchernoff, op. cit., 132.

29. Ibid., 129.

30. De la Gorce, op. cit., IV:181.

31. Delord, op. cit., II:580.

ed to accept the grace of the Corsican's nephew as a matter of republican principle,<sup>32</sup> but the small folk among the refugees were glad to return.<sup>33</sup>

The leaders remaining voluntarily outside France after the amnesty were inspired by the purest kind of intransigent opposition to the Empire, but they soon came to reflect a sort of neurosis of exile. They discovered that their high-minded self-ostracism carried little weight among republicans in France. They had the greatest distaste for the mere "political republicans" at home. These last occasionally would come to Belgium or England and would not even visit them. The aggrieved exiles, the most ardent of the 48'ers, unconsciously fancied themselves as martyrs, and bitterly resented it when their advice was ignored. Thus they recommended abstention in the elections of 1857, 1863, and even 1869, but the mass of republicans had little desire for such negativism.<sup>34</sup>

These exiles in England and elsewhere were able to inundate France with their publications, indicating that Napoleon III, like the later czars, was not able to control efficiently the means of ingress of books; later absolutist regimes have been able to disabuse themselves of this embarrassment. Within France this literature probably had relatively little effect, for it was read largely by the small numbers of ardent republicans who already agreed with the exiles' stand anent Napoleon.<sup>35</sup>

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32. Delord, *op. cit.*, II; 580.

33. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 146, 147.

34. De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, IV:181-184; the author has a good critical treatment of the exiles' psychology.

35. *Ibid.*, IV:182.

The great exiles remained outside France to the bitter end, and this was one of the distinctive features of the republican party under the Second Empire. These exaltés of '48 enjoyed enormous prestige, although not a corresponding influence, on the actions of other republicans, and their resentful exile provided the republican party with one of its raison d'être.

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### III

Back in France, the regeneration of the republican party came largely through a temporary acceptance of the existing order. Advice from abroad was gratuitously proffered, but opposition in the Chamber proved much more effective.

The years from 1855 to the elections of 1857 saw the first signs of revival. An occasional plot against the regime or the emperor showed the minor extremists still had some fight left.<sup>36</sup> All public reunions were interdicted, and the press was effectively gagged by a decree of 1852,<sup>37</sup> but republican activity came through the form of aid to the exiles' families and secret political meetings in homes where the police could not readily gain access.<sup>38</sup> This gave the republicans a little confidence until the first limited opportunity presented itself in the elections of 1857.

Louis Blanc expressed the view of the political outcasts that abstention from voting in the elections should be the rule,<sup>39</sup>

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36. Tchernoff, op. cit., 224-225

37. Ibid., 264.

38. Ibid., 210, 216.

39. Delord, op. cit., II:301-303.

but in Paris (organized republican sentiment did not as yet exist in the departments) opinion was decidedly in favor of participation.<sup>40</sup> Electoral committees of influential republicans were organized, but the accustomed differences in republican ranks quickly cropped up. One of the disputes involved whether they should run single or double candidates in each circonscription (electoral district),<sup>41</sup> and, after much debate, it was decided to appeal to the London and Belgian exiles to halt their own quarreling for a moment in order to arbitrate this matter. Ledru-Rollin, as spokesman for the arbitrators, handed down a unanimous verdict in favor of single candidatures, as eliminating jealous disputes, and so it was decided.<sup>42</sup> The subsequent campaign brought several victories in Paris despite the enfeebling internal dissensions, for the populace took advantage of

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40. Delord, op. cit., II:304.

41. See A. Lawrence Lowell, The Governments of France, England, and Germany (Cambridge, 1914), 16, for a ready explanation of electoral procedures in France. Under the Second Empire as under most of the Third Republic elections were by scrutin de liste as opposed to the other method, scrutin d'arrondissement. The latter means single electoral districts as in the United States. The former works as follows: Candidates are freely chosen in all districts in each of the departments, the popular politician frequently being elected in more than one district. This scrutin de liste operates by double balloting, if necessary. The candidate who has an absolute majority in the open field against all other candidates on the first ballot is declared elected; an absolute majority lacking to any one candidate after the first ballot, a second is held between the two candidates polling the two highest total of votes on the first, all others dropping out. The one having the majority on the second ballot is declared elected. Where a candidate is chosen in more than one district, he selects the district he prefers to represent. Supplementary elections then choose successors for the district or districts foresaken.

42. Delord, op. cit., II:317.

the election opportunity to voice its feelings against the Empire. Carnot, Goudcheaux, and Cavaignac were elected on the first ballot, but refused to serve, giving place to Jules Favre and Ernest Picard. On the second ballot Emile Ollivier and Alfred Darimon, a mediocrity but Proudhon's friend, were returned.<sup>43</sup>

From 1857 to 1863 the Corps Législatif had a tiny but vocal republican opposition consisting of Favre, Picard, Ollivier, Darimon, and Hénon, called "Les Cinq".<sup>44</sup> The degree of opposition could not be very great: The system of official candidacies, which was resorted to by Napoleon throughout the Second Empire, meant that a huge majority of deputies in the Corps Législatif would always do as Napoleon and his ministers wished.<sup>45</sup> The deputies could not question the ministers, so this was in no way a responsible parliamentary system.<sup>46</sup> Les Cinq could voice opposition, and a little vocal criticism was better than none at all, the moderates thought.

Things took a turn for the worse after the failure of the famous Orsini Plot in 1858, for its aftermath was the Law of General Safety, a Napoleonic return toward the reaction of 1852, but republicans were immensely heartened by the return of most of the exiles in 1859.<sup>47</sup> The party had high hopes for the next elections in 1863.

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43. Tchernoff, op. cit., 276.

44. Ibid., 276.

45. Ibid., 269-270.

46. Ibid., 282.

47. Ibid., 153-154.

Hardly was the electoral campaign opened in the spring of 1863, however, when the disputes among the Parisian republicans reappeared. Differences existed between 48'ers living in Paris and the younger republicans, and between an electoral committee managing the candidacies and the faction surrounding Havin, editor of Le Siècle, and anxious to become a deputy.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, Ollivier, one of Les Cinq, was the object of differing opinions, as his republicanism was already suspect.<sup>49</sup> By a great effort the factions managed to patch up their differences for the sake of the campaign.<sup>50</sup>

But the interesting feature of this campaign was the movement called the "Liberal Union," a combination of all of the opposition groups, but chiefly the republicans and Orleanists, to present a united front in the elections. The Liberal Union's electoral list included Thiers and Guérault, editor of L'Opinion Nationale, a Saint-Simonian who was not averse to Napoleon.<sup>51</sup> This opposition ticket won in its entirety in a vote which was a small revenge for the coup d'état.<sup>52</sup> Les Cinq were reelected en masse, although well before the next elections two among them--Darimon and Ollivier--had deserted to the enemy. There were some run-off elections in 1864, as Haven

48. De la Gorce, op. cit., II:187; Delord, op. cit., III:429-432

49. Emile Ollivier, "Histoire Contemporaine" in Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1931), III:767; Ollivier's memoirs were printed here over many years' time, and were the periodical form of his L'Empire Libérale (12 vols., Paris, 1895 ff.).

50. Delord, op. cit., III:436.

51. Ibid., 439.

52. Ibid., III:453.

of Le Siecle and Jules Favre chose provincial départements, and this brought another of the 48'ers back into harness, Garnier-Pages.<sup>53</sup>

From this time until the end of the Empire the republicans exercised much more pressure in the Corps Législatif, as compared to a few years earlier when a deputy was not permitted to declare himself republican.<sup>54</sup> Napoleon III, since the Italian war committed to a liberalizing policy, had accorded to the Corps Législatif a limited right of address and of amendment in 1860.<sup>55</sup> Between the elections of 1863-64 and of 1869 Napoleon made a further parliamentary concession in granting a limited right of interpellation of ministers.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, in 1868 came two surprising concessions in the passage of the Law on Public Reunions and the Law on the Press.<sup>57</sup>

Republicans, of course, could never for a moment forgive the coup d'état and the personal rule; so from their point of view the concessions simply became the sanction to say publicly what they thought privately about the Empire. The elections of 1869 found them extremely vocal in their opposition to regime, individual candidates hinting that an end to the personal rule would not be a calamitous event.<sup>58</sup> In this election the alliance with the opposition parties was again debated,

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53. Delord, op. cit. III:476.

54. Tchernoff, op. cit., 270.

55. Ibid., 374.

56. Ibid., 419.

57. De la Gorce, op. cit., V: 368, 361.

58. Ibid., V:390.

but did not become formal party tactic. The younger and more ardent candidates would not hear of such a thought, terming themselves the "Irreconcilables," although the more moderate and less numerous republicans close to Ernest Picard were willing to combine with other groups to oppose the Empire.<sup>59</sup> The election results found the republicans making a clean sweep of their eight candidates.<sup>60</sup> In fact, Napoleon was greatly disquieted in comparing the election results with those of 1863: on that occasion the official candidates polled 5,300,000 votes against 2,000,000 in opposition. His policies of concessions found his deputies mustering only 4,438,000 votes in 1869 to an alarming 3,355,000 in opposition.<sup>61</sup>

By the year before the Empire died the republican party, through its parliamentary efforts, had grown. A nervous and persecuted minority virtually ostracised from the Corps Legislatif in 1852, in seventeen years' time it became a vociferous and flourishing opposition.

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IV

A large part of the discussion in the party's councils in the elections of 1863 and 1869 was due to a phenomenon which was a distinguishing feature of the republican party in these years: the rivalry between the older men who had participated in the Revolution of 1848 and its aftermath, and the

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59. Tchernoff, op. cit., 506.

60. Ibid., 554.

61. Ibid.,

younger generation which reached political maturity in the decade following the coup d'état. This rivalry was the more keen because it always existed beneath the surface, for, officially, at least, on all sides of the republican spectrum the words of the men of '48 were regarded as fiat on all matters. These men had created the republic in 1848, had gained experience as ministers, prefects, or other functionaries, and were expected to resume their posts as soon as France should be rid of her most recent Bonapartist deceiver.

Despite their standing as the elite of the republican party, the older republicans weakened their influence in being so badly split. There were two groups of them, the exiles who disdained the amnesty of 1859 and who, as we have noticed, were for the most part advanced republicans, and the moderates who remained home to compete in the Napoleonic elections. The exiles forbade participation in any of the four elections, but their counterparts in France--Garnier-Pagès, Cavaignac until he died, Favre, Carnot, and others--were undecided on this matter: in 1852 they abstained, in 1857 they campaigned in Paris alone, and in 1863 and 1869 they campaigned energetically<sup>62</sup>--not a clear-cut record one way or the other. And their influence was weakened because it was well-known that they quarreled among themselves over each other's conduct at different points back in 1848<sup>63</sup>--not an edifying sight to the younger men.

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62. De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, IV: 184-85.

63. *Ibid.*, IV: 186.

The older generation was alarmed at the attitude and conduct of the republican youth which appeared in 1857 or thereabouts: the more disillusioned exiles were embittered against mankind, and tended to be hypercritical of anyone who diverged in the slightest degree from their conceptions of what had happened.<sup>64</sup> But more to the point, almost all of the elders felt that the young men were not strongly enough in opposition to the regime, were too willing to compromise, and seemed excessively opportunistic.<sup>65</sup> Mazzini wrote Edgar Quinet complaining of the youths' "Machiavellian opportunism...and lack of moral sense".<sup>66</sup> Beneath this dissatisfaction one can sense the irritation of the older generation at the youths' propensity for selecting new values, as well as the very evident feeling that the "jeunes" did not have the proper regard for their elders.

The younger people, on the other hand, privately viewed their masters with an extremely critical gaze. During the 60's Vermorel, later of the Commune, published a brochure called Les Hommes de 48 reflecting many of the youths' objections to the "vieux:" He reproached them for their blind faith in the virtue of a single political form embodied in the Second Republic. He blamed them for their religiosity, which made their republic a shrine at which to worship in a fashion little different from orthodox faiths. And he attacked Lamartine for his

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64. Tchernoff, op. cit., 165-166.

65. For a typical reflection of this attitude, see Juliette Adam, Mes Sentiments et Nos Idees avant 1870 (Paris, 1905), 48; 372-373.

66. Quoted in Weill, op. cit., 470.

naive idealism in ignoring tactical considerations which might have insured greater longevity to his romantic ideal.<sup>67</sup>

These "jeunes" were far more earth-bound than the 48'ers, and it was the naïveté of the latter at which they invariably railed. They could never forgive them the very real fact that, despite their doctrinaire republican zeal, they had been vanquished, had lost the republic.<sup>68</sup> Among themselves they spoke very irreverently of the men of '48, referring to them as the "greybeards" or even the "old blockheads".<sup>69</sup>

Relations between jeunes and vieux were not improved by the party's election tactics in 1857, 1863-64, and 1869. In 1857 Carnot, Garnier-Pagès, and others conceded that a new generation existed by selecting Ollivier as a candidate--but he was the son of a 48'er and was chosen to run in the bad second circonscription. Much to their amazement, Havin of Le Siècle sponsored the candidacy of another young man, Picard, while Ollivier was to oppose Garnier-Pagès. And the campaign resulted in the election of Ollivier and Picard, as well as Darimon, well-liked by the younger men at the time.<sup>70</sup>

Les Cinq who emerged from the campaign of 1857 became the favorites of the youths, particularly Ollivier and Picard, who were almost of their age. Thus they were not very highly regarded by the elders, especially since the only one of Les Cinq who had been in the government in 1848, Favre, was dis-

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67. See Tchernoff, op. cit., 364-365, for a summary of the book.

68. De la Gorce, op. cit., II: 195.

69. Ibid., IV: 187.

70. Ibid., II: 194-198.

liked by them anyway.<sup>71</sup>

In 1863 the unusual unity achieved after exhausting efforts found the youths obedient to the wishes of the men of '48, and the dissensions in the campaign involved individuals --like Ollivier and Thiers--in the Liberal Union program, more than it did the difference in the generations. But in the supplementary elections of 1864, again, the impatience of the youths to don the political harness themselves was evident in the plethora of republican hopefuls who considered campaigning for the two available seats. One, even, was so insistent in combating the expectant Garnier-Pagès that finally Favre had to intervene to ask his withdrawal in favor of the older man.<sup>72</sup>

By 1869 the jeunes' impatience knew no bounds. In their thirties, they could no longer be dismissed as too youthful. As far as they were concerned, the 48'ers seemed to live forever, and never showed any signs of retiring in favor of new blood.<sup>73</sup> Consequently, in 1869 they no longer had any compunctions about competing openly with the older men. The campaign of 1869, it has been said, was distinguished by the noisiness of republican opposition growing out of Napoleon's liberalizing decrees of 1868; but the open attacks on the Empire were also due to the jeunes' desire to make their opposi-

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71. De la Gorce, op. cit., IV: 186.

72. De la Gorce, op. cit., IV: 269-270, this was Ferry.

73. In fact, an amazing number of the 48'ers survived the generation of Napoleon III to turn up at the birth of the Third Republic. (Cavaignac, Lamartine, Proudhon, as far as he was politically-minded, and the unorthodox Barbès, were about the only prominent republicans to die in the interval.)

tion clearly more uncompromising than that of older men. While still publicly singing the praises of the old masters, these Irreconcilables offered more alluring programs to the electors, making, frequently, promises which could not be realized short of a change in the system of government.<sup>74</sup>

Throughout the Empire, then, these differences in outlook between aristocrats and parvenus in the republican party lay just beneath the surface. In the first days of the Third Republic the fact that the two generations with all their dissimilarities met in the same government did not make easier the task of the governors of France during the depressing final stages in the Franco-Prussian War.

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V

The 1850's and 1860's, whatever the vicissitudes of the republican party in its formal struggle with Napoleon III, were a period of intellectual ferment for the younger enthusiasts of democratic government. This was the time in which the older romantic tradition in the realm of ideas was succeeded by a newer, more earth-bound and utilitarian outlook, which typified intellectual activity in the west of Europe during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

In France, the romantic strain had had its political origins in Rousseau, and had flourished until the lifetime of Lamartine. The romantic and idealistic notions of the universal republic which inflamed the spirits of the revolutionaries

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74. De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, V: 390-394.

of 1848 no longer sufficed a few years later; the romantic tradition in the larger sense had passed, and with it its particular manifestations in politics. The newer philosophical tendencies were popularized, and those portions which were most adaptable to a republican political context had especial credence. In origin the newer intellectual influences came out of the anti-rationalist tradition, but in France this had been shaped into optimistic and utilitarian form. It is obvious now that at the root of the troubles between the men of '48 and their prospective successors was this difference in intellectual antecedents. But it was not quite so evident at the time that there was such a profound division in thought. The petty differences always existing among men would not have been so irritating were it not for this, but because of it they seemed unaccountably important. Not only were two generations colliding, but two modes of thought.<sup>75</sup>

One of the intellectual lights of the time was a historian who is now remembered chiefly for his brilliant style-- Jules Michelet. In age, certainly, Michelet was of the Restoration generation, far removed from the youths, and in his conception of history he was even more certainly a romantic. But his importance at this time came out of his ability to breathe life into history. Whatever his errors and prejudices, he made the history of France live, particularly in his Histoire de la Revolution Française, first published in 1855.<sup>76</sup>

75. See Tchernoff, op. cit., 189-190 for a short summary of these tendencies.

76. G. P. Gooch, History and Historians of the 19th Century (London, 1913), 182.

and thus democratized as had nobody before him.<sup>77</sup> A favorite idea of Michelet's, the fraternity of peoples--a Revolutionary concept which he broadened and intensified--became a republican dogma. The younger people interpreted the fraternal idea as an appeal to action in order to relieve the oppressed, without as well as<sup>78</sup> within, France.

Pierre Joseph Proudhon, best known today as a progenitor of Anarachic political theory, enjoyed great prestige in France during his own lifetime. He was attracted by Michelet's idea that groups lived not as abstractions submissive to a fatal law of divine right, but as human beings with a will of their own. Proudhon, thus, attached enormous importance to the human individual, a common enough attitude in the nineteenth century, but carried to its logical extremity by Proudhon in advocacy of a sort of anarchism. To fulfill himself, the individual needed the benefits of an education, and it was this belief in the extension of educational facilities to all which gave Proudhon an influence in the bourgeois republican world.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, Proudhon had great faith in a form of internationalism which was in accord with his tendencies toward anarchy. Thus, he believed that the diplomatic and national obstructions to unity could be destroyed by decentralizing the state. This would eliminate national barriers, while contacts could be maintained among the decentralist groups by means of

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77. Tchernoff, op. cit., 168.

78. Ibid., 170.

79. Ibid., 176.

conventions to discuss inter-related problems.<sup>80</sup> The moderate republicans were not so inclined to push Proudhon's notions to their blueprint ultimates, but it was significant that most of the members in the republican party had great faith in a rather vague program of decentralization for France, and in the efficacy of international conferences of the youth to discuss anti-militarist and decentralist projects.

Michelet and Proudhon, in their different ways, appealed to all elements in the younger republican generation--Michelet through his fraternalist concept and his evocation of the French Revolution, Proudhon through his individualism and emphasis upon democratic education--but other notable philosophic tendencies of the time affected chiefly the bourgeois-minded elements in the republican party. It was in this group, moderate in its methods, capitalist in its economics, laissez-faire republican in its politics, and optimistic in its outlook, that the Positivist philosophy of Comte and the Kantian philosophical tradition from German had so much appeal.

Philosophical tendencies from German had an enormous influence in Western Europe in the nineteenth century. Immanuel Kant, who lived most of a long life in the eighteenth century, happened to be the pioneer figure in the development of the Prussian Idealistic School of philosophy, but the French in the 60's who accepted his ideas preferred the part of his thinking which emphasized moral values as a matter of ethical utility

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80. Tchernoff, op. cit., 176.

and Protestant Christianity as the most natural accompaniment.<sup>81</sup> The most prominent French exponent of Neo-Kantianism was Renouvier. Certain of his ideas readily gained acceptance in the non-Orleanist bourgeois circles: in his La Science de la Morale he repeated the Kantian concept that external liberty appeared in the world of being in mankind, and should therefore exist in society.<sup>82</sup> And Renouvier rejected any form of socialism in favor of capitalism and the maintenance of private property; progressive taxes could prevent great accumulations in wealth.<sup>83</sup> This, naturally, fitted in neatly with the predilections of the liberal bourgeoisie.

More influential than Neo-Kantianism was the Positivist philosophy of Auguste Comte. Comte, of course, broke away from German Transcendentalism to expound a philosophy of intellectual development in mankind which would advance by certain stages--with the advance in man's understanding and use of knowledge would come a general advancement. Comte's direct influence among republicans was not very large in a political sense, for he was not a democrat, but his philosophy enjoyed wide acceptance through the popularizing efforts of his former disciple, Littré. In his book, Conservation et Positivisme, Littré gave to Comte's idea of an inevitable surge toward perfectibility a political connotation--positivism alone would impart order to a republic, for it would unite the bourgeoisie

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81. John H. Randall, The Making of the Modern Mind (New York, 1940), 411-413.

82. Weill, op. cit., 447-448.

83. Tchernoff, op. cit., 296.

and the masses, the socialists and the republicans. He rejected the Liberty, Equality, Fraternity idea as placing too much emphasis on equality.<sup>84</sup> Positivism could do much for the European revival of free thought and political liberty by eliminating their revolutionary origins, which frightened so many moderate-minded people, making of these a natural movement leading toward regular stability.<sup>85</sup> As summarized by Tchernoff, historian of the republican party under the Empire, the enormous effect of Positivism can be realized:

"Positivism....shaped this republican generation: it no longer considered the Republic as a sort of government produced from metaphysical speculation, deduced from a certain number of immutable principles, establishing itself as the consequence of a revolution; but as a positive institution having its reason in life, transforming itself with it, and going through the sway of contingent conditions; not only affirming itself by great principles, but adapting itself, like all living institutions, to all the complex and variable manifestations of human existence".<sup>86</sup>

The same element which found Positivism appealing often looked with favor on the ideas of Edgar Quinet, another French philosopher, whose ideas brought him closer to the political world, since he had been an ardent defender of the Second Republic. Quinet's political ideas (to be noticed briefly in Chapter III) sharply divided republican sentiment, but his attitude toward religion and the Catholic Church met with general approbation. Efforts to find a meeting ground between the free-thought tendency, with its natural accompaniment of a

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84. Randall, *op. cit.*, 500.

85. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 190.

86. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 189-190.

democratic political goal, and liberal Catholicism had pretty largely failed as an aftermath of the Revolution of 1848,<sup>87</sup> and Quinet's ideas of intransigent anti-Catholicism became widely accepted amongst republicans. In his L'Enseignement du Peuple, published in 1850, Quinet dismissed liberal Catholicism as a chimera, and went on to say:

"Today universal Christianity tends to realize itself by liberty, equality, and fraternity, by the sanctification of work, and in the civil institutions-- this is the socialism of modern humanity."<sup>88</sup>

To arrive at liberty, Quinet added, church and state must be separated, and lay education introduced.<sup>89</sup> The emphasis on lay education placed him with Proudhon on this issue, while Quinet's liberal Protestantism was a meeting ground with Neo-Kantianism and Positivism, which were also Protestant in their religious implications.<sup>90</sup> Thus Strauss' Life of Jesus as the highmark in German Higher Criticism was translated by Littré while Renan led the French movement Higher Criticism.<sup>91</sup> Many young republicans joined Masonic lodges to express their convictions of free-thought and liberal Protestantism, although these became much more popular in the 70's and 80's. Others, however, eschewed any semblance of formality in favor of a natural religion without Cult. Jules Simon, philosopher and republican politician, was typical of this element.<sup>92</sup>

The ensemble of these intellectual influences, as is obvious, appealed mightily to the liberal bourgeoisie.

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87. Tchernoff, op. cit., 303-304.

88. Quoted in Weill, op. cit., 303-304.

89. Ibid., 336.

90. Tchernoff, op. cit., 310-311.

91. Ibid., 319.

92. Weill, op. cit., 431-432; Tchernoff, op. cit., 299.

Positivism, Neo-Kantianism, and Quinet's anticlericalism possessed elements of free thought, were strongly anti-Catholic and sympathetic to liberal Protestantism, were easily adaptable to democratic political goals, and in their social and economic implications tended to promote unity through leadership of a progressive, capitalistic bourgeoisie. Implicit in the whole of this philosophic mélange was a deep strain of optimism and faith in individual action to attain the general welfare. Within this group, the rationalist eighteenth century's conviction of progress toward human perfectibility.<sup>93</sup> was changed only slightly: it became an optimistic faith in the republic, the bourgeoisie, in the adaptability rather than the clash of classes, and the necessity of struggle with the Catholic Church in order to control the means of progress, universal education--this would assure the steady progress of mankind toward a better world.

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VI

It is necessary to understand the enormous gap separating the bourgeois republicans from the radical republicans. The differences between the "avancés" and the "modérés" were far greater than their similarities; this despite the French conservatives' efforts to prove that the moderates were only the irresolute begettors of radical republicanism.<sup>94</sup> In truth,

93. Carl Becker, The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers (New Haven, 1932), 138-139.

94. The import of the entire investigation of the Government of National Defense in Annales, Vols. XXI-XXVI, op. cit., is indicative of this (to be explained elsewhere).

faith in democratic principles, however differently construed, and their occasional tactical alliances against the Empire, the two groups had nothing in common.

The avancés in their politics were almost unanimously believers in a Jacobin republic. The Jacobinism of the great French Revolution had embodied beliefs in republican government, in universal suffrage, a centralized state with a strong executive, a secular regime, with universal education.<sup>95</sup> These aims have always been associated with Jacobinism in French republican history. The more advanced leaders in 1848 could justly be called Jacobins<sup>96</sup> and at all times that the republicans remained a minority party in a Monarchist or Napoleonic regime in France there was a Jacobin party.

The distinctive features of Jacobinism in the nineteenth century lay in its emphasis upon the revolutionary side of the original Jacobin program. The faith in the republic was ever present, the insistence upon universal education and universal suffrage, and so forth, but the revolutionary means which was constantly emphasized in opposition to Monarchist or authoritarian governments tended to obscure the other aims.

These Jacobin avancés of the 50's and 60's, the most intransigent of enemies of Napoleon III, looked to the days of the first French Revolution for guidance. As we have seen, Michelet did much to make the French Revolution a living force, and the Jacobins took their cue from this to re-examine the

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95. Crane Brinton, The Jacobins (New York, 1930).

96. Delord, op. cit., I: 263.

Revolution. They turned to 1793 and the beginning of the Terror as the moment when the Revolution reached fulfillment before the Thermidorean reaction set in; they bestowed their admiration on the most advanced Montagnards and Jacobins, as the National Convention of 1792-93 was dominated by the Committee of Public Safety, then by the Terror through the latter part of 1793 to the 9th of Thermidore, 1794. But the new Jacobins admired not Robbespierre but Hebert whom they regarded as representing the proletarian element in '93<sup>97</sup> through his paper Père Duchêne.

This Neo-Jacobin spirit was chiefly political, only to a lesser extent a class movement. Some of these Jacobins became socialists in carrying out the economic implications of the egalitarian political philosophy, but by no means all of them.<sup>98</sup>

Many of the great exiles of '48 were Jacobin in their inclinations, notably Félix Pyat, and Ledru-Rollin.<sup>99</sup> The two most influential representatives of the avancés, Charles Delescluze and Auguste Blanqui, perfectly represented the two types of Jacobinism prevalent at the time. Delescluze was the incarnation of the straight, unadulterated Jacobinism of '93. His objectives were almost entirely political, although he gave some attention to the problems of the working man, but never in a socialist context.<sup>100</sup> He was very popular, was personally

97. Tchernoff, op. cit., 298.

98. Edward S. Mason, The Paris Commune, An Episode in the History of the Socialist Movement (New York, 1930), 811.

99. Tchernoff, op. cit., 133.

100. Mason, op. cit., 18.

unselfish; he had an unusually supple, subtle mind, and because he personified sincerely, if narrowly, the Jacobin tradition he could even be admired by some conservatives.<sup>101</sup>

Blanqui's fame has been more lasting than that of Delescluze. In his own lifetime he was regarded with horror by the conservatives as the most fearsome exponent of revolutionary Jacobin socialism in France. To the younger generation of radicals in the 50's and 60's he was the almost legendary "vieux". Marx paid tribute to his activity in 1848, while it is well-known that Lenin derived some of his ideas on revolutionary tactics from Blanqui.<sup>102</sup> In essence, Blanqui was an old-line conspirationalist who had no use for any form of moderation; his method was flatly revolution by violence through the training of a small, devoted following which would overturn the government and win over the populace at a moment's notice by its revolutionary élan.<sup>103</sup> In the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 Blanqui was closest to being a Babeufist. In the 60's while in prison at Sainte-Pélagie he exerted an enormous influence among the youths, recreating his small group of devoted followers, and accepting the Hébertism of his younger followers as his ideal.<sup>104</sup> Blanqui was a Jacobin who turned socialist without abandoning his Jacobinism, although his socialist program remained rather vague because he was always more the "conspira-

101. See attribute to him by De la Gorce, op. cit. V: 395-396.

102. Mason, op. cit., 19.

103. See interesting description of Blanqui in Max Nomad (Pasvolosky), Apostles of Revolution (Boston, 1932), 56-57.

104. Weill, op. cit., 421.

tionalist" than the social reformer.<sup>105</sup> He was the most important Jacobin of the time chiefly because of his awesome reputation; his party, if it could be called such, remained extremely small.<sup>106</sup>

Though there were a dozen or more nuances of Jacobinism, the movement is most easily understood insofar as these two men, Delescluze and Blanqui, represented the two broad tendencies in Jacobinism.

In Paris the haunts of the *avancés* were in the Latin Quarter. Here lived the déclassés and Bohemians who made up the radicals' ranks. The schools in the Latin Quarter, particularly the College de France, were centers of the more ardent republican activity; also the cafés which mushroomed after the liberalizing laws of 1868 were hotbeds of politics.<sup>107</sup>

*Avancés* and *Moderés* had little in common except the opposition to the Empire. The latter were the opponents of the Empire through the parliamentary forms, and revolutionary only by the force of the ballot. The former were anti-parliamentarian and revolutionary by force of action, peaceful if possible, armed, if necessary. But the grave differences in methods and ends were not so noticeable in the 60's, for the two groups could work together at times to oppose Napoleon III, just as moderate republicans and Orleanists could. They managed an uneasy alliance in the election of 1863, and with the

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105. Nomad, op. cit., 56.

106. Ibid., 59.

107. Tchernoff, op. cit., 352-356.

"Irreconcilable" faction of the republican party in 1869.<sup>108</sup> And the Parisian lawyers were willing to defend the extremists in their clashes with the regime, as in the trial of some of the exiles in 1862<sup>109</sup> or the trial of Delescluze after the Baudin manifestation in 1868-69.<sup>110</sup> There was contact between modérés and avancés also in the different international conferences for various humanitarian causes which were so popular between 1865 and 1870: This was especially the case in the meeting in Switzerland of the Congress of the League of Peace at the end of the 60's.<sup>111</sup> But these brief working agreements were as nothing compared to the deep cleavages which were revealed to the public gaze during the Franco-Prussian War.

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## VII

Another aspect of republican politics before 1870 concerned the relations between bourgeoisie and workers. Throughout the Empire the workers were solidly republican in their politics: "At the end of the Empire as in 1848 one observed the workers constantly affirm their intimate solidarity with the bourgeoisie when it was a question of struggling for the Republic," said the leading historian of the republicans under the Empire.<sup>112</sup> The problem lay in the question of the degree of political activity of the workers as a whole, and the extent to which they identified themselves with the bourgeoisie

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108. Weill, op. cit., 501.

109. Tchernoff, op. cit., 372.

110. Mason, op. cit., 6; Weill op. cit., 505.

111. Tchernoff, op. cit., 466, 483.

112. Ibid., 494.

or thought of themselves as a separate social group struggling alongside the bourgeoisie toward a democratic goal.

In 1863 a worker by the name of Carbon wrote a book called Le Secret du Peuple de Paris in which he described the three divisions amongst the workers in Paris at this time: There were the inferiors, who were too completely down-trodden and misery-stricken to have any political ideas. Next was a middle group, some of which, coming from the provinces, wished to return there, and the others desiring to enter the bourgeoisie through hard work. Finally there was an upper stratum which was devoted to the social advancement of the workers; they were without religious faith, desired democratic reforms, and dreamed of the union of all peoples.<sup>113</sup> It was this last element, of course, which provided the leadership for the workers.

In 1863 the workers showed the first signs of political awareness since the days of the revolutionary workers of 1848. In one of the electoral committees at Carnot's home the workers were allowed to participate.<sup>114</sup> Usually, however, they were not consulted on the bourgeois candidates, although they voted for them en masse simply because they were republican.<sup>115</sup> But the bourgeois candidates were not completely satisfactory, so the workers ran candidates of their own in two districts crowded with workers.<sup>116</sup> In the supplementary election of 1864 Tolain, for several years a moderate member of the Inter-

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113. Summary of the book in Weill, op. cit., 492.

114. Tchernoff, op. cit., 393.

115. Ibid., 405.

116. Ibid., 405.

national, ran again as he had in 1863, but he polled only a handful of votes, despite the support of Delescluze and some of the bourgeoisie.<sup>117</sup> Six years later the workers were much more active in the elections.

In the middle 60's by far the most influential public figure with the workers was Proudhon. Those who were politically conscious subscribed completely to his so-called "Federalist" program (the positive side of his semi-anarchism): formation of small sovereign groups united only by a pact of federation; government in each federal unit organized by an extremely limited division of powers; no central authority for the federated units.<sup>118</sup> And so far as the workers were socially conscious, they followed Proudhon's economic "Mutualism" described in his work, De la Capacité Politique des Classes Ouvrières: this as the Harvard economist Mason described it,<sup>119</sup> meant an order in which the workers, owning the instruments of production and the land, would co-operate in the production, exchange, and distribution of commodities.

The economic side of Proudhonism might appear radical, but its politics were certainly utopian; in fact, the whole program was extremely innocuous. The workers following Proudhon were passively anti-governmental, in effect offering no opposition to Napoleon III.<sup>120</sup>

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117. Tchernoff, op. cit., 408-410.

118. Mason, op. cit., 40.

119. Ibid., 41.

120. Tchernoff, op. cit., 457.

It is well-known that Napoleon had some lines of contact in the organization of the so-called First International.<sup>121</sup> The International Working Mens' Association had its inception in 1862 as a contact between the French Proudhonians and British trade-unionists.<sup>122</sup> Until 1864 there was no organization worthy of the name, and Tolain, leader and co-founder of the French section, was suspected of being a Napoleonic tool.<sup>123</sup> The French members were mildly republican, viewing the Association chiefly as an educational and benevolent organization on behalf of the workers in Europe. In France the Blanquists dismissed the Proudhonians, with their political organization, as insipid sentimentalist. Some of the bourgeois politicians, particularly Jules Simon, encouraged the French members of the Association in these aims,<sup>124</sup> which is an indication that workers and bourgeoisie were not separated by the single fact of the creation of the organization.

The International Working Mens' Association in the first few years following its official creation in 1864 remained in the control of the moderate Proudhonist faction. The Organization was always virtually bankrupt, and probably did not number over 1,000,000 members at any time in its short history.<sup>125</sup> In the annual conferences at Geneva in 1866 and Lausanne in

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121. Tchernoff, op. cit., 444-445.

122. Merle Fainsod, International Socialism and the World War (Cambridge, 1935), 3.

123. Tchernoff, op. cit., 450, 455.

124. Ibid., 457-461.

125. Mason, op. cit., 44-46. (Tchernoff on the basis of French sources, estimated 2,000,000 as the high in 1869, op. cit., 481).

1867 the resolutions voted were Mutualist-inspired, but in 1868 at Brussels, the British, German and Italian workers outnumbered the French to vote a collectivist program. And in 1869 at Basle, with Marx and Bakunin present, the First International definitely changed over to an advanced pro-Marxist outlook.<sup>126</sup> In France the Proudhonists lost prestige, and after 1868 the French section was inclined toward the more aggressive socialism which had come to prevail; this trend was helped along by the addition of some revolutionaries, including a few Blanquists.<sup>127</sup>

At least one important reason for the growing radicalism of the French section involved the trials of the organization inaugurated by the now-frightened Napoleon, who saw his brain-child grow far beyond anything imagined in his patronage. Three series of convictions took place in 1867, 1868, and 1869. Some of the convicted were thoughtlessly consigned to Sainte-Pelagie, where their hatred for Napoleon appears to have brought about a working entente with the fire-eating Blanquists.<sup>128</sup> In the elections of 1869 the French section of the International, and the intellectual avances led by Delescluze, Rochefort, and others, had an alliance. This was due more to the Napoleonic persecutions than to the newly aggressive policy of the First International.<sup>129</sup>

There were contacts between the Association and the young bourgeois republicans fairly frequently up to 1870. In 1866

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126. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 461, 465, 475, 481.

127. Mason, *op. cit.*, 51-57.

128. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 479, 474, 489.

129. Weill, *op. cit.*, 520.

the First International meeting at Geneva and the republicans meeting in the Congress of the League of Peace at Lausanne exchanged ideas and parted amicably. Again in 1869 when both organizations met in Switzerland there were tentatives; the young republicans meeting at Lausanne made a slight concession by devoting more time to social questions although keeping the political problem uppermost.<sup>130</sup>

In resume, by the end of the Napoleonic era the workers had founded an organization of their own to express their aims. Relations with the bourgeoisie remained cordial for the most part, and, despite the International's class-struggle resolutions, there was an accord with even the moderate republicans so far as struggle against Bonaparte was concerned: by 1870 French workers were not compelled to gain political satisfaction by voting for bourgeois politicians; yet the differences between bourgeois republicans and workers were probably less great than the split between *avancé* and *modéré* republicans. The workers were thinking of themselves to a greater degree as a class distinct from the bourgeoisie, but the political differences with the moderates were not so great because most of the workers were not concerned with the finer points in French revolutionary tradition or in political tactics--the issues which separated the moderates from the radicals.

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#### VIII

The growth of the republican press in the decade from

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130. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 466, 483.

1860 to 1870 illustrated the revival of the party in this period. Before 1860 the republican press was so muzzled as to consist merely of Havin's Le Siècle, and La Presse, operated by Emile de Girardin and Darimon.<sup>131</sup> This last was liberal on economic matters, it declined by the mid-60's. There were also the literary journals, L'Avenir, edited by Eugène Pelletan, and La Revue de Paris, edited by Louis Ulbach; these had small circulation and had to hide their republicanism in literary guise.<sup>132</sup>

The second important daily to be founded was Guérout's L'Opinion Nationale in 1859. It was arguable whether this was even republican due to Guérout's indifference to political forms, not to mention the open secret that Napoleon gave the paper his protection.<sup>133</sup>

Next republican daily in the field was Nefftzer's Le Temps established in 1861.<sup>134</sup> He was a very moderate republican, acceptable to many Orleanists, and to many people his newspaper was far too palid. Yet it early gained the reputation of great accuracy in its reporting, and its very moderation lent weight to its editorials.

In the election of 1863 all three of these newspapers supported the Liberal Union opposition ticket.<sup>135</sup> Such unity of the republican press was possible only when all opposition

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131. Weill, op. cit., 329.

132. Ibid., 405-406.

133. Ibid., 499.

134. Ibid., 500.

135. Tchernoff, op. cit., 395; Delord, op. cit., III: 439.

had to be carefully controlled and when there were only a few newspapers in the field.

During the early 60's the revival of the Latin Quarter brought a flood of avant garde periodicals, none of which had a very long existence. One of them, Le Travail, founded in 1862, had Clémenceau and Zola in a collaboration which they were to repeat more than thirty years later. The best of these was La Jeune France, which had several future figures in the Commune as contributors.<sup>136</sup> A more respectable magazine, edited by the younger bourgeois republicans, called Le Courrier de Paris had as short a life as the Latin Quarter periodicals, despite official sanction, and, typically, free contribution by the staff.<sup>137</sup>

The great emancipation of the republican press came, of course, after the Press Law of 1868. This date ended the quasi-monopoly that Le Siecle, Le Temps, and L'Opinion Nationale had enjoyed in the field of serious liberal journalism. In the year of 1868 appeared L'Electeur, at first a weekly, then under the title of L'Electeur Libre, as a daily, which was dedicated to maintaining the Liberal Union principle of 1863.<sup>138</sup>

But in opposition to this coalition principle appeared L'Avenir National, edited by Peyrat, who popularized "le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi" long before Gambetta, Le Réveil, edited by Delescluze, and Le Rappel, edited by Victor Hugo.<sup>139</sup>

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136. Tchernoff, op. cit., 345, 339.

137. Ibid., 380.

138. Ibid., 506; Weill, op. cit., 500.

139. Tchernoff, op. cit., 509-511, 517.

Others less known were weeklies or largely literary reviews. In the elections of 1869 the three papers, plus Le Siècle<sup>140</sup> under different editorship, were partisans of Gambetta and the other Irreconcilables. Another popular newspaper of the day was Rochefort's La Marseillaise, which for a time was the organ of the First International in Paris.<sup>141</sup>

By 1869 there were dailies, weeklies, and periodicals, ostensibly literary, which expressed almost every shade of leftist politics. And all of the major factions in the republican ranks had dailies. The independent, moderate Le Temps, the Liberal Unionist L'Electeur Libre, what might be called the republican center in Le Siècle, L'Avenir National, and Le Rappel representing left republicanism to the verge of Jacobinism, and the influential Le Réveil, representing clear-cut, intransigent Jacobinism. The numerically weak but well-organized Blanquists did not have a daily because their leader was decidedly persona non grata in France, and appeared in Paris only unofficially.

It is evident from all of this that the republican party had made a strong comeback by 1869-70. This was due in part, it is true, to Napoleon's own relaxation of barriers in his desperate but psychologically doomed effort to gain liberal support, after alienating other factions by his ill-timed, inept ventures. But much of the republicans' strength came through their own efforts. However badly split they were, the

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140. Tchernoff, op. cit., 511-520.

141. Ibid., 486.

different factions managed to do more than they were willing to admit to each other: the exiled '48 ers constantly reiterated the tradition created in the Second Republic and led the way in making not the slightest concession to the personal power in Paris; the bourgeois republicans rebuilt the party by the very practical means of organizing a steadily enlarging parliamentary opposition to Napoleon; the radicals maintained the party's vitality by keeping before it the revolutionary tradition; the workers added to the ranks of distinct social group separate from declassé radicals and bourgeois politicians; and the republican press acted as the non-parliamentary spearhead of opposition to the regime. By the last year of the Second Empire all of those professing republican politics could look forward with far greater hope than in the years following 1851--an external enemy, the last Napoleon, still stood over them, but the internal enemy of deep factional cleavages boded ill for the future, should the common foe be removed through chance or his own ineptitude. As for the other parties, their lot was currently the same as the republicans; in the future, their chances, felt the republicans, would not be as good, for they were not as well known for their opposition to the Second Empire. The problem presented by Orleanists and Legitimists was less paramount, certainly, than the long-present problem of Napoleon III, or the perplexing possibility that in the future the republicans' internal feud could not be concealed in the struggle against the autocrat.

## CHAPTER III

JULES FERRY - LAWYER, JOURNALIST, ASPIRING  
POLITICIAN

It was in the bourgeois world of the young lawyers in Paris that Ferry gained his first prominence in the years from 1855 to 1870. In background, education, profession, income, and inclination he appertained to the younger generation of modérés in the complex weave of republican politics under the Second Empire. At the same time, widely acquainted in party circles, he, like most of the younger group, had an excellent grasp of all the aspects of the republican climate of ideas which have just been described. Before noticing the most important happenings in Ferry's political growth under the Empire, it will be helpful to examine briefly the circle of friends and the intellectual influences shaping Ferry's actions in these days.

In the year or two on either side of 1860 Jules and Charles Ferry enjoyed the luxury of a fine apartment in the Rue Duphot, Paris. Here they were able to entertain any number of friends who thought as they did, and had similar political interests: a few of the more prominent of these friends included Dréo, Garnier-Pagès' son-in-law, and Clamageran and Hérold, both secondary figures in republican politics later, Floquet, subsequently a very prominent republican politician, but whose fame before 1870 rested on his reputed remark to

Alexander II, a visitor at the Paris Exposition in 1867: "Vive la Pologne, Monsieur!"<sup>1</sup> And there was added to these young men, one Léon Gambetta, a bizarre-looking and talkative young lawyer who had come from the south of France. Charles Ferry had this recollection of Gambetta years before he became famous:

"His meridional verve, his sallies, and his extempore quips were the joy of our reunions. These were often a little gross, a little facile, often obscene, but the torrent carried away the slag. And if I know some raconteurs of a lighter, more elegant wit, never have I encountered others as powerful. Many times we accompanied him to his door, or, he, in his turn, recrossed the bridges with us, in this fashion until 2:00 A.M."<sup>2</sup>

At this time it was Jules, as host and organizer of the republican youth, who was regarded by casual observers as the leader of the younger element. However, a little later in the 60's it was Gambetta who was generally identified as the most promising of the younger republicans.<sup>3</sup>

It is reported that Ferry's first plunge into politics came in the elections of 1857 when he tried unavailingly to get General Cavaignac to campaign as a candidate from the Meurthe.<sup>4</sup> In the years following this election Ferry and his friends became fairly widely known in Paris as the admirers of Les Cinq, more particularly Ollivier and Picard. The young friends of these two regularly occupied the eighteen seats set

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1. Pottecher, op. cit., 64-69; Weill, op. cit., 464.
  2. From C. Ferry's notes in Pottecher, op. cit., 67-68.
  3. Weill, op. cit., 464; Tchernoff, op. cit., 379; Darimon, L'Opposition Libérale, 287.
  4. Tchernoff, op. cit., 270.

aside for visitors at the Corps Législatif, and soon garnered the appellation of the "auditeurs au Corps Législatif".<sup>5</sup> In this fashion they gained a thorough acquaintance with parliamentary procedures, such as they were, in the middle years of the Second Empire.

The Ferrys' liking for Picard and especially Ollivier helped them to move about in the center of social circles among the republicans in Paris. The leading republican salons were conducted by Mme. Picard, mother of the deputy, the Olliviers, husband and wife, and Mme. Juliette Adam, friend of Georges Sand and well-known in Paris. The Ferrys with Gambetta and the others, were frequent guests at the gatherings of all three of these groups.<sup>6</sup>

Through acquaintance with Ollivier, Ferry had come to know Liszt and Wagner. He also was an opera-goer in an age in which Meyerbeer, Gounod, and Verdi were at their zenith. At the Théâtre Français he watched the performances of Musset's plays.<sup>7</sup>

Ferry and his friends expressed their feelings about the personal rule by affecting a great liking for the life in Ancient Rome. Through this subterfuge they strengthened their civic-mindedness, their distaste for the privileges of the Em-

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5. Darimon, op. cit., 32-33; Tchernoff, op. cit., 377; As Darimon points out, "les Auditeurs" were well-known in the Parisian political world. They were regarded on all sides as the potential successors of "Les Cinq."

6. Jean Dietz, "Les Débuts de Ferry," 513; Juliette Adam, Mes Sentiments avant 1870, 361.

7. Pottecher, op. cit., 83.

peror's court, and their desire for a world in which men could freely exchange information.<sup>8</sup>

Ferry's anti-clericalism had a positive side at different times which found expression in a preference for liberal Protestantism as professed by Nefftzer, Eugène Pelletan, and others.<sup>9</sup> This took the form of participation in the functions of Masonic lodges. In Paris the Rite Ecossais had the old '48'er, lawyer, and befriender of French Judaism, Crémieux, as Grand Master, and Ferry was a member of this lodge.<sup>10</sup>

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In the sphere of ideas which were to shape his political future, Ferry was exposed to the new Comtian philosophical outlook in a way which left a permanent impression on his thinking and conduct. Positivism left a greater mark on him than on any other young republican with the possible exception of Gambetta.

Positivism came to Ferry not through direct knowledge of Comte or Littré, but by way of the ideas of a young friend of his, one Phelimon Deroisin. In 1857, only two years after completing his study for the law degree, Ferry became reacquainted with Deroisin at the annual Molé Conference, a meeting of the young lawyers in France.<sup>11</sup> Deroisin was a very cultured young man who, however, had a disorganized type of mind. In back-

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8. Jean Dietz, "Les Débuts de Ferry," 510.

9. *Ibid.*, 509.

10. Weill, *op. cit.*, 465.

11. Alphonse Dupront, "Jules Ferry Opposant à l'Empire--Quelques Traits de Son Idéologie Républicaine", in *Revue Historique*, (Paris, 1936), CLXXVII: 352-374; this article is particularly good on Ferry's economic views.

ground, if not in performance, he was considerably ahead of the youthful lawyers, and he immediately attracted Ferry.<sup>12</sup> Republican in political sentiments, Deroisin had been introduced to the Comtian ideas by his father in the years around 1845.<sup>13</sup> Though not a convinced Comtian, he was thoroughly familiar with Comte's major ideas, and accepted some of them. In his quarters in the Rue Mazarin, Paris, Deroisin used to unite Ferry, Floquet, Dréo, occasionally Picard, and a number of others, in weekly meetings to discuss Positivism and other ideas of the time.<sup>14</sup>

Ferry had an extremely high regard for Deroisin and his ideas, as some of his letters show. Though the ritualistic aura in which Comte clothed his philosophy was not adopted by the young republicans,<sup>15</sup> their new-found faith in Positivism had nevertheless something resembling religious conviction, for Ferry referred in a letter to his brother to "Deroisiana", calling Deroisin the "venerated master".<sup>16</sup> There is a letter, also, addressed to Deroisin under date of November 28, 1857, affectionately upbraiding him for failure to write Ferry, and referring to the "positive religion" and the "apostle of the new faith".<sup>17</sup> Some of this zeal unquestionably was the enthusiasm

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12. Alphonse Dupront, "Jules Ferry Opposant a l'Empire--Quelque Traits de Son Ideologie Republicaine", in Revue Historique, (Paris, 1936), CLXXVII: 356; this article is particularly good on Ferry's economic views.

13. Tchernoff, op. cit., 188.

14. Dupront, op. cit., 357.

15. Ibid., 357.

16. See Lettres, 15.

17. Ibid., 4,5.

of youth for a new intellectual discovery: even though the ardent interest did wear off, the effect of the ideas did not. Later in life Ferry recalled the significance of Positivism on him in the years about 1860 in the following words:

"....Against the menacing pessimism of a generation which had not acted, Postivism brought hope, the theory of progress, and the rational assurance of the happiness of the human species by science".<sup>18</sup>

This statement reveals the unusual timeliness of Positivism for young men such as Ferry. The optimism of the philosophy was a useful guide to action for a generation that wished to set itself apart from the elders who, by failing to act, brought on the coup d'état.

Ferry came to know Littré through the Revue de la Philosophie Positive<sup>19</sup> in the 1860's. His training in Positivism was thorough enough to enable him to contribute to this journal along with Gambetta. Littré was the founder of the Revue.

A supplementary aspect of Ferry's intellectual training in the decade of 1855-1865 lay in his familiarity with political economy. The chief influence on him in this realm of thinking was Marcel Roulleaux, a young man of his own age, and a close friend of Deroisin.<sup>20</sup> Roulleaux, and Deroisin also, disagreed with Comte's condemnation of Manchester economics as excessively laissez-faire. They were quite thoroughly versed in Adam Smith economics and the work of the Physiocrats. They had

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18. Discours, I: 586.

19. Tchernoff, op. cit., 300; Lettres, 20.

20. Ibid., 188.

a great liking for the nineteenth century English economists especially John Stuart Mill. They impressed upon Ferry the importance of such economic problems as manufacturing and working laws in France, and the significance of the Industrial Revolution in England.<sup>21</sup> Ferry had as high a regard for Roulleaux as for Deroisin. After Roulleaux died in 1862, Ferry referred to him in a letter to Lavertujon in the most affectionate terms.<sup>22</sup> He helped to edit a volume of Roulleaux's economic ideas, and published an article on him in La Revue de la Philosophie Positive.<sup>23</sup>

Ferry's laissez-faire ideas in economics led him into a number of studies on that subject. The conclusions which he reached, present no element of surprise to those aware of his predilections in that particular field.

In 1860 he prepared three articles on specific phases of the Napoleonic economics. He wrote one called "The Politics of Floating Loans," and another entitled "The Loan and the Tax" (L'Emprunt et L'Impot).<sup>24</sup> Ferry opposed Napoleon's policy of floating large-scale loans in order to obtain funds for investment, arguing that Necker could not save Louis XVI in this fashion: it only increased the public debt, and did no more than bring momentary prosperity at the price of weighting down future generations.

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21. Dupront, op. cit., 359.

22. Lettres, 19.

23. Ibid., 19, 20.

24. Discours, I: 29-37.

Another article, "Loans to Industry" ("Les Prêts à l'Industrie")<sup>25</sup> attacked the policy of subsidizing industries after embarking upon a policy of free trade by means of the famous Cobden Treaty of 1859. Henry IV and Colbert protected infant industries, but to attempt a similar policy in 1860 was to serve no good end.

Part of his attitude was a natural manifestation of laissez-faire economics. Thus, he heartily approved of the Cobden Treaty, and, conversely, obviously deplored protection. The articles, however, were also motivated by the distaste for the regime, felt deeply by all of the republicans. This could lead to some inconsistencies. It was undeniable that under the Second Empire capital investments and industries expanded enormously. Industrial development was much to be desired, in the eyes of Ferry, who recalled the success of the Industrial Revolution in England. Nevertheless it was hard to condemn Napoleon III's policies without seeming to include the industrial expansion as well. These articles, then, were intended to criticize the means chosen by Napoleon's economic advisors rather than the results obtained.

After examining at great length the agency of the Crédit Mobilier, Ferry tried for several years to get the Revue des Deux Mondes to publish an article of his on industrial concentration in France.<sup>26</sup> He believed, evidently, that industrial expansion without government protection would not result

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25. Discours. I: 37-42.

26. Dupront, op. cit., 359-360.

in monopolistic concentration--an oversight, as we know today, which was typical of most advocates of economic laissez-faire. Six years after he prepared this article, he wrote to one of the editors of the Revue, April 24, 1865, asking again to have the article printed, for it would take up no more than thirty-two of the Revue's valuable pages. In this letter he unburdened himself of these opinions of the Emperor's Crédit Mobilier:

"This Crédit Mobilier has only one raison d'être: MONOPOLY....It seems that the moment is well chosen to expose that this financial institution, which is, in the economic order, the equivalent of political despotism, is based on a monstrous concentration of the capital of speculation".<sup>27</sup>

The analogy of the Crédit Mobilier as the economic equivalent of political despotism is revealing and characteristic of Ferry's desire on any and all occasions to denounce the politics of personal rule in all its forms. In this he was no more than typical of all of his republican companions.

Ferry was opposed to all forms of governmental interference in capitalistic economics; in his unedited notes on economic problems is a remark that "all governmental enterprise is harmful".<sup>28</sup> If he did not realize all of the consequences of unrestrained free enterprise, neither was he altogether unaware that some contradiction existed between the principle of complete economic freedom and its natural outcome: monopoly. He did not want liberty to mean immoral laissez-faire. He de-

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27. Part of this letter reprinted in Dupront, op. cit. 363-364.

28. Ibid., 368.

sired social harmony in the way the Positivists wished it--by ameliorating economic woes with all participating in the development of a capitalist society and by denying the existence of class differences based upon a clash of economic interests--and yet he knew that a modern system of capitalistic production implied societal stratification.<sup>29</sup>

An avid student of English affairs through his reading of John Stuart Mill, the Edinburgh Review, and the Westminster Review, Ferry believed that the answer might be found in the direction of Manchester economics. He noticed the obvious fact that industrialization had begun much earlier in England than in France. Simultaneously he was convinced that by the middle of the century the manufacturing dynasties of England had become an elite habitually performing social services. Thus the English worker did not want, or need, the possession of capital. If this was happening in England, why should it not transpire in France as time elapsed and manufacturing and industry should become more stabilized.<sup>30</sup>

So far as the employee as such was concerned, Ferry followed Littré in his Conservation, Révolution, et Positivism, recognizing at least a limited right to strike.<sup>31</sup> But just how limited this was to be in actual fact is indicated by his approval of the famous Law of the Coalition in 1864. Though most republicans disliked the law, Ferry thought it satisfactory, as

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29. Part of this letter reprinted in Dupront, op. cit., 365.

30. Ibid., 366.

31. Ibid., 368.

a letter of his to Ollivier shows.<sup>32</sup> The law, while permitting strikes, forbade unions, thus nullifying any effective operation of the principle of the strike.

In view of this training in economics and the nature of the articles which he wrote, it seems safe to say that Ferry was a typical advocate of the economics of free trade. In his economic thinking he reflected quite well the bourgeois heritage from which he sprang: himself a lawyer, he was not in commerce, nor business, nor manufacturing. His father was a lawyer before him. He was in possession of fair means. All of this made the embracing of the principle of laissez-faire a relatively easy matter for him. Actually, in the upper bourgeoisie in France there was no concerted opposition to Napoleon III's economics. Many in fact welcomed the chances for investment. Consequently, Ferry's economic ideas were not so very typical, and in this sphere he was more nearly English in thought than most of his countrymen.

As one would expect, Ferry had great faith in a free press. England had the freest newspaper press in the world, one which expressed the views of every group in English society. "A regime of free discussion," he was sure, "will of itself create a new order".<sup>33</sup> The importance which Ferry attached to free discussion as a prerequisite of liberty is understandable: this was before the Reform Bill of 1867, approximately the half-way mark on Britain's route to universal suffrage, while

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32. Ollivier, "Histoire Contemporaine, IV5: 33-34.

33. Dupront, op. cit., 366-367.

in form alone France under Napoleon III had manhood suffrage. At the time, then, Ferry would notice the freedom of the press and freedom of speech in England, while the limited suffrage would seem a small enough limitation to one living in a France which had a stringently circumscribed right to vote in the disguise of legal suffrage.

Ferry's ideas on education are perhaps the best-known side of his intellectual views in general because of the determining role he played in the first stages of the liberalization of education under the Third Republic.<sup>34</sup> A sentence will suffice to explain his attitude on the subject about 1860, the time when his thinking reached its maturity: in his unpublished notes there were a few lines copied from the old Le Temps for February 18, 1846, which summarized his feelings:

"Education develops and fortifies the sentiment of the dignity of man; that is to say, the conscience regarding his rights and duties. The one who is enlightened makes appeal to reason and not to force in order to realize his desires."<sup>35</sup>

This last conviction of Ferry's typifies beautifully the very evident fact that he was what we call to-day a nineteenth century liberal, a man of his time, convinced of education as the indisputable means to achieve the rational behavior of man. The link with Comtian ideas and with eighteenth century belief in progress is not difficult to see.

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34. See Acomb, op. cit., for a full treatment of his ideas in this regard.

35. Dupront, op. cit., 368.

Another favorite idea of Ferry's which was rather local than Western European in its typicalness was his faith in decentralism as a program. At least indirectly the Proudhonian influence, which was enormous in the republican bourgeoisie as well as the workers,<sup>36</sup> may be noted here. But the main force of decentralism among bourgeois republicans was anti-Napoleonic in its nature. In 1865 a group of Lorrainers held a conference advocating French decentralization; though not openly stated, this was obviously intended as a censure of the Empire's highly centralized administrative system which made impossible any local democratic development. Ferry, Simon, and others adhered to this program, finding that Legitimists like Berryer and an Orleanist like Guizot were in agreement with them on the issue.<sup>37</sup> Ferry, incidentally, wrote a letter to Hérolâ signifying his accord with the intent of the Nancy conferees to include a reference to social reforms, as the workers desired.<sup>38</sup> Here was an instance of the fact that he was not of "blind bourgeois mentality", when considered in conjunction with the labor law of the previous year.<sup>39</sup>

In Ferry's circle the question of decentralism was most frequently discussed in terms of provincial and municipal autonomy of Paris. The regime retorted that this would be the Commune of Paris, and remained deaf to Picard's argument that

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36. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 183.

37. *Ibid.*, 431-432.

38. *Ibid.*, 433.

39. See page 68.

the Commune had not grown out of free elections, as the republicans desired.<sup>40</sup>

Ferry also had some definite ideas on this question: on September 1, 1865 he wrote his brother from Bern, Switzerland that the Congress of the International Association for the Progress of the Social Sciences had been futile in its efforts, as far as he was concerned, but what he had learned of the organization of the Swiss Communes had made his trip worth while.<sup>41</sup> Earlier in the same year he had worked on an article, never printed, seeking to prove that the Commune of Paris was not the menace to order which it was commonly believed to constitute.

"An accord between 'l'insurrection' and the Hotel de Ville is not a historical law", wrote Ferry. "The Commune vanquished the insurrection in '91; it was necessary for the insurrectionists to rout the Commune on August 10, (1792). There was no Commune in 1830, and it was not the Commune which made 1848".<sup>42</sup>

Although Ferry's ideas expressed here anent the Commune had a subsequent importance for him, the great interest which he and other bourgeois republicans displayed in decentralism was pretty much confined to the longevity of the Second Empire. After the advent of the Third Republic most republican politicians were not noted for their obsession with the questions of a decentralized administration. It is evident, then, that the

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40. Tchernoff, op. cit., 425-426.

41. Ferry, Lettres, 31.

42. Quoted from an unedited article of Ferry's in Dupront, op. cit., 373.

primary reason for interest in decentralism lay in the fact that it presented another readily accessible shibboleth with which to carry on the verbal struggle against Napoleon III. At the same time it is easy to overemphasize the extent to which political expediency motivated the bourgeois republicans at this point. They were sincere as well as expedient so far as centralization was associated specifically with the Bonapartes. Ferry reflected this in a letter he wrote to a friend in 1869: Republicans "must destroy the administrative edifice of the Year Eight, which neither parliamentary monarchy nor republic had done".<sup>43</sup> It seems fair to say that Ferry and others hated centralization in its Napoleonic form as much as they said they did. After 1870, however, decentralization did not seem as essential as it did a few years earlier, when feelings ran high.

Logically the decentralist principle would be the antithesis of the principle of nationalism, as in fact it was with someone as indifferent to orthodox inconsistency as Proudhon. But with Ferry, as with most republicans, decentralist ideas did not gainsay a strong feeling of sympathy for oppressed nationalities. The latter, needless to say, was a passion of practically all those who professed liberal ideas in the nineteenth century, and the principle of nationalism was by no means dead in the twentieth century as the Treaty of Versailles showed. In the case of Ferry, acceptance of the nationalist

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43. Quoted from an unedited article of Ferry's in Dupront, op. cit., 370-371.

idea was not only typical of the group of which he was a part, but was personalized to some extent through his talks with the Polish general, Miraslowsky. He had no blame for the regicide idea implicit in the Orsini Plot despite his moderation because the incident symbolized again the fate of an oppressed nationality.<sup>44</sup>

Ferry in his political theory was completely free of the Comtian influence which he had adopted for other realms of thought. Comte was opposed to political liberalism, legalism, and the sovereignty of the people, all of which Ferry embraced. Instead, he followed Mill in his Comte and Positivism. This was Mill's reinterpretation of Comte in order to fit the philosophy into a context of democratic political thought.<sup>45</sup>

The best expression of Ferry's political theory, however, is to be found in a series of articles he wrote for Nefftzer's Le Temps in 1866.<sup>46</sup> The ideas Ferry expressed here are extremely important, for they define exactly where he stood on the questions of French democracy and the Great Revolution, the proper interpretation of the revolutionary tradition in French history, and the meaning of Jacobinism for the Frenchman living in the nineteenth century. By a full discussion here of Ferry's interpretation of French revolutionary history, plus recollection of the views he expressed anent the relative harmlessness of the Commune, the reader will more readily under-

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44. Tchernoff, op. cit. 378; also see a letter of his to Eugène Pelletan in 1864, Lettres, 28.

45. Dupront, op. cit., 367.

46. Printed in Discours, I: 100-121.

stand Ferry's entire position regarding these questions during the Franco-Prussian War.

The occasion for Ferry's articles requires a little explanation: in 1865 Edgar Quinet published his La Révolution. As G. P. Gooch pointed out,<sup>47</sup> Quinet was inconsistent in his book in denouncing the Terror in the French Revolution because of its violence, while berating the Revolution for not destroying the Catholic Church root and branch; this seems to imply that Quinet believed that it was necessary to respect differences in political opinions, but that it would be justifiable to wipe out religious ones. At the time the book was published, however, the debate hinged on Quinet's interpretation of the Terror, for most republicans were anti-clerical anyway, and tended to view Quinet's ideas on the religious question as somewhat advanced views on this matter; the *avancés*, in fact, were in full accord with Quinet here.

In Paris the book was severely attacked by the Publicist, Peyrat, in his newspaper, L'Avenir. Peyrat's position is typified in several remarks he made to Mme. Adam:

"The Third Republic must be constructed on the foundations of the First. The Second Republic was infantile--it did not understand that a government must place its survival above its principles. As Saint-Just stated it, 'That which constitutes the Republic is the destruction of all that is opposed to it!'"<sup>48</sup>

Ferry's first defense of Quinet's book came in Le Temps, January 6, 1866, under title of "The Ghosts" ("Les Revenants").

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47. G. P. Gooch, op. cit., 236.

48. Quoted in Juliette Adam, Mes Sentiments avant 1870, 32.

This article amounted to a general attack on the Jacobin tradition which Peyrat defended as inappropriate to the nineteenth century:

"Modern society is not challenged by a soul alive; the ancien régime exists only for the old newspapers which do not wish to lose the habit of breaking things up. In the middle of overflowing democracy, which, in the place of enemies, has only sycophants, Jacobinism is no longer an arm of war, but a peril, for it represents among us something sadder than the memory of the scaffold--the Presumption of Dictatorship.

In the nineteenth century there no longer exist tyrannies, but only dictators. One does not deny liberty, one does no more than wait for it.

M. de Bismarck has only one grievance against Prussian liberty--it could prevent him from making his acquisitions in his own little way. He subordinates liberty to annexation....

The doctrine of the Public Safety is also liberty subordinated. On what ground do you dare to complain of the subordination of liberty to conservative principles, if you yourself subordinate to the revolutionary necessities?....

All sect is haughty, dogmatic, intolerant.... These continuators of the Revolution have inherited only sophisms, declamations, and hatreds".<sup>49</sup>

In this article one notices several points of significance; the oblique reference to Napoleon III and the direct attack on Bismarck, as nineteenth century despots, is characteristic of any liberal disliking of personal government. So, too, are Ferry's optimistic assumptions about the nineteenth century: the feeling that nobody would contest the desirability of the "modern society", by which Ferry doubtlessly

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49. Discours, I: 100-103.

meant his own conceptions of modern society. The dismissal of the ancien régime as defunct is polemical exaggeration, for the Legitimists were by no means dead as their numbers in the National Assembly of February 1871 showed. Likewise, the feeling that democracy was overflowing and that tyranny did not exist as a principle amounted to a mixture of argumentation and expression of hope rather than any resemblance to fact.

The most important part of the article lies in his denunciation of Jacobinism as a denial of liberty equal to absolute monarchy. Assuming the bona fide application of universal suffrage, this is a perfectly logical position.

In his article in Le Temps, January 30, 1866, entitled, "Girondins and Jacobins," Ferry revealed his attitude toward certain crucial phases in the Great Revolution. This time he aligned himself squarely behind the position taken by M. Quinet in defense of the Girondins. Quinet, he said, did justice to the Girondins. They had never had a defender, as Quinet explained, since Lamartine's L'Histoire des Girondins started out as an apology but turned into a misplaced tribute to Robespierre by the author. Then Ferry went on:

"Between the constitutionnels who would not pardon them, and the Montagnards, whom they exasperated, the most eloquent, the most generous, the most innovating of the revolutionaries have long remained without defenders.

To kill the Girondins, people have accused them of not knowing how to act, of being an inconsistent melange of incapacity and eloquence, of vanity and weakness. Robespierre began the fancy, others have copied it.

As people said, the Republic was implicit in the Constitution of 1791, and, what with the Monarchy betraying the country to the foreigner, the necessities of the exterior defense precipitated the crisis. The Girondins prepared the Republic, the Revolution, and the war, while the Jacobins were still in the background, and even demanding contrary action. The Girondins organized the first defense and the first victories....

The Jacobins must be reproached for misunderstanding the revolutionary zeal of the populace, and believing that force and terror were necessary....

All the great events (of 1792-1793) were accomplished not by the Montagne or the Gironde, but by the people of France. There has been too much attention paid to the (National) Convention in the present zeal for centralization!<sup>50</sup>

The charges against the Girondins, summarized and dismissed here by the author, have by no means been forgotten. Many of them, in fact, appear to have a fair degree of accuracy in the light of the exhaustive research done in this field. However, Ferry neglected to mention that they were suspected, with some truth, of attacking the Montagnards in the Convention, largely to assure their own political dominance, that they vacillated on the imminent question of an insurrection for the Republic in August, 1792, and feared to oppose openly the September Massacres, which they later condemned, and that they procrastinated in unseemly fashion on the question of the king's trial in the winter of 1792-1793.<sup>51</sup> In very many respects the Girondins' conduct was none too heroic. It is, therefore, not

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50. Discours, I: 108-121.

51. See an estimate of the Girondins' actions in 1792 in Leo Gershey, The French Revolution and Napoleon (New York, 1941), 230-238; it is well known that this a relatively unbiased computation of the latest research on the Revolution.

so surprising that this group's defenders were comparatively few up to the 1860's. At the same time it is true, as Ferry says, that they helped to prepare the Revolution and the Republic, and that their general, Dumouriez, certainly did much until he compromised himself with the enemy. Yet they alone did not accomplish as much in the first period of the war as Ferry would have his readers believe. Nor did the other groups, for that matter. As Ferry says of the Convention, it was the people of France of all the parties rather than the followers of any one group who saved the nation.

Ferry's third article, entitled "The Doctrinaires of the Terror" was printed in Le Temps, January 11, 1866. In this polemic the old question of the necessity of the Terror was revived. In his book Quinet had accused Robespierre, Saint-Just, and the others of systematizing the Terror, while Peyrat had denied this in an article in L'Avenir, saying the Terror was a war necessity. Ferry went on:

"This opinion, often emitted, constitutes what one can call the modesty of modern Jacobinism, and it had taken in many good people.."

Next follows Ferry's version of revolutionary psychology:

"The first stage of revolutionary violence was the innocent stage, for this was the revolution of instinct: the levée en masse, the Law of the Suspects, the revolutionary tribunals, etc.

This was neither a theory nor a system, but the work of the multitudes caused by long servitude and secular iniquity.

But then came the second stage when the men of state and the legists entered, and the Terror changed character. Popular terror, like the tempest, appeased itself, but systematic terror increased in the same proportion as victory; the longer the Terror lasted, the more weighty it became, and the more dogmatic, the less it was necessary."

Ferry next quoted Billaud-Varennes' statement of November 17, 1793, that the Committee of Public Safety must "make Terror the order of the day", in order to confound M. Peyrat and his theory of the leaders' repugnance to the Terror. To the argument that the Terror was only the device of war and its necessities, Ferry recalled the victorious campaign of September to December, 1793, then quoted again the oft-repeated words of Robespierre on revolutionary government as the despotism of liberty against tyranny. Ferry added:

"The Terrorists represented the spirit of energy which saves revolutions in their hour of greatest peril, but they did not represent justice. By tradition democracy can accept only justice.<sup>52</sup>

In the latter part of the article on "Girondins and Jacobins" Ferry continued his interpretation of revolutionary history in its latter stages:

"The 9 Thermidor (July 27, 1794) was the end of the Terror and the beginning of justice and clemency. Thermidoreans and non-Thermidorians are better identified as Terrorists and non-Terrorists".<sup>53</sup>

Ferry, in the course of his three articles on revolutionary history, also maintained that there was a direct link be-

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52. Printed in Discours, I: 103-108.

53. Ibid., I: 114.

tween the insurrection of May 31, 1793, by which the Girondins completely lost control of the Convention, and 18 Brumaire (November 9, 1799) when Napoleon managed his coup d'état--dictatorship bred dictatorship. The evidence was the reappearance of men such as Fouché and Merlin under the First Consul.<sup>54</sup>

Ferry's views concerning the year of 1793 in the French Revolution, which he stated in the course of his defense of the Girondins, are revealing. He is tolerant of the first period of feverish arrests and occasional violence to late September, 1793, even though the Girondins were eliminated by June of 1793. He even found the Law of Suspects, proposed by Merlin de Douai, an ardent Terrorist, as not indicative of systematic Terrorism. But the concentration of power in the Committee of Public Safety from September to December 4, 1793, when the so-called "Government of the Terror" usually is said to have begun, he considered the work of the "legists" and the systematizers of Terror. This interpretation was perfectly understandable coming from a man of Ferry's bourgeois background.

Ferry's other views on the continuation of the Terror after victory was assured, and the inevitability of a Napoleonic dictatorship after a Jacobin one, are probably those of the great majority of bourgeois and moderate-minded people everywhere. The evidence for such generalizations is by no means as clear for present-day scholars on the Terror as it has been for the general reader in revolutionary history.

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54. Printed in Discours, I: 113-114.

Ferry's sympathy for the Girondins becomes very understandable in the light of this description by a modern scholar of the Revolution:

"....The majority of the Girondin deputies were lawyers, cultivated, idealistic disciples of the philosophes and, in their social philosophy, of Turgot and the Physiocrats. They were unblest either with sympathy or with understanding of the inarticulate needs of the peasants and the city artisans. They unconsciously sponsored the claims and interests of landowners and men of affairs. Socially--this point is important--as well as intellectually, they were linked by strong bond of sympathy to men of wealth and property. Their political and social ideal was a state where trade and industry would be free and unregulated, where foodstuffs would be imported and exported without supervision or the interfering regulation of a central administration, where private property would be inviolable and well-nigh as sacred as life itself. They had consented to the establishment of a republic, but they could not resign themselves to the rule of the lower classes without which a republican government could not then exist. For them the Revolution had gone far enough; further progress spelled anarchy and the end of their economic security".<sup>55</sup>

The affinity between the Girondins' background and ideas, and Ferry's, is too close to be missed. Ferry at this time aspired to be a deputy, preferably in a republican system of government. He was a lawyer, exponent of a new liberal, forward-looking, optimistic philosophy. His origins were somewhat upper-bourgeois, in a provincial town, and in his associations he unquestionably found himself with the well-to-do and the progressive people of affairs in Paris, and his views on trade and industry were no more than nineteenth century adaptations of the Girondins' own physiocratic views. One must be cautious when

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55. Gershoy, op. cit., 231-232.

identifying a man's political philosophy with his background, but in the presence of considerable evidence, such an identification has some usefulness.

Ferry, then, in his outlook on the French Revolution, expressed his own feelings and his own political philosophy. He abhorred the violence and the element of directed force in the tradition of the Terror, and took the position of most believers in political democracy and the efficacy of universal suffrage: Jacobinism is dictatorship disguised as democracy. His attitudes on the crucial moments in the Revolution indicated how he might be expected to act in a period of war and imminent revolution: while he defended the republic, and justified the twilight period of 1793 when the maximum for prices, the levée en masse, the Law of Suspects were inaugurated as the necessities of war and the economic crisis, he rejected everything following December, 1793, and the Terror government, for he could not accept the series of events surrounding the fall of the Girondins. The subsequent war measures were the work of the French people in their first innocently violent stage.

In summation, we might say that, while Ferry's politics may have been the ready accessory of his background, his social and economic outlook the likely aftergrowth of his social origins, his long-range philosophy had the gratifying merits of optimism, educational equalitarianism, and social-mindedness.

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Given these attitudes, training, influences, and personality, we can turn our attention to the most important inci-

dents of which Ferry partook between 1860 and 1869. His journalistic and political development in these years gave him enough experience and training to make his official political debut in 1869.

On the personal side, Ferry's public life may have been affected by a turn of events in his later twenties. It has been mentioned that he was a frequenter of the salons of Mme. Adam, Mme. Picard, and especially the soirées of the Olliviers. Many of Ferry's companions, like him, were attracted to the latter residence. Part of this was due to their enthusiasm for the young Ollivier's politics, but an equally strong motive was their enthusiasm for Mme. Ollivier.<sup>56</sup> Ollivier's first wife, Blandine, was the natural daughter of Liszt and Daniel Stern. In 1860 she was a young woman in her late twenties, of an uncommon beauty, and, by all accounts, she had an irresistible attraction for the young men who made her acquaintance.<sup>57</sup> Ferry appears to have fallen violently in love with her, a completely untenable situation, since Ollivier was his personal as well as political friend. The Ollivier home, then, had the double attraction of some world-famous guests and the exquisite Blandine. Although the presence of the socially well-thought-of republican youth, especially Ferry, was a subject of gossip both within and outside of Ferry's own circle,<sup>58</sup> it deterred none of them from continuing to attend gatherings at the Olliviers' home.

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56. Dietz, op. cit., 513.

57. Ibid., 514; Pottecher, Ferry, 81.

58. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 270.

In order to improve his standing with Blandine Ollivier, he began to write for a new periodical, Le Courrier Francais. Though his service with Le Courrier Francais was brief, it was the beginning of his journalistic career.<sup>59</sup> Blandine, who was in ill health, passed away in childbirth. Ferry was placed in a peculiarly trying position when Ollivier asked for his assistance, as a good friend, while his wife was dying. This worsened when he asked Ferry to accompany him on a voyage to Italy in order to forget the tragedy. Forced to conceal his feelings all this time, Ferry wrote his brother, November 9, 1861, an affecting letter, saying that, while his brother always regarded him as very strong in mind, he felt as feeble as a baby over it all, and adding that in the future his soul affection in life would be Charles.<sup>60</sup> Undoubtedly the death of Blandine Ollivier and of as close a friend as Marcel Roulleaux left a mark on him, and probably contributed to his well-known exterior coldness. Politically, his love for Mme. Ollivier kept him very close to Ollivier in the early 60's, and it may have provided some of the impetus to his first ambition to succeed in politics.

By this time, he began seriously to make his way through the medium of the newspaper press. He wrote for the Gazette des Tribunaux, as a young lawyer reporting the most important trials and cases of various kinds.<sup>61</sup> He was a contributing

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59. Dietz, op. cit., 514-515.

60. Ibid., 515-516; Pottecher, op. cit., 81.

61. Lettres, 10; Tchernoff, op. cit., 380.

editor for Le Courrier de Paris,<sup>62</sup> edited by Clement Duvernois, then in opposition to, but later a minister of the Empire. And soon after Nefftzer founded Le Temps in 1861, he began to write for this newspaper. He found it particularly congenial to his tastes because of its serious editorial policy and its liberal Protestant tone.<sup>63</sup>

In this year he published one article worth noting, entitled "The Frontiers of the Rhine".<sup>64</sup> In it, he offered the sane opinion that it would be unwise for France (i.e., Napoleon III) to attempt aggressive expansion to the Rhine, or the annexation of Belgium, for the price would be the enmity of Europe. Ferry, as a Vosgien, assuredly was entitled to a view on such a subject.

A year later he was immersed in his first completely political project. With several others of the republican "jeunes," he set to work preparing an electoral manual on election procedures in Napoleonic France. The immediate pretext, as he wrote Lavertujon in June, 1861, was the election of council committees, but the real object was to aim at the general elections in 1863. The liberal newspapers gave a summary of the contents of the manual, and let it be known that the authors held themselves at the disposition of any electors who had been faced with legal difficulties at the polls. Les Cinq, and '48'ers like Marie, Carnot, and Garnier-Pagès were behind Ferry,

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62. Tchernoff, op. cit., 388.

63. Dietz, op. cit., 609.

64. Discours, 25-29 (originally in Courrier de Paris).

Floquet, Dréo, and the other contributors. Ferry believed that with proper publicity the manual would do much to insure fair elections in 1863.<sup>65</sup>

The year of 1862 was taken up with further editions of the electoral manual,<sup>66</sup> which made a favorable impression in republican Paris, and for which young Ferry was commended as the most persevering contributor.<sup>67</sup> During this year also, he served along with Gambetta and others, in the defense of several of the former exiles who were being tried for political crimes amidst considerable publicity.<sup>68</sup>

1863 was a year to which all of the young republicans looked forward. For Ferry, it began with his employment by another journal, La Presse, edited by Darimon and Girardin, the latter a well-known journalist who had changed stripes several times. Darimon thought Ferry would be a useful addition, for he was the most intelligent of the young republicans and had no attachment to the 48'ers.<sup>69</sup> In January, 1863, while Ferry was employed by Darimon, he was asked to prepare an article on social conditions in the cotton industry for La Presse. Ferry had access to some material furnished by the manufacturers of Mulhouse, which he used in the article for Darimon.<sup>70</sup> Before long Darimon and Ferry had quarreled over the former's relations with Napoleon, which Ferry, sharing his friends' views,

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65. Lettres, 11-12.

66. Ibid., 16.

67. Darimon, L'Opposition Liberale, 145.

68. Tchernoff, op. cit., 372-373.

69. Darimon, L'Opposition Liberale, 287.

70. Ibid., 295.

deplored;<sup>71</sup> the difference, however, was composed for the time being.

With the elections imminent by April, 1863, the question arose among the republican "jeunes" as to whether Les Cinq should be supported, or left to their own devices, because of their excessive moderation. Sentiment was divided among the younger men. Ferry, partly because of his association with Ollivier, was favorable to Les Cinq, and Gambetta, likewise, was known to prefer the moderate opposition. Thanks to their influence, a vote on support or non-support held at Hérold's home came out 20 in favor of Les Cinq, 15 opposed, 5 absences.<sup>72</sup> It should be noted that the crux of the dispute lay in the dubious attitude shown in 1863 by Ollivier, not to mention Darimon's crypto-Bonapartism.

Garnier-Pagès took the authors of the electoral manual under his wing by organizing his electoral committee, and this in turn eventually managed to unite with the Siècle and Liberal Union groups.<sup>73</sup> Unity at this moment was extremely difficult, as a letter of Ferry to Lavertujon shows,<sup>74</sup> for the old question of abstention vs. non-abstention returned to plague the republicans. Naturally, Ferry was a strong exponent of the latter.

Ferry and his colleagues busied themselves studying electoral procedures with the intention of publishing a supplement

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71. Darimon, L'Opposition Liberale, 327-329.

72. Tchernoff, op. cit., 397.

73. Delord, op. cit., III: 432-435; Weill, op. cit., 480-481.

74. Lettres, 21-27.

or a new edition of their electoral manual of 1861-62. They first obtained the support of the older figures in the republican party. The subsequent brochure, of which by far the largest part was Ferry's work, was published some months after the election as La Lutte Electorale de 1863.<sup>75</sup> The major portion of this work consisted of a summary of various charges of fraud in the recent elections, protests against official candidatures, and so on. Though a protest against the regime, the pamphlet was essentially moderate, at least in comparison to the type of charges hurled at the government in 1869. The fact that Ollivier and Darimon, in the favor of the government, looked upon the work as the legitimate expression of criticism of a non-revolutionary opposition, is indicative enough.<sup>76</sup> Even more significant is the fact that Ferry, anxious to have the brochure published by a well-known printer, got Darimon to use his influence in order to have the imperial printer, Dentu, undertake publication.<sup>77</sup> Subsequently, Darimon repented of his sponsorship of La Lutte Electorale en 1863, and La Presse gave little publicity to the pamphlet. Ferry wrote a letter to Darimon complaining of the silence of La Presse and the other newspapers, after promises of due publicity had been obtained beforehand.<sup>78</sup>

Despite the fact that Ferry, Gambetta, and the others aligned themselves with Les Cinq, a degree of opposition which

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75. Reprinted in Discours, 44-94.

76. Ollivier, "Histoire Contemporaine", III: 780; Darimon, Le Tiers Parti sous l'Empire (1863-1866) (Paris, 1887), 25.

77. Ibid, 4-6.

78. Ibid, 31.

was tolerated by the government, the youths of the electoral manual had some unpleasant contacts with the authorities. Napoleon, evidently disconcerted by the success of the anti-government slate, attempted to break up the Garnier-Pagès committee by trying certain republicans for violating the law prohibiting meetings of more than twenty people. The accused, among whom were Garnier-Pagès, Carnot, Dréo, Floquet, Ferry, and others, numbered thirteen in all, a cause for much comment, since they were supposed to have violated a law applying to twenty or more people. The trial did not take place until the middle of 1864. The accused were ably defended by Favre and Berryer. Eventually each of the Thirteen was fined 500 francs.<sup>79</sup> The whole affair, so far as the "jeunes" were concerned, redounded to their benefit in giving them a great deal of publicity.

In 1863-1864 Ferry was both an ardent defender of Les Cinq in the election and a supporter of the idea of the Liberal Union. Le Temps, for which Ferry showed a preference in his journalism, was at this time something like Thiers in 1870-71--half-Orleanist, half-republican, and it was much in favor of the Liberal Union.<sup>80</sup> Even after the election of 1863, when close relations between Orleanists and republicans were no longer tactically necessary, Ferry, following Picard's lead, kept himself in accord with the best-known of the younger Orleanists, particularly d'Haussonville. He helped establish the Club du Café de Londres where all shades of opposition

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79. Tchernoff, op. cit., 416-417; Weill, op. cit., 483-484; Rambaud, op. cit., 10.

80. Tchernoff, op. cit., 396.

met.<sup>81</sup> One of his biographers, has, in fact, accounted for this camaraderie with people who were not republicans during 1863-64 with the explanation that Ferry's background was not such as to bring forth many antipathies to the Orleanists. Their constitutionalism, their upper bourgeois fiber, and their rationalism were, if anything, likely to make him feel that there was some common bond between Orleanists and republicans.<sup>82</sup>

Thus it is not difficult to see how a moderate republican of Ferry's stamp should not be averse to some lines of accord with the Orleanists at this time. The year of 1864, however, found Ferry, in the midst of the run-off elections of that year, involved in a compromising situation less readily explainable than his cordiality toward Orleanism. Ollivier had been drifting away from the republicanism of Les Cinq for some time, and in the months following the elections he had almost entirely lost favor with them, although no open split came until the Law of Coalitions was reported out of committee in April, 1864.<sup>83</sup> Certainly it was well-known that Ollivier was aligning himself with the government by January of 1864. In the committee working on the Coalitions Law, he showed himself favorable to the measure. Because Simon, also on the committee, had reported this to his friends, it did not remain a secret.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, Ferry remained close to Ollivier, as did

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81. Dietz, op. cit., 519.

82. Ibid., 608.

83. Darimon, Le Tiers Parti, 34; Delord, op. cit., III: 502.

84. Ollivier, op. cit., IV:15.

Gambetta,<sup>85</sup> long after all of the other republicans had lost faith in him.

Favre and Havin having opted for département seats after the 1863 elections, supplementary elections were held for the two Parisian constituencies. Thus it was in March, 1864 that Ferry presented himself for the first time as a candidate for the Corps Législatif, with the strong support of Ollivier. Latter helped him to prepare his manifesto to the voters during the campaigning period.<sup>86</sup>

At the same time, Ferry helped Ollivier in his work on the Law of Coalitions. During the month of March Darimon intended to write a series of articles on this very subject in La Presse. But the Duke de Morny, who was openly in consultation with Ollivier at the time, wished Ollivier to do such an explanatory series. Ollivier enlisted Ferry's help. The latter went to La Presse to obtain its use for publication of his proposed articles, only to find that Darimon intended to do this himself.<sup>87</sup>

In the campaign the republicans were not of the same mind, as usual. The year before, the '48'ers had not campaigned in Paris, but this time Garnier-Pagès desired Favre's seat, and Carnot wished Havin's. Ferry took the field, nevertheless, declaring himself in part to the voters as follows:

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85. Ollivier, op. cit., IV:15.

86. Tchernoff, op. cit., 380--the author received this information from Charles Ferry.

87. Darimon, Le Tiers Parti, 129.

"My candidature answers a need which is being expressed by all sides. Must not a great party, in addition to the illustrious figures of the past, prepare the combatants of the future?"<sup>88</sup>

After mentioning the obscurity of the name of Ferry, and recalling "the services that I have rendered to the cause of electoral liberties since 1857," the appeal concluded:

"I have the ambition of uniting my voice to those of the deputies of the opposition in order to vindicate with them our liberties, and advance beside them with decision and maturity on the road to social reforms."<sup>89</sup>

The announcement to the voters evidences the young man's desire to appear as a candidate, emphasizing the advantages of his youth, while seeking not to alienate any of the older party adherents, since their friendship was essential to any young republican's advance. His youth appealed to the "jeunes" restless impatience to arrive politically, rather than to tag along forever after men who had had their day fifteen years before. The references to the advance of universal suffrage and social reform were made as a tacit recognition of the Empire's advance toward greater liberty and with the assumption that this liberalizing process should continue.<sup>90</sup> This is worth noticing here, for by 1869 the young republicans' tactics had altogether changed, and there was no longer any tenderness shown toward Napoleonic sensibilities.

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88. His manifesto is reprinted in De la Gorce, op. cit., IV: 214; De Lord, op. cit., III:473.

89. Ibid., 214; Ibid., 473.

90. Dupront, op. cit., 353.

Ferry's campaign was brief. Anxious not to lose the two seats through multiplicity of candidatures, the "vieux" had Jules Favre on March 12 request Ferry to withdraw from the competition.<sup>91</sup> He complied with the older republicans' desires.

For a time after the elections, Ferry and Gambetta alone remained with Ollivier, but they, too, drifted away before the end of the year of 1864.<sup>92</sup> Ferry's remaining with Ollivier in the days when Ollivier was moving toward open accord with the government is a good illustration of Ferry's opportunism. It can be accounted for in three ways. It may have been pure expediency, in that Ferry, anxious to reach the Corps Législatif, saw an easy route thereto through guidance by Ollivier. His subsequent withdrawal could be explained as recognition of the fact that he could not win without the republicans', as well as Ollivier's support. Or, it could have been due to his friendship with Ollivier, particularly to the memory of Ollivier's dead wife. Considering that later on Ferry showed an unaccountable faith in General Trochu at a time when it was obvious that the general was not capable, the possibility of an undue allegiance to a respected acquaintance should not be ruled out. Or, it may have been Ferry's faith in the essential soundness of Ollivier's conception of political ends. Since they separated not much later, this does not seem to have been the reason. Probably it was a mixture of the first two motives.

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91. De la Gorce, op. cit., IV: 270; Delord, op. cit., III: 476.

92. Darimon, Histoire de Douze Ans, 1857-1869 (Paris, 1883), 223.

Following 1864 one notices two aspects of Ferry's activities, which had appealed to him earlier, but which now took a major portion of his time, since no elections were in the immediate offing. These were his love of travel, now satisfied by journeys to Central and Eastern Europe, and his penchant for participating in conferences held outside France on various progressive subjects of the day.

Of his travels, two made a lasting impression on Ferry. One was a sojourn in South Germany in September-October, 1865, after he had just attended a meeting of the Congress of the International Association for the Progress of the Social Sciences, held at Bern. The second was a journey to Constantinople in 1868.<sup>93</sup> A third trip, which lasted only a few days, took him to London, but there he did not have the time to make any serious observations. Since he was fortunate enough to have the means with which to travel fairly extensively, his journeys had not only the usual broadening effects, but also helped to shape the liberal bent of his mind. He was able to acquaint himself with the illness of Europe's Sick Man by first-hand observations in Constantinople. He perceived some of the manifestations of the German spirit, to which he felt himself related, in the area east of the Vosges and the Rhine. In addition to that, he was able to draw upon history, as do most capable men of politics, in order to make analogies and contrasts with the contemporary political and cultural problems in which he was particularly interested.

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93. Lettres, 49-50.

Letters to his brother, written from Munich and Ratisbonne in September, 1865, show how a man whose interests were primarily political drew impressions from his immediate surroundings. He was greatly impressed with the magnificent, yet artificial, splendor of the new Munich, the "German Athens". He showed his kinship to the German--or the South German--spirit by paying tribute to the "colossal effort, to which all the modern Germanic genius, with its high pedantism, its minutiae of erudition, its grave and pretentious imagination, its emphatic and encompassing nationalism", contributed to this work.<sup>94</sup> His comments on Bavarian politics were an interesting intermixture of truth and faulty prophecy:

"These people will be hard to centralize... They are Bavarians, they have made a Bavarian painting; a Bavarian civilization which appertains neither to Bavaria, nor to Germany, nor to Europe, but which, like all great things, is in the domain of the entire humanity. This is why they snap their fingers at Bismarck, and hold the Berliners in pity, something they do not deprive themselves of doing".<sup>95</sup>

This letter concludes with words which reveal as well as any the finer side of the man, both personally and politically:

"In this peaceful Munich, this Lapland of intelligence, there was an honest-to-goodness meeting a few days ago, with previous public advertising on the walls and in the journals. A meeting which was spontaneously and freely assembled, and one where Bismarck has been flogged, excommunicated, cursed; all with gravity, honesty, eloquence, and, especially, resoluteness. This dilates the heart. It is necessary to come to a dreamland in order to discover the signs of an Athens of another day,

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94. Lettres, 34.

95. Ibid., 39.

not in the imitations of architecture, but in the free and legal exercise of a right of unlimited assembly, and a freedom of press equal to the English press".<sup>96</sup>

In 1868 he journeyed down the Danube to the gateway to the Orient, in the company of a young friend and client of his.<sup>97</sup> Here, too, he observed with some care, noticing things about the Turk which were not original, but which showed that he had a sense of history that could serve him well.

Ferry's love of conferences illustrates how typical he was of the company he kept. The young republicans could express themselves, in fact, only in talk: Publicly, they had only the limited medium of the press, or, for free discussion, such free assemblies as were available in near-by countries. In the early 60's the Ferrys' own private circle provided an outlet in a small way; once active, politically, Ferry preferred a more public forum. Jules' love of intermixing himself in the affairs of the moment justifies one authority's statement that he was a man for whom "the need of acting was almost a disease".<sup>98</sup> He was not different from others among "jeunes" in this regard, he simply went at it with greater intensity. So, between 1865 and 1870, he was a regular at the Molé conferences, the meetings of the Congress of the International Association for the Progress of the Social Sciences, and, especially, at the Congress of the League of Peace which annually met in Switzerland.

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96. Lettres., 39-40.

97. Ibid., 46; Dupront, op. cit., 355-356.

98. Tchernoff, op. cit., 372.

In 1866, as an aftermath to the polemic with Peyrat, Ferry gained a friend among the "vieux," for whom he had previously not much personal affection. Edgar Quinet wrote Ferry a letter of thanks for his vigorous defense of Quinet's volume on the Revolution,<sup>99</sup> and a fairly warm friendship was the outcome. This was useful to Quinet and Ferry both: apropos the Austro-Prussian War then in progress, Quinet wrote Ferry informing him of a brochure he had authored as early as 1831 called L'Allemagne et la Révolution in which he had shown that the German unity in formation would be in the name of the despotism of Prussia. He invited Ferry to remind his readers in Le Temps of this, which he was glad to do.<sup>100</sup> In 1867, likewise, Ferry insured that Nefftzer would not forget to give space to the review of a book in his newspaper which Quinet favored.<sup>101</sup> The friendship was to prove useful to Ferry in his electoral campaign in 1869.

In 1868 Ferry began to contribute to such periodicals as La Revue Polititique of Challemeil-Lacour, L'Electeur, which he helped to found, and Eugène Pelletan's La Tribune.<sup>102</sup> Writing for the first issue of L'Electeur Ferry got some notoriety by trying out the new press law with a severe attack on the Empire's politics under the new law, only to be prosecuted and fined 5,000 francs.<sup>103</sup> But he garnered far greater fame ear-

99. Edgar Quinet, Lettres d'Exile (Paris, 1886), III: 80-81.

100. Ibid., 124-125, 452.

101. Ibid., 206-207.

102. Tchernoff, op. cit., 506-508.

103. Alfred Darimon, Les Irreconciliables sous l'Empire (Paris, 1888), 254.

lier in the year of 1868 by another polemic, this time against the city administration which was headed by Baron Haussmann, Napoleon III's Mayor of Paris, who rebuilt the capital during the 1860's. This attack on one of the most famous of the Empire's functionaries was issued as a brochure after it was published first in Le Temps. But it was through the medium of this newspaper that Ferry's indictment of the Empire reached the general public, for it was published in serial form running from December, 1867 to May, 1868, thus having the inestimable advantage of keeping the author and his theme in the reader's mind for several months. The title, too, was ideally chosen in order to heap ridicule on the Empire--Les Comptes Fantastiques d'Haussmann, a parody on Offenbach's comic opera, "Les Contes d'Hoffmann". It is said that the title was suggested to Ferry by Nefftzer;<sup>104</sup> however, he was thoroughly acquainted with the operatic productions in Paris in the time of Napoleon III, so that the title may have been his own idea. Be that as it may, the articles were Ferry's work. His attack on Haussmann's administration reminds one a little of the work of the American muckrakers of a later day in its documentation of corruption.<sup>105</sup> For purposes of his attack Ferry, naturally, ignored the admittedly remarkable job of remodeling the city that Haussmann had completed, instead concentrating on the Baron's handling of

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104. Frank Brabant, The Beginning of the Third Republic in France (London, 1940), 34.

105. Reprint of the brochure in Discours, I: 123-165.

funds, with a generous sprinkling of bons mots. A few samples will suffice:

"The citizens recognize in the very beginning that this functionary has made of Paris the most beautiful inn on earth; the parasites of two worlds would find nothing comparable....

His bad taste in remodeling the city is equaled by that of his architects. The new capital, with its long gaps and oblique lines, engraved across the old capital gives it the displeasing aspect of a tomahawked Chinaman".

In connection with Haussmann's accounts published in Le Moniteur, Ferry recalled that in 1864 he had engaged himself to spend no more than 350 millions of francs in remodeling Paris. In December, 1867, however, he recognized that he would spend 710 millions by the end of 1868.

"The members of the Commission of the Corps Législatif (of which not one of the elected of Paris was represented) charged with examining the new Loan for the City of Paris have three choices: to vote simply and purely for the project of law--in view of what had happened, this would be an abdication. To return to the Corps Législatif the question of the annual vote of the budget for Paris--no final solution, for M. Haussmann would then remain at his post. To vote to liquidate this past, making evident the rupture with the Prefect, and bringing about his downfall, thus saving the future."106

By the end of 1868, then, Ferry had made a substantial name for himself by his activity. In the public eye, his name immediately recalled the attack on Baron Haussmann in Le Temps. This put him in much better position for the next elections.

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106. Selected quotations from Discours, I: 124,132,165.

In the elections of 1869 young Ferry conducted a campaign which was troublesome enough, but this time he did not have to trouble himself in his manifesto with a reference to his obscure name.

## CHAPTER IV

LAST DAYS OF THE EMPIRE: FERRY IN THE CHAMBER,  
JULY 1869 - JULY 1870.

The electoral campaign of 1869 was anticipated with zest by the republicans, since their own success as the principal element in the Liberal Union in 1863 augured well for the next general elections. In Paris, certainly, since a fairly sweeping republican victory was likely, the foremost problem was to prevent the various republican factions from getting into each other's hair more than they had in 1863.

Very early in the campaign it became evident that two republican movements were sure to gain ascendancy. This time the "Jeunes" intended to enter as candidates, with or without the consent of the "Vieux". And this time, also, there was to be a fairly strong swing away from the Liberal Union program of 1863<sup>1</sup>. By the time elections were held, in fact, the Liberal Union republicans represented the minority in the party.

The influence of the old republicans declined noticeably with the appearance of new newspapers after the Press Law of 1868. Heretofore they had been able, by means of the electoral committees, to select the candidates and demand conformity (as with Ferry in 1864). This time, with greater liberty for campaigning, the prestige of committees dominated by the '48'ers was negligible. Le Reveil and Le Siecle and L'Avenir National

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1. Weill, op. cit., 500-501.

proclaimed that the people themselves should choose their own candidates.<sup>2</sup>

Ferry wished to enter as a candidate for one of the circonscriptions of Paris, although this was not as simple as it appeared, even with his new-found notoriety and the experience of 1864 behind him. Early in January, 1869, he seems to have been disgruntled about his lot, convinced that the general public showed him little enough consideration. He wrote to Quinet about it, for this notable wrote to Ferry commiserating with him on public ingratitude. Quinet suggested that he run as a candidate from the Jura,<sup>3</sup> if Paris seemed inhospitable.

But Ferry intended to run in the capital. The problem, so far as he was concerned, consisted of taking a stand with reference to the debates concerning the Liberal Union principle versus the Democratic Union idea, the latter of which was the tactic advocated by "Purists" such as Delescluze in Le Réveil. This principle foreswore any relationship with other opposition parties. Until the end of 1868 Ferry was much more in accord with the Liberal Unionists. L'Electeur was founded chiefly in order to resurrect the policies pursued in the elections in 1863, and Ferry was one of its founders.<sup>4</sup> He had written for Le Temps for several years by this time, and this paper had never veered from a course of safe moderation. In August, 1868,

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2. Delord, op. cit., V: 435; Tchernoïf, op. cit., 535.

3. Quinet, op. cit., IV: 45-47.

4. Weill, op. cit., 500.

Ferry wrote articles in Le Temps in which he tilted with the more advanced advocates of the Purist principle. One of these articles asked Le Siècle to declare its adherence to or disapprobation of the technique for voting in elections in which a second ballot was necessary; was there to be unity behind the opposition candidate with the most votes on the first ballot, whether he was republican or of another political persuasion, or should the republicans throw away their votes, as a matter of principle, on a candidate whose chances for ultimate election were nil? In another, he attacked Le Réveil for its insistence that republicans must not combine with other parties of the opposition for the purpose of winning an election. Ferry was sure that such intransigence only assisted Napoleon.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time, Ferry had contacts with those opposed to the Liberal Union idea, for he reported at times for Pelletan's La Tribune.<sup>6</sup> Gambetta, too, favored tactical accord with other groups until late in the year of 1868.<sup>7</sup> The turning point for him was the trial of Delescluze after the Baudin Subscription demonstration. Gambetta's leap into the anti-Liberal Union camp seems to have helped Ferry to do the same, although the latter's was a less unequivocal switch.

The Baudin Trial was one of the great events in the last years of the Empire. The republicans had taken up subscriptions

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5. Rambaud, op. cit., 14.

6. Ibid., 16.

7. See an interesting letter of Gambetta's written in Sept. 1868, in S. de la Porte, Ed., Allain-Targé, La République sous l'Empire, Lettres, 1864-1870 (Paris, 1939), 218.

in memory of Baudin, killed on the barricades in 1851. The authorities swallowed the bait by prosecuting the three newspapers handling the subscriptions. In the subsequent trial, Gambetta defended Delescluze of Le Réveil. His defense dealt little with the law case at hand and much with a resounding denunciation of the Empire.<sup>8</sup> Overnight, Gambetta, whose great talent had been observed by few, because he was overshadowed by the ageless '48'ers, became the hero of the most ardent republicans. Even more, it resulted in his being universally regarded as a certainty to win in 1869, wherever he should choose to run.<sup>9</sup> Apropos the trial, Ferry wrote of Gambetta in laudatory terms in L'Electeur.<sup>10</sup> During the ensuing months Ferry cooperated closely with Gambetta, relying on the support of his old comrade-in-arms in the campaign.

It was generally agreed in the Party that, in the first stage of party maneuvering, the field should be open to any and all candidates. The "vieux" in the Corps Législatif met with primary opposition all along the line in the Parisian districts: Gambetta faced Carnot, Raspail opposed Garnier-Pagès, Rochefort ran against Favre, Vallès against Simon, and Ferry against Guérault.<sup>11</sup> Some of these challengers, Ferry included, had competitors in turn.

In November, 1868, when the various districts in which the younger republicans could run to advantage, were under discus-

8. J.B.T. Bury, Gambetta and the National Defense: A Republican Dictatorship in France (London, 1936), 12.

9. Ibid., 13.

10. Discours, I: 177; Rambaud, op. cit., 16.

11. Tchernoff, op. cit., 539.

sion, the possibilities of the sixth circonscription were investigated. Laurier, Gambetta's intimate friend, considered presenting himself as candidate, but Gambetta counselled against this. Gambetta also did not wish to run in this district, and so it seemed agreed in February, 1869 that Ferry would be the representative of the "jeunes" against Guérault.<sup>12</sup> But in March and April, during the maneuvering for the first ballot, Ferry was faced with Brisson, along with Guérault, as his competitor, a cause of serious misunderstanding among the intimates of Gambetta.

Gambetta, in a letter to a personal friend dated April 5, 1869, explained his reasons for preferring Ferry in this district of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The letter points up Gambetta's brilliance as a politician--his appreciation of all that was involved would do credit to an American party chairman at his best:

"What is necessary (against Guérault) is a modéré republican, politic, of unassuming demeanor, who has not too many commitments, while still being very liberal and democratic. Paradol (a friend of Gambetta's who had become friendly to the Empire) has lost this, for he is neither republican, nor democratic, nor Italian, nor popular; someone with all of these qualities was necessary against Guérault. Ferry seemed to me to represent these diverse qualities, and could detach from Guérault all of the sincere democratic voices who voted for him in 1863 without realizing he was a Dynastic.

And against Cochin (Orleanist opponent of Guérault), who always can muster seven to eight thousand votes, Ferry's candidature is still more opportune: Not being compromised in the liberals' eyes by dec-

12. Daniel Halevy and Emile Pillias, eds., Lettres de Gambetta, 1868-1882 (Paris, 1938), 23-24.

larations which he still has not the reason for making, he is in reputation entirely liberal, and he will certainly obtain, on the second ballot, all of Cochin's votes which would never go to Guérault, nor to a man too much engaged in the politics of revolutionary action.

As a last consideration, the campaign that Jules Ferry conducted against Haussmann has popularized him in a quarter where people read newspapers and pamphlets a good deal, and this will enable him to triumph on the municipal terrain of M. Cochin, who has been Mayor of St. Sulpice and member of the municipal commission under M. Haussmann."<sup>13</sup>

Since it seemed understood that Ferry was to be the single candidate representing the young republicans for the sixth circonscription, Gambetta, in a meeting of republican leaders on February 10, proposed Ferry definitely as their man.<sup>14</sup> Accepted there in principle, Ferry made his initial public appearance as the young republicans' opponent of Guérault on February 24.<sup>15</sup>

But the matter did not end here. Delescluze and Peyrat, probably convinced that Ferry was too closely associated with the Liberal Unionists, were very cold to his candidacy.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, in March, Brisson suddenly turned up as a more advanced opponent of Guérault. Laurier proceeded to write Gambetta anent this on March 18:

"I strongly recommend that you write nothing to Ferry that he can utilize. You have compromised enough in this direction, and in the presence of Brisson's candidacy you should remain reserved."<sup>17</sup>

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13. Lettres de Gambetta, 24.

14. Ibid., 23-24.

15. Ibid., 25.

16. Tchernoff, op. cit., 544.

17. Ibid., 544.

Laurier professed to be concerned only with Gambetta's endangering his own position with the avancés by giving any support to Ferry. However, there was the factor of personal enmity between him and Ferry.

Gambetta, in his letter of April 5, commented on the matter by saying that he had informed Brisson of Ferry's candidacy in the very beginning, and Brisson had offered no objections. At this date, Gambetta felt, his competition with Ferry was ridiculous, for there was the same objection to Brisson's candidacy in the sixth as there was for himself or Laurier campaigning there--"The circonscription would not take to a Radical candidate".<sup>18</sup>

Gambetta considered Ferry as a moderate republican, as assuredly, he had always been. Ferry, however, evidently felt that he had joined Gambetta's independent republicanism, which had a link with the avancés, for he wrote Gambetta early in April about the political scene, and he referred to the other parties in the sense that an outsider would:

"Things do not transpire like this only among us: The Orleanists, the liberals, the people of the Liberal Union, and others, tear each other apart just as we do, over this apple, often rotten, of the opposition candidature....Nothing is sacred any longer, neither camaraderie, nor decency, nor friendship. As for me some have betrayed me, others do not sustain me...."<sup>19</sup>

Brisson's and Laurier's opposition aroused great disqui-

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18. Lettres de Gambetta, 25,23.

19. Lettres, 51.

etude in Ferry, for he wrote a letter to Gambetta between April 10 and April 15 explaining his troubles with Laurier, and asking for Gambetta's aid. Laurier, it appeared, had intervened during a meeting of the party leadership discussing the endorsement of Ferry for the sixth circonscription:

"...Laurier entered. Who invited him? Nobody; and I would never have accepted his arbitration...He aroused fears of the Old Man of the Mountain (Delescluze), and he covered me with poisonous flowers; result: the embarrassment of the situation aiding, it was voted by 21 votes to 20 that they would not vote..(on endorsement). Everybody told me that of the 21, two-thirds were really in favor of me, had we voted...I am preparing a great reunion for next week, but it is essential that you be there. Your entry will be absolutely decisive; the youth swear only by Gambetta. This time I beg of you to return, not in order to make war on Brisson, but to fight for me as if he did not exist.

I have taken Laurier's perfidies with equanimity largely because of you. They surpass all measure. As I suspected, he was the one who put forward B...(Brisson)."<sup>20</sup>

This intriguing was brought to an end by Gambetta upon his return from campaigning in Marseilles. On April 26 he presented Ferry to some 500 listeners in a political reunion in the Gymnasium of the Sorbonne.<sup>21</sup> Soon Brisson withdrew, leaving Ferry to his campaign.

In line with his greater radicalism, Ferry prepared a ringing manifesto, full of denunciations of the Empire, for his democratic voters. It went in part as follows:

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20. Lettres., 54-55.

21. Ibid., 55; Tchernoff, op. cit., 543.

"No more of compromise nor of patched-up solutions! Reclaim neatly, on legal terrain, in the face of the personal government and its results, the government of the Nation by the Nation, which can alone give to France liberty, security, and peace.

It is not enough to decree all the liberties; it is necessary to make them live.

France will not have Liberty as long as she lives in the bonds of administrative centralization, this legacy made by the Roman Empire to the Ancien Regime, which transmitted it to the Consulat.

France will not have Liberty as long as she does not possess a judiciary really independent of the Executive Power...

France will not have Liberty as long as she persists in the system of standing armies.

Thus it is necessary to require above all: Administrative decentralization, absolute separation of Church and State, reform of the judicial institutions by an enlargement of the Jury system, the transformation of standing armies. These are the necessary destructions: in working for them, the present generation will build in the surest fashion for the future."<sup>22</sup>

As Tchernoff says, this program was at least semi-revolutionary,<sup>23</sup> for Ferry spoke of destroying much in the Napoleonic scheme of things, and he appealed to a "government of the Nation by the Nation." It was saved from being openly revolutionary by the counsel to accomplish the changes through legal means. Ferry's brother thought his program was too radical, and advised him, without avail, not to declare himself so decisively in his proclamation.<sup>24</sup> At one point in this document Ferry had originally had the phrase, "suppression of standing armies". But Gambetta had considered this as inexpedient, reminding Ferry that he would be in power some day, which would

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22. Discours, 190-191.

23. Tchernoff, op. cit., 545.

24. Ibid., 545--Information furnished Tchernoff by Charles Ferry.

give his opponents the chance to remind him of such an unqualified commitment. Therefore, Ferry altered the phrase to read "transformation of standing armies."<sup>25</sup> Ferry understood fully how far he had gone at the time, for years later in a speech at Bordeaux in 1885 he referred as follows to 1869:

"The program of 1869 was, after all, the deposition of the Empire through its progressive disarmament..."<sup>26</sup>

In response to Ferry's manifesto, a committee in the sixth circonscription published a circular recommending Ferry to the republican voters. The signatures on this circular included the name of Gambetta, as expected, and of notables such as Michelet, Littré, and Vacherot.<sup>27</sup> Tchernoff reports that Ferry obtained the support of republican intellectuals such as Michelet and Littré because in an political meeting he accepted the idea of rejecting the Imperial budget, despite the oath that all candidates took to support the budget.<sup>28</sup>

Ferry's campaign, down to the elimination of Guérault on the first balloting, May 24, was eventful enough, as were all of the elections in Paris.<sup>29</sup> Generally, Ferry sought to please his democratic listeners by speaking in a tone at least as critical as the words of his proclamation. Thus, in answer to a question from a listener concerning power--political power--Ferry said that "power", meaning the personal authority of the Emperor, was

25. The authority for this was Antonin Proust in his reminiscent article in Le Figaro, June 29, 1895.

26. Ollivier, "Histoire Contemporaine," 588.

27. See list of signatories in Rambaud, op. cit., 17.

28. Tchernoff, op. cit., 545.

29. Weill, op. cit., 515.

the illegal detainer of liberties, and those elected by universal suffrage must sit in judgment over the Emperor.<sup>30</sup> In regard to a question about class differences in society, he revealed his middle-class conviction that the idea of class antagonism must never be recognized:

"It is the antagonism of the classes which lost us in 1851. While the classes fought, there came, as the fable says, a third robber, who has confiscated liberty."<sup>31</sup>

It is evident that Ferry's campaign radicalism did not contemplate social objectives. Gambetta, for that matter, in his famous Belleville Mandate commitment, held himself to no more than a hint of a social justice theme.<sup>32</sup> Yet, because of his personality, the Baudin trial, and the fact that he campaigned in a workers' district, he was regarded as a radical by the *avancés* themselves, while Ferry at no point had their confidence.

Ferry was aided in his campaign by the support of Le Siècle,<sup>33</sup> Peyrat's L'Avenir National,<sup>34</sup> which unenthusiastically found him preferable to M. Gueroult, and Le Rappel of V. Hugo, and, even, the reluctant concourse of Delescluze in Le Réveil.<sup>35</sup> Naturally Le Temps and L'Electeur Libre favored his candidacy,<sup>36</sup> which gave Ferry the advantage of having almost

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30. Recounted in Tchernoff, op. cit., 545.

31. Tchernoff, op. cit., 545; from Le Temps' summary of political meeting for May 6.

32. See a reprint of the Belleville Mandate in Bury, op. cit., 285-287.

33. Le Siècle, May 18, 1869.

34. Ibid., May 21, 1869.

35. Journal des Débats, June 9, 1869-letter of M. Cochin, the other candidate.

36. Weill, op. cit., 500.

all of the republican press behind him, while Guérault was left with only his own L'Opinion Nationale as his liberal support. Guérault attacked Ferry as being too negative, by reason of his carping criticisms of Empire policies. This was just about his only mode of defense against the younger man's aggressive tactics.<sup>37</sup>

One embarrassment did present itself to Ferry when, according to L'Opinion Nationale's account, a questioner at a reunion in mid-May brought up the matter of the candidates' reaction to the second ballot: Since M. Guérault and M. Ferry, both republicans, wished M. Cochin's defeat, wouldn't the one with the less votes on the first ballot promise to urge his voters to support his victorious rival on the second? M. Guérault announced that he was happy to commit himself in this fashion, and the audience applauded. Ferry, after hesitating, refused to take any engagements for the second ballot.<sup>38</sup>

Ferry wrote a letter to L'Opinion Nationale regarding this occurrence which showed that he was not quite at ease about it. Without specifically denying L'Opinion Nationale's account of the meeting, he claimed that it was "inexact." He reiterated in the letter what he had told Guérault privately-- that he would give him his votes, as was the Opposition's custom, should he win on May 24. True, earlier he was unwilling to commit himself anent M. Guérault because he was not sure that Guérault was any better than M. Cochin, but this was not the

37. See Journal des Débats, May 16, 1869, reprinting Le Siècle's account of an electoral reunion of Ferry's and Guérault's.

38. Journal des Débats, May 16, 1869-reprint of L'Opinion Nationale's account of the meeting.

case, he had found.<sup>39</sup>

Despite the excellent reasons Gambetta had found for preferring Ferry in the sixth, privately he thought the district too difficult even for Ferry's special qualifications.<sup>40</sup> But by the evening of May 24, it was evident that Ferry would defeat Guérault. The latter's position had proved too uncomfortable. He was deserted by most republicans because of his friendship with Napoleon, while conservatives repudiated him as a republican, preferring M. Cochin instead.<sup>41</sup> When the votes were tabulated, Ferry received 12,916 votes, Cochin 12,470, and Guérault a mere 4,851.<sup>42</sup>

At the end of the first balloting, in five of the nine districts of the Seine, republican candidates were victorious: Gambetta and Bancel (against Ollivier) were newly elected, Pelletan and Simon were newcomers for the Seine, and, of the '63 deputies, Picard was returned on this ballot.<sup>43</sup> This left Favre, Garnier-Pagès, Ferry, and Thiers to be elected on the next balloting, and, of these, Thiers alone was not a solid republican. Thus, the Liberal Union principle of 1863 had to be applied only in the case of Thiers, who then received the support of the democratic press (with the exception of the utterly intransigent Le Réveil).<sup>44</sup>

39. Journal des Débats, May 18, 1869--reprinted from L'Opinion Nationale.

40. Lettres de Gambetta, 22.

41. De la Gorce, op. cit., V: 484.

42. Rambaud, op. cit., 19.

43. Ibid., 19.

44. Lettres, 57; Tchernoff, op. cit., 546-547.

Victorious over Guérault on the first ballot, Ferry was confident of defeating Cochin on the second.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the campaigning for the June 7 run-offs was heated enough. The government had taken care to drag out the red menace during the campaign,<sup>46</sup> and Cochin took care to accuse Ferry of radicalism. In a meeting of May 30 one of Cochin's defenders accused Ferry on that score. Ferry replied that charges that in Paris there existed only the government or the Commune were calumnious.<sup>47</sup> The attack became severe enough for Ferry to write a letter to La Gazette de France. This paper had accused him of having passed into the extravagantly socialist camp. Ferry wrote that this was not discussion, but invective. Never, he maintained, had he said anything against property or the family.<sup>48</sup>

M. Cochin had his troubles also. In meetings, he was repeatedly embarrassed, being, presumably, a liberal Catholic, by searching questions concerning his views on Pius IX's Syllabus of Errors.<sup>49</sup> Since Ferry's campaign was heavily weighted against clericalism,<sup>50</sup> Cochin was placed so much the more on the defensive.

As expected, Ferry was returned the victor. Election results made public June 8 showed Ferry to have won 15,776 votes to Cochin's 13,936.<sup>51</sup> Since less than two thousand votes separated the two, it is evident that some of Guérault's votes went

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45. See his letter to Gambetta, May 25, 1869, Lettres, 57.

46. Claretie, op. cit., 6.

47. Le Siècle, May 31, 1869.

48. Journal des Débats, June 5, 1869.

49. De la Gorce, op. cit., V: 485.

50. Tchernoff, op. cit., 545.

51. Journal des Débats, June 8, 1869.

to Cochin as well as to Ferry.

After the election Ferry remained in Paris to await convocation of the Corps Législatif to swear in the new deputies. The campaign cost Charles Ferry the tidy sum of 20,000 francs,<sup>52</sup> evidence enough that it was not easy for anyone below the status of well-to-do bourgeois to compete as a candidate for the Chamber.

M. Cochin did not accept defeat without an exchange of views with Le Journal des Débats. His explanation of Ferry's victory was typical of the conservatives' and clericals' attitude at the time:

"My adversary presented himself between M. Michelet and M. Gambetta, with the concurrence of Le Rappel and Le Réveil, which he did not disavow.

The liberal party has been defeated by the radical party. This is the truth!"<sup>53</sup>

The Journal des Débats replied to Cochin with greater justice that Ferry's victory was a liberal one. The support of Le Reveil did not transform him into a radical--observe MM. Simon, Picard, and Pelletan, who were thus supported, but were by no means radicals.<sup>54</sup>

Ferry made sure to thank Gambetta, the man who was most responsible for his election, in a letter of late May.<sup>55</sup> The several days following the end of the campaign saw Paris in a considerable state of agitation over the election results, to-

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52. Pottecher, op. cit., 95.

53. Journal des Débats, June 8, 1869.

54. Ibid., June 8, 1869.

55. Lettres, 57.

gether with a general reaction to the Napoleonic regime--so much so that many Parisians talked glibly of imminent revolution.<sup>56</sup> Ferry wrote Gambetta, describing the uneasiness, with greater accuracy, as a vague unrest analogous to that noticeable in the last years of Louis XVI.<sup>57</sup> The imminence of the regime's expiring was obviously a favorite subject of speculation among the younger republicans. In this same letter, Ferry wrote that they had chosen Gambetta's seat in the Corps Législatif during his absence, and that they would be seated next to each other--an essential for those of the republican Left who held identical views.<sup>58</sup>

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I

The extraordinary session of the Corps Législatif for 1869 convened on June 28.<sup>59</sup> Among the republican deputies, new and old, there was apparent the difference in regard to tactics which had appeared during the elections. A moderate wing was willing to cooperate with other opposition parties. Another group wished to constitute an exclusively republican opposition. The first was called the Open Left, led by Picard; the other element was the Closed Left, or the "Irreconcilables", to which Gambetta and Ferry appertained. Favre was to some extent an intermediary between the two wings.<sup>60</sup>

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56. Lettres, 57.

57. Ibid., 59-60.

58. Ibid., 60.

59. Ibid., 60.

60. Simon, op. cit., I:257-259; De la Gorce, op. cit., VI:108.

The validation of Ferry as a new deputy was recorded in Le Journal Officiel for July 6, 1869. There was a routine summary of the complaints against the deputy-elect's campaign methods, and then he was seated without further discussion.<sup>61</sup>

Since the administration prorogued the session before the end of July, Ferry was able to accomplish no more than his maiden address. But his speech, though on a very prosaic subject, caused a tremendous uproar in the Chamber. When the session adjourned, he was no longer an obscure freshman deputy from Paris. On July 9 Ferry gained the floor while validation of elections was continuing, and spoke on the subject of official candidatures. This was fitting enough, since he could justly claim to be an authority of long standing on this question. Ferry denounced all of the official candidates elected, especially one M. de Guilloutet, whose name happened to be before the Chamber when Ferry received permission to speak. He was extremely downright in his denunciations of the administration's deputies, and, since the majority of the Assembly was present only because of the electoral system, he brought down upon his head the derisive criticisms of the majority. M. Schneider, the presiding officer of the Corps Législatif, who was usually moderate enough, even went so far as to remind M. Ferry that he was no longer delivering an election speech in a public reunion.<sup>62</sup>

Le Journal des Débats took note of the incident in com-

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61. Discours, I: 195-197.

62. Ibid., I: 197-210.

menting that M. Ferry, in attacking official candidatures, did not sufficiently separate the persons from the system, and gave the impression of criticizing elections already verified. But then, "M. Ferry explained his thought as soon as the extraordinary emotion of the Assembly permitted him to do it."<sup>63</sup>

The democratic Siècle waxed supercilious over the attitude of the majority in the Chamber. It described the occurrence in the following words:

"Since his first words, the deputy from the seventh (sic) circonscription has raised the most amusing of tempests. What fancy gesticulations with his paper-knife! What menacing gestures! What Homeric postures!

M. Jules Ferry hasn't yet had the time to familiarize himself with the euphemisms of parliamentary eloquence. He is capable of calling a spade a spade...He was guilty of no more than questioning the official elections.<sup>64</sup>

As for M. Schneider's reminder to Ferry, "the fact is that in seeing this furious majority, which was let loose against him, he managed to mistake one for the other."<sup>65</sup>

The abrupt closing of the session before the validation of all the new deputies caused an enormous furor. The recent elections had increased the opposition to approximately forty republicans and fifty Orleanists. Napoleon dissolved the Corps in order to gain time in which to consult with his advisors.<sup>66</sup>

With the Chamber adjourned, the irresolute and enfeebled

63. Account of the session in Journal des Débats, July 10, 1869.

64. Account of the session in Le Siècle, July 10, 1869.

65. Ibid., July 10, 1869.

66. James E. Gillespie, Europe in Perspective (New York, 1945), 134.

Emperor set about plans to present a new constitution, and rumors of his intentions were rife in the city of Paris in the next few days.

Without realizing it, Napoleon managed to throw the republican deputies, many of whom were still strangers to each other, altogether off guard by this. An effort was made to unite the republicans with the Orleanist left with Thiers acting as an intermediary. No such agreement was possible.<sup>67</sup> Next, the republicans sought to make a declaration for themselves, but dissensions made this equally impossible. A declaration which would have anticipated the Emperor by refusing to have anything to do with his reforms would have been an unconstitutional act, and possibly an invitation to revolution. A constitutional declaration which would have simply tried to specify conditions for the Emperor would not have satisfied the deputies' constituents, and would have been too moderate for the Irreconcilables. Consequently, nothing whatever was resolved.<sup>68</sup> Ferry, fearful that Le Réveil, Le Rappel, and other newspapers would, with some reason, damn the republican deputies as excessively timid, proceeded to publish a protest on his own responsibility.<sup>69</sup> This, printed in Le Temps, July 24, 1869, protested prorogation of the Chamber, and concluded with an appeal to universal suffrage<sup>70</sup>--in lieu of anything more

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67. Lettres, 65--Letter to Gambetta, July 23, 1869.

68. Lettres, 66-68.

69. Ibid., 69-70--Letter to Gambetta, July 24, 1869.

70. Discours, I:211.

definite to appeal to at that moment.

On August 2, 1869 Napoleon submitted to his rubber-stamp Senate his proposed constitution, which he intended to be the climax of his liberal policy of these years. If adopted, the constitution would go into operation early in 1870. The Senate accepted the proposal almost unanimously, Sept. 7, 1869.<sup>71</sup> It provided that the Corps Législatif should approach being a standard parliamentary body, able to introduce legislation, vote on the budget, interpellate ministers, choose its committee of- ficers, and ratify treaties. The Senate would be more active through debating and voting on legislation discussed in the Corps Législatif. The Chamber could vote no-confidence in a ministry, but the ministry would not fall as a consequence, un- less the Emperor desired it. Another important qualifying ele- ment in the new order was constitutional permission for the Em- peror to indulge in the family predilection for plebiscites.<sup>72</sup>

Ferry offered his reaction to this when Nefftzer, always moderate, displayed a great optimism for the new constitutional program in Le Temps early in August. Fearful that his long as- sociation with the newspaper might cause people to think Nefft- zer's was also his own attitude, Ferry wrote the editor to throw cold water on his optimism. Gambetta, for one, thought Ferry unwise in writing so often concerning passing events, al- though he agreed that in this instance he probably had to take

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71. Lavertujon, op. cit., 57-58.

72. Gillespie, op. cit., 134-135; Tchernoff, op. cit., 567.

some action.<sup>73</sup> Early in September, after Napoleon's plans were public, Ferry wrote a friend that "the administrative edifice of the Year Eight must be destroyed, a task which neither parliamentary monarchy nor republic accomplished; the dynasty could not manage this, so democracy, pacific but radical, alone can do it."<sup>74</sup> This is evidence that privately, even more than publicly, Ferry was convinced, exactly a year before the Empire came to an end, that there was no possibility of a solution to France's problems short of an end to Napoleon. It is of passing interest to notice with reference to this the reputed opinion of Napoleon concerning Ferry and Gambetta:

At bottom Gambetta is a good fellow who only wants peace and quiet. Ferry is quite different. He is as cold as a surgeon.<sup>75</sup>

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## II

In the month of September, the Congress of the League of Peace and Liberty held its annual meeting at Lausanne at the same time that the First International was meeting at Basel. Ferry attended the sessions of the former, as was his wont, along with other parliamentary republicans. In this convention, Ferry committed himself as unqualifiedly opposed to standing armies and the most recent Napoleonic military laws.<sup>76</sup> In this

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73. This incident is reported in full in Lavertujon, op. cit., 4, 57-58.

74. Dupront, op. cit., 370-371.

75. Recounted in Brabant, op. cit. 34.

76. Tchernoff, op. cit., 385.

instance, as in several others, Ferry, unlike Gambetta, brought on himself subsequent criticism by failing to realize the inconveniences of denunciations without qualification. In the session of September 16 Ferry spoke in favor of decentralism, his favorite panacea for the Napoleonic administrative system. Concerning this, he wrote Gambetta shortly after the end of the convention:

"I hope we will not haul down our decentralist flag. I have the idea of authoring a brochure or a parliamentary proposition, or both. What do you say? Would you associate yourself with a project of law?.... Take your pen and write me on decentralization. We are evidently in accord."<sup>77</sup>

They were not in accord, however, for Gambetta wrote to Lavertujon on August 30 advising him not to attend the Lausanne Conference, and giving his statesmanlike views on the subject:

"It is not necessary, in excess of reaction to the administrative despotism of deposed monarchies and the two Napoleonic regimes, to advance to the suppression of the idea of the State, of reform government, initiator and protector."<sup>78</sup>

And on September 20 he wrote Lavertujon that he "would have greatly desired that neither Ferry nor Laurier had set foot in the Lausanne convention."<sup>79</sup>

Ferry wrote Gambetta from Florence, which he visited after the conference, on October 1, in regard to Delescluze's reaction to his speech at Lausanne:

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77. Lettres, 76-77.

78. Lavertujon, op. cit., 10.

79. Ibid., 14.

"I am anathematized by Le Réveil since my discourse at Lausanne. I'm little excited about it, since I predicted it. More than ever I pray for some sheet which will be more generous, less disgusting, more fruitful, than this old Jacobin rag..."<sup>80</sup>

Obviously Ferry was irritated at the weighty influence which Delescluze enjoyed in republican circles in the last days of the Second Empire. His dislike for Delescluze is worth remembering, in view of a melodramatically critical incident, replete with subsequent recriminations, which arose between the two men during the siege of Paris.

Before the session of 1869-70 got under way in November, there transpired a comic-opera incident which rocked the republican ranks, as had the dissolution of the Chamber in July. It consisted of a resurrection of the same question. The republicans discovered in the old constitution a provision specifying that when a legislative session ended, the new session must be called not later than six months after the close of the previous session. Because the Corps Législatif had adjourned for the elections on April 27, the republicans reasoned, the new Chamber must be called not later than October 26. The logic was weak, however, since the session of June 28 had intervened. Even if this last was extraordinary, and had been dissolved, it handled the validation of deputies. Hence, its legality could hardly be debated. Nevertheless, the matter was pretext enough for the republican press to set up a hue and cry for immediate convoca-

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80. Lettres, 76.

tion of the Chamber.<sup>81</sup>

At this point, one M. Kératry, a new republican deputy possessed of bizarre ideas, entered the scene. He had an open letter published in Le Temps, in which he proclaimed the session should begin on October 26. M. Kératry said that he intended to be at the doors of the Corps Législatif, whether they were open or not--his colleagues, if they had the nerve, could join him.<sup>82</sup>

The press interpreted this as a potentially revolutionary appeal, for the administration had announced the new Corps Législatif would not convene before late November. This caused acute embarrassment to the republican deputies, for, as Gambetta said, if one were planning revolution (which he was not), "one did not warn one's enemy in advance."<sup>83</sup> Other republicans were very slow to respond to the impetuous Kératry, only four declaring themselves with him by date of October 1. Le Journal des Débats remarked sarcastically that with four people one could start a game of whist, but hardly a revolution.<sup>84</sup> Gambetta who had been apprized by Lavertujon that public feeling in Paris ran high, reluctantly sent his adherence, all the while regretting that this "stupid Kératry could...compromise my reputation as a moderate..." but "I must not lose all electoral influence."<sup>85</sup>

81. A good account of this is in De la Gorce, op. cit., V:509-510.

82. Lettres, 76.

83. Lavertujon, op. cit., 31.

84. De la Gorce, op. cit., V: 510.

85. Lavertujon, op. cit., 38-39.

In this emergency, Ferry was enabled for the first time to display an instance of mature political forehandedness. In order to disengage Kératry, Gambetta, and the others from the necessity of individual action, he called for a general council of all of the republican Left to meet on October 6 in order to discuss the October 26 question.<sup>86</sup> On the same date he wrote Gambetta concerning the state of public opinion in Paris:

"I arrived yesterday; a little time was necessary to appraise the state of opinion. It is on fire. It has turned, quite unjustly, against us....

A common entente, I have said in my letter... This is approved by Le Siècle, by L'Avenir..., even the most fierce are now with us (see Le Reveil of this evening, which is even more moderate than Le Temps.)...

We must, according to my feeling, do two things: (1) Energetically counsel against any manifestation for October 26 as a trap and a folly...(2) Constitute by a manifesto... the republican left--the morale of public opinion.<sup>87</sup>

Ferry's advice in this instance was followed to the letter, although not without the accustomed arguments over the proposed manifesto. Finally, a proclamation signed by a number of the leaders of the Closed Left announced that the Left would not appear before the Chamber on October 26, in order to prevent a demonstration, but intended to call the cabinet to account for this new injury before the Chamber.<sup>88</sup>

Unfortunately, the incident was not quite closed with this. The republican avancés were dissatisfied with the show-

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86. Pessard, op. cit., 296-297; Delord, op. cit., IV:508.

87. Lettres, 77-79.

88. Delord, op. cit., IV:512.

ing of the new Parisian deputies. Even before this affair, back in mid-September, Laurier wrote Gambetta from the Lausanne Conference that the *avancés* present were dissatisfied with Ferry, Favre, and Picard, who were suspected of moderation.<sup>89</sup> Some of these people, then, refused to be satisfied with the deputies' proclamation. They decided to call the offending deputies to account. One of them, Lefrançais, was instrumental in organizing an electoral committee to request the presence of some of these deputies "who were not lawyers for nothing."<sup>90</sup> Lefrançais and Millière, another well-known figure among the radical journalists, presided over a meeting, held October 18, at which Bancel, Pelletan, Simon, and Ferry appeared. In the midst of a vociferous assemblage of *avancés*, the deputies were given an extremely unpleasant reception when they sought to defend their conduct.<sup>91</sup> Thus, the fiasco came to this rather sordid end. The deputies who appeared were probably ill-advised in submitting to such an extreme application of democracy in action. The republican Left's declaration was the best that could be made out of a bad situation, although, as Ferry wrote to Gambetta, they could not altogether absolve themselves of a "new edition of the comedy, *Much Ado About Nothing*."<sup>92</sup>

In late November, the new session of the Corps Législatif got under way without incident, and Ferry, along with Gambetta, and the other new deputies, had the opportunity to expound their

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89. Dietz, *op. cit.*, 620.

90. Lefrançais, *Souvenirs*, 364.

91. *Ibid.*, 364-366; Simon, *op. cit.*, I: 351-352.

92. *Lettres*, 82.

anti-Napoleonic feelings in a full-fledged legislative session. Ferry's record in the first parliamentary body in which he sat appears undistinguished in retrospect because his position necessarily placed him in the role of a minor critic. At no time did he regard a governmental measure as well-taken. Most of his attacks on glaring evils were nullified by his unhappy talent for arousing the ire of all but his intimates in the Chamber.

Continuing his drive on official candidatures, on December 8, Ferry attacked the election of M. Dréolle, an arch-Bonapartist and one of the more notorious beneficiaries of a trumped-up election.<sup>93</sup> In the next day's session Ferry gained the floor again to protest in the most unbending terms the election of one M. Chaix-d'est-Ange.<sup>94</sup> On this occasion he aroused widespread dissatisfaction in the Chamber. Le Siècle noted that M. Schneider departed from his usual calm to admonish M. Rochefort (elected in the supplementary balloting of the fall) and M. Ferry. "...Today M. Ferry, of whose oratorical merits we hold in high esteem, has, in our opinion, been mistaken, in occupying the tribune too long."<sup>95</sup> The Journal des Débats was more critical still in questioning the propriety of Ferry's arguments:

"Perhaps M. Ferry, in spite of the talent for discussion of which he has given proof,.. is too ready to turn toward historical re-  
criminations; he has a talent for acrimonious

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93. Discours, I: 212-214.

94. Ibid., I: 214-217.

95. Le Siècle, December 10, 1869.

allusion like another Irreconcilable, M. Gambetta, has a talent for violent interruption. Both are excellent at provoking and irritating the majority...When it is a matter of pronouncing on the validity of elections, the Chamber, it has been remarked, transforms itself into a jury. Is it wise to excite needlessly the political passions of a jury when one can appeal to its conscience to arouse its justice?"<sup>96</sup>

Nevertheless, Ferry continued his campaign. He registered another speech in protest of the election of one M. le Marquis de Campagne on December 27.<sup>97</sup>

In January Ferry was heard first in connection with the trial of M. Pierre Napoleon, the Emperor's worthless cousin, who had murdered a republican journalist, one Victor Noir, while they were supposed to be negotiating a duel.<sup>98</sup> Ferry's was a legal protest, lodged January 12, as to the type of court which should have jurisdiction over a murder case involving a member of the imperial family. His interpretation of the problem naturally differed from that of the Ministry.<sup>99</sup> Since Pierre Bonaparte was acquitted subsequently,<sup>100</sup> it made little difference.

M. Haussmann having been deposed in Paris, Crémieux presented a bill for a new municipal council to which Ferry added an amendment. On January 26 he was recognized in order to speak on the subject of Parisian administration and the city budget<sup>101</sup> like the official candidatures, a topic on which Ferry was known

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96. Journal des Débats, December 10, 1869.

97. Discours, I: 218-221.

98. See Claretie, op. cit., 23-24, for an account of the episode.

99. Discours, I: 222.

100. Claretie, op. cit., 24.

101. Discours, I: 237-247.

to possess considerable information. Le Siècle felt that he spoke logically and clearly on this problem.<sup>102</sup>

On January 18 Ferry's constituents made an appeal to him to protest the Pierre Bonaparte matter, which had had an additional complication. Rochefort had been arrested for his ungentle criticisms of Pierre Bonaparte's acquittal. On February 9 came Ferry's opportunity to lodge a protest on behalf of his constituents, when he asked the ministry if it was true that all of the employees of Le Marseillaise (Rochefort's newspaper) had been arrested. He also complained vigorously about the closing of two public gatherings by the Parisian police.<sup>103</sup> This brought a great outcry from the majority, for Ferry had dared to suggest that he had no confidence in the impartiality of Bonapartist justice. He was twice called to order by M. Schneider, as he continued with his address in the face of strong opposition.<sup>104</sup> On February 12 Quinet, who had been very happy at Ferry's election the previous summer, wrote, congratulating him for being twice called to order, "a veritable title of honor"; while complimenting him for not "falling a prey to the school of pretty manners."<sup>105</sup> On the other hand, M. Molinari in Le Journal des Débats, observed, apropos Ferry's remarks on the arrests, that it was difficult sometimes to distinguish between public and private meetings; he did not think that "the violent accusations of M. Jules Ferry would have any

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102. Le Siècle, January 27, 1870.

103. Discours, I: 248-251.

104. Le Siècle, February 10, 1870.

105. Quinet, op. cit., IV: 188-189.

more of an echo in public opinion that they had in the Chamber.<sup>106</sup>

A month later, Ferry was back harping on his favorite theme, in questioning the election of M. de Guiraud, on March 10.<sup>107</sup> His efforts were unavailing, as M. de Guiraud's election was validated with only two votes in the negative; one of them was Ferry's.<sup>108</sup> On the constructive side of the election issue, Ferry, along with his colleagues, Emmanuel Arago and Gambetta, introduced a bill for electoral reform in the session of March 27,<sup>109</sup> which, however, did not meet with the approval of the majority.

Outside the Corps Législatif, Ferry made an address at the Salle Molière in Paris, April 10, 1870, entitled "A Discourse on Equality of Education."<sup>110</sup> This speech embodied Ferry's ideas on universal education, ideas he had formulated during his political training in the sixties. The address is most significant as the verbal expression of ideas he was to put into operation a decade later.

In early April, Napoleon III's Minister of Education closed the School of Medicine of the Sorbonne in order to institute reforms in the medical schools. In the Chamber on April 12 Ferry protested the extremity of closing the School of Medicine,<sup>111</sup> for it affected some 2,000 medical students, who thus were deprived of the opportunity of obtaining their medi-

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106. Journal des Débats, February 10, 1870.

107. Discours, I: 252-257.

108. Journal des Débats, March 11, 1870.

109. Discours, I: 258-277.

110. Ibid., I: 258-277.

111. Ibid., I: 306-310.

cal degrees. The Journal des Debats, ordinarily so critical of Ferry, said of his address:

"M. Ferry, to render him a justice that we are pleased to give, did not try to excuse the disorders...(in the operation of the medical); he has criticized only the choice of the penalty."<sup>112</sup>

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### III

In May of 1870 came Napoleon's final attempt to seize the political initiative, a plebiscite to determine the state of public opinion anent his new Liberal Empire. The Emperor's melodramatic gestures in his last years had the merit, from his point of view, of invariably disconcerting his enemies. This time all of the opposition groups were divided in their reactions to the Plebiscite. The large Catholic vote was disunited --one group was solidly behind the Emperor, while the Orleanist and Legitimist Catholics took no clear-cut stand on the question.<sup>113</sup> Among Protestant Orleanists and republicans alike there was no general unity in response to the announcement of the plebiscite.<sup>114</sup> Louis Blanc, as an example, was still advocating abstention from any contamination with Napoleonic elections.<sup>115</sup> But eventually the republicans resorted to their usual device of a proclamation, this time announcing their opposition to any Napoleonic tricks such as a plebiscite. The

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<sup>112.</sup> Journal des Debats, April 13, 1870.

<sup>113.</sup> W. Pickeragill, "The French Plebiscite of 1870 and the Catholics," in English Historical Review (London, 1937), LII: 254-266.

<sup>114.</sup> Tchernoff, op. cit., 588-589.

<sup>115.</sup> Ibid., 590.

Closed Left reached an accord with the journalists of Paris, not excepting Delescluze, in recommending that republicans cast a resounding "no" to Napoleon's request for public approval of his government.<sup>116</sup> The International's desire to be included in this proclamation was rejected because of the organization's recent notoriety, and even Delescluze agreed that it would be risky to include them.<sup>117</sup> In the political maneuverings with respect to the proclamation, Ferry played a conspicuous part. On May 8, 1870, plebiscite day, Le Réveil and other republican newspapers printed the manifesto of the "Committee of the Left and of the Delegates of the Democratic Press of Paris and of the Départements." The statement denied the administration's charge that those opposed to the plebiscite desired only rebellion and assassination--the men of violence were those of the coup d'état. It recommended a negative vote, in capital letters, and it carried the signatures of Emmanuel Arago, Cremieux, Dorian, Favre, Ferry, Gambetta, Garnier-Pages, Glais-Bizoin, Grevy, Magnin, Pelletan, and Simon, of the deputies, and Delescluze, Jourdan, Lavertujon, and Peyrat, of the Parisian journalists.<sup>118</sup> The name of Picard, leader of the Open Left, was conspicuously absent.

In the days before May 8, a brochure of Gustave Chaudey, who was a moderate republican Proudhonist, called L'Empire

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116. Tchernoff, op. cit. 538.

117. Ibid., 589.

118. Printed in Le Reveil, May 8, 1870, in Collection des Journaux Français sur le Plebiscite du 8 Mai, 1870, a collection donated to the Library of Congress by John Meredith Read.

Parlementaire, was widely publicized in the republican world because it showed the contradiction between the personal power and the principle of universal suffrage. Following up this idea, Ferry and Gambetta, in their anti-plebiscary speeches, argued that plebiscites and elections based upon universal suffrage must lead inevitably and logically to the Republic. Few other republicans, however, followed them along this line of reasoning.<sup>119</sup>

On Plebiscite day Ferry gained some notoriety by intervening at the polls. L'Opinion Nationale reported the incident in which he was involved as follows:

"M. Jules Ferry appeared at one of the polls situated in the Bonaparte quarter. Here is how Le Soir reports this occurrence:

M. Ferry presented himself this morning in the Bonaparte quarter in order to survey the votes of the army.

Entry was refused to him, as rumor had it.

M. Ferry pleaded his quality as a deputy. He was told that his was not a regular mandate for the circumstances, and he retired without any further objection."<sup>120</sup>

Ferry also wrote a public letter to the Parisian Prefect of Police protesting the latter's temporary arrest of individuals distributing bulletins and manifestoes relating to the plebiscite.<sup>121</sup> Here, Ferry showed great activity, in accordance with his firm beliefs in universal suffrage and the honest administration and operation of elections.

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119. Tchernoff, op. cit., 591.

120. L'Avenir Nationale, May 10, 1870.

121. Le Réveil, May 8, 1870.

As for the plebiscite, its outcome, thanks to Opposition disunity and official pressure, turned in favor of Napoleon which could not but please the most skeptical of the Emperor's councillors: 7,359,000 votes were cast in favor of the government, while only 1,582,000 negatives were counted.<sup>122</sup> Of course, republicans were privately unnerved by the returns, for this was an uncomfortable setback, as compared to their gains of the year before.

Back in the Corps Législatif, Ferry managed to deliver another speech before the crisis with Prussia arose. On June 20 Ferry rose to protest the complacent fashion in which the Ministry had received the news that M. Bismarck desired the completion of the Saint-Gothard Railway, a projected line along the Swiss-Austrian frontier which would link up the South German States and Italy.<sup>123</sup> Although M. Molinari in the Journal des Débats reacted adversely to M. Ferry's interpellation, as tending uselessly "to provoke a tumultuous scene,"<sup>124</sup> the young Irreconcilable showed himself quite well aware that M. Bismarck's interest in the railway was hardly a commercial one. As a matter of fact, Ferry for several years had realized that the matter of German unification was not an instance of nationalism on the march to which republicans should automatically lend their support: He had called attention to Quinet's brochure of the 1830's, already referred to, exposing the German danger. Again,

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122. Gillespie, op. cit., 135.

123. Discours, I: 340-345.

124. Journal des Débats, June 21, 1871.

in May, 1866, when Thiers delivered his famous speech denouncing Napoleon for his neutrality in the Italo-Prussian alliance against Austria, with all that this would mean to France, Ferry published an article in Le Temps, May 5, 1866, approving wholeheartedly M. Thiers' prophecy of Franco-Prussian relations.<sup>125</sup> Ferry's eastern origins and interest in Germany stood him in good stead here.

Thus, on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War, Ferry had made a small name for himself in France: He had a record of several years in journalism in Paris, a reputation as one of the most promising figures amongst the republican youth, and an apprenticeship of one year in the Corps Législatif of France.

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125. Discours, I: 345-347.

Part II. Jules Ferry in the Government of National Defense.

## PART II

## CHAPTER I

## FALL OF THE SECOND EMPIRE AND THE DAY OF SEPTEMBER 4.

## I

The fall of the Second Empire was assured, though Napoleon III did not think it so, on the day war was declared on Prussia. From the first hours of the war the hopeless ineffectiveness of the Second Empire became glaringly obvious to the world. On September 4, 1870 the vox populi of France simply regained its right of free decision from a personal form of government which it had never willed.

For almost two months after the plebiscite France was in a state of political calm, even lassitude. Then, suddenly, at the beginning of July, 1870 the underlying hatred between France and Prussia, rekindled by the Austro-Prussian War, was brought to the attention of Europe. In France, every articulate citizen was aroused or alarmed by the revelation that a little-known member of the Prussian royal family might become the next king of Spain. The newspapers did no more than reflect what was in many minds when they reiterated references to Charles V reincarnated.

On June 30 Emile Ollivier, as Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, assured M. Jules Favre, leader of the republican deputies, that never did the government survey an international

scene more conducive to peace. One week to the day later another official, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Duke de Gramont, confirmed rumors that Leopold of Hohenzollern had been offered the Spanish throne, and spoke far less reassuringly of peace in the face of this resurrection of the throne of Charles V.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the specter of Charles V, the deputies were far from united, in the subsequent crisis, in believing that war must be risked. Republicans en masse, and many Orleanists led by Thiers, indicated their fear that the government might precipitate war.<sup>2</sup> On July 13 Benedetti notified the Ministry that it had obtained its diplomatic triumph. The King of Prussia had announced that he approved young Prince Leopold's withdrawal as a candidate for the Spanish crown. With this all reasons for war disappeared. When Ollivier met Thiers at the beginning of the session of July 13, he replied to Thiers' admonition to remain tranquil, that the government would not let peace escape.<sup>3</sup> The Duke de Gramont, a civilian in the Emperor's war party, sealed the Empire's doom by demanding next a renunciation, binding for the future, of the Hohenzollern candidacy in Spain. Bismarck achieved his most publicized triumph in this affair with a baited trap which ensnared the entire French nation, prisoner of the war-minded government.

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1. Simon, op. cit., I: 139-141 ff. Simon has a good account of the Hohenzollern candidacy crisis from the standpoint of a republican deputy.

2. Simon, op. cit., I: 140-141, 161, 174.

3. Ibid., 160-161.

On Bastille Day the text of Bismarck's edition of the Ems Interview excited the susceptibilities of the French people.<sup>4</sup> The war crisis was climaxed in the Chamber the next day, as the government asked for 50 millions credit to prosecute the war, which Prussia's insolence, it insisted, has made inevitable. The entire assemblage, except for the republican Left and M. Thiers, hailed the imminent approach of war with enthusiasm. For Thiers' solemn warnings of onrushing disaster, the Chamber had only derision. In answer to Favre's and Gambetta's desperate demands for information concerning Prussia's provocative dispatches, the Ministry had only silence. Ollivier pronounced the fatal words that the government embarked upon the war "with a light heart."<sup>5</sup>

French public opinion, contrary to the impression fostered by the administration and repeated by many historians, was not as enthusiastic for war as is popularly supposed. Le Temps, probably the most informative, accurate, and impartial newspaper in France at the time, represented a large segment of public opinion in its attitude during the crisis. On July 11, in alarm, Le Temps announced itself opposed to war. On July 14, speaking of the news of the day before, Le Temps was delighted to hear that the Hohenzollern prince had refused the Spanish throne, and on July 16 the editorial stated that Le Temps did not regret having pleaded the cause of peace up to the eleventh hour.<sup>6</sup> As

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4. Simon, op. cit., I: 174-175.

5. Ibid., 175-179; Jules Favre, Gouvernement de la Defense Nationale (3 vols., Paris, 1871), I:17-23.

6. Le Temps, July 11, 14, 16, 1870.

Jules Simon knew, the majority of the Emperor's prefects in France, when consulted--as was Napoleon's habit when great issues were at stake--reported that there was not enthusiastic support, but apathy, regarding the approach of war.<sup>7</sup> More recently, it has been quite conclusively demonstrated that a large measure of the war enthusiasm was drummed up through manipulation of the official press and artificial incitement of public support by administrative functionaries.<sup>8</sup> In view of this, the attitude of skepticism and alarm shown by the parliamentary Left toward official versions appears, in retrospect, amply justified.

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## II

In all of this Jules Ferry played very little part, other than to associate himself with his colleagues of the Left, especially Gambetta. In the session of July 15 when the crucial war credits were before the Corps, like almost everybody, he forgot the differences of the last few days, and in the interests of patriotism voted in favor of the appropriation.<sup>9</sup> Ferry's one opportunity to speak came on July 19 just before the Chamber's premature adjournment on July 21, due to the war crisis.

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7. Simon, op. cit., I: 144-145.

8. See H. C. Benjamin, "Official Propaganda and the French Press during the Franco-Prussian War," in Journal of Modern History (New York, 1932), IV: 214-230; and E. M. Carroll, "French Public Opinion on War with Prussia in 1870," in American Historical Review, (New York, 1926), XXXI: 679-700.

9. See Le Temps, Le Journal des Debats, July 16, 1870 and many other newspaper's for the day which gave the vote on the war credits. War was declared officially only on July 19, but the vote on the war credits determined it.

He protested a bill sponsored by the administration which specified that the French press was to be muzzled on the subject of military operations.<sup>10</sup> Ferry felt that the law was unnecessary. In addition to that its vague phraseology was sure to give the government opportunity to belabor the newspapers concerning information that was not strictly military. As was frequently the case, Ferry's conduct as an orator drew forth adverse comment. Le Siècle noted with reluctance:

"M. Jules Ferry, first, sought to put in focus the inconveniences of the repressive measures taken by the government toward the press.

The honorable deputy of the Left called attention to the 'Draconian' character of the law presented.

Unhappily, M. Jules Ferry was not in form today, and we must avow, in spite of all our sympathy for his talent, that the young orator did not easily attack the work of the commission...M. Gambetta stepped in to give him assistance."<sup>11</sup>

Ferry's and Gambetta's suspicions about the operation of the law were quickly verified. On the other hand, when one observes what the Parisian press did with military news under the policy of broad tolerance pursued by the Government of National Defense, it is only fair to say that the Ministry was not unjust in requesting legislation to fetter the press.

A week after the Corps Législatif adjourned, the war reached the stage of serious military operations. Hardly had the first major battles been fought when the government's boasts

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10. Discours, I: 352-360.

11. Le Siècle, July 19, 1870.

about the Army's efficiency were proven to be lamentable exaggerations. By August 6 the French armies had suffered three resounding defeats, at Wissenbourg, Forbach, and Froeschwiller (Reichshoffen),<sup>12</sup> and the war, short of a miracle which never came, was lost in the first two weeks. Though appalled by these and subsequent defeats, the French public on all sides resolved to fight on indefinitely, since the issue between France and Prussia had at last been drawn.

Under the circumstances, the Empress could not refuse to reconvene the Chamber for the date of August 9. By mid-August the Empire existed only by the force of earlier momentum. The end was near--that was clear to all except the imperial family and the advisors close to the throne. On August 14 there transpired a brief attempt at revolution in one of the working quarters of Paris instigated by the arch-conspirator, Blanqui. The uprising was ridiculously unsuccessful; yet it could only have occurred at a moment when the Empire had lost all prestige in the eyes of the public.<sup>13</sup>

A few days earlier, on the day the Chamber reconvened, the government was much closer to a debacle brought on by the force of public opinion. Huge crowds greeted the deputies as they proceeded to the Palais-Bourbon, where the Corps Législatif met, and waited for them until the session was over. Many of them climbed the wall into the interior grounds of the Palais-Bourbon. In the opinion of Jules Simon, this might have become a

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12. Simon, *op. cit.*, I: 210-211, 232-234.

13. Claretie, *op. cit.*, 154.

serious attempt at revolution, were it not for words of caution by Jules Ferry which helped to cause the interlopers to disperse.<sup>14</sup> A little while earlier, Ferry, in the Chamber, along with another deputy, M. Estancelin, all but engaged in a wrestling match with the Duke de Gramont, who had been defiantly insulting to the Left.<sup>15</sup>

During the session, the badly pressed regime reluctantly made a few concessions. Jules Favre asked for the immediate armament of the National Guard of Paris, a proposition which was unpalatable to the majority because of the imminence of revolution--a Parisian National Guard in arms meant then what it had meant in 1792. But Favre revised his recommendation to provide for armanent of the National Guard throughout France; urgency was voted for consideration of this, and on the day following, at the insistence of the Left, armament was voted for the National Guard within Paris and without.<sup>16</sup> As events proved, however, there was a wide discrepancy between voting arms and actually arming the populace. The other noteworthy change conceded by the government also became official on the day of August 10--the Ollivier Ministry fell with a crash, and the Count de Palikao, one of Napoleon's generals, became Minister of War and head of the last Bonapartist cabinet.<sup>17</sup> A further addition to the government was the appointment of General

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14. Simon, op. cit., I: 247.

15. Claretie, op. cit., 150.

16. Simon, op. cit., I: 243, 265.

17. Claretie, op. cit., 151.

Trochu as military Governor of Paris on August 17 at the behest of the Emperor in the field, after pressure from his wife and cousin.<sup>18</sup> General Trochu was at that time the single popular general in the French Army, for he had never made an effort to hide his distaste for the Empire and all of its works.<sup>19</sup>

But the critics of the faltering regime did not succeed in their pressure to transfer the powers of government to some sort of executive commission for the duration of the war. On August 9 Favre proposed that a governing commission be created from the legislative body in order to govern France in its hour of peril. This proposal was supported by a republican minority, but a minority which numbered some Orleanists and even a few foresighted Bonapartists.<sup>20</sup> Had it been accepted, it would have been composed of a majority of Bonapartists, since its membership was to be drawn from the Corps Législatif. Proposals to this effect were offered in slightly varying forms by different deputies of the Left on any number of occasions between August 9 and September 3, but were always rejected by the majority. The Court feared that acceptance of this would have made certain the dissolution of the Second Empire.<sup>21</sup> Very likely this would have been the case. Yet by stubbornly refusing to acquiesce in this proposal the Empress closed the door to whatever slim chance there may have been for her son to become the fourth Bonaparte to leave a mark in history.

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18. Simon, op. cit., I: 283.

19. Claretie, op. cit., 174.

20. Simon, op. cit., I: 242-246.

21. Favre, op. cit., I: 36-37.

As for Ferry, on only three occasions did he express himself during the twilight of the Second Empire. On August 10, second day of the reconvened Corps Législatif, Ferry arose to protest the suspension of Le Réveil and Le Rappel, the press representatives of the avancés, which enjoyed considerable circulation. The Ministry had suspended the papers on the tenth because they had vehemently demanded the arming of the National Guard, and had made no effort to hide their contempt for the government's ineptitude.<sup>22</sup> Ferry argued that the government had gone too far with its suppressions. There was a state of war in France, but no state of siege in Paris, he said, and the population had not conducted itself seditiously.<sup>23</sup> His argument was sound enough in theory, but under the circumstances he received no response from the Ministry or the majority.

On August 14 Ferry spoke on behalf of a bill which provided that unmarried men who had matured in 1865-1866, and married men without children for the same years, should be included in the Mobile Guard. This was a separate unit analogous to the National Guard, but organized in a fashion to provide for the men to be moved rapidly from one to another place of danger. The second part of this proposal which Ferry elucidated specified that exemptions for seminary students should be abolished so that they might be absorbed into one of the branches of the armed forces.<sup>24</sup> His views on this matter were not those of the majority, for it was observed that France needed more weapons, not

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22. Tchernoff, op. cit., 597.

23. Discours, 597.

24. Ibid., I: 367-375.

more men.

The date of August 25 was the last time Ferry spoke in the legislative body of the Second Empire. The government had forbidden the fabrication or the sale of arms by private concerns not favored by the War Department. Ferry spoke in favor of repeal of this legislation because of the shortage of war material. Repeal would encourage private manufacture of arms. As it was, commerce and industry in France were hampered by the government monopoly, while the arms industries in Belgium and England flourished. Pending a large-scale increase in arms production in France, Ferry also recommended immediate importation of arms from neighboring countries, in order that the citizenry might be able to protect itself.<sup>25</sup> Because Ferry intended to arm the populace rapidly, the Ministry, in dread of momentary revolution, rejected his proposals. That Ferry's plan was not unreasonable is indicated by the conservative Journal des Débats, anxious ordinarily to see motions which originated from the Left rejected:

"M. Jules Ferry has expounded with clarity, and with a moderation of language of which we would like to see him habituate himself, the vices resulting from the prohibition on fabrication and commerce in arms of war."<sup>26</sup>

Le Temps took the sound position that the majority, in rejecting M. Ferry's proposals, was preventing national unity by defying the minority. The latter was now the spokesman of public opinion.<sup>27</sup>

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25. Discours, I: 375-383.

26. Journal des Débats, August 26, 1870.

27. Le Temps, August 27, 1870.

## III

As Jules Simon remarked afterwards, from the date of August 9 to September 4 "it was evident to all that the Empire existed only in name."<sup>28</sup> Consequently, parliamentary republicans were very active during the last four weeks of the Empire, for it became glaringly obvious that the myopic Corps Législatif would not seize the initiative to forestall a drastic solution to the government's unpopularity. The republicans had been in the habit of caucusing on parliamentary matters in a building in the Rue de la Sourdière, although the Open Left of Picard had disassociated itself from these meetings since the period of the plebiscite.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Delescluze, as far to the left as Picard was to the right in republican circles, was not to be seen there after the plebiscite, for he was not a deputy.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, conversations in what might be termed "respectable" republican circles took place chiefly among the "Irreconcilables." This was the Parisian group in the Closed Left of the Corps Législatif which was anxious for France to be freed of the Bonapartes. It hoped to bring about these changes in less critical times and according to due legal forms.

Several of these people held a meeting in Ferry's residence shortly after news of the Battles of Forbach and Froeschwiller spread through Paris. The question under debate: Was

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28. Simon, op. cit., I: 246.

29. Bury, op. cit., 48.

30. Simon, op. cit., I: 260.

it necessary, given the Empire's ineptitude, to change the form of government immediately, even if this entailed a revolution? The problem was threshed out, then rejected, since those present did not wish to take the chance that the republic might be born as a result of rebellion.<sup>31</sup> Ferry's advice to the crowds on August 9 becomes even more understandable in the light of this.

On this very day the troublesome issue was mulled over further in the meeting of three deputies, led by Pelletan, and several democratic journalists, to consider the possibility of a demonstration of 100,000 people. This would not be in order to precipitate a revolution, but to impress upon the government that a committee of national defense was by now an essential. The scheme was abandoned as too risky, and it was decided to wait for events to suggest a solution.<sup>32</sup>

An incident which caused a variety of inaccurate rumors among the Bonapartists was a visit to General Trochu made by several republican deputies on August 21. Favre, Picard, and Ferry had an interview with the general in order to have his opinions on the state of defenses in France, and particularly in Paris. Those who habitually suspected the republicans of Machiavellian intriguing were sure that secret revolution was being plotted in this tête-a-tête. Actually the deputies lis-

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31. Tchernoff, *op. cit.*, 598; Charles Ferry imparted this information to the author.

32. *Ibid.*, 598; again, private information furnished the author, who profited by consultation with republicans of the 1870 generation.

tened while General Trochu gave a two hour extemporaneous lecture on the war up to that moment. Among other things, according to Favre, it was on this occasion that Trochu remarked for the first time that the defense of Paris would be a "heroic folly",<sup>33</sup> a phrase which the general doubtless had occasion to regret.

Before Trochu was given the post of Governor of Paris, he had visited the dejected Emperor on bivouac at Châlons. There he was invited to join the government, and reluctantly accepted. The Emperor was no longer making decisions for himself, but he agreed with cousin Pierre Bonaparte, Marshal MacMahon, and others, that the main army must fall back on Paris for future fighting. This was one of the conditions on which Trochu accepted his post.<sup>34</sup> However, on August 23, due to pressure from Palikao and the Empress, who felt that Napoleon III must not return to Paris in defeat, this decision was reversed in favor of a march to the rescue of Bazaine at Metz.<sup>35</sup> This act was purely political--the hope of a long-chance victory to save the dynasty--and it doomed the remainder of the army to irrevocable disaster, for it left Paris unprotected. Thiers, an experienced military strategist, said of this act: "You have one marshal blockaded; now you will have two."<sup>36</sup> As all the world knows, this was an understatement, for MacMahon's army was intercepted in its long march toward Metz, and General

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33. Favre, op. cit., I: 49.

34. Simon, op. cit., I: 290; Denis, op. cit., I: 92.

35. Denis, op. cit., I: 97-98.

36. Ibid., I: 115.

von Moltke's army cut the French forces to ribbons, forcing a complete surrender on September 2, at the Battle of Sedan.<sup>37</sup>

The opposition in the Corps Législatif had obtained still another grudging concession from the Ministry. As a result of a repeated demand for a governmental commission made in this instance by M. Kératry on August 22, Palikao, on August 24, announced with bad grace that three members of the Chamber were hereby adjoined to the Ministry's committee of defense. These members were selected by the Ministry. Thiers reluctantly accepted the invitation to join the committee of defense.<sup>38</sup> This enabled the republicans to obtain access to confidential information for the first time. Thus, Thiers was able to inform confidentially the members of the Left of the disaster at Sedan as early as September 3.<sup>39</sup> In the regular session of the afternoon, Palikao tried to dissimulate the extent of the disaster. Without averting to his information, Favre asked the Chamber to provide that all parties, including the Ministry, efface themselves before a military man in this hour of supreme crisis. Despite everything, the Ministry and the majority refused to consider this proposal at the very hour that the news of Sedan was spreading like wildfire amidst the consternated Parisian populace.<sup>40</sup>

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37. Accounts of the Battle of Sedan abound; Simon, op. cit., I: 311-332; a good version from the standpoint of an interested civilian.

38. Favre, op. cit., I: 45-47.

39. Denis, op. cit., I: 139.

40. Ibid., I: 142-144; Favre, op. cit., I: 60-62; Bury, op. cit., 46.

## IV

The night of September 3 was a bedlam of furious, pêle-mêle activities. The crowds of Paris, the republican deputies, and the directionless, teetering government worked at cross-purposes.

On the part of the Left, an all important council was held in an ante-chamber of the Palais-Bourbon, with Open and Closed Left reunited for the first time in several months. It was not easy to arrive at a joint statement, although there were not the disagreeable differences which ordinarily characterized these meetings. Agreement was reached on several points. Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte and his dynasty were to be asked bluntly to abdicate. The Corps Législatif should create a commission of government to conduct the affairs of the nation. Finally, General Trochu should remain Governor of Paris. They intended to name the governmental commission. But a difficulty appeared when Thiers, who was assumed to be the key figure on this body, balked at participating. Before its membership could be further considered, the Chamber convened. Those present at this meeting affixed their names to the proposition which Favre read to the Chamber a little later. They were: Favre, Crémieux, Saint-Hilaire, Desseaux, Garnier-Pagès, Larrieu, Gagneur, Steenakers, Magnin, Dorian, Ordinaire, Emanuel Arago, Simon, Pelletan, Wilson, Picard, Gambetta, Kératry, Guyot-Montpeyroux, Tachard, Lecesne, Rampont, Giraud, Marion,

Javal, Bethmont, and Jules Ferry.<sup>41</sup>

Although the Ministry did not intend to call an emergency session of the Chamber for the night of September 3, the citizens of Paris helped change the government's mind. As on August 9, so on September 3-4 Parisians were in the streets in crowds of tens of thousands. The people were shouting "De-thronement," and milling about the gates of the Palais-Bourbon again. A hurried consultation of Empire officials resulted in a decision for a midnight session of the legislative body, although it was not deemed necessary to grant any of the concessions which the Chamber had been demanding for almost a month.<sup>42</sup>

During the course of the evening, Gambetta had two adventures. According to Tchernoff, he had a conference with Ledru-Rollin and Schoelcher.<sup>43</sup> These two old exiles had seen more than one revolution, and had fewer repugnances for non-legal means than Gambetta, and apparently tried to impress upon him the necessity for an immediate and, if necessary, violent return to the Republic. Nevertheless, that night before the Chamber convened, Gambetta, solicited by the crowd before the Palais-Bourbon, urged a peaceful, orderly solution to the people's difficulties, and requested patience while their deputies did their best for them.<sup>44</sup>

Then followed the legislative session at which Favre's resolution was given its place on the calendar. Palikao in-

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41. Favre, op. cit., I: 60-62. Bury, op. cit., 48-49.

42. Simon, op. cit., I:358-359; Bury, op. cit., 50-51.

43. Tchernoff, op. cit., 602.

44. Bury, op. cit., 50-51; Simon, op. cit., I:360.

sisted on putting off a decision until noon of September 4, and the deputies dispersed, as the crowds watched disappointedly.<sup>45</sup>

By the morning of September 4, the mass of the population in Paris was in the last straits of impatience over the slowness with which political events were proceeding. Most people had anticipated the fall of the dynasty the night before, and were disappointed in the republican deputies' inability to secure a dethronement during the short extraordinary session. A potential rising of the populace could be foreseen should the Corps Législatif fail to announce the death of the Empire during the early moments of the session.<sup>46</sup>

A happening which helped to precipitate the events of mid-afternoon was the delay in the opening of the session until 1:15 P.M. This was due to a flurry of last-second negotiations conducted by the majority, a large group which surrounded Thiers, and the republican Left, all conferring separately during the noon hour. Favre and his followers intended to present intact their resolution of the night before. Thiers labored over a proposal which varied slightly from Favre's in the interests of allaying ill-feeling all the way round. And a conference with the Empress showed her willing

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45. Denis, op. cit., I:147.

46. Practically all authorities and reminiscent accounts agree about the restless uneasiness of the crowds on Sept. 4. See: Denis, op. cit., I:152; Claretie, op. cit., 228-229; Mason, op. cit., 59-60; De la Gorce, op. cit., VII: 408; "Le Quatre Septembre, 1870, Recit d'un Témoin" in La Grande Revue (Paris, 1920), CIII: 177-188, and many others.

to grant to her ministers and the parliamentary majority permission to present a proposal for a governmental commission.<sup>47</sup>

Once the session opened Palikao, as head of the Ministry, presented his project. This provided that the proposed commission should be of membership selected by the Ministry, and called for Palikao himself to be "Lieutenant-General" of the commission. Needless to say, it was received with pronounced distaste by the assemblage. Favre's resolution was duly presented again. And Thiers offered his proposal, remarking that his personal preferences favored Favre's solution, but he presented his own in the interests of greater unity. His suppressed the Left's sentence announcing the deposition of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte in favor of the sentence, "Under the circumstances, the Chamber names a commission of government and national defense." And it provided for the calling of a Constituent Assembly as soon as circumstances would permit. The three proposals then were remanded to committees for urgent consideration and immediate recommendation.<sup>48</sup>

In the meantime, the crowds in the streets were on their way toward forcing a showdown. There could be no doubt that the Empire would fall on this day. Le Siècle set the pace for the democratic press. It mentioned the rumor that National Guard contingents were going to appear at the Palais-Bourbon, and it urged them to be unarmed. On its first page was a reprint of the decree of the National Assembly of August 10, 1792,

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47. Simon, op. cit., I: 372-376.

48. Denis, op. cit., I:157-159; Simon, op. cit., I:376-378.

which announced that the "Chief of the Executive Power is provisionally suspended".<sup>49</sup>

When the crowds gathered on the Place de la Concorde before the Palais-Bourbon many of the National Guardsmen, after all, were armed. Some had gone to their homes to get their weapons, after seeing regular troops stationed about the Palais-Bourbon.<sup>50</sup> Only two battalions were armed with aforesaid thought, according to any evidence available today.<sup>51</sup> There was little likelihood of resistance, as events proved, for the troops fraternized with the crowds.<sup>52</sup> As the deputies were admitted through the gates into the Palais-Bourbon, National Guardsmen and others crowded in also, and at one moment or another it became impossible to close the gates.<sup>53</sup> Thus an ever-growing assortment of people was in the courtyard of the building while the session was held. While the committees considered the three resolutions, some of the crowd began to press into the building, then into the legislative chamber itself. According to some authorities, several of the republican deputies, including Ferry, lent a hand to those seeking entrance.<sup>54</sup> At any rate, once inside the Palais-Bourbon, they found their way into the Chamber soon enough.

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49. Le Siècle, September 4, 1870.

50. Tchernoff, op. cit., 603-604.

51. Ibid, 602; C. Ranc, ed., Ranc, Souvenirs et Correspondance, 1831-1908 (Paris, 1913), 156.

52. Denis, op. cit., I:102; Bury, op. cit., 57-58.

53. Simon, op. cit., 384-388 has been followed here for the account of the investment, since it is comparatively unbiased and since Simon had access to the stenographic notes of a secretary.

54. See particularly, Denis, op. cit., I: 163-166.

At 2:30 the presiding officer, Schneider, tried to reconvene the Chamber, but could not make himself heard amidst the noise. Gambetta moved to the front of the Chamber and asked for silence while the Corps Législatif deliberated. The crowd shouted for "la République," and, although Gambetta obtained semi-silence, Schneider could not resume. Therefore, he announced the session closed, and walked from the hall, harrassed by the crowd.<sup>55</sup>

There followed several minutes of indecisive shouting and tumult during which, among other incidents, Ferry routed two youths who had dashed to the presiding officer's rostrum.<sup>56</sup> Gambetta, after conferring hastily with several colleagues anent the closing of the session, rose to speak again. He abjured the citizens to remain calm and swore that the deputies were going to proclaim the dethronement. The noise failing to abate, Gambetta, after another brief conversation with his friends of the Left, announced:

"...The necessary time has been given to the national representation to pronounce the dethronement;

...As we constitute the regular power issuing from free universal suffrage;

We declare that Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte and his dynasty have forever ceased to reign over France."<sup>57</sup>

The crowd cheered Gambetta to the echo, for this was part of what the Parisians desired. In the next minute, Favre entering, replaced Gambetta in addressing the crowd. He re-

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55. Simon, op. cit., I: 388-392.

56. Ibid., I: 396-397.

57. Ibid., I: 397-398.

peatedly asked the citizens not to resort to violence or civil war, then said that all of them must create a provisory government at the Hotel de Ville. At the prompting of the people, then, both Favre and Gambetta said the Hotel de Ville was the place to proclaim the Republic (as had been done in 1848). The crowd followed Favre and Gambetta and the other republican deputies, as they left the building.<sup>58</sup>

Shortly after this, the committees reported out the Thiers proposal as that to be recommended to the Assembly. It was too late, for the crowd had dispersed to the Hotel de Ville. Even had the Thiers proposal been sent to the floor an hour earlier, it probably would have made little difference. The people would have insisted on dethronement and proclamation of the Republic.<sup>59</sup>

The deputies' march to the Hotel de Ville was a triumphal procession. Favre was accompanied by Ferry and Kératry on his route to the other building. Half way there they encountered General Trochu, making a very delayed excursion toward the Palais-Bourbon to find out what transpired there. Favre told him that there was no more government, that they were on their way to proclaim one, and that they would communicate with him later in the day.<sup>60</sup>

At the Hotel de Ville it required some time to establish the semblance of order. For one thing, the crowd had reached

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58. Simon, op. cit., I: 402-404.

59. Ibid., I: 394-395.

60. Favre, op. cit., I: 78; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 336.

the building before the deputies, and there were groups scattered through most of the rooms in the building. Of even greater moment was the presence amongst the people of several of the leaders of the avancés--notably, Millière, Delescluze, Pyat, and Lefrançais--who were trying to gain enough attention to declare a revolutionary government of their own. Millière had prepared tentative lists for a provisional government, and these had been cast out the windows of the Hotel de Ville to the crowds below.<sup>61</sup> In the melee of shouting and gesticulating which followed, somebody suggested that the deputies of Paris should form the provisional government. This was quickly seized upon, and the situation was saved, so far as the moderates were concerned.<sup>62</sup> This was a rallying point around which the public would unite, and it would exclude all of the avancés from the new government.

After this, it became possible to make a start toward setting up the governmental machinery. In this connection, several indecorous incidents occurred. The Ministry of the Interior, the heart of the administrative system, was the most important post in the internal affairs of France. Picard and Gambetta drove to the offices of the Interior in the same carriage, each intent upon securing the coveted post. Gambetta dashed into the office first, and announced himself Minister of the Interior, while Picard contented himself with waiting

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61. Denis, op. cit., I:181; Simon, op. cit., I:413; De la Gorce, op. cit., VII:413; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 336.

62. Simon, op. cit., I: 414.

for a decision of the Council, later in the day. Etienne Arago, as an old revolutionist popular with the masses in Paris, was proclaimed Mayor of Paris by acclamation of the throngs. Adolphe Crémieux, another old stand-by, hastened to the Department of Justice, there to lay claim by right of possession. The other deputies waited for the Council of the evening to distribute portfolios.<sup>63</sup>

Other measures were taken. MM. Wilson and Glais-Bizoin were dispatched to General Trochu's quarters to seek his adhesion to the government. This was of crucial importance, for, as Governor of Paris, he controlled the military forces, kept the unruly National Guard in check, and would conduct the defense of the city once the onrushing Germans should arrive. Without Trochu's support the government would be lost from the first hour, and civil war might ravage the city.<sup>64</sup> Meantime, a proclamation was drawn up by Picard, to which those present affixed their signatures. This repeated a little more formally Gambetta's announcement in the Corps Législatif, and reminded the populace that in 1792, as would be the case tomorrow, the Republic had saved the land from the invader.<sup>65</sup> This done, they searched the many rooms of the Hotel de Ville for a small enough room in which to deliberate, finally deciding upon an ante-chamber formally used by M. Haussmann. In this room they began their first informal council.<sup>66</sup>

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63. Bury, op. cit., 67, 69.

64. Simon, op. cit., I: 421-422.

65. Ibid., I: 415-416.

66. Ibid., I: 416.

Almost immediately came two surprises, one pleasant, one not so pleasant. General Trochu appeared, announcing that he would give his adherence to the government, if it would protect "God, Religion, and the Family." He was reassured on this score, then tendered the post of Minister of War. He left almost immediately for the War Office to see General Palikao before that worthy should leave Paris.<sup>67</sup> The next caller was a person of different ilk. This proved to be the redoubtable Henri Rochefort, elected from Paris in 1869, more recently in prison over l'affaire Pierre Bonaparte, and just now released as the Napoleonic regime fell. He had been associated with the avancés, especially the International, and was thus suspect to the other deputies. Nevertheless, there was the inconvenient fact that he was an elected deputy of Paris. Hence, he had to be included. As Picard remarked, it was better to have him inside the government than out,<sup>68</sup> and, as events proved, this was a correct estimate of his role.

Somewhat later, General Trochu reappeared. This time, according to his own account, he felt it necessary to ask for the presidency of the provisional Council (Favre was to have had this position) because it would be better, in the unsettled, disorganized state of Paris, that a soldier be the head of the government. And so it was decided without controversy.<sup>69</sup> With this the Government may be said to have been constituted. The

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67. Trochu, op. cit., I: 199; Denis, op. cit., I: 183.

68. Denis, op. cit., I: 183.

69. Trochu, op. cit., I: 207; Favre, op. cit., I: 80.

first formal session of the Government of National Defense was held the night of September 4.

The day of September 4 had one painful political happenstance amidst the general rejoicing. Hours after the dissolution of the Corps Législatif and the proclamation of the Republic a rump session of the Chamber reconvened. This was composed largely, but not wholly, of the Bonapartist deputies, and was presided over by Thiers, still acting as a disinterested intermediary. The Thiers proposal was adopted, and a deputation sent to the Hotel de Ville to acquaint the Favre government of this new turn of events.<sup>70</sup> Favre, on behalf of his colleagues, rejected any alliance with the Corps Législatif's proposed committee for defense of the realm. He pointed out, quite properly, that this proposal came long after it was too late, and to the public it would smack of a post facto effort by the Chamber to hold on to a thread of power.<sup>71</sup> On the evening of September 4 Favre and Simon went to the Corps Législatif to report this personally. At first this was badly received by the seated deputies. But thanks to Thiers' words of wisdom the encounter ended quietly:

"Don't you feel that if you oppose this event, it will immediately recall the violation of another assembly? Do the facts of the day need a verification?...Haven't I been to Mazas? Let us not enter into re-  
criminations which will lead us too far.

In the presence of the enemy who will be before Paris almost immediately, I believe

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70. Denis, op. cit., I: 188-189.

71. Favre, op. cit., I: 81.

we have only one thing to do: We shall retire with dignity."<sup>72</sup>

On these words the Corps Législatif disbanded forever.

On the same day the superfluous Sénat, not important enough to merit invasion by the crowd, ended its sessions of its own accord. The Second Empire was no more.<sup>73</sup>

In the provinces the Republic was proclaimed on the day of September 4. Lyons, learning of the battle of Sedan before Paris, thus preceded the capital in announcing the end of the Empire. The other cities--Bordeaux, Marseille, Nantes, Tours--followed suit the same day or on September 5.<sup>74</sup>

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V

The day of revolution left unsettled many incidents which could be variously interpreted, depending upon one's politics or one's conception of human nature. People of all shades of republicanism, for example, have believed that the Napoleonic regency failed to crush the incipient revolution by force of arms only because the government lacked the physical strength to do so. The troops before the Hotel de Ville were evidence enough, so it was said. But in the parliamentary investigation at a later date, no substantiation of this charge was unearthed, although one of the Empire's ex-ministers, Jérôme David, conceded that a possible coup d'etat was discussed, and possibly prepared.<sup>75</sup> Is this a hint that the popular suspicions were

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72. Denis, op. cit., I: 194-196; Simon, op. cit., I: 429-430.

73. Simon, op. cit., I: 427-429.

74. Tchernoff, op. cit., 606-607.

75. See Denis, op. cit., I: 154, 156; Annales, XXIII: 143.

justified, or is it merely one man's whisper about a whisper?

And what of the republicans? If there is suspicion that the Regency wished a coup d'état to prevent revolution, there is a similar suspicion that republicans used the crowds of Paris to promote it. In the case of the avancés, there can be small doubt that September 4 was only a partial attainment of their aims. They were rid of the Empire, yet they did not have a Commune. But there is almost nothing to indicate that they had elaborated a plot (aside from Blanqui's hopeless street-rising of August) which culminated in the crowds invading the Corps Législatif.<sup>76</sup> They did not have to: it was apparent that events would provide them with the opportunity they sought. But data abounds to show that once the revolution was in motion, they intended to carry it a long way further than it went. The radical leaders were in the front ranks of the crowd which poured into the Corps Législatif.<sup>77</sup> They arrived at the Hotel de Ville well before the republican deputies. Here, as we have seen, they were busily engaged in promoting their own aims when the moderates appeared. And the testimony of some of the Communards who survived 1871 furnishes additional proof.<sup>78</sup> Paris could have had a Commune by the night of September 4; more likely, she would have had civil war, had the Communards won.

76. Tchernoff, op. cit., 602.

77. Simon, op. cit., I:404; Ferry's testimony, Annales, op. cit., XXIII: 383; De la Gorce, op. cit., VII: 409.

78. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 394; Arthur Arnould, Histoire Populaire et Parlementaire de la Commune de Paris (Brussels, 1878), 24.

The attitude and conduct of the modérés on September 3-4 have been suspect by conservatives and radicals alike. After the events, the Bonapartists contended that the republican deputies had plotted the Empire's downfall once the war began, and September 4 was only the culmination of their schemes.<sup>79</sup> And from the other side, some of the radicals have contended that the moderate republicans tried to use them on September 3-4 to promote a rebellion, only to take it over once it had reached the stage they desired. Thus, Arthur Arnould recounts that on the evening of September 3 Charles Ferry entered the Café de Madrid, where Arnould was sitting. He announced that there would be a special session of the Chamber, and he "urged everybody to come in order to give support to the Left deputies."<sup>80</sup> If the incident actually occurred, it could mean, as Arnould implies, that the parliamentary Left was not averse to a mild revolution, or at least interested in placing heavy pressure on the Corps Législatif to overthrow the Empire.

Other shadowy incidents have been similarly interpreted. The events already recounted, such as the front page of Le Siècle, the story that some of the Left deputies aided the investors of the Chamber, and the presence on the Place de la Concorde of friends or relatives of some of the deputies--Arthur Picard, Charles Ferry, Clément Laurier<sup>81</sup>--have been cited

79. A typical example of this accusation is explained in Simon, op. cit., I: 359-362; he quotes M. Dréolle, Bonapartist deputy whose forte was in interpreting unclear remarks to fit his own suspicions.

80. Arnould, op. cit., 16-17.

81. Simon, op. cit., I: 371.

against the parliamentary republicans. But in the aggregate, no irrefutable information exists to show that the modérés were in any way guilty of a planned revolution.<sup>82</sup> What has passed as evidence is, in reality, no more than the speculation of political enemies of the modérés regarding incidents subject to a multiplicity of explanations.

A final reflection on this problem should be added. As parliamentarians, the modérés were convinced of the efficacy of legal change, and worked toward this end for some time. For almost a month before September 4 they besought the Corps Législatif to take the initiative in creating a governmental commission. They wished to prevent revolution, not encourage it. If the Empire was expunged by an uprising of the populace, it had only itself to blame. It comes with poor grace for Bonapartists to accuse the parliamentary Left of promoting revolution. General Trochu had the obvious retort to their accusation that the new government was a revolutionary one: so was that of the First Empire, The Orleanist regime created in 1830, the Republic of '48, and, most of all, so was Napoleon III's government.<sup>83</sup> Finally, had not the moderate faction gained control of the rising at its crucial stage, the day of September 4 never would have passed without blood-letting. It is to the lasting credit of the modérés that this French revolution was completed in the passing of a single day and without a single act of violence. Parliamentary republicanism had its limita-

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82. Tchernoff, op. cit., 602.

83. Trochu, op. cit., I: 213.

tions--but one of its virtues was that its moderation discouraged discord and violence.

## CHAPTER II

THE PERSONNEL AND MANIFOLD PROBLEMS OF THE  
GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

## I

The newly consecrated Government of National Defense faced an unenviable future. It was presumed to be primarily, if not exclusively, a war government, but its tasks were virtually insurmountable after the defeat at Sedan. With disaster already at hand, the critical state of the realm cried for leaders adept at handling day-to-day crises promptly and sensibly. Who were the public figures in the new government, and how well were they fitted for their task?

The organization of the government was confusing. There was no assembly, only an executive council and the customary administrative posts. The Council, in which the policy-making problems of the new government were decided, was the dominant unit. Its membership consisted of the deputies elected from Paris, including those who had chosen seats in the départements, and General Trochu.<sup>1</sup> All of the other people associated with the government in various administrative positions were, like the members of the Council, republicans, although they were not usually referred to as the "Government of National Defense." In actuality, of course, they were participants in the government, as much as the Council members,

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1. Simon, op. cit., II: 4.

but they had not the same importance. Some of this latter group commanded departmental posts, and the same was true of some of the members of the Council, another source of confusion. The more important of these associates of the "Government of National Defense" were:

Mayor of Paris--Etienne Arago  
 Prefect of Police--Kératry  
 Minister of Public Works--Dorian  
 Minister of Agriculture and Commerce--Magnin  
 Minister of War--LeFlô  
 Minister of the Navy--Fourichon<sup>2</sup>

All of these people had positions of key importance. On most occasions they sat with the Council, although usually not voting.

Next to the above group stood the following:

Director of Telegraphs--Steenackers  
 Director of Posts--Rampont  
 Commander of the National Guard--Tamisier  
 Attorney-General--Leblond  
 Public Prosecutor--Didier  
 Director of the National Printing Office--Hauréau<sup>3</sup>

The Council was constituted as follows:

President of the Council--General Trochu  
 Vice-President of the Council, and  
 Minister for Foreign Affairs--Jules Favre  
 Secretary of the Council--Jules Ferry  
 Minister of the Interior--Léon Gambetta  
 Minister of Justice--Adolphe Crémieux  
 Minister of Finance--Ernest Picard.

Members of the Council without portfolio:

Emmanuel Arago (after Crémieux left for Tours,  
 (Minister of Justice )  
 Alexandre Glais-Bizoin  
 Eugène Pelletan  
 Louis Garnier-Pagès  
 Henri Rochefort.<sup>4</sup>

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2. Denis, op. cit., I:205.

3. Ibid., I:207.

4. Ibid., I:205.

For the greater part of five months, until after the armistice was signed, Ferry was closely associated with the other eleven members of the Council, in seeking to guide France out of her predicament. This Government of National Defense had some features of homogeneity. However, it also had certain disparate elements which were disadvantageous from the very beginning.

With the exception of Trochu and Garnier-Pagès, the one a military man, the other to some degree a commercial figure, all of the Council members had made their reputation in the law or as publicists or journalists. In providing training for a man entering politics, these professions were as good as any other; the trouble arose over the lack of public experience possessed by these men. Four in the Government had held some kind of administrative position during the Second Republic, while three others were associated in the public mind with this era, but the Second Republic was at best a very dubious proving ground for statemanship. The other civilians had not before held public office, while the one non-civilian, although President of the Council, was altogether unacquainted with politics. This inexperience, especially at a period of overwhelming crisis, during which decisions had to be made instantaneously and correctly, was the Government's greatest handicap, and contributed more to its downfall than anything else.

There is the hint of another limitation in their backgrounds. As lawyers, as journalists, or as professors (Simon), they perhaps suffered from too great a concentration upon ideas

and causes considered in the abstract. In the type of law and journalism in which these men engaged, the emphasis was on analysis, theory, and especially words. They were much too prone to mistake words for deeds, and, as luck would have it, the military figure in the Government was most addicted to this vice. But in France a politician's word very frequently carries great weight, though his abilities may be limited. A historian of the period said of this: "'Words, words', says Hamlet. But in France one kills and is killed for words."<sup>5</sup> Without seeking to overemphasize this, there is some truth in the impression that these men rose to influence and power chiefly through their words, less through their proven abilities. Their love of oratorical flights and wordy proclamations in lieu of performance exemplified both their inexperience and their backgrounds. Thus, in the case of these men, as individuals, the training to which they had been exposed was inadequate. The fact that throughout their public careers up to 1870 they had been almost exclusively in the opposition only accentuated these limitations of background and expression.

The men of September 4 had as a compensation their common republican political principles, their addiction to moderation and prudence, and the benefit of mutual acquaintance over several years' time. Among themselves, assuredly, they agreed on a greater number of potential courses of action than they ever could have with any other group. But even here, as time elapsed,

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5. Claretie, op. cit., 359.

the positive side of the Government of National Defense was overshadowed by serious divergences, in turn, which engendered weakness. There were the usual temperamental differences to be found among all men seeking to work together. There was an unfortunate discrepancy in age amongst the members of the Government: Three Council members, Ferry, Gambetta, and Rochefort, were in their thirties, while all of the others except Picard were fifty or over. This would not be so significant, had it not been that it pointed up one of the basic sources of dissimilarity in the republican ranks which had been noticeable in the sixties: the "vieux" and the "Jeunes" this time were to carry their differences in outlook into the sphere of political action. Thus, faced with onrushing events, several of the '48'ers seemed inclined to apply the abstractions of the Second Republic, or eschew decision, lest the action corrupt. By contrast, Gambetta and Ferry, especially, wished to deal with the problems as they arose, shifting means and principles as the occasions demanded. Consequently, the Council often found itself at cross-purposes. Men who thought of the Third Republic as the reincarnation of the Second did view problems differently from younger men, who, by training and temperament, wished decisive action rather than unbending principle.

It was the fate of the Government of National Defense, then, to have the dissimilarities of the leaders outnumber the

likenesses. With the other handicaps the Government faced, this was unfortunate. As for the individual figures other than Ferry, a few words need be said.

Jules Favre, born in 1809, had made his reputation as a lawyer for defendants in political trials. In 1848 he had been Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior, and elected to the Chamber in that year. He returned to the legislature after Napoleon seized power as early as 1858.<sup>6</sup> He was best known as a fine orator, and by 1870 enjoyed the greatest respect among older men. He had the defects of excessive sentimentality, fuzzy analytical powers, and indecisiveness.<sup>7</sup> For the man who would meet Bismarck face to face, Favre's failings were alarming.

Jules Simon, born in 1814, was trained as a philosopher and student of Victor Cousin. He was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1848, and soon was regarded as an authority on education. This was the main reason why he was selected for the post he received in 1870. He reentered the legislature in 1863.<sup>8</sup> He was eclectic in his thought, absorbing seemingly disparate philosophies into his own system. In temperament he was naturally patient and addicted to compromise.<sup>9</sup>

6. Pierre Larousse, Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX Siècle (Paris, n.d.), VIII: 170.

7. Etienne Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 736-737; Lamy's articles are weak in their generalizations, but he is penetrating in his critical character analyses.

8. Larousse, op. cit., IV: 739-740.

9. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 739.

Emmanuel Arago was born in 1812, a son of the well-known French astronomer. He was known as an outstanding lawyer. He had held a minor administrative post in the Département du Rhône in 1848, and had been elected to the Chamber in 1849. He entered the Corps Législatif in 1869.<sup>10</sup> In appearance, he looked like a later Bourbon, was good-humored, and well-liked. Leadership was not his forte, and neither was his ability to dissuade others from committing obvious errors.<sup>11</sup>

Louis Garnier-Pagès, born in 1803, was a half-brother of the anti-Orleanist politician. He made a small fortune in commerce, then replaced his brother in the Chamber upon his death in 1841. He was Minister of Finance in the provisional government in 1848. He entered the Corps Législatif in 1864.<sup>12</sup> While he was sincere enough and a hard worker, his abilities were decidedly limited. His reputation stemmed from his brother, and while he fancied himself as an orator, his talent in that direction was very mediocre.<sup>13</sup>

Eugène Pelletan was born in 1813. Like Simon, he was addicted to philosophy, though he had not the other's formal training. In 1848, as a close friend of Lamartine, he was proffered, but refused, an administrative post, and was defeated as a candidate to the Assembly in the same year. Thereafter, he wrote extensively for La Presse and other newspapers,

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10. Larousse, op. cit., I: 544.

11. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 735.

12. Larousse, op. cit., VIII: 1044-1045.

13. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 735.

entering the Corps Législatif in 1864.<sup>14</sup> He was very sincere, very modest, and performed duties well. He was perhaps a little too prone to take a mystical outlook on rather narrowly political affairs.<sup>15</sup>

Alexandre Glais-Bizoin was born in 1799, and, like Crémieux and Garnier-Pagès, appertained as much to the Orleanist generation as he did to that of 1848. He was a deputy for many years before 1848, was in the Constituent in that year, and reëntered the legislature in 1869.<sup>16</sup> He was famous for his sotto voce bons mots in the Chamber. He had good sense and energy enough, but in his zeal for little things he very frequently overlooked the big.<sup>17</sup>

Adolphe Crémieux was born in 1796. As a lawyer, his reputation harked back to 1830. He entered the Orleanist Chamber in 1842, and was Minister of Justice in the provisional government in 1848. He returned to the legislature in 1869.<sup>18</sup> He had shown outstanding ability as a lawyer, but his limitations were in his age, a personal appearance which lent itself to ridicule, and his excessive vanity.<sup>19</sup>

The three younger men other than Ferry need little introduction. Picard, in a sense, stood between vieux and jeunes, although closer to the latter in outlook. He was far above the average in ability, but not too conscientious about

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14. Larousse, op. cit., XII: 526.

15. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 736.

16. Larousse, op. cit., VIII: 1291.

17. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 736.

18. Larousse, op. cit., V: 648.

19. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 734.

his work. He was known for his quick wit and never-failing good humor. His talent for sizing up situations for what they were worth was offset by an excessive skepticism and his inability to change other people's minds to his own way of thinking.<sup>20</sup> Gambetta was the youngest man in the Government. He possessed outstanding ability in all directions, and, while calculating, he had a knack for keeping diametrically opposing factions faithful to him.<sup>21</sup> At this period of their careers, he was superior to Ferry, in that he was decisive with a clearer purpose, and could more readily take the initiative away from less competent men who were incidentally in command. Rochefort was the pamphleteer and satirist supreme, had both feet in the camp of the radicals, but once in the Government of National Defense he was perfectly harmless to the moderates, for his power was almost entirely negative.<sup>22</sup> In Council, he was acquiescent enough, and stood in awe of General Trochu.<sup>23</sup>

The last-named has been the victim of hostile attacks from Left and Right because of his part in the Government of National Defense. His was an unusual and ill-starred character, in many ways. He had virtues which most people would regard as commendable--kindness, generosity, disinterestedness, and a high sense of honor--but in politics or in war he proved completely inadequate. His ability lay entirely in the field

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20. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 135:737.

21. Ibid., 743.

22. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 742.

23. Trochu, op. cit., I: 618-620.

of analysis, never in the field of action. He was an excellent critic of tactics and strategy alike, but suffered from the Hamlet-like characteristic of "thinking too much on the event." Thus, he would temporize, delay, and finally act indecisively. Although he was personally very brave, he was excessively timid when faced with the responsibility of leading men. His very religious frame of mind carried over into his occupations. He regarded the defense of Paris as a "heroic folly", but intended to fight on in a kind of hopeless pessimism, on the chance that the Germans would give up in sheer exhaustion. As head of the Council, Trochu followed when he should have led, and made frequent excuses on the score that he was not a political man. At the same time he insisted on involving himself in all kinds of political considerations. His chief contribution to the internal problem was unity through "moral force," a religious concept by which Trochu meant that discord and imminent civil war should be met by tolerance, not by a resort to force without extreme provocation.<sup>24</sup> An admirable religious solitary or professor of military science, Trochu, regrettably was a total loss as political commander of the French people in this crisis. To break von Moltke's vice around Paris, France needed no less than Napoleon; but she had no more than the well-intentioned Trochu.

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24. For Trochu's character and background, see Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Defense Nationale," 747-749; Denis, op. cit., II: 362-363; and many other sources. A very accurate estimate is made by Favre, op. cit., I:217-218.

## II

To understand the position and the activity of Ferry in the first government in which he participated, a sketch of the major issues and problems confronting the new leadership is essential.

Of first importance to a war government was the conduct of the war. This, naturally, had a variety of ramifications, but purely military considerations were uppermost in everybody's mind. What were the minimum necessities for a defense of Paris? It was estimated that 40,000 men were necessary to defend the fortresses surrounding Paris, and 80,000 more to handle the action between the forts, and give elasticity to the resistance. In the few days following September 4, the Government had not enough trained troops to fulfill this need, but as time passed the French protective forces grew to 200,000 and more, not counting the National Guard. This was made possible because the German besiegers, numbering 100,000 to 150,000 men were able to invest Paris, but not to increase their own forces until the fall of Metz, after which the Germans had some 250,000 besiegers.<sup>25</sup> There was likewise a shortage of arms, various defects in the network of fortresses (constructed by Thiers in Louis-Philippe's day), and a lack of long-range canon.<sup>26</sup>

As for future prospects there remained three. Trochu

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25. Figures and estimates of the defense of Paris in Military Report of the Defense of Paris, Annales, XXI:218-225; also Denis W. Brogan, France under the Republic (London, 1940), 15-16, 40.

26. Simon, op. cit., II: 7-10.

and his generals might break the German investment of Paris, completed September 19. There was the possibility that a show of force by the inept Bazaine, locked up in Metz, might cut off the Germans from their bases. Finally, there was the possibility of succour from one or more French provincial armies, could these be organized. When all is said, the chances, at best, were very slim.

Looked at from the standpoint of the diplomatic war, the outlook was potentially brighter. But all of the possibilities here remained illusory, as it proved. Favre, although doing no more than to echo French public opinion, severely hampered his own diplomatic maneuverings by announcing in a famous proclamation on September 6 that in this war France "would surrender not a foot of her territory nor a stone of her fortresses."<sup>27</sup> The French were also so naive as to believe that the war might be expected to end quickly because the Prussian king had announced that he was fighting only the aggressive Napoleon and his soldiers, not the French people.<sup>28</sup> They were soon disabused of this, for, when Favre went to visit Bismarck for the first time, he was assured by the chancellor that Prussia wanted only peace, but this could be guaranteed only by the surrender of Strasbourg.<sup>29</sup>

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27. Journal Officiel de la République Française (Paris, 1870), Sept. 6.

28. Claretie, op. cit., 170, has William's proclamation reprinted.

29. Favre, op. cit., I: 165.

The Government had much higher hopes in negotiations with other Powers than in dealing directly with Prussia. Because of Napoleon's talent for alienating everybody, France had entered the war without allies. Nevertheless there remained the strong possibility that other countries might be disposed to intervene to halt a Prussian maiming of France. In accordance with this feeling, Thiers accepted the mission to visit London, St. Petersburg, and Vienna to see what could be done.<sup>30</sup> Thiers' travels were unavailing, for various reasons, but contacts with the neutral Powers were maintained throughout the war.

One of the problems involving the Government's location was largely diplomatic. With Paris invested, would it not have been wise for the Government, or at least the Foreign Minister, to leave the capital for a less perilous abode? For a number of reasons, one of which was the recollection that the government had not left Paris in 1792-93, the most important members of the Government, including Favre, remained throughout the siege.<sup>31</sup> This was indubitably a calamitous blunder by the new rulers of France, for during the siege Favre had no liberty of movement except to visit Bismarck. In the worst days of 1914 the same mistake was not repeated.

A different type of problem confronting the Government,

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30. Favre, op. cit., I: 129-134.

31. See Simon, op. cit., II: 35-38, for the Government's feelings on this question.

particularly in its first days, had to do with personnel for the prosecution of the war. In this regard, the provisional government was severely handicapped by the unwillingness of M. Thiers to join the republican deputies in their heavy task.<sup>32</sup> Had he done so, it is less likely that the Government would have made mistakes such as failing to leave the capital. His many years of experience would have been invaluable. As it was, the most that he would do was to act as diplomatic agent for the stricken Government.

A serious personnel issue involved the question as to whether other political parties should be invited to lend their assistance to the conduct of the war. This came up in three forms. Should all of the new mayors representing the arrondissements in Paris consist solely of republicans? Similarly, and more importantly, were the prefects and other functionaries for the départements to be republicans only? Thirdly, should members of other parties be added to the Council? Attitudes on these questions constituted part of the difference between Open and Closed Left in the government. Trochu, Favre, and especially Picard were not unwilling to utilize the other parties in the duties of the defense.<sup>33</sup> But since the Closed Left was dominant in the Council, this possibility was entirely rejected, except for the utilization of Thiers' diplomatic talents. Gambetta, leader of the Closed

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32. See Simon, op. cit., II:4, for the Government's feelings on this question.

33. Denis, op. cit., I:224.

Left, was instrumental in pushing the policy of republican administrative appointees.<sup>34</sup> Picard suggested on several occasions that some of the ex-deputies of the opposition be included in the Government. This was definitely rejected in the Council session of September 12.<sup>35</sup>

The idea of including other party representatives in the administration of government was an important one because it represented the surface form of a basic problem. France was fighting a war, true, but she had changed to a republican government in mid-war. Just what did this entail? The Government of National Defense, if its title implied anything, was an apolitical regime for the duration of the war. But all of the members of the Government--even Trochu, to everybody's surprise--were upholders of the republican political theory.

In actual fact, it was impossible for these men not to act in the interests of their party, as well as in defense of the country. Gambetta believed "that the defense could only be effective if the country was under the undisputed control of a well-disciplined party."<sup>36</sup> Ferry, though not as thoroughgoing as Gambetta in this attitude, thought much as he

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34. Bury, op. cit., 82,94.

35. Henri des Houx, ed., Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale, 4 Septembre, 1870--16 Février, 1871, Procès-Verbaux du Conseil, Publiés d'après les Manuscrits Originaux de M. A. Dréo (Paris, 1905), 113; these are the minutes in Extensio of the Government's sessions in Council. Prepared by a single secretary, M. Dréo, this is the only source on Council meetings. Hereafter referred to as Dréo, op. cit., etc.

36. Bury, op. cit., 70.

did. He explained that services offered by ex-deputies representing, not Paris, but the provinces were ignored because "everybody understood that where the fighting is consummated (that is, Paris), there the power must lie."<sup>37</sup>

These men, then, had the tendency to identify the defense of the realm with the republican party. Consequently, they must act on its behalf, while prosecuting the war.

The problem of a republic which was created in wartime took an extremely delicate form. How must the Government act with reference to elections? The elevation of the new regime by acclamation, however difficult to forestall, proved to be a never-ending source of embarrassment. With only a de facto existence in the midst of war, the Government was obviously handicapped in its diplomacy, and, as events bore out, no less so in its internal policies.

The solution lay in holding elections. But there were innumerable practical difficulties. Seven departements were overrun, which prevented the people in the east of France from voting. Elsewhere, communications were obstructed, especially after Paris was encircled. Next, there was a question anent the type of elections to be held. Should they be simply constituent elections which would, presumably, ratify the authority of the incumbents? Or should there be municipal elections to precede the others in order to oust the municipal councils elected in August? This last could be im-

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37. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 338.

portant, for the administration in the local communities was Bonapartist-dominated. If elections were to mean anything, these symbols of the old order must go. The new prefects of the departements might do it, but a less partisan way would be by means of new elections.<sup>38</sup>

There was serious doubt about holding elections at all. Would it not be a distraction at a time of great distress? Was the Government even responsible for elections? Perhaps its only object was to defend the nation against the foreigner, then disappear, in which case no elections would take place. Gambetta felt these last two arguments against elections should prevail.<sup>39</sup>

At rock-bottom of all thinking about this problem was concern about how elections might affect the newly-born Republic. The nineteenth century French republicans were faced with the highly inconvenient likelihood that free elections would create an anti-republican government. This was not a uniform rule, since the elections of 1848 had returned a majority of republicans;<sup>40</sup> but it was a disturbing probability. Republicans could surmount this in one of two ways. The Jacobins did it by applying Rousseau's theory of the General Will and the Will of All in such a fashion as to disqualify from the vote large segments of the population because these groups would be in opposition to the General Will (as they

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38. Bury, op. cit., 105.

39. Ibid., 104.

40. Gustafson, op. cit., 187.

conceived it).<sup>41</sup> In short, they believed in their own type of dictatorship, and universal suffrage was not a worrisome problem. But the parliamentary republicans, also with Rousseau no doubt in the back of their mind, relied upon universal suffrage, yet were afraid to use it. To escape the dilemma of basing their democratic principles on universal suffrage in a country in which this might bring a non-democratic state, they had to resort to procrastination. They would delay elections until an opportune moment arose, then convoke the voters, and pray that they had guessed aright. In this connection, Garnier-Pagès, in Council, in one sentence laid bare the problem: If they could count upon the elections going republican, they would be much less hesitant about holding them; as it was, they remained divided on the question.<sup>42</sup>

In view of these clashes in principle, in timeliness, in practicability in wartime, the Government vacillated in its decisions on the elections, letting events be the determining factor. On September 4 the members of the new Government intended to hold elections in the near future.<sup>43</sup> A vote taken on September 8, resulted in a virtually even division in the Council. A compromise was, however, reached by which the elections would be put off for a time, viz. October 16.<sup>44</sup> By September 15 (Favre's first interview with Bismarck immi-

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41. Mason, op. cit., 15.

42. Dréo, op. cit., 90-Council of September 8.

43. Simon, op. cit., II: 38,48; Dréo, op. cit., 90.

44. Dréo, op. cit., 91--Council of Sept. 8; decree in Journal Officiel, Sept. 9.

ment), opinion had changed. It was decided that municipal elections should also be held, on the date of September 25, while the constituent elections should be moved up to October 2.<sup>45</sup> By September 23, the situation had changed considerably. There had occurred a new series of military reverses, opposition to municipal elections by the new Government delegation at Tours, and especially Favre's inability to obtain satisfactory armistice terms from Bismarck.<sup>46</sup> This last made it almost impossible to hold elections, for an armistice by this date was prerequisite for national voting. Consequently, all of the elections were cancelled by the Government.<sup>47</sup> This matter did not end here. On October 1, to the Government's amazement, the subsidiary Tours Delegation announced that it would hold constituent elections after all, with the result that the Government had to cancel this in a decree of its own, made effective on October 8.<sup>48</sup> Even after this, the problem arose to plague each member of the Council whenever armistice negotiations were discussed. The election issue had still another vexing form, to be noticed briefly with reference to the Government's internal problems.

Within Paris, the men of September 4 faced as many woes as they did in confronting the armies of Prussia, the hostil-

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45. Dréo, op. cit., 124, 125--Council of Sept. 15; decree in Journal Officiel, Sept. 16.

46. Simon, op. cit., II: 49; Bury, op. cit., 108-111.

47. Dréo, op. cit., 154--Council of Sept. 23; decree in Journal Officiel, Sept. 24.

48. Dréo, op. cit., 171-172--Council of October 1; Bury, op. cit., 117.

ity of Europe, and the indifference of the provinces. From the standpoint of mere survival, the problem of subsistence was pre-eminent. This problem had three aspects: assumptions on the length of the siege, the food and other necessities available or producible, and the size, stability, or mobility of the population. With regard to the first two of these, opinion was general that the siege would not last more than two months at the most,<sup>49</sup> before rescue arrived. The handling of provisions was predicated on this basis. As events had it, Paris went from September 19 until February 4<sup>50</sup> without importing food; hence, this was a problem which caused concern from the beginning, and one which became rapidly more acute as time passed. As will be seen, measures of handling the food crisis were piecemeal and stop-gap. As for the population, a complicating factor consisted of an absolute increase in the numbers within the metropolitan area of Paris, just before the investment of the city was completed. Whereas the normal pre-war population had been about 1,750,000, another 200,000 to 250,000 incautious people had been added, despite repeated warnings of the imminent approach of siege.<sup>51</sup> This increase became subsequently an even greater cause for concern when the Prussian bombardment precipitated evacuations of some areas, thereby congesting the population in other

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49. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 368; Simon, op. cit., II:198.

50. Lucien Delabrousse, Joseph Magnin et Son Temps (2 vols., 1915), I: 276.

51. Simon, op. cit., II: 257.

locales.

An excruciating internal complication for the Government of National Defense involved its relations with the radical element in the republican party. The day of September 4 was a glaring example of the enmity between the two wings of the party. They had managed to remain under the same roof only against the common enemy. Ferry himself expressed accurately the parliamentarians' feeling about the "impatiens":

"In the elections of 1869 we had to rely on the votes of the group that we then called by a very sweet name, the party of the 'impatiens!'...In the interregnum period following..., we had a bone to pick with them at every occasion. They insisted on agitating... In the Corps Legislatif we were not the government, but we were obliged to resist the tail-end of their group absolutely as if we were governing."<sup>52</sup>

September 4 had shown to the members of the new government that, from their point of view, they could expect the worst from the avancés. Their anticipations were quickly realized.

The radicals were convinced that the moderates were incompetents at best, harlots of the Republic at worst. Therefore, though they paid lip-service to the new rulers because Rochefort was in the Government, there is small doubt that they wished to overthrow the ex-deputies at the earliest opportunity.<sup>53</sup> Thus, on the evening of September 4, if one of

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52. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 336.

53. Mason, op. cit., 63.

the Communards is to be taken literally, Delescluze remarked in a tone of despair, "we are lost"<sup>54</sup> which was hardly an expression of confidence in the new regime. Lefrançais recounts in his autobiography that on September 6, meeting two men returned from Lyons, where a Commune existed for a time, he said: "We hope to emulate you, and disembarrass ourselves of the vermin enthroned at the Hotel de Ville."<sup>55</sup>

The radicals had a great deal of influence on several specific measures favored or pondered by the Government. Thus, the municipal elections were such a ticklish question because the members of the Council feared an outcome analogous to a Commune, or, failing that, the election of city officials, many of them radicals, who would then have a legal sanction which the Government lacked.<sup>56</sup>

A measure favored by all shades of French democrats, recalling the Great Revolution, was the creation of a National Guard. Under the Empire, the republicans had opposed a professional army, and once war began they wished a nation-in-arms to defend the realm by a democratic élan. It will be recalled that the deputies of the Left had insisted upon arming of the Guard in early August. By September about sixty battalions, numbering 90,000 men were in the Guard. By the end of September 194 new battalions had been created, bringing the National Guard of Paris to a total of 300,000 men.<sup>57</sup> The un-

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54. Arnould, op. cit., 26.

55. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 398.

56. Dréo, op. cit., 125--Council of Sept. 15.

57. Mason, op. cit., 86-87; Denis, op. cit., I: 240.

usual feature in its organization was the election of officers, according to the decree of September 16.<sup>58</sup> This became a never-ending source of trouble, for it led to the loudest talkers being elected officers, perpetual indiscipline in the ranks, reluctance of the generals to utilize the National Guard for military purposes, and, for a time, the disquieting sight of Blanqui as one of its officers.<sup>59</sup> Throughout the war the great majority of the National Guard remained orderly, but whenever there was discontent due to the Government's ineptitude or ill-luck, it was possible for the radical elements to stir up National Guard contingents for revolutionary action.<sup>60</sup>

Just as the National Guard was a republican cure-all for military problems, so, too, was the endorsement of suppression of the Prefecture of Police in Paris. This was long recognized as a political unit, associated with the previous government, and generally regarded as an agency of anti-democratic suppression. The *avancés* especially desired elimination of the Prefecture.<sup>61</sup> The Government, though considering seriously the possibility, never undertook such a step.<sup>62</sup> This issue, while never a plague to the Government comparable to the handling of the National Guard, still was a source of friction and bickering.

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58. Journal Officiel, September 16.

59. Mason, op. cit., 87-89.

60. Mason, op. cit., 92.

61. Gustave Lefrançais, Etude sur le Mouvement Communaliste a Paris, en 1871 (Neuchate 1, 1871), 64.

62. Dréo, op. cit., 183--Council of Oct. 4.

As the siege became more severe, the Government encountered new difficulties, engendered by the military and political exigencies of the situation. These were constituted by the rising of October 31, the awakening of the provinces by Gambetta, which was a source of hope and mystification alike, the international Conference of London, toward which the Government knew not quite how to act, and, after Christmas, by the dread likelihood of capitulation. These matters are best studied in their context. What is most important at this point is an understanding of the recurrent questions-at-issue, especially the Government's reactions to the Parisian avances.

The men of September 4 were never able to evolve a policy toward the revolutionary potential which could avoid the antithetic evils of reactionary suppression or nerveless indulgence. Broadly speaking, the outlook of each member of the Government is expressed fairly accurately in this summation:

"The men of '48, J. Favre, J. Simon, Garnier-Pagès,....haunted by the fear of revolutionary excesses, did not wish to risk anything which would scandalize the bourgeoisie; Trochu, conservative and Catholic, sustained them, as did Picard, leader of the Open Left. The Irreconcilables, Gambetta, Arago, Pelletan, Dorian, more democratic or more Parisian, inclined to satisfy the people of Paris and to invoke the military tradition. Between the two, Ferry, younger than the one group, more bourgeois than the other--maintained communication. Rochefort, admitted in order to conciliate the revolutionaries, was reduced by his ignorance of politics to the role of a figurehead."<sup>63</sup>

This difference in point of view hurt greatly, for it

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63. Georges Bourgin, La Guerre de 1870-1871 et la Commune (Paris, 1939), 95.

naturally resulted in wide divergences in the Council, and prevented the Government from pursuing one line of conduct consistently or without internal recriminations. On the whole, the Government stumbled dismally over the rock of excessive tolerance. Every government must be able to protect its own existence, but this one remained paralyzed in the face of repeated threats. After September 4 the avancés were able to exert enormous pressure on the Government through various means. There occurred infiltration of the National Guard to transform units for revolutionary purposes.<sup>64</sup> The International, as far as the more radical element was concerned, set up committees of vigilance in all of the arrondissements allegedly to check reaction, especially at the Hotel de Ville.<sup>65</sup> Various workers' delegations in the later stages of the siege tended to coalesce into the famous Central Committee of the National Guard, subsequently very important in the Commune.<sup>66</sup> Finally, there was the device of exerting instantaneous pressure by demonstrations before the Hotel de Ville, a technique especially favored by the Blanquists and the International avancés.<sup>67</sup>

In the face of all of this, the Government undertook half-hearted suppression or did nothing at all. The reasons for this inactivity were several. A first cause went back to the day of September 4, and the subsequent inability to hold

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64. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 409-410.

65. Lefrançais, Etude sur le Mouvement Communiste, 68; Mason, op. cit., 65.

66. Arnould, op. cit., 66-67.

67. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 394, 407; Gustave Geffroy, L'Enfermé (Paris, 1897), 309.

elections: the Government of National Defense had come into existence by a revolution, and, in the absence of attaining de iure as well as de facto status, it could not effectively repress this principle applied against it.<sup>68</sup>

Another cause of the Government's attitude, excessively emphasized by the members themselves, lay in the disorganized and ineffective means of regulation, whether in procedural or substantive law, which were available.<sup>69</sup> General Trochu believed that the Government's strength rested almost entirely on "moral force," since it did not possess the necessary physical necessities in a war-torn and besieged city which had recently been the scene of a political revolution. Undoubtedly this handicapped the Government considerably, although one feels it might have done more with what it had, were it not for indecision.

Another cause of the Government's leniency toward the revolutionaries was due to its own republican origins. Creators of the Third Republic, devotees of democratic principles, former allies of the avancés, the men of September 4 could not deal energetically with the irresponsibles. Even with a state of war existing, and, still more, in the midst of a siege, the Government hesitated, for repression would certainly have been regarded as betrayal of the ex-deputies'

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68. Mason, op. cit., 62; Denis, op. cit., I: 223.

69. Simon, op. cit., II: 178; Trochu, op. cit., I: 390-391; Ferry's testimony in Annales, XXIII: 348.

most cherished beliefs.<sup>70</sup>

It must be said that a final consideration of importance was the Government's own incompetence. It was never able to handle systematically any problem confronting it. The members' habit in Council of talking at great length about day-to-day issues, then voting upon them, resulted in vacillation, wavering decisions which would be subsequently reversed, and in diametrically opposing advice which would split the Council almost evenly. No effective chairman existed to dominate the scene, and to enforce policies once embarked upon. The older men were not capable leaders, and the younger ones were not able to dominate. Gambetta left for the provinces early in October, while Ferry was handicapped by inexperience, administrative duties, and personal differences with others. Most of the serious demonstrations which embarrassed the Government were motivated as much by its own blunders as by revolutionary aforethought. As the Government of National Defense could not solve its problems in the aggregate, so it could not master a particularly grave fraction of its total burden.

With this sketch, we can appreciate more fully the position of Ferry as a member of the wartime provisional government. His attitudes and his actions with reference to these manifold vexations represent the major portion of the subsequent material.

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70. See one of many instances of this feeling, never expressed explicitly, but ever-present, in Dreo, op. cit., 200-201--Council of October 10.

## CHAPTER III

FIRST PERIOD OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE;  
THE ROLE OF JULES FERRY.

## I

The first period of the provisional Government of National Defense lasted from September 4 to October 31, at which date it barely survived a major crisis. Before describing Ferry's reactions to various issues in Council, and relating the incidents in which he played a part, it is necessary to describe his position in the Government.

He was, as a deputy from Paris, a full-fledged, voting member of the Council, and had been named Secretary of the Council on the first day. This last function meant comparatively little, consisting chiefly of editing for publication in the Journal Officiel the decrees and proclamations agreed upon. In addition to this, he acquired other undefined duties in the Council of September 6, when he was made the "Delegate from the Government and the Ministry of the Interior to the Administration of the Seine."<sup>1</sup> This tongue-twisting title meant that Ferry was the liaison agent between the Government and the Mayor of Paris. In this capacity, Ferry participated in the meetings of the Mayor of Paris and the local mayors of the twenty arrondissements. He acted as the Government's representative when deputations of the

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1. Dréo, op. cit., 81.

Parisian citizenry came to the Central Mayor's office for information or for demonstrations, favorable or unfavorable. It was his duty to report the happenings in the city to the Council, and make recommendations on administrative matters desired by the Central Mayor or the mayors of arrondissements. In addition to this, the post entailed a miscellaneous assortment of tasks, such as participation on various committees of greater or lesser importance, down to trifling exercises such as helping to rename streets with the appellations of republican heroes. Of this amalgam, participation in the work of ascertaining the provisions available for the course of the siege was the most important function.

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## II

In the very first session of the Government on the evening of September 4, two incidents out of the ordinary occurred. Etienne Arago, as a veteran of 1830 and 1848, prepared a triumphant proclamation announcing his advent as Mayor of Paris, which included the phrase, "Commune de Paris." The Council, with Ferry concurring, decided that that phrase was far too provocative, and should be replaced by the innocuous "Hotel de Ville."<sup>2</sup> Circumspection, at this point, was the better part of wisdom, for, not only did the former deputies

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2. Dréo, op. cit., 68; Etienne Arago, L'Hotel de Ville de Paris au 4 Septembre et pendant le Siége (Paris, n.d.), 27.

eschew the idea of a Commune, but conservative newspapers such as Le Figaro and Journal des Débats expressed doubts about the Government's legality almost from the first moment.<sup>3</sup> They would have openly refused support at any hint of the Commune.

The other incident was a vote on the Ministry of Interior, in connection with the distribution of portfolios in the Government. Gambetta was confirmed in this post over Picard, in a secret ballot, but one in which Ferry, in all probability voted in favor of Gambetta.<sup>4</sup> He was a close friend of the younger man, and owed to him a large measure of his first political success: there is every reason to think that he so voted. This decision insured the victory of the "Closed Left" in Council, for appointments made by Gambetta were certain to be people of unmixed republicanism.

In the Council of September 6 a hot discussion took place on the subject of appointments to local mayoral posts. The list of appointees appeared in the Journal Officiel<sup>5</sup> on the same day, and the members of the Government had had nothing to do with making the selections. Etienne Arago, with Gambetta's approval, prepared the list of mayors,<sup>6</sup> and because people such as Parent, Ranc, Lockroy, Mottu, and Clémenceau were among the appointees, the Council almost revoked the list for including too many radicals.<sup>7</sup> Ferry, like the other Coun-

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3. Journal des Débats, Le Figaro, September 6.

4. Dreo, op. cit., 69; Bury, op. cit., 295-296--in this volume is an interesting opinion on the voting for the Ministry of Interior.

5. Journal Officiel, September 6, 1870.

6. Bury, op. cit., 82-83.

7. Dreo, op. cit., 80.

cil members, was irritated to find the choices made unbeknownst to him, and felt that, in the aggregate, the mayors were very poorly selected.<sup>8</sup> It is possible that Ferry was made the Government's delegate to the mayors in the evening of September 6 because some of the Council members felt that Arago was too ardently partisan as evidenced by his conduct as Central Mayor. Ferry, though anxious not to have radicals lodged in important political posts, did not desire conservatives either, for he opposed in the Council of September 6 the appointment of an Orleanist as one of the adjutants to the Central Mayor.<sup>9</sup> In respect to appointments, he followed in Gambetta's footsteps: republicans all, but moderates by preference.<sup>10</sup>

In this first week of the new government, several ranking issues arose on which Ferry expressed an opinion. In the session of September 10, with the Germans fast approaching, a discussion was fixed about the possibility of raising the octroi, the tax on all foodstuffs entering Paris. The disadvantages of this seemed more than counterbalanced by the advantages, or so some members of the Council thought. Picard, from the very beginning the most cautious member of the Government, opposed lifting the tolls on the ground that this would permit the great industrialists to bring in merchandise

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8. Dréo, op. cit., 80; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 356.

9. Dréo, op. cit., 79.

10. Lettres, 87-Letter to Gambetta, Oct. 18, 1870.

en bloc, thus depriving the Treasury of some funds. Ferry, on advice of Clamageran, attached to the Central Mayor's office, favored suspension, for this would increase the provisions available for the siege, whatever the loss to the Treasury. A temporary suspension lasting from September 10 until October 17 then was undertaken as a compromise.<sup>11</sup> Ferry was correct in foreseeing the subsequent accumulation of useful goods. Nevertheless, many thought that the compromise worked out unsatisfactorily. Almost immediately he had to publish a request in the Journal Officiel not to abuse the new privilege,<sup>12</sup> for, as Picard had predicted, great quantities of unessential items were crowded through the gates of the city. Another inconvenience, this time unforeseen by Ferry, occurred when the people of the surrounding villages and suburbs came pouring into Paris.

With a siege imminent, there was repeated discussion of the need for removing the Government, all or in part, to some location in the provinces, preferably Tours. On this important matter, its members showed no consistency at all. First discussed on September 7, a tentative decision seemed to envision the moving the entire Government outside Paris. This was modified, apparently at Trochu's desire, to constitute simply the sending of representatives of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Finances, and War elsewhere.<sup>13</sup> On September 9 the

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11. Dréo, op. cit., 101; Delabrousse, op. cit., 292-294.

12. Journal Officiel, September 11, 1870.

13. Dréo, op. cit., 85.

decision for the main body of the Government to remain in Paris was reiterated, and on the eleventh it was determined that Crémieux alone should go to Tours.<sup>14</sup> Since it was a mistake to send no more than a seventy-four year old man, they promptly dispatched two more of his contemporaries, Glais-Bizoin and Fourichon on September 17; finally, Gambetta, the Council's Benjamin, left on October 8.<sup>15</sup> The fumbling attitude of the Government on the delegation question was an unfortunate preview of its conduct of the next few months. If it was believed that the Government should split up, assuredly the most important functionaries, especially the Minister for Foreign Affairs, should have left Paris, leaving their assistants in the capital. Instead the contrary device was adopted. On this issue, Ferry shared the majority's astigmatism, for he was by temperament anxious to remain at the hub of action. He shared Jules Simon's feeling that the civilians in the Government could not leave a general and minor officials in Paris because they might not be able to maintain order in the metropolis.<sup>16</sup> There may have been some merit to this point of view, but Ferry did not seem to realize the value of dispatching the Foreign Minister to Tours. When a vote was taken on this question, Ferry voted with the majority that the best place for Favre was within Paris.<sup>17</sup> Gam-

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14. Dréo, op. cit., 93, 104, 108.

15. Bury, op. cit., 100-101, 117.

16. Ferry's testimony, Annales, 368; Simon, op. cit., II: 33.

17. Dréo, op. cit., 104--Council of September 11.

betta, on the other hand, took a much more statesmanlike view of this question, favoring both Favre's leaving, and the sending of a strong delegation to Tours.<sup>18</sup>

The approaching siege meant, as far as Ferry was concerned, that he was kept busy with a number of administrative tasks outside the Council. As associate of Etienne Arago, he shared with him and Gambetta the duty of providing arms for the National Guard.<sup>19</sup> With this in mind, Ferry ascertained from LeFlô that his department could spare 90,000 guns for the arming of the new contingents of the National Guard.<sup>20</sup> This was an insufficient number for the many new battalions created almost over night, but eventually most of the men were given weapons. Much criticism was directed at the municipal officials for permitting the radicals to obtain the best equipment,<sup>21</sup> and some of it at Ferry, when he was examined on the subject by the Commission of Inquiry on the Commune. Ferry also headed a Commission to examine the question of a special subsistence fund to supplement the 1 franc, 50 centimes daily salary of National Guardsmen, in the case of destitute individuals.<sup>23</sup> Ferry's attitude on the moot question of elections in the National Guard units was in the beginning no different from that of his other civilian colleagues. In the first days

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18. Dréo, op. cit., 104--Council of September 11. Bury, op. cit., 98-99.

19. Arago, op. cit., 81.

20. Dréo, op. cit., 86--Council of September 7.

21. Annales, XXI: 242.

22. Ferry's, testimony, Annales, IX:418.

23. Dréo, op. cit., 92,102.

all were agreed on the desirability of the elections, with Picard and Gambetta leading the way.<sup>24</sup> On September 14, after the first elections, Picard advised cutting this procedure short, in view of the number of soap-box orators who had been elected officers, but Trochu and LeFló, usually opposed to elections now desired no further disorganization before the enemy.<sup>25</sup> As for Ferry, in the Council of September 27, he indicated that he may have had some regrets on the electoral procedure, for he deplored the lack of order among National Guardsmen, who, after a dozen friends had elected an officer, proceeded to invade private residences of foreigners.<sup>26</sup>

Other unconnected problems demanded Ferry's attention in the week before the investment. In the areas outside the city, Ferry said, the farmers were reluctant to destroy their crops and farm implements before the advancing Germans. Consequently, the next day the Prefect of Police was to smash up a grindstone to set an example.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, he busied himself with the sore problem of trying to curb the speculators in all types of goods in the environs of Paris.<sup>28</sup> This, however, remained unremedied. Ferry also tried to handle the problem of providing lodgings for the influx from the suburbs, having inserted in the Journal Officiel a request that apartments not in use be turned over to temporary residents.<sup>29</sup> In

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24. Trochu, op. cit., I:265.

25. Dréo, op. cit., 120.

26. Ibid., 163.

27. Ibid., 106--Council of September 11.

28. Ibid., 124--Council of September 15.

29. Ibid., 117--Council of September 13; Journal Officiel, September 14.

addition to all of this, Ferry found it his duty to bring to the attention of the Council various emergency measures in municipal administration, such as the need for transporting kerosene from other towns to help light Paris, special burial grounds to help dispose of soldiers' bodies, and reminders to the citizenry not to dispose of their garbage in the streets.<sup>30</sup>

Ferry's attitude toward the primary concern in external affairs, the question of war and peace, during this early period of the Government is interesting. Until the last days before the armistice, Ferry, like most republicans, was a strong partisan of war à outrance, and took literally Favre's proclamation (that which the Foreign Minister himself did not) concerning peace terms.<sup>31</sup> The first mention of a settlement came in the session of September 8, when Picard, with Favre lending his assent, suggested that France might have to surrender the border of the Rhine in order to obtain an armistice and elections.<sup>32</sup> None of the others are recorded as having responded to this,<sup>33</sup> because they promptly turned their attention to the question of elections. Yet it is almost certain that Ferry and Gambetta were not thinking of a territorial concession at this time. Gambetta, of course, never did reconcile himself to it. Ferry's feeling is indicated by his actions of September 20, the day of Favre's return from

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30. Dréo, 107, 93, 106--Councils of September 10, September 9.

31. Lettres, 93--See letter to Gambetta, December 15, 1870.

32. Dréo, op. cit., 90.

33. Favre, op. cit., 154-155.

his first encounter with Bismarck. He wished the Government to issue a proclamation announcing that it adhered to its original program, and he was very concerned over loss of public support because of general misunderstanding of Favre's move.<sup>34</sup> Gambetta shared Ferry's concern over the matter: neither had known in advance of Favre's visit to Bismarck.<sup>35</sup> At most, Ferry might have considered an indemnity as the price of peace.<sup>36</sup>

Ferry was an advocate of swift consultation of the voters as the most suitable solution to the vexing issue of constituent elections. In the Council of September 8 Ferry aligned himself with Picard, Favre, Trochu, and Garnier-Pagès--broadly speaking, the conservative faction in the Council--against Gambetta, Simon, Crémieux, Rochefort, and Glais-Bizoin in favoring immediate constituents.<sup>37</sup> It was at this time that the matter was resolved by a seven-six vote in favor of a constituent assembly after some delay, the date set being October 16.<sup>38</sup> In his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry on the Government, Ferry maintained strongly that they had not been guilty of the conservatives' oft-repeated charge that constituents were put off in order to keep themselves in power. He pointed out that at one point the date of October 16 was advanced, and he regretted that the elections did not take place until February, 1871, for, had they come on the morrow of the

34. Dreo, op. cit., 146--Council of September 20.

35. Ibid., 146-147, 144.

36. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 340.

37. Dreo, op. cit., 90.

38. Ibid., 91.

revolution, a confirmation of the Republic, he felt, would have been assured.<sup>39</sup> The elections were not held because of Bismarck's demand for territory, in return for an armistice and elections, and because the Parisian citizenry could think only of war, not of politics.<sup>40</sup> In the session of September 15, however, Ferry, along with the others, showed that his interest in elections was not solely non-partisan. He agreed that constituent elections without having previously removed the Napoleonic petty officials by means of municipal elections were not to be considered.<sup>41</sup> After the Prussian terms were fully known, the decision on the elections was reconsidered, and on September 23 it was unanimously decided to postpone all elections.<sup>42</sup> The subsequent complete investment of the capital seemed to make constituent elections, at any rate, out of the question.

Ferry's views on the municipal elections were not the same as Gambetta's. In regard to the provinces, certainly, he favored such consultations, but he opposed their counter-part in the capital, although at times, he reluctantly wished to reconsider the matter. His attitude appears to have been dictated by two motives. The first and predominating one was a fear of the political consequences of municipal elections in a city with as many radical republicans as had Paris. The second motive, which to a certain extent counterbalanced the first,

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39. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 339-340.

40. Ibid., 340.

41. Dréo, op. cit., 124.

42. Simon, op. cit., II: 49.

causing him to alter somewhat his earlier flat opposition to municipals, was the belief that the Government must follow the will of public opinion. All of the Council members were extremely sensitive to the public will, Ferry no less so than the others, and when signs appeared that many people desired elections, he modified his attitude somewhat. The Government's excessive respect for public opinion, as expressed in verbal protests, was obviously a source of weakness, for a siege was no time to try to please everybody.

The subject of municipal elections came up first in the session of September 15, when it was decided that the provinces should hold them. Apparently there was no thought of municipals for Paris, since the capital's exceptional situation was evident enough, until Gambetta proposed them for Paris as well.<sup>43</sup> Ferry offered the very practical objection that these elections would create a municipal council holding a legal title which the Government itself did not have, and thus such a council might be expected to oppose itself to the Government.<sup>44</sup> The matter was dropped for a day or two after this, but on September 18 it arose again. This time the decision to hold unrestricted municipal elections was reached, despite the objections of Ferry, Garnier-Pagès, and, to some extent, Picard, because Gambetta, Rochefort, and, surprisingly enough, Trochu regarded them as essential.<sup>45</sup> Ferry dis-

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43. Bury, op. cit., 84.

44. Dréo, op. cit., 125.

45. Ibid., 133-134; Henri Rochefort, The Adventures of My Life (2 vols., London, 1896), 275.

agreed because he was sure that a central municipal council would only lead to serious conflicts, since it would seek to substitute its authority for the Government's.<sup>46</sup> Obviously, Ferry feared the bugaboo of a revolutionary commune, the mere thought of which he had inveighed against in his polemic with Peyrat back in 1866. He offered the further objection that the mayors, representatives of the different districts, had not asked for these elections. If some concession were necessary, he favored no more than elections by arrondissement, by which the new officials would have authority only in the areas from which they were elected, and no central municipal council should exist.<sup>47</sup>

When the constituent elections were called off on September 23, the municipals had to be postponed likewise because of the unsatisfactory Ferrières Interview. Gambetta, however, still wished to hold these elections despite the siege, and Ferry reminded him twice that the delegations which they had received at the Hotel de Ville had asked for postponement.<sup>48</sup> Garnier-Pagès and Dréo, the secretary, confirmed Ferry's words. Therefore there can be no question that there was pressure from several directions toward this end. Since Ferry repeatedly specified this as one of his reasons for opposing municipals, it seems likely that this weighed almost as heavily in

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46. Dréo, op. cit., 133; Henri Rochefort, The Adventures of My Life (2 vols., London, 1896), 275.

47. Ibid., 133.

48. Bury, op. cit., 84; Dréo, op. cit., 154, 162--Councils of September 23 and September 26.

his mind as the question of timeliness. Thus, it becomes less puzzling to find his attitude changed in the Council of October 7. A serious demonstration had taken place on October 5, in which demands were made for municipal elections.<sup>49</sup> The Government decided afterwards that it would reiterate its announcement concerning postponement of elections, although Ferry and Rochefort desired to hold a plebiscite to ascertain the public's desires regarding the city elections.<sup>50</sup> Keeping these facts in mind, we shall be able to understand Ferry's attitude on election when the October 31 Affair, and its aftermath, is studied.

Another perplexing duty involved the proper handling of deputations which would appear at the Hotel de Ville to put pressure on the Government through a potential threat of force. This type of direct action harried the Government a great deal in its early days, and Ferry acted as a sort of "troubleshooter" in confronting the demonstrators. Since the Government's policy toward this menace was almost invariably one of appeasement, he it was, who, assisted sometimes by other Council or municipal officials, made this as palatable as possible to the discontented. In a like fashion, in the occasional meetings of the arrondissement mayors with the Mayor of Paris and his adjutants, Ferry appeared to explain the Government's conduct, and transmit to the Council any especial desires of the mayors. This was less disagreeable than meeting the depu-

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49. Claretie, op. cit., 295.

50. Dreo, op. cit., 193; Rochefort, op. cit., I:275.

tations because meetings were formalized. However, that aspect of Ferry's work at this stage of the siege was uninviting enough, and, later on, became more unpleasant still. Yet it was an important task, for it brought Ferry into direct contact with the *avancés* in the hours of greatest discontent in Paris.

In late September and early October one demonstration followed another, as the populace, or some parts of it, indicated its lack of confidence in the men of September 4. The series of anti-government performances in September were precipitated by Favre's interview with Bismarck. On September 21 and 22 one deputation after another appeared at the Hotel de Ville for explanations of the Government's foreign policy. Rumors spread by L'Electeur Libre, the newspaper edited by Picard's brother, relating to Favre's *démarche* had rocked all of Paris by September 20. On September 21 Ferry, representing the Government, was confronted by a deputation of National Guards, among which was Blanqui, which came to the Hotel de Ville to urge war à outrance. Blanqui, at this moment, desired cancellation of all elections, constituent and municipal, in the interest of the defense. He insisted to Ferry that not only should the Government swear never to surrender a piece of French territory or a stone of her fortresses, but not even a penny of her money. To this Ferry replied that if any indemnity were necessary to obtain peace, it should be paid by the 7,500,000 Frenchmen who had voted for Napoleon the

previous May.<sup>51</sup> This remark was evidently a verbal evasion aimed at dispensing with an inopportune question. Blanqui's concern at this time with the defense against the Prussians is worth noting, for it illustrates the patriotism of the French radicals during the war: there is no doubt that in their own way they were as intensely patriotic as the most ardent conservatives. Ferry was impressed with his interlocutor's attitude, for, like most of the bourgeoisie, he attached undue weight to Blanqui's influence among the avancés. It was partly because of this incident that Ferry was so sure that everybody in Paris was anxious to postpone municipal elections.

On the same day, however, he listened to another group of malcontents who saw matters in a different light from Blanqui. This was a representation from the Central Republican Committee of the Twenty Arrondissements of Paris, the political pressure group organized chiefly by the radical section of the Paris International. On September 18 the Committee drew up its program, numbering five major points: no negotiations with the foreigner, death in the ruins of Paris rather than surrender, the levée en masse, dissolution of the Prefecture of Police, immediate election of the Commune of Paris.<sup>52</sup>

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51. Geffroy, op. cit., 309-310; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 340.

52. Claretie, op. cit., 292; Le Temps, September 22, 1870, reprinting from Le Rappel; Annales, XXI: 207.

On September 21,<sup>53</sup> then, a delegation of twenty, representing the different arrondissements managed to gain a hearing with Ferry at the Hotel de Ville. They presented their petition to him, and asked him to answer explicitly three questions: Was the Government trying to treat with Prussia? Ferry gave his word that they would not negotiate at any price. Would the Government accede to the popular will and suppress the Prefecture of Police? Ferry responded that he did not think the Government had the power to do this, and any future municipal council would have to determine it. Finally, when would the election for the Commune of Paris take place? The Committee wished them by September 25, but Ferry replied that elections could not be held before September 28, but seems to have reassured them regarding this date.<sup>54</sup> There followed an involved colloquy on the procedure to be adopted in the proposed city elections. The Committee wished to have the municipal council composed of ten representatives from each arrondissement, or, better, one for every 10,000 inhabitants. Ferry

53. There is a confusion of dates here, the Central Committee's own minutes, Annales, XXI:207, place this meeting on September 22; however, by comparing references made in Le Temps, September 22, and accepting authorities such as Mason, op. cit., 66, it appears almost impossible that this meeting took place on September 22.

54. Authorities sympathetic to the avancés say that Ferry promised municipal elections. See Lissagaray, Histoire de la Commune de 1871 (Brussels, 1879), 24. Also accounts of the meeting report this: Claretie, op. cit.; Le Rappel's account, reprinted in Le Temps, September 22, 1870. It is very probable that he made some such assurance, for the impracticability of elections was not made plain until the Council of September 22.

replied that the total number in such a council might be augmented, but that there must be an equal division among the arrondissements. The differences here arose over the Committee's desire to gain a large representation in a municipal council, particularly if the thickly populated workers' arrondissements were represented proportionate to their numbers, while Ferry had in mind an exact equality of representation in order to hold down the radicals' representation. After this exchange, the meeting broke up, with the delegates feeling reassured on the score of the Government's war program.<sup>55</sup>

Next day there took place two further encounters between the Government and representatives of different elements in the National Guard. Ferry, with other members of the Government, met one of these delegations, but evidently missed the other. The first of these was a sizable representation from the National Guard led by MM. Lermina and Gaillard, which indicated its sympathy and accord with the Government. The leaders merely asked for a continuation of the energetic struggle against Prussia, and for postponement of all elections in the interest of the fight against the external enemy.<sup>56</sup>

Immediately after this delegation had gone its way, there came a second group of National Guardsmen to the Hotel de Ville. This demonstration was instigated again by the Central

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55. Le Temps, September 22, reprinting Le Rappel's account of the meeting; also, minutes of the Central Committee, Annales, XXI: 207.

56. Simon, op. cit., II: 117; Ferry's account of the meeting, Dreó, op. cit., 151--Council of September 22.

Committee, especially by leaders such as Vermorel and Ranvier, who demanded suppression of the Prefecture of Police, or else the Central Committee would oblige by performing this task for the Government.<sup>57</sup>

In the Council, after the encounters of September 21 and 22, Gambetta insisted on municipal elections to mollify the discontent. At the same time Trochu stated that the precarious state of the siege made elections out of the question.<sup>58</sup> The next day the postponement was announced in the Journal Officiel, followed by a notice on September 24 that new dates would be set when the occasion warranted.<sup>59</sup>

The cancelling of the municipal elections precipitated another demonstration by units of the National Guard and representatives of the Central Committee on the night of September 26.<sup>60</sup> Picard, Gambetta, and Ferry met different representatives of this somewhat disparate gathering, and came away with different versions of what occurred. Ferry spoke to M. Lermina again, and this gentleman as spokesman for some, though certainly not all, of the National Guard battalions repeated that no elections were desired at this time. M. Dréo, reporter of the Council, confirmed Ferry's impression that M. Lermina represented the delegation as a whole.<sup>61</sup> On the other

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57. Simon, op. cit., II: 117; Dréo, op. cit., 151.

58. Dréo, op. cit., 151.

59. Journal Officiel, September 23, 24, 1870.

60. There is another confusion of dates here--an authority such as Bourgin, op. cit., 95, gives this meeting as September 22; by comparison of references, however--Dréo, op. cit., 161-162; Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 407-408; Annales, XXI: 207, it seems undeniable that the date was September 26.

61. Dréo, op. cit., 162.

hand, Gambetta mentioned that some of the battalion chiefs demanded municipal elections, a feeling he had noticed several times before. The representatives of the Central Committee, certainly, asked for immediate reconsideration of the postponement.<sup>62</sup> Gambetta and Picard, after hearing the Committee's request, excused themselves in order to confer with the other members of the Council on the delegation's requests. Ferry, however, remained long enough, it is recounted, to clash with Blanqui in a heated verbal exchange. Blanqui, by this time realizing the possibilities of municipal elections, had changed his mind about the dangers to the defense that these might entail. Ferry, therefore, blamed Blanqui for joining the Central Committee's demonstration.<sup>63</sup> The conversation remained unfinished as sounds of gunfire were heard, and Picard seized this opportunity to break up an unpleasant session by shouting to the assemblage that the Germans were invading Paris, and that it was time to dash to the ramparts.<sup>64</sup>

The next demonstration came on October 5 in an incident which might have been tragic, but wound up as ludicrous. This performance was instigated by Gustave Flourens, an addle-headed radical who was sometimes associated with Blanqui. A great favorite among the more romantic republicans because of service in the Cretan war, he had demanded the title of "Colonel

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62. Annales, XXI: 207; Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 407-408.

63. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 407-408.

64. Ibid., 407-408; Annales, XXI: 207.

of the National Guard," a rank that did not exist. In order that he might be pacified he was given the title of "Major of the Barricades."<sup>65</sup> However, by October he was a malcontent once more. On the fifth of that month he appeared at the Hotel de Ville with his battalion commanders and ten armed battalions. He had notified the Government of his intentions in cavalier style by writing letters to Etienne Arago and Ferry announcing that he wanted "a serious interview."<sup>66</sup> Thus, almost the entire Council was on hand to remonstrate with the recalcitrant "Major."

Flourens asked for more guns for his men, but was told that all available weapons had to go to the army outside of Paris. However, the production of armaments would be stepped up. The "Major" remained unimpressed, and Ferry, among others, reminded him that if blood flowed on this day, he would be responsible for it. Flourens then melodramatically resigned, and the meeting broke up. The Government gladly accepted his resignation, but Flourens, thinking better of it, withdrew it in a day or two, and the Government accepted this too!<sup>67</sup>

By this time everybody was disturbed by the repeated processions to the Hotel de Ville. Le Temps observed that all of the freedom of speech in the world did not permit a group to present its program by force of arms.<sup>68</sup> It also noted that

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65. Dréo, op. cit., 154--Council of September 23.

66. Arago, op. cit., 196; Denis, op. cit., I: 282.

67. Arago, op. cit., 201-202; Claretie, op. cit., 295; Denis, op. cit., I: 284-285.

68. Le Temps, October 7, 1870.

even some of the radical republican papers such as Le Réveil and L'Opinion Nationale deplored the recent armed demonstrations.<sup>69</sup> On this score it is worth mentioning that at no time did Delescluze lend his support to this type of overt pressure.

Still another threat to the Government occurred, nevertheless, on October 8. This time some 5,000 men marched to the Hotel de Ville, as a result of another appeal of the Central Committee. The Government was able to bring up reinforcements of its own on this occasion to the agitators' irritation,<sup>70</sup> thus preventing another recurrence of the impression that it was being intimidated. Ferry received three delegates, who were informed that the Hotel de Ville no longer intended to listen to agitators, and warned that measures had been taken against them.<sup>71</sup> This was true enough, for on October 7 and 8 the Journal Officiel had announced that the Government would no longer tolerate demonstrations of the National Guard, and stated that elections were definitely postponed until the end of the siege.<sup>72</sup>

This was the last of these episodes until October 31. In the Council of October 10 Kératry assured the members that Blanqui, Flourens, and others were planning further acts against them. Subsequently a vote of the Council, with Ferry

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69. Le Temps, October 8, 1870.

70. Geffroy, op. cit., 314; Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 409-410; Simon, op. cit., II: 120; Le Rappel, October 14, 1870.

71. Geffroy, op. cit., 314; Le Temps, October 10, 1870.

72. Dreö, op. cit., 193--Council of October 7; Journal Officiel, October 7, October 8, 1870.

voting in the affirmative determined the arrest of Blanqui and Flourens. The arrests were bungled, partly due to the giddy Keratry's fumbling, bringing about his resignation in a huff. As a result of this incident the manifestants were nevertheless quieted for a time.<sup>73</sup> On the eleventh the battalion of Belleville (chiefly Flourens' men) sent a representative to the Hotel de Ville, bent on showing their patriotism. With this, Ferry went to Belleville Arrondissement, as a gesture of good-will on all sides, and reviewed the troops; the men were very orderly, shouting "Vive la République!"<sup>74</sup> and the incident was closed. There followed three weeks of comparative stability for the Government.

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### III

In this same period of daily palpitations for the Council, Ferry was present at the intermittent meetings of the mayors called by Arago. He was much more responsive to views expressed here than he was to the avancés' wishes. At times he did not see eye to eye with Etienne Arago, and he was constantly at odds with one of his adjutants, Brisson,<sup>75</sup> his erstwhile opponent of the year before. His relations with the district mayors were, however, cordial enough at this stage, although later on he was at odds with some of them. In fact, after

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73. Dréo, op. cit. p 201, 203-204--Councils of October 10, October 11; Trochu, op. cit., I: 314-315.

74. Le Rappel, October 14, 1870; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 345.

75. Etienne Arago's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 470; Juliette Adam, Mes Illusions et Nos Souffrances pendant le Siège de Paris (Paris, 1906), 97.

Gambetta had gone to Tours, and it was necessary to dispatch a messenger after him, Ferry was instrumental in recommending Arthur Ranc, then adjutant mayor for the ninth arrondissement.<sup>76</sup> This was rather surprising, since Ranc at this time was popularly believed to be an *avancé*. Ferry may have recommended him because he was very close to Gambetta.

The mayors were called together about once in ten days, and most of the time they were consulted only on administrative matters having to do with the siege.<sup>77</sup> Frequently, though, the mayors would volunteer opinions on political issues. The question of municipal elections bothered them just as it did everybody else, and in their second session, about September 18 or September 19, they devoted part of their time to this subject, finally rejecting the proposal almost unanimously.<sup>78</sup>

In the third meeting of the mayors on September 26 the issue came up again, since it had caused such a furor during that week. The mayors this time tabled the matter until the Government should make its own decision.<sup>79</sup> In this session,

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76. Trochu, *op. cit.*, I: 411; Ranc, *op. cit.*, 168-169.

77. Unfortunately, the unofficial *procès-verbaux* of the mayors meetings from September 1870 to February 1871, were destroyed by the fire in the Hotel de Ville during the Commune.

78. Arago, *op. cit.*, 132-133; *Le Temps*, November 13, 1870--reprint of a letter of Henri Martin, mayor of the 16th Arrondissement, summarizing the mayors' reaction to this issue. As a historian, Martin was generally regarded as scrupulously honest in anything he reported.

79. Arago, *op. cit.*, 125; Henri Martin's letter, *Le Temps*, November 13, 1870.

they brought up several other political items to Ferry for transmission to his colleagues: everybody in Paris had become aware of the apathy to the war in the provinces, as a result of which the mayors suggested, by medium of M. Ranc, that special "commissars" be sent to the départements to whip up some enthusiasm for the conflict.<sup>80</sup> This was a fairly drastic suggestion, since the provinces' antipathy to Parisian republicans was no secret. Ferry expressed himself as not opposed to this suggestion, and, he did, in fact, transmit the recommendation for the Council's consideration.<sup>81</sup> This was as far as it went. The mayors asked also for the levée en masse, the first step of which should be the creation of a National Guard unit composed of volunteers, aged seventeen to twenty. The Council was unimpressed with this proposal, on the sensible grounds that they already had more defenders than armaments.<sup>82</sup> Finally, on September 26, the mayors discussed briefly the subject of separation of church and state, regarding this republican stand-by as an immediate objective. Ferry, while agreeing in principle with the mayors, suggested tactfully that it would be better to reserve the application of this reform to the initiative of the constituent assembly.<sup>83</sup>

The next session of the mayors met on October 7. Conferring after days of agitation, the mayors, by a bare major-

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80. Arago, op. cit., 127-128.

81. Dreo, op. cit., 161--Council of September 26.

82. Ibid., 161.

83. Arago, op. cit., 128.

ity, recommended that the municipal elections should take place, since the inconclusive state of the siege bid fair to continue for some time.<sup>84</sup> On the same day, a moderate committee had seen Ferry to recommend elections by October 10, Ferry replied that the inconveniences outweighed the advantages, but added that the Government might change its attitude if enough petitions were presented in a peaceful fashion without appearance of revolution.<sup>85</sup> It is in the light of these two occurrences that we find Ferry, along with Rochefort, advocating a plebiscite to determine the public will in regard to the local elections. Following this, the mayors' sessions were uneventful until October 31.

When one compares his actions toward the mayors with his reactions to the avances, there is an observable difference. It would appear that his personal feelings were that municipal elections raised the specter of the commune. The demonstrations at the Hotel de Ville were evidence enough of the radicals' intentions, and he preferred to counter their pressure by rejection of their demands. This might be a flat refusal, as on October 8, or an equivocation, such as on the day of September 21. Since the radicals were not squeamish about their tactics, Ferry's penchant for opportunistic indirection by which to express his negation of their plans is not particularly blameworthy. Thus, he tended to ignore the

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84. Arago, op. cit., 132-133; Henri Martin's letter to Le Temps, November 13, 1870.

85. Le Temps, October 8, 1870.

impatience' petitions demanding municipal elections, while repeating that the National Guard demonstrators wished elections postponed. This was true of the great majority in the National Guard who were still moderate in outlook.

To the extent that the mayors represented public opinion in their local communities, Ferry allowed himself to be guided by their wishes. In late September they shared his views on the inadvisability of the elections; in early October, when they began to shift in the other direction, Ferry likewise altered his position on the matter. This seems not too hard to understand, in view of his bourgeois training: as a steadfast republican of moderate outlook, he was willing to attach importance to an organ of public opinion, however limited, whether or not its adherents agreed with him. As late as October 5 in Council he reiterated his feelings that city-wide elections were a danger,<sup>86</sup> although by this time he was about ready to forego his opinions were plebiscites to show that the populace seriously desired the elections.

Ferry's type of solid middle-class republicanism was, if not particularly imaginative, nonetheless tolerant. In Council, on incidents which skirted close to the basic issues of freedom of speech and the press, Ferry took a comparatively liberal position. He wished to deal harshly with any publication of information bearing directly on the conduct of the war and the siege, but when this naturally unassailable

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86. Dréo, op. cit., 186.

area was not infringed upon, he was disposed to apply the principle of the necessary liberties.

The first occasion on which this arose came on September 20 at the time of the Favre-Bismarck discussions. The day before, L'Electeur Libre published two articles, one telling of Favre's mission, the other revealing some military details. Everything seemed to point to a leak to the paper via Picard, since his brother edited it, and he himself had formerly done so. All of the members of the Council were annoyed with Picard, especially Gambetta and Ferry. A vote was taken on the question of suppression of the newspaper. A majority voted for outright suppression, but Picard's threat to resign from that body, caused the Council to reconsider its decision.<sup>87</sup> The vote by individuals is not recorded, but, from the remarks he made at the time, it is very likely that Ferry voted for suppression. Since this was clearly a release of confidential information which could have imperilled the defense, drastic measures against L'Electeur Libre would not have been unjust. Ferry, however, was opposed to Gambetta's desire to have the offending journalist placed before a council of war, believing that it was punishment enough to bring him into civil custody.<sup>88</sup>

A like incident occurred in mid-October, when La Verité reprinted from the Standard news of a very discouraging nature. Favre, Rochefort, Ferry and Simon favored prosecution of the

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87. Dréo, op. cit., 144.

88. Ibid., 144.

editor.<sup>89</sup> Ferry evidently regarded the offense as identical in nature with that of L'Electeur Libre of the month before. The members of the Council discussed inconclusively the type and the means of punishments available, and the affair became another characteristic example of the Government's talent for losing prestige through indecision. There was great difficulty in applying an adequate press law: none could be created constitutionally in the midst of the siege, while the Empire's laws, still on the books, were completely discredited. Finally, it was decided to prosecute M. Portalis, editor of La Verité, merely for posting handbills all over Paris which had advertised the news in his paper. Since the white color of the handbills was reserved only for official Government-inspired placards, this seemed safe grounds for prosecution. The subsequent trial, however, went badly, and almost immediately Rochefort, Picard, Garnier-Pagès, and Favre wished to acquit the accused for lack of serious evidence against him.<sup>90</sup> Ferry did not join this movement, suggesting that he regarded an offense such as the one of M. Portalis as unforgivable. A day after this, the trial ended. Portalis had argued before the court that his handbills were innocently intended, serving only to give his paper a scoop in the American manner. In the course of the trial, nothing had been uncovered as to how Portalis had obtained access to the Standard for his article. In view of this, the Council decided, after all, to

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89. Dréo, op. cit., 216--Council of October 15.

90. Ibid., 230--Council of October 19.

set Portalis free, and another incident had thereby ended unsatisfactorily.<sup>91</sup> During La Verite episode, Picard alone expressed a wish for severe press censorship, even suppression of all newspapers for the duration of the siege, if this were necessary. None of his colleagues, not even General Trochu, shared this desire, which occasioned the matter to be quickly dropped.<sup>92</sup>

In regard to a freedom complementary to that of the press, Ferry took a position of greater tolerance, since the spoken word of the average person would do less harm than excesses by the press. He did not favor suppression of the Prefecture of Police, constantly recommended by the advanced republicans, and even by some of the more conservative members of the Council.<sup>93</sup> He desired a sane operation of this agency in order to avoid any pressure on individual freedom, the charge most frequently levelled against the Prefecture. He was critical of the severe measures asked by Keratry in the Council of October 10 to maintain order--he agreed that the arrest of Blanqui and Flourens was essential, but one need not resort to general suppression to safeguard the regime. Keratry urged the closing of the political clubs, the chief forums used by the Parisian citizenry for letting off steam concerning the siege. At this time, before the investment had reached the critical

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91. Dreo, op. cit., 231, 227--Councils of October 20 and October 18.

92. Ibid., 225--Council of October 17.

93. Ibid., 154--Council of September 23.

stage, such a measure restricting freedom of speech would surely have been denounced as reactionary by moderates as much as by avances. Ferry intervened at this point, energetically repulsing any such proceeding, and the matter was dropped.<sup>94</sup>

Thus, we can perceive the broad lines of Ferry's thinking on the internal problems of the siege before October 31. With this in mind, his actions after October 31 become clearer. Throughout November and December there was no recognizable alteration in his outlook. The force of events in the month of January finally modified his position.

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#### IV

During most of the month of October the Government was confronted with comparatively few worries outside of the conduct of military operations, which never seemed to be going well. Consequently, Ferry's activities were less conspicuous. He had taken an active part in the preparations for Gambetta's journey, closeting himself with his friend in the days before he left,<sup>95</sup> and even taking a trial spin in Gambetta's balloon, along with Charles and Louis Blanc,<sup>96</sup> in order to test the safety, and the flying capacity of his colleague's vehicle of escape. One perceives in this another instance of Ferry's

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94. Dreo, op. cit., 201.

95. Arago, op. cit., 196.

96. Le Temps, October 7, 1870, reprinting an article from Journal des Debats.

love for meddling in whatever might be the most exciting event of the moment.

During the comparative lull in October we can observe, in passing, Ferry's reaction to two or three topics which point up a bit more clearly his outlook and temperament. Back in late September the possibility arose of receiving the aid of Garibaldi, who had announced that he was eager to help out the French republic, struggling against Prussian autocracy.<sup>97</sup> Ferry, in Council, expressed a negative reaction to this offer, contending that Garibaldi was not serious, and, in any case, acceptance of his offer would be dangerous, and would not help the defense.<sup>98</sup> His bourgeois background, making him sensitive to non-republican susceptibilities, caused him to react unfavorably toward the activities of a famous revolutionary.

Another illustration of this type of thinking is afforded by his attitude toward military decorations. When Trochu brought up the question of maintaining or abolishing these honors, some of which were Bonapartist-inspired, Ferry, in contrast to his colleagues, was all for their elimination. When they were kept, he remained opposed to giving any publicity to the conferring of medals upon individuals.<sup>99</sup> This attitude stemmed from his abhorrence of anything smacking of the Bonapartes, and from a certain degree of austerity. Ready to perform services, he disdained outward acclaim for them,

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97. Claretie, op. cit., 378.

98. Dreo, op. cit., 169--Council of September 30; Trochu, op. cit., I: 287.

99. Ibid., 169,222--Councils of September 30, October 16.

and tended to expect others to feel the same way. This characteristic fitted in with his attitude of comparative indifference to the public reaction to him while holding political posts.

Finally, to close this analysis of Ferry's actions during the first period of the Government of National Defense, there is an outstanding example of his overweening optimism, a trait which he exhibited with annoying frequency. On October 18 he wrote Gambetta, who was newly ensconced at Tours, to this effect:

"....The people are admirable of discipline and of good sense, and the government has never been stronger than since its adversaries saw fit to act against it. The minority has been completely routed by the simple effect of moral force. People asked only for a little firmness, and the immense majority--unanimity, one can say--has ranged itself on our side. We have restored order in the local areas, with great ease, and with good and firm republican appointments. We have our eyes open to reaction, which we do not fear. The situation of the defense is admirable; the general (Trochu)--if pessimistic--does not hide his satisfaction. That which fortifies my confidence is that you adjudge the military situation like him..."<sup>100</sup>

Allowing for a laudable quantity of morale-boosting, this was still an excessively optimistic account of the situation in Paris. At Tours, Gambetta likewise exhibited a talent for miscalculating events. The danger in this was, of course, that it tended to make the individual overlook the imminence of disaster, lurking just around the corner. Exactly how wrong Ferry

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100. Lettres, 87-88.

could be in his estimate of the Government's internal stability became apparent in less than two weeks' time.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE ABORTIVE REVOLUTION OF OCTOBER 31.

## I

The day of October 31, 1870 is remembered in French political history for what did not transpire, rather than for the topsy-turvy events which did take place. October 31 did not witness the Jacobins' triumph in a Commune of Paris, an event still more than four months in the offing, although happenings of the day came within a mere eyelash of ushering in the Commune. Like September 4, the day did not inject civil war into an already depressing situation for France. By the greatest of all miracles, October 31 did not sacrifice a single drop of blood before the altar of Parisian political differences. For hours, literally, a crisis, raged which was of dimensions such that it might have brought forth street-fighting of the most savage character. The occasion did not present itself, Paris was spared, and the Government of National Defense survived, to go its unhappy way toward another type of disaster, which it could do nothing to avoid. Since Jules Ferry enacted perhaps the most memorable part in this affair, it becomes necessary to examine the causes, events, and the aftermath of the occasion in some detail.

The first incident which contributed to the crisis occurred on October 27. On this date, Félix Pyat printed in his

newspaper, Le Combat, the news that Bazaine, on behalf of the Emperor, Napoleon III, had surrendered to the Prussians at Metz. He claimed, also, that the Government knew this as well as he did, but withheld it from the public.<sup>1</sup>

This threw Paris into an uproar, and the Government into consternation. There is no evidence to show that the Government had foreknowledge of Bazaine's surrender. On the other hand, there were ominous clouds in abundance, which should have been enough to cause the Council to move cautiously. It had had no word from Metz, despite repeated efforts to contact Bazaine. Furthermore, the Council's agent in Brussels had informed it that Bazaine was negotiating, either with Napoleon III, or the Prussians directly.<sup>2</sup> On October 26, in fact, due to this disturbing news, the Council approved unanimously a letter which Ferry had prepared, and which was to be sent to Bazaine.<sup>3</sup> On the very day of Pyat's accusation, Ferry reported in Council rumors from Versailles that Bazaine would surrender, but simultaneously dismissed them as absurd.<sup>4</sup> At the very best, then, the situation at Metz was obscure. Nevertheless, fearful of the public's reaction to Pyat's alleged revelation, the Council published a resounding denial of the rumor in the Journal Officiel. In it Pyat was accused by implication of betraying France, while Bazaine was needlessly

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1. Claretie, op. cit., 327.

2. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 347; Simon, op. cit., II: 127.

3. Dréo, op. cit., 249.

4. Ibid., 252.

lauded.<sup>5</sup> Public opinion turned against Pyat, who next claimed that he had garnered his information from Flourens, whose source was Rochefort.<sup>6</sup> Flourens denied this in turn, and the fiasco remained unsettled up to October 30.

On this date the already hard-pressed Government had reason to feel that it was caught in a spell of ill-luck. The first discouraging news announced the loss of Bourget. The French troops had captured this town of little tactical importance on October 28.<sup>7</sup> But since hopeful signs were so rare, the populace hailed this minor gain with delight. Therefore the prospect of letting it know the sequel was particularly uninviting.

On the same day, Thiers, who had been escorted to the gates of the city by the Prussians, arrived in Paris. The Council assembled in extraordinary session to listen to his description of his peregrinations about Europe. On his return to France, he had stopped off at Tours to see Gambetta and his colleagues. Journeying northward, he had been detained briefly by the Prussians, while Bismarck revealed to him with relish that Metz had surrendered.<sup>8</sup> Considering the circumstances, Thiers strongly urged that negotiations with a view to an armistice be resumed with the Prussians. He said that the provinces were very desirous of general elections,

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5. Journal Officiel, October 28, 1870.

6. Claretie, op. cit., 327.

7. Favre, op. cit., I: 314-316.

8. For a good summary of Thiers' travels, see Simon, op. cit., II: 99-108.

and that an armistice might well be the occasion for the other powers, most likely Russia, to intervene, in the war on behalf of France.<sup>9</sup> Gambetta, it was true, had advised that the provinces did not wish the elections,<sup>10</sup> but, confronted with conflicting authorities, the Council preferred to take the advice of the one which it faced at the moment. All of its members agreed with Thiers that armistice negotiations were for the best.<sup>11</sup> At the same time they also agreed with Trochu that it should be stipulated that general elections and revictualling of the capital should be the sine qua non of an armistice.<sup>12</sup> Thiers was to start for Versailles and an interview with Bismarck some time during the day of October 31.

The Council's conference with Thiers was held in the midnight hours of October 30-31 at a time when some of the day's unpleasant news had reached the population of Paris. Thiers' arrival in Paris had been instantaneously interpreted as the first move in a bid for peace. The mishap at Bourget, likewise, was no longer a secret to a great many people by the morning of October 30.<sup>13</sup> With this already known, the Government decided that it must reveal its blunder with respect to Metz, while confirming the rumors surrounding Thiers and Bourget. Thus, on the morning of October 31 the Parisian citizen-

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9. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 348.

10. Favre, op. cit., I: 317; Bury, op. cit., 169.

11. Simon, op. cit., II: 109-110; Favre, op. cit., I: 318.

12. Trochu, op. cit., I: 367-368.

13. Mason, op. cit., 71; Claretie, op. cit., 328; Favre, op. cit., I: 321.

ry saw in the Journal Officiel the three news items which were on everybody's lips.<sup>14</sup> The explanation of Thiers' purposes was intended to offset the rumors of a surrender.

Observers since have agreed that this means of conveying the news to the people was a grievous mistake. Nothing whatever had been said in the Council about the possibility of Thiers' negotiating for a general peace, for it was evident that the proposed constituent assembly would have to determine the question of war or peace. However, the entire radical section of Paris, and most of the moderate population as well, were convinced that Thiers would prepare the way for a capitulation which nobody desired.<sup>15</sup> At 10:00 P.M. of October 30 the Council had received word from Etienne Arago that an uprising could be expected for the next day.<sup>16</sup> In case the Council members were blind to what was in the offing, this should have furnished them the necessary information. Some of the Council members preferred not to publish the three news items at the same time for fear of the consequences. A majority, however, decided in favor of a proclamation in the Journal Officiel.<sup>17</sup> Ferry was of the more sensible minority which wished to publish all of the news but with a careful explanation.

It might be added that the Government was handicapped on

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14. Journal Officiel, October 31, 1870.

15. Claretie, op. cit., 329; Simon, op. cit., II: 127.

16. Simon, op. cit., II: 127-128; Arago, op. cit., 239-241.

17. Simon, op. cit., II: 111.

the day of October 31 because the new Prefect of Police, Edmond Adam, took no precautionary measures the night before.<sup>18</sup> Etienne Arago warned him of what was expected, but he scoffed at the possibility of a serious demonstration, recalling that as adjutant to the Mayor of Paris in 1848, he had seen Lamartine quiet the crowds with his voice.<sup>19</sup> In the crises of 1870 all precedents not derived from 1792, were derived from 1848.

By mid-morning of October 31, it was perfectly evident that the Government was faced by a demonstration of far greater dimensions than any of those of the previous month. Ferry, Simon, Trochu, and other members of the Government agreed afterwards that the rebellion of October 31 was caused by the public dissatisfaction with the Government for losing Bourget, stumbling over the Metz controversy, and for showing a general lack of initiative.<sup>20</sup> All historical evidence available bears out the opinion of these moderates.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, there is a belief, firmly held by the French conservatives, that the day of October 31 was carefully prepared in advance by the radicals.<sup>22</sup> On the surface there seemed to be proof of this in the fact that rebellion occurred,

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18. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 359.

19. Arago, op. cit., 240.

20. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 355; Trochu, op. cit., 334; Simon, op. cit., II: 127.

21. Mason, op. cit., 76.

22. The Commission of Inquiry on the Government of National Defense had no doubt about it--see Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 355.

as Ferry testified, because the fall of Metz was known in the provinces before the news reached Paris, and public dissatisfaction by October 31 helped to cause a rebellion in Marseille which the radicals did lead.<sup>23</sup>

In all probability, the situation was as follows. The avancés in Paris would have had no hesitation about preparing an attempt to overthrow the Government--the two months which had elapsed were abundant evidence for that. But they decided to bide their time until the rulers should blunder so badly as to lose all public support. Then only would they make themselves the leaders of a movement to replace the government. There are signs that precisely this occurred.

On October 27, Ulysses Parent wrote Ranc, with Gambetta at Tours, that Pyat's article in Le Combat had caused widespread dissatisfaction. They were preparing an uprising and had drawn up lists for a new government which was to include the names of Flourens, Blanqui, Pyat, Millière, and others.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, another group of the revolutionaries in the International held a meeting on October 30 at which nothing definite was decided for the morrow, but in which hope was expressed that a situation might arise which could be utilized to replace the Government.<sup>25</sup> Thus, beyond these tentative schemes to take advantage of any embarrassment which the Gov-

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23. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 355.

24. Ranc, op. cit., 172-173.

25. Annales, XXV: 70--Testimony of M. Carbon, Mayor of the 15th Arrondissement, who was a non-revolutionary republican.

ernment should create for itself, the revolutionaries did not go. Their own unco-ordinated acts of October 31 give further evidence that they had no elaborate plans. The Government had no one but itself to blame for giving the avances their opportunity on that day. Ferry admitted as much in his testimony by saying that on the morning of October 31 the "Parisian population was, from the top to the bottom of the scale, absolutely hostile to us."<sup>26</sup>

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II

By 10:00 A.M. a huge throng had gathered before the Hotel de Ville, asking that there should be no armistice, and shouting for the Commune. Most of those who talked about the Commune meant simply that they desired the municipal elections which the Government had seen fit to postpone. However, the mere use of the word made it easy for the radicals to maintain subsequently that everybody demanded the Commune of Paris.<sup>27</sup> The tumult reached such dimensions that Etienne Arago ordered a special session of the local mayors to thresh out the measures to be taken, and to present to them the draft of a decree calling for municipal elections.<sup>28</sup> The mayors were assembled by early afternoon for what became a very long conference.

At the Hotel de Ville, Ferry used the telegraph available for emergencies to summon the members of the Government

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26. Annales, XXIII: 348.

27. Arago, op. cit., 245; Simon, op. cit., II: 128.

28. Arago, op. cit., 246.

to appear there at once. Favre was at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conferring with Thiers, who was being briefed in view of his imminent departure. Since Favre was slow in responding, Ferry came over to explain that the Hotel de Ville might be invested any minute.<sup>29</sup> Then he hastened back to the City Hall.

Favre met Picard en route to the seat of the Government. The latter wisely suggested that they avoid involvement in the critical situation at the Hotel de Ville, in order to maintain their freedom of action. Favre, however, insisted that they rejoin the others.<sup>30</sup> Simon, too, had a chance to leave the building before it was overrun, but failed to utilize it.<sup>31</sup>

Since the members of the Government at the Hotel de Ville could not convene formally until all of the members of the Council were present, they engaged, while waiting, in undignified bickerings with the crowd which had gathered. At one entrance to the Hotel de Ville, Trochu, Pelletan, and Simon tried to explain to the crowd that the armistice did not mean surrender.<sup>32</sup> Elsewhere, Ferry assured the throngs that the Government was about to consult, and would give due consideration to the people's wishes.<sup>33</sup> None of these speeches

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29. Favre, op. cit., I: 325.

30. Ibid., I: 326.

31. Simon, op. cit., I: 133.

32. Simon, op. cit., I: 130.

33. Le Temps, November 2, 1870--account of a witness of events up to that hour. Since it contains nothing erroneous, it appears to be accurate.

had any effect on the shouting, gesticulating mobs.

After having retreated into the building, the members of the Government somewhat delayed in calling their meeting to order. This enabled hundreds of people in the throngs, including many of the more rabid revolutionaries, to crowd into the Hotel de Ville, which was an immense building with a variety of rooms, passageways, and wings. A group chanced upon the room where the mayors were conferring, another followed the members of the Government, while large numbers of the Parisian populace who had entered out of sheer curiosity scattered through the many halls in aimless anticipation.

A deputation headed by Tibaldi, an Italian revolutionary, Joly, an impecunious Parisian lawyer,<sup>34</sup> and, in another group, Lefrançais, a particular enemy of Ferry's, pursued the members of the Government in order to grill them on the subject of the negotiations for an armistice. There ensued a wild half hour. General Trochu remonstrated with Joly, as did Simon; both without success.<sup>35</sup> While some of the other members of the government argued with their various challengers, Ferry got into an angry altercation with Joly, who accused him and his colleagues of being incompetents. Ferry halted Joly with the taunt that he should be the last man to denounce the Gov-

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34. Maurice Joly, though not highly regarded in 1870, has earned his place in history. He it was who authored the Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel, a satire on Napoleon III, which served as the basis for the infamous Protocols of the Elders of Zion, published in Russia between 1895 and 1900.

35. Claretie, op. cit., 331.

ernment, since he asked it for a job only two weeks before.<sup>36</sup> About this time, Lefrançais began to throw open the windows in the room, with the intent of shouting down to the crowd that the Government had been overthrown. Ferry accosted him, and Lefrançais replied with an insult. The two scuffled about until others separated them.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the presence of a large number of interlopers in the outer rooms of the Hotel de Ville, the Council began an extraordinary session at 3:40 P.M. In another part of the building, meantime, the mayors had decided by acclamation that the municipal elections were vital at this moment. They adjourned their meeting for the time being, although they remained in the building, while Etienne Arago conveyed the mayors' wishes to the Government.<sup>38</sup>

Discussion began after the announcement by a building official that half of the Hotel de Ville was overrun with people, causing some of those present to feel that a serious meeting was impossible until the building was cleared. The election question was raised immediately, and some felt that it would constitute the worst kind of equivocation, if the announcement granting municipal elections were made, while the crowd outside was clamoring for the Commune.<sup>39</sup> These two ob-

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36. Le Temps, November 2, 1870.

37. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 417-418; Le Temps, February 26, 1871--Lefrançais' testimony, Trial of the Accused of October 31.

38. Claretie, op. cit., 330; Arago, op. cit., 247.

39. Simon, op. cit., II: 134; Dreo, op. cit., 262--Council of October 31.

jections had not been resolved, when an interruption occasioned instantaneous consideration of the question of elections. Etienne Arago, fresh from the Mayors' gathering, and harassed by the crowds in the building, dashed into the Council chamber in a state of panic to beg of the members of the Government to accede to the mayors' recommendation for immediate elections.<sup>40</sup>

A short discussion ensued, in which there was some doubt over whether the members of the Government should submit their names to the voters, in the course of general municipal elections. Since it was imperative that Etienne Arago be given an immediate answer, the Council adopted Ferry's suggestion, that they vote on the issue of granting municipal elections, but that they fix no definite date for them. An affirmative vote of five to three was recorded, with Ferry, Favre, Picard, Emmanuel Arago, and Pelletan voting in the affirmative, and Trochu, Simon, and Garnier-Pagès opposing any type of elections at this time.<sup>41</sup> Etienne Arago left, in order to impart the news of elections without fixed date to the mayors and the crowd.

The Council argued another angle of the question after that decision had been arrived at. Ferry desired that the Government of National Defense participate en masse in the municipal elections. Several disagreed, despite the fact that

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40. Favre, op. cit., I: 329-330; Dréo, op. cit., 262.

41. Dréo, op. cit., 263.

his reason was substantially valid. He explained that the municipal officials elected would surely wish to constitute themselves as the general government. Therefore the Government should validate itself in order not to be compelled to abdicate in favor of a municipal council.<sup>42</sup> The problem was left unresolved for the time being, but, for all practical purposes, Ferry's idea ultimately prevailed.

Disorder held sway in all other parts of the building. Before Arago could return to the mayors' hall, it had been invaded by the noisy throng, demanding a variety of mutually exclusive concessions. In the midst of this crowd were Pyat, Delescluze, and a number of other "impatients."<sup>43</sup> Arago, unable for the moment to reach the mayors' meeting place, shouted out of the windows that municipal elections had been granted, but the noise drowned out the old man's legalistic explanation that this was not tantamount to the Commune.<sup>44</sup> Molested by the crowd, he retreated briefly into the Government's chamber. Very near collapse, he was solaced for a while by the members of the Council, then started out anew, braving the crowds, for the other assembly room.<sup>45</sup>

Seconds later the Government's meeting place was invaded by the populace and from 4:00 P.M. until approximately 3:00 A.M. of the next morning, the Government of National Defense

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42. Dréo, op. cit., 263.

43. Claretie, op. cit., 330.

44. Simon, op. cit., II: 134.

45. Favre, op. cit., I: 331.

remained captive within its own Council room. The events of these several hours set a new high for bewildering oscillation.

The invaders poured into the room at such a fast pace that the inmates were unable to move from their chairs. Picard alone managed to escape from the room in the midst of the uproar, with the purpose of initiating counter-measures.<sup>46</sup> The others were accosted by the invaders. One of them grasped Ferry, saying: "Finally I hold you, and you will not escape me!" to which Ferry replied: "It is I whom you hold, but, mark my words, tomorrow you will be in the position I am today."<sup>47</sup> Rochefort tried to get the crowd's attention long enough to announce that the Government had agreed to grant municipal elections, but was forcibly replaced by Lefrançais, who at that moment was the leader of the invaders.<sup>48</sup> Lefrançais, before entering the Chamber, had declared to all who would listen that the Government had been overthrown, and that he had cast out of the windows of the halls lists bearing the names of the members of a commission which was to supervise the communal elections to be held within the next forty-eight hours.<sup>49</sup> Lefrançais repeated this information, this time in the presence of the Council, listing as members of his commission Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Victor Hugo, Delescluze, Pyat,

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46. Simon, op. cit., II: 146; Favre, op. cit., I: 334.

47. Simon, op. cit., II: 138.

48. Ibid., II: 139-140; Claretie, op. cit., 331.

49. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 419-420; Lissagaray, op. cit., 31.

Blanqui, Millière, among others, and Dorian, the lone representative of the incumbent Government.<sup>50</sup> It should be observed that all of these men had by no means been consulted by Lefrançais, which, of course, made little difference, since Lefrançais was himself replaced by a new chieftain within the span of mere minutes.

The newcomer was no less than Flourens, who had arrived at the Hotel de Ville accompanied by 500 of his Belleville sharpshooters, who were presumed to stand guard throughout the building. Flourens, though idolized by the Parisian radicals, was of monumental incompetence, and contrived, within the next few hours, to ruin whatever chances of success the dissatisfied elements had. Since his presence had caused the din to be reduced to an incoherent babbling, it was possible for him to announce the birth of another new government. This was to be a "Committee of Public Safety," on the model of 1793-1794. Oddly enough, the list of its participants was headed by the name of Flourens. In addition to that, it included several of the names which had appeared on Lefrançais' list, namely, Blanqui, Pyat, Delescluze, Millière, plus Ranvier, Mottu, Malon, as well as others. At the insistence of the crowd Dorian was included. An interminable and noisy discussion ensued, with everyone present debating the names listed.<sup>51</sup>

While all of this took place in the Council room, the

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50. Annales, XXI: 74; Lissagaray, op. cit., 31.

51. Ibid., 79; Ibid., 31; Claretie, op. cit., 332.

mayors' room below was the stage set for other happenings affecting the radicals. Etienne Arago had managed to push through the halls to his office, which adjoined the mayors' meeting place. In the hour or two after 4:00 P.M.--the exact time seems to have been 4:30<sup>52</sup>--Arago and his adjutants took measures, without sanction from higher authority, which were provocative of grave misunderstandings. Informed that, since he had left the Council room, the Government had been imprisoned, Arago felt that it was necessary to act immediately on the question of elections, in order to appease the irate populace. Consequently, the announcement that municipal elections were to follow at an unnamed date, with the polls opening at noon.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, finding the very popular Dorian, who had followed him from the Council room, at his side, Arago closed his placard with the announcement that Dorian was to be president of the electoral commission, with the old republican, Schoelcher, as his assistant.<sup>54</sup> This action, plus his reputation in the public mind as an ardent republican, and his friendship with avances such as Delescluze, caused Arago to be subsequently maligned by the Commission of Inquiry as a collaborator of the radicals.<sup>55</sup> This, however, is extremely unlikely, for, as Etienne Lamy, a perennial critic of this war government, notes,

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52. Arago, op. cit., 282.

53. Ibid., 255-256; for a reprint of Arago's placard, see Claretie, op. cit., 341.

54. See the placard reprinted, Claretie, op. cit., 341.

55. For Arago's remarks on the, see Arago, op. cit., 326-327, 364-365, 367.

he was at this time an old man, addicted to violence only in words, and anxious to pacify everybody in every possible way.<sup>56</sup>

Arago's announcement especially pleased Delescluze and Pyat, who had been among the early arrivals in the original invasion of the mayors' assemblage. These two men, together with Ledru-Rollin,<sup>57</sup> by 1870 a satellite of Delescluze, were quasi-moderates in methods, if not in ends, favoring a legal solution to the crisis of October 31.<sup>58</sup> They had protested against the establishment of a new government by proclamation, preferring to use Arago's electoral announcement as the device by which a commune could be obtained. Arago, who knew Delescluze well, stated that he was the most intelligent of the revolutionaries, a man who knew how to use a situation for his own ends.<sup>59</sup> Thus, after they had heard Arago's election announcement, they left the Hotel de Ville hoping that this solution would prevail. In leaving, both repeated that they would not approve of a commune established by dictatorial decree. Pyat also let it be known to Lefrançais that he would not consider participating in this one's temporary revolutionary electoral commission.<sup>60</sup>

Hence, by nightfall the revolutionary elements had drawn up blueprints for three different species of provisional gov-

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56. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Defense Nationale," 252.  
 57. Alvin R. Calman, Ledru-Rollin après 1848 (Paris, 1921), 244.  
 58. Calman, op. cit., 240.  
 59. Arago, op. cit., 276.  
 60. Le Combat, November 3, 1870--Pyat's account of his part in the events of October 31; Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 419.

ernments or electoral procedures. None of these was favored with general acceptance. At the same time their incessant bickerings spelt immediate danger to their victory.

Amidst all of this, the members of the Government, locked in the Council room, were looking forward to a spine-tingling evening. The first moves toward their rescue were unavailing. As early as 1:00 P.M., Favre, en route to the Hotel de Ville, had dispatched Charles Ferry to National Guard headquarters in order to sound the general alarm. Nothing came of this, for no one there would take the responsibility of acting, in the absence of a written order.<sup>61</sup> In addition to that, the moderate elements in the National Guard were dissatisfied with the Government, and were not willing to rally immediately to its defense.<sup>62</sup>

After Picard had escaped at about 4:00 P.M., the first counter-moves materialized. Going to the offices of the Ministry of Finance, he telegraphed some of the generals asking them to return to Paris, and had the general alarm sounded. He tried to have the handful of regular troops, then in Paris, sent to the Hotel de Ville, but their commanding officer refused, since General Trochu had expressly warned against the use of the army in a crisis such as this one.<sup>63</sup> Pending reinforcements, a battalion of the National Guard commanded by

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61. Favre, op. cit., I: 340; Simon, op. cit., II: 148, says, however, that a written order existed, but was improperly executed.

62. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 379-380.

63. Denis, op. cit., I: 468; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 349.

a Breton friend of Trochu, Colonel Ibos, to which Charles Ferry was attached, was sent to the Hotel de Ville.<sup>64</sup>

The members of the Government were held as hostages, subject to a variety of indignities. At the same time, they were not under an unrelenting surveillance for two reasons. One was the unparalleled situation, which found the Hotel de Ville filled with a nondescript crowd of people, some friendly to the invaders, some friends of the incarcerated Government, some indifferent. This made it comparatively easy for a third person to announce himself as a messenger of Flourens, then enter, and push through to the Government's meeting place.<sup>65</sup> Likewise, it was not at all difficult to enter or exit from the Hotel de Ville, unless the person happened to be emerging from the Council Chamber or the Mayor of Paris' office. Thus, people as different as Charles Ferry and Delescluze went in and out several times.<sup>66</sup>

The indecision of Flourens provided the other cause for the elasticity of the revolutionaries' occupation. Flourens might have taken several actions. He might have made sure that all entrances and exits were guarded by his men. He certainly should have had his men reconnoitre, for there was a subterranean passage from the Council room to the former offices of M. Haussmann, and thence to the mayors' council room. By remaining in ignorance of this until it was too late, he

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64. Annales, XXI: 78; Favre, op. cit., I: 334.

65. Simon, op. cit., II: 157.

66. Ibid., 153; Arago, op. cit., 276.

enabled the Government's National Guard battalions, especially the Ibos group, to occupy the passageway. This made it possible for the Government's adherents to hold a commanding position by intercepting messages from the revolutionary groups in the Council room and those at the mayors' chamber, and thus preventing any communication between the two groups.<sup>67</sup> Finally, Flourens might have had the members of the Government conveyed to the prison of Mazas, as many of the insurgents wished.<sup>68</sup> Instead, he procrastinated, arguing to no purpose with the members of the Government about their resignation, and kept on issuing contradictory orders to his men. The bewildered Flourens awaited the coming of the most famous of the revolutionists, who at the time had not as yet succeeded in reaching the scene.

About 8:00 P.M. occurred the incident which, more than anything else, turned the tide in favor of the Government. Ibos' battalion, accompanied by Charles Ferry, used the subterranean passage to burst suddenly into the Council room. Amidst a brief altercation, Ibos managed to catch the eye of Trochu, Jules Ferry, and Emmanuel Arago. At this sign, these three arose simultaneously, and contrived to march out of the room escorted by several of Ibos' men.<sup>69</sup> The three Council members scattered rapidly, in order to assist Picard in or-

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67. Simon, op. cit., II: 162-163; Geffroy, op. cit., 326.

68. Claretie, op. cit., 335.

69. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 349; Favre, op. cit., I: 334.

ganizing further resistance. After this unbelievable bit of carelessness, Flourens had the remaining members of the Government closely guarded, concealed from public view. Since Rochefort had been allowed to leave the room during the first minutes of its occupation, the insurgents held only Simon, Favre, and Garnier-Pagès as their captives. As time elapsed, this number was increased by General LeFlô, General Tamisier, and M. Magnin, all three of whom had been captured, or had asked to be led to their colleagues.<sup>70</sup>

The enfant terrible was, of course, Blanqui. He reached the Hotel de Ville only at about 6:00 P.M., advancing immediately toward the Council room. When he perceived Ibos' battalion, he sought refuge in another room for the time being. There he began to issue orders, with a view to establishing the revolutionaries' position. Unlike the others, Blanqui knew exactly what had to be done! He ordered the gates of Paris to be closed. Another order bid the revolutionary battalions to guard all doors, to occupy the interior of the Hotel de Ville, and to oust the Ibos battalion. Another of Blanqui's decrees provided for the occupation of the Prefecture of Police, the nerve-center of all political surveillance. Blanqui had chosen as his Prefect of Police the man who became the most hated of the Communards, Raoul Rigault.<sup>71</sup> A fourth order signed by Blanqui called for the occupation of the local

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70. Simon, op. cit., II: 160-161.

71. E. Cresson, Cent Jours du Siege à la Prefecture de Police, 2 Novembre, 1870-11 Février, 1871 (Paris, 1901), 46-47.

mayors' offices, and, in fact, two or three of these were momentarily occupied.<sup>72</sup> For a few minutes only, Blanqui must have felt that at last, after thirty-five years of waiting, his hour had come.

While Blanqui was trying once more to reach Flourens, he was sighted by Charles Ferry, who asked some of Ibos' men to take him into custody. At this very moment, Flourens, no longer able to hide his anxiety, emerged from the Council room in search of Blanqui. For a few seconds, Charles Ferry had a firm grip of Flourens' arm, but the "Major" broke away. Blanqui was conducted downstairs, where a clash took place between Flourens' men, and Ibos'. Neither side would shoot, for fear of bloodshed, and, in the ensuing muddle, Blanqui escaped once more. This time he went to the Council room to survey the situation there in person.<sup>73</sup>

Charles Ferry came equally close to capturing Delescluze and Pyat. These two had re-entered the building at about 8:00 P.M., in the company of Ledru-Rollin, because they had decided that the revolution was not proceeding according to their taste. They were arrested briefly, but in another melee, Delescluze slipped into the interior, while Ledru-Rollin and Pyat left the building once more.<sup>74</sup>

In the hours from 8:00 to 10:00 P.M., the counter-offensive of the escaped members of the Government took form. An

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72. Geffroy, *op. cit.*, 326-327.

73. *Ibid.*, 326-327; Simon, *op. cit.*, II: 162-163.

74. *Le Combat*, November 5, 1870--Pyat's account.

extended conference was held at General Trochu's headquarters<sup>75</sup> Trochu's friend, General Ducrot, arrived on the scene, and had a great deal to say concerning remedial measures. This ebullient soldier, who had escaped from capture after the Battle of Sedan, now insisted that the Hotel de Ville be invested by troops of the line, while the revolutionaries be blasted out. Should the captured members of the Government be shot in the process, this certainly would be regrettable! Trochu, who refused to be a party to deliberate violence, followed Ducrot's advice only to the extent of ordering the Hotel de Ville entered by two battalions of Mobile Guards.<sup>76</sup> All of these men were Bretons, devoted to General Trochu, and devoutly Catholic. With the exception of their officers, they understood nothing but their own dialect, and, told that the revolutionaries within the Hotel de Ville were irreligious, they were ready to fight to the last man at the first shot fired. Thus, Trochu was by no means acting too weakly in sending no more than these men into the Hotel de Ville. Once within, in fact, it was necessary for General LeFlô, a Breton, to gain the revolutionaries' permission to speak to the Mobile Guards, in order to prevent their opening fire without further ado.<sup>77</sup>

The Mobile Guards were to offset Flourens' sharpshooters in the interior. The faithful battalions of the National

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75. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XIII: 379; Denis, op. cit., I: 469.

76. Denis, op. cit., I: 469.

77. Simon, op. cit., II: 155.

Guard did the real rescue work. By 9:00 P.M. the sounding of the general alarm had at last had its effects, for the moderate National Guardsmen had been won back to the Government of National Defense by the news that Blanqui was in the process of directing affairs at the Hotel de Ville.<sup>78</sup> Since the relief of the City Hall was regarded as primarily a political mission, Jules Ferry, as a civilian member of the Government, was placed in charge of the reassembled National Guard, now 50,000 strong.<sup>79</sup> Between 9:00 and 10:00 P.M., then, Ferry set out for the Hotel de Ville, accompanied by his brother, and several officers of the National Guard leading no less than twenty battalions.<sup>80</sup>

The entrance of the Mobile Guards into the building, plus the gradual formation of Ferry's men outside, created an entirely novel situation in the edifice. The unique happenings of the earlier part of the evening were now over-shadowed by still more unprecedented events: a revolutionary government was holding the regular government as hostage, and was imprisoned in turn in the process.

This placed the insurrectionists in a position from which it would be difficult to emerge unscathed. The shooting of the hostages would have doomed all parties concerned. A surrender en masse would have meant imprisonment for the avancés, which

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78. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 380; Simon, op. cit., II: 168.

79. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 349; Mason, op. cit., 75; Denis, op. cit., I: 471.

80. Denis, op. cit., I: 469.

would not have served their political ends at all. But a clever handling of the situation, as it existed, might save part of the day. In this very crisis, Delescluze, assisted by Millière, performed an enormous service to the radicals' cause, and, it should be added, to the cause of internal peace.

Delescluze, if one is to believe Arago--and his opinion seems plausible enough--had utilized his hours away from the Hotel de Ville to observe the trend of events with great care.<sup>81</sup> By virtue of Blanqui and a Committee of Public Safety, to which he had been named, and which had been elevated to temporary power in a non-legal fashion, the revolution had taken a turn which he did not appreciate. He also observed that counter-revolutionary forces were beginning to take shape by evening. Consequently he returned to the Hotel de Ville, determined to salvage as much as he could from the revolutionary explosion, and, if possible, to restore a situation more to his taste. Regaining the interior of the Hotel de Ville, along with Pyat and Ledru-Rollin about 8:00 P.M., he encountered Lefrançais, who was leaving in disgust, just as these three entered.<sup>82</sup> After his adventure with Charles Ferry, Delescluze had managed to make his way to the Council room. There he consulted animatedly with Blanqui, Milliere, Ranvier, Mottu, and Flourens. Some time after 9:00 P.M., evidently,

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81. Arago, op. cit., 276.

82. Lefrançais, Souvenirs, 422.

they agreed more or less, that their cause was lost, and that it was necessary to strike a bargain with the members of the Government. Millière was delegated to speak to Favre, Simon, and Garnier-Pagès, while Delescluze set off for Arago's office, where he knew Dorian could be found.<sup>83</sup>

Since Dorian and Arago had not been able to leave Arago's office for several hours,<sup>84</sup> they were aware of happenings elsewhere only through hearsay. Dorian had not given Arago permission to attach his name to the placard announcing elections for November 1,<sup>85</sup> but neither did he wish to repudiate the placard in the midst of a serious crisis such as this. While the two men awaited events, Delescluze appeared in Arago's office. He wished to speak to Dorian, since it was Delescluze's understanding that he was in charge of the elections announced by Arago.<sup>86</sup> Since Dorian was motivated by the praiseworthy desire to avoid bloodshed at all cost, he showed himself willing to join Delescluze in trying to arrange a general accord between insurgents and defendants. Arago, who was well acquainted with Delescluze's subtle, calculating mind, was disturbed to see Dorian willing to negotiate.<sup>87</sup> His uneasiness was well-founded, as subsequent events proved, for, in helping to prevent a conflict, Dorian seems to have allowed Delescluze to

83. Claretie, op. cit., 335; Geffroy, op. cit., 330; Denis op. cit., I: 335.

84. Arago, op. cit., 276-277; Simon, op. cit., II: 167.

85. Dréo, op. cit., 266--Council of November 1--Dorian's words.

86. Claretie, op. cit., 334--reprint of Delescluze's account of October 31, reprinted in Le Réveil, November 1.

87. Arago, op. cit., 276.

specify terms which permitted the radicals to maintain at a later date that they had been double-crossed.

Delescluze and Dorian walked to the Council room, where Millière had been in consultation with the captive members of the Government. Millière sought to convince them that the best way to arrange a peaceful evacuation of the Hotel de Ville would be for them to agree to their resignation, pending the elections for the morrow, which should determine France's war government.<sup>88</sup> After Dorian and Delescluze had appeared, Dorian conversed with his colleagues, trying to get them to enter into a general consultation with all of the insurgents' leaders.<sup>89</sup> Delescluze, also, talked briefly with Favre alone about a possible convention.<sup>90</sup> Whether the three members of the Government held in custody agreed to the Dorian-Delescluze transaction has never been absolutely clear. Simon and Favre maintained consistently that at no time did they accede to an accord.<sup>91</sup> Dorian, on the other hand, maintained equally steadfastly that they had agreed.<sup>92</sup> Garnier-Page's felt that an agreement of a kind had been reached, although it

88. Simon, op. cit., II: 165; Millière's account of October 31, reprinted in Annales, XXV: 538; Favre, op. cit., I: 336.

89. Simon, op. cit., II: 167; Favre, op. cit., I: 338.

90. Ibid., 168. Ibid., I: 338.

91. Annales, XXI: 86; Favre, op. cit., II: 9; Simon, op. cit., II: 167-168.

92. Dorian's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 464, 466; Dorian's deposition in the Trial of Blanqui before the fourth Council of War, reprinted in Journal des Débats, February 18, 1872; Didier's testimony, Annales: XXIII: 870.

was not properly executed.<sup>93</sup> Tamisier, at the side of Favre, Simon, and Garnier-Pagès, and in a somewhat more disinterested position than they or Dorian were, had an interesting opinion: many things were said, he testified, while the members of the Government remained silent, and this silence was interpreted by some, notably the insurgents, as a consent.<sup>94</sup> The Public Prosecutor, Didier, and the Attorney-General, Leblond, were sure that, on the whole, some sort of understanding had been reached, as was evidenced in the Council of November 1, when the subject of arrests was raised.<sup>95</sup> As would be expected, all of the revolutionaries of October 31 maintained that the captives agreed to an arrangement. They claimed also that the agreement was quite precise: municipal (that is, as far as they were concerned, communal) elections for the next day, election of a provisional government on November 2, and an amnesty for all of the insurgents who were in the Hotel de Ville on October 31.<sup>96</sup>

While the discussion concerning the accord continued in the Council room, Ferry appeared with his National Guard con-

93. For Garnier-Pagès' attitude in Council of November 1, see Dréo, op. cit., 268; his deposition in Trial of Blanqui, reprinted in Le Siècle, February 17, 1872.

94. Tamisier's deposition, Trial of Blanqui, reprinted in Le Siècle, February 16, 1872.

95. Didier's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 871; Leblond's testimony, Annales, XXV: 445.

96. See Delescluze's purported document to this effect in Annales, XXI: 84 and his explanation in Le Réveil, November 1, reprinted in Le Combat, November 5, 1870; Blanqui's account, La Patrie en Danger, November 4, 1870; Flourens' account, La Patrie en Danger, November 4, 1870; Millière's account, Annales, XXV: 538.

tingents, and accompanied by Edmond Adam, who, as Prefect of Police, was now showing some delayed activity.<sup>97</sup> Ferry had his men surround the building, upon one door of which he pounded. Two shots were fired aimlessly, and a few minutes later Dorian and Delescluze appeared as joint intermediaries. At that point a discussion took place which has not been straightened out to this day.<sup>98</sup>

To follow Ferry's own account for the present, this meeting went as follows. Delescluze, in the company of Dorian, presented himself as a conciliator, and not as a member of a government. Delescluze suggested that a non-violent evacuation of the Hotel de Ville would be the best solution for all concerned, to which Ferry gave his hearty agreement, since avoidance of civil war was universally desired on account of Prussian proximity. Ferry said nothing here about a commune or elections. In fact, at that time he was not yet aware of Arago's election placard.<sup>99</sup> The only mention of the subject occurred when Ferry, in passing, remarked that he would not want to remain in the Government a day longer unless the people were consulted, and the Government's power regularized.<sup>100</sup> Dorian made no mention of the election placard or of an agreement concerning elections, suggesting simply that they "erase

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97. Adam, Mes Illusions, 177.

98. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 377, 350.

99. Annales, XXIII, 377, 351. This meeting must have occurred after midnight, see testimony of Arnaud(de l'Ariege), a disinterested observer, Annales, XXIII:885--a witness of Dorian's activities, Arnaud says that he did not complete the transaction in the interior until midnight or thereabouts.

100. Annales, XXIII: 377.

the entire affair." Ferry rejected this as going too far.<sup>101</sup> Then he and Delescluze agreed that the latter should re-enter the City Hall in order to supervise an evacuation under these conditions: all marching from the building would shout, "Vive la République!", the Government should remain in sole possession of the Hotel de Ville, General Tamisier should leave first, presiding over the march to the exits. This was a military convention only, with no other commitments on Ferry's part.<sup>102</sup>

Dorian and Delescluze went back into the Hotel de Ville, while Ferry waited for the agreement to be carried out. However, a long vigil was in store for him, because Delescluze could not arrange the evacuation as easily as he had hoped. Since Blanqui felt that the Dorian-Delescluze accord was too tenuous, some time was lost due to his insistence that they obtain written assurances, especially from Trochu who was absent.<sup>103</sup> Much more time was lost over the difficulty of handling the armed men in the building. The Breton Mobile Guards gave indications that firing would start at the moment Flourens and his men should attempt to leave.<sup>104</sup> Even more troublesome were Flourens' men, whom he could not control. They were un-

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101. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 377; also a letter to Favre explaining the incident, Favre, op. cit., II: 423.  
 102. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 377; Ferry's letter to Favre, Favre, op. cit., II: 422.  
 103. Millière's account of October 31, Annales, XXV: 540; Blanqui however, denied this at his trial--see Le Siècle, February 17, 1872 Trial of Blanqui.  
 104. An account of Flourens, reprinted in Claretie, op. cit., 336; Geffroy, op. cit., 331.

willing to let anyone leave the building.<sup>105</sup> In this manner, more than two hours elapsed, with the situation as inconclusive as ever, nerves frayed to the breaking point, and an aura of imminent carnage hanging over everyone.

Ferry wondered what had gone wrong in the interior. At one point while he waited, Ferry, close to a doorway, was ambushed by some of Flourens' men, only to be immediately freed by some National Guardsmen near-by.<sup>106</sup> Jules Simon had an interesting reflection on this incident. It reminded him of the habit in the later Middle ages in Italy. Flourens' men like those of the Italian condottieri, specialized in ambush, whenever a situation became critical.<sup>107</sup> After a long wait, Ferry was apprized of a secret gate through which he might enter. He permitted Adam and his brother to enter, separately. The first went deep into the interior of the Hotel de Ville to help with the imminent evacuation,<sup>108</sup> while the second went to the main entrance before which Ferry's strong National Guard units stood, and opened the door.<sup>109</sup> Then came the denouement.

Ferry, at the head of the one hundred and sixth Battalion, with a number of men from other units, marched through the halls of the Hotel de Ville, lined with armed men, and upstairs to the Council room. An instant later he burst into the

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105. Millière's account, Annales, XXV: 540; Flourens' own admission, La Patrie en Danger, November 4, 1870.

106. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII:350.

107. Simon, op. cit., II: 171.

108. Adam, Mes Illusions, 183.

109. Ibid., 183. Geffroy, op. cit., 331; Arago, op. cit., 292.

chamber, followed by a long line of national and Mobile Guardsmen. There was a second's silence, followed by Flourens' panicky shouts to his men to take to their guns, and to Ferry, to remind him that they had reached an agreement. Ferry climbed on a table, and delivered a short address, variously reported, but which Simon vouched for as follows:

"Recognize that you are my prisoners, that I hold you, that you are at our mercy. Today I shall give you grace. Leave on the instant. Remember, if you attempt another coup we shall be without mercy."<sup>111</sup>

This broke the tension, and, as if by prearranged signal, both sides began the evacuation of room and building. Tami-sier took the lead, leaving the building with Blanqui on his arm, while Delescluze and Dorian were close behind,<sup>112</sup> thus lending credence to the story of the accord. Other revolutionary leaders leaving the Council room exchanged a few words with Ferry. According to Flourens, always boastful, he informed Ferry that he did not need his summation of the state of affairs in order to take action, for they had arranged a convention with his friends, and were about to execute it.<sup>113</sup> Millière recalled afterwards that Ferry complained to him at this moment that the insurgents' evacuation was taking too long, which can be taken as a hint as to Ferry's subsequent attitude toward the entire affair.<sup>114</sup>

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110. Simon, op. cit., II: 171-172; testimony of a Mobile Guardsman, M. Kergall, Annales, XXIII: 843.

111. Simon, op. cit., II: 172.

112. Claretie, op. cit., 336.

113. Flourens' account of October 31, La Patrie en Danger, November 4, 1870.

114. Millière's account, Annales, XXV: 541.

Thus, in the early hours of the morning of November 1 the unequalled one-day revolution of October 31 came to an end. At 3:25 A.M. Charles Ferry was able to telegraph to the local mayors and Government officials that the Hotel de Ville had been evacuated without loss of blood.<sup>115</sup> After the outpouring of all of the armed men, Jules Ferry and Adam busied themselves clearing out a miscellaneous band of stragglers who had been taken into custody by the Mobile Guard during the course of the evening.<sup>116</sup>

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### III

Within twenty-four hours, the recriminations started to be bandied about. Ferry became a storm-center of the dissatisfaction over the last act in the drama of October 13.<sup>117</sup> His achievement in breaking the stalemate, by means of which, so Simon stated, Ferry saved the captives' lives,<sup>118</sup> was quickly forgotten. So, too, was the fact that his invasion of the Hotel de Ville had made the evacuation workable.<sup>119</sup> In the days immediately following October 31, he was condemned by the radicals, in the years immediately following 1870, by the conservatives, for his role in the hours of crisis. The conservatives' criticism, epitomized in the questions directed at him by the Commission of Inquiry on the Government of National

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115. Mason, op. cit., 75.

116. Adam, Mes Illusions, 184-185; Denis, op. cit., I: 477.

117. Ferry's letter, Favre, op. cit., II: 474; Kergall's statement, Annales, XXIII: 843.

118. Simon, op. cit., II: 172.

119. Kergall's statement, Annales, XXIII: 843.

Defense,<sup>120</sup> consisted of blaming Ferry for complicity with the revolutionaries on the day of revolution. Their assumption was that any transaction, whatever its kind, with the insurgents was ipso facto an encouragement to revolution and disorder. They thereby entirely overlooked the fact that any arrangement Ferry had made was in the immediate interests of evacuating the Hotel de Ville without a civil war. The radicals, with a different end in mind, also accused Ferry of an arrangement with them. They maintained that he had agreed to Delescluze's statement calling for immediate municipal elections, a provisional government, and a general amnesty. This was very important to them. They wished that Ferry would admit having struck the bargain. It would enable them to argue as follows: the captives' accusation that no agreement reached in the interior was valid, because they were not free agents, was nullified because Ferry was at liberty, and was the representative of the government.<sup>121</sup>

This issue took concrete form almost immediately. On November 1, Le Reveil published Delescluze's account of the previous day, stating among other things, that Ferry had given his specific adherence to the Delescluze convention.<sup>122</sup> Ferry's answer was a categorical denial of everything that was imputed to him. This took the form of a public letter, which was reprinted in most of the Parisian newspapers on November

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120. See, for instance, Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII:380.

121. Thus, see Blanqui's argument in La Patrie en Danger, November 7, 1870.

122. See reprint of Delescluze's entire statement, Claretie, op. cit., 332-334.

2-3, and which Ferry wrote on the morning of November 2, immediately after having read Delescluze's article.<sup>123</sup> His answer took an even more decisive form: within a few days he became the most pronounced leader of that faction in the Government which wished to prosecute to the limit men who had led the revolt of October 31.

This accusation impugned Ferry's good faith in an incident which was one of the turning points in the Franco-Prussian War. For this reason, a careful examination of the evidence, circumstantial and actual, and an estimate of his innocence or guilt, has merit.

The bits of evidence indicating that he had committed himself to the Delescluze arrangement are as follows:

(1) The account of Delescluze, which, because it was very detailed, and subtly conveyed the feeling that the author must be telling the truth, carried weight.

(2) The fact that when a list of the culprits of October 31 was made public, Delescluze's name did not appear, was construed by some as evidence that an agreement between Delescluze and Ferry, at least, must have taken place.<sup>124</sup>

(3) The incident concerning the release of the miscellaneous prisoners by Ferry after the leaders of the insurrec-

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123. See reprint of the letter, with commentary, Favre, op. cit., II: 421-423.

124. Thus, see Frank Jellinek, The Paris Commune of 1871 (New York, 1937), 80; Jellinek says that Ferry favored a mild Jacobin dictatorship, a statement for which no evidence exists.

tion had left the Hotel de Ville was interpreted to mean that Ferry, by this gesture, was carrying out the terms of the pact.<sup>125</sup>

(4) A preposterous supposition by the anti-republicans that because Ferry, a civilian, took command of the National Guard to march on the Hotel de Ville, he must have intended to make an agreement with the radicals.<sup>126</sup>

(5) The account of a National Guardsman, who, though a witness to the meeting between Delescluze and Ferry, was unable to overhear the conversation.<sup>127</sup>

(6) A story told by Millière that Charles Ferry shook his hand, as the evacuation began, which, in Millière's opinion, showed that the brothers regarded a convention as having taken place.<sup>128</sup>

(7) Most seriously, the testimony of Dorian and Adam, both of whom were present at the Delescluze-Ferry interview, that an accord existed.<sup>129</sup>

With the exception of Dorian's and Adam's evidence, these accusations can be refuted with comparative ease. To begin by answering supposition with supposition: it is unlikely that Ferry should have consented to more than a minimal evacuation agreement with Delescluze, since he had disliked him--and the feeling was mutual--ever since the electoral cam-

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125. See Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 374-376 for a discussion of General Ducrot's accusation to this effect.

126. See Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 349.

127. Le Rappel, November 5, 1870.

128. Le Combat, December 20, 1870.

129. Trial of Blanqui, reported in Journal des Débats, February 18, 1872--evidence of Dorian and Adam; also Adam, Mes Illusions, 187-188.

paing of 1869.<sup>130</sup>

Significantly, Delescluze's own account aroused the greatest amount of suspicion against Ferry, although his explanation of October 31. is by no means entirely accurate. Delescluze very cleverly altered ambiguous happenings in his own favor. He began his account by giving the impression that Arago's election placard, which he so much favored, had been agreed upon before the investment of the Hotel de Ville. This was to his liking, for it meant that no outside pressure had caused Arago to concede elections for the next day. Since the Council meeting did not end by force of an invasion by the crowds until 4:00 P.M. (having began at 3:40<sup>131</sup>), Arago could not have returned to his office to issue his electoral proclamation before this hour, thus making inaccurate Delescluze's version that it occurred at about 3:00 P.M.<sup>132</sup>

Next, Delescluze's statement, which he drew up, and to which Ferry was supposed to have agreed, referred to the "preliminary formalities for the election of the Commune being already accomplished," while Arago's placard specified "municipal elections," and nothing else.<sup>133</sup>

Finally, Delescluze spoke of the "election of a provisional government" after the communal elections had taken place, and nowhere in the election notice can the faintest

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130. See references to Delescluze, Lettres, 54,76, (April 10, 1869 and October 1, 1869).

131. Dréo, op. cit., 262-265.

132. Arago, op. cit., 282; Claretie, op. cit., 332.

133. Ibid., 282; Ibid., 334,341.

reference to this be found.<sup>134</sup> Since Delescluze was inaccurate to his own advantage in reference to several facts in his tale, it is not unreasonable to suspect that his version of the conversation with Ferry also was geared to his own ends.

The absence of Delescluze's name was widely commented upon when the list of the proposed prosecutions became public. Ferry explained that he was not arrested at the time for two reasons. He had made very real efforts to arrange a non-violent evacuation of the Hotel de Ville. Furthermore, there was no evidence which could incriminate him, for he had done nothing violent, and, in fact, was not in the Hotel de Ville much of the time.<sup>135</sup> Ferry's reluctance to prosecute is rather magnanimous, in view of Delescluze's somewhat malicious charges against him.

The matter of the prisoners who had been released after the evacuation of the Hotel de Ville was, in reality, a trifling incident. However, General Ducrot, who loved to recall what he had heard, and whom the anti-republicans adored for his deep suspicions of the moderates, raised a great hue and cry over this in L'Independence Belge, March 26, 1871.<sup>136</sup> The legend that Ferry was carrying out the agreement in releasing the prisoners was completely shattered by way of the testimony of a little-known Breton lieutenant, a M. Kergall. He had

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134. Arago, op. cit., 282; Claretie, op. cit., 341.

135. See "Enquête sur l'Insurrection du 18 Mars, "Annales, X: 259--Letter from Ferry to the Commission of Inquiry.

136. See Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 374.

been present on the occasion and recalled exactly what had occurred. When Ferry was asked by Kergall's commanding officer what should be done with the prisoners, Ferry replied, "You have them, hold them." M. Kergall remarked that with the leaders at liberty, there was no use in holding the small fry. After a time Ferry was persuaded to free the prisoners. At the hearings some interest was centered around the disappearance of the firearms which the prisoners had carried before they were captured, and it was suggested that Ferry permitted them to be rearmed. M. Kergall testified that after having exerted a great deal of pressure, he had been able to obtain the weapons for his Mobile Guards, because previous to that his men lacked the weapons with which to fight the Prussians.<sup>137</sup>

The charge that Ferry insisted on the command of the National Guard in order to negotiate with the insurgents was not even supported by as much as hearsay evidence. Hence, in this instance there is nothing to refute.

The tale of the National Guardsman simply described the meeting in front of the Hotel de Ville, stating that "one understands that it is a question of an arrangement." One could understand that it was not so, just as easily! The account then describes the exact terms of the Delescluze convention.<sup>138</sup> Had it been printed before Delescluze's own story, and in a newspaper other than the left-wing Le Rappel, it might have

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137. Kergall's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 841-843.

138. Le Rappel, November 5, 1870.

carried greater weight.

Nothing startling necessarily follows from Millière's reminiscence. He described that Charles Ferry congratulated him on the "propriety, energy, and dignity" of his conduct during that night.<sup>139</sup> Charles Ferry, who kept on weaving in and out of the building, was without a doubt aware that Millière was a participant in Delescluze's negotiations. Likewise, since he was acquainted with his brother's purely military convention with Delescluze, he could very easily have been congratulating Millière for helping in carrying it out.

The testimony of Adam and Dorian is the single tangible bit of evidence that Ferry participated in, and fully understood, the convention as Delescluze interpreted it. Even this is much less formidable than it appears, for Dorian was committed to co-operation with Delescluze in arranging for the evacuation. Therefore he would naturally be strongly inclined to justify his own role by giving the impression that one or more of his colleagues had participated with him. Thus, in his testimony in the trial of Blanqui, he did not mention the names of anybody who had specifically adhered to the Delescluze agreement, stating positively only that a convention providing for a complete amnesty had been accepted by both sides.<sup>140</sup> In his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry Ferry maintained that when the question was first debated in the Council of November 1, he had explained that he had not

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139. Le Combat, December 20, 1870.

140. Dorian's testimony, Journal des Débats, February 18, 1872.

committed himself,<sup>141</sup> and that Dorian had not interrupted him for correction on this point. This statement is true, by evidence of the minutes of the Council for November 1.<sup>142</sup> The great significance of this lies in the fact that Ferry made this statement in the Council meeting at 9:00 A.M. of the first, before Delescluze printed his explanation.

Adam, on the other hand, stated categorically in the Trial of Blanqui that Ferry was a party to the convention.<sup>143</sup> In addition to this, Adam's gossip wife writes of a comment made by her husband on a letter of Ferry's. She says that Adam noted regarding Ferry's conduct on the night of October 31, climaxed by his insistence on arrests afterwards, "Ferry loves the double-cross."<sup>144</sup> In court, a wife may not testify on behalf of her husband for very evident reasons.

Adam's testimony is not as incriminating for Ferry as one might think at first. A careful reading of his wife's memoirs shows that the Adams' sympathies seemed to have been with the mild Jacobin republicans, rather than with the Government of National Defense.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, to resort to hearsay evidence in turn, Ernest Cresson, Adam's successor as Prefect of Police, reported the following: "One of the employees at the Prefecture reported that 'on October 31 Mme

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141. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 377.

142. Droc, op. cit., 267.

143. Adam's testimony, Journal des Débats, February 18, 1872.

144. Juliette Adam, Mesangoisses et Nos Luttés, 1871-1873 (Paris, 1907), 21.

145. See Adam, Mes Illusions, 48, 107, 114, 119, 138-139, 203, 320-321, which give some evidence of this.

Adam, seated in her husband's armchair, said, during the sessions at the Hotel de Ville: "Finally, we shall have the government that is necessary for us."<sup>146</sup> In this light, Adam's failure to see the need for protecting the Hotel de Ville on the forenoon of October 31 could be more than simple carelessness. There can be no doubt that Adam's conduct on the thirty-first was equivocal. In the course of Ferry's testimony, one of the members of the Commission agreed with him that Adam had incriminated himself a great deal during that day.<sup>147</sup> Ferry's opinion of Adam, for what it might be worth, was that Adam had been in and out of the building several times, and that the event had greatly troubled him. "My God! The Prefect of Police..., with the best of intentions..., had perhaps very much committed himself. That is my impression."<sup>148</sup>

Finally, we have Ferry's explanation of exactly how he saw the situation in the hours after his conversation with Delescluze, and in the days immediately following:

"First, whatever may have been the interior negotiations in the Hotel de Ville, it is not admissible that an act performed by a captive Government carries any obligations for it. It is impossible to recognize in these acts a legal and obligatory character... In any case, it is evident that whatever point of view one takes, either the superiority of the law that we had regained (control) at the Hotel de Ville, or even the point of view of the (Dorian-Delescluze) conventions, after two hours of waiting without response the besiegers re-enter into their

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146. Cresson, *op. cit.*, 46-47.

147. Ferry's testimony, *Annales*, XXIII: 378.

148. *Annales*, XXIII: 378.

rights, and the convention, if any, would have been broken (by virtue of lapse of time and inaction upon it)....

I say that the engagements taken in the interior of the Hotel de Ville were not executed, that in any case they were valid on only one point, namely, that we should permit those who happened to be there to leave."<sup>149</sup>

Upon examination from every point of view, it appears that Ferry should be absolved from all complicity in the Delescluze convention. Granting that Ferry's word as a participant was as good as Dorian's or Adam's or Delescluze's, the accumulation of circumstantial evidence tends to prove him innocent.

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149. Annales, XXIII: 352-353, 350.

## CHAPTER V

NOVEMBER I - DECEMBER 15:  
A PERIOD OF UNEASINESS AND INDECISION

## I

From November 1 to December 15, when the dissillusionment following the setback at the Marne became a major factor, the Government's popularity curve, which had once more begun on a fairly high level, declined steadily toward an unvarying low. After the October 31 Affair, the Government might have gained public respect for the duration of the siege, had it effectively handled that threat to its existence. Instead, it blundered into a solution which was no solution at all, reaping a harvest of popular discontent, while remaining doomed to conduct the city to its final reckoning with Bismarck.

On November 1, the Government stood physically triumphant, but morally very much in need of reinforcement. Its first duty was to deal with the authors of the twelve-hour revolution of October 31, but in order to move decisively in this direction, it was in dire need of legalizing its own position. In the forenoon of November 1, then, the Government rushed through a decree, placarded all over Paris, cancelling the Arago election notice of the night before, and calling the voters to the polls for Thursday, November 3.<sup>1</sup> After some

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1. Favre, op. cit., II: 5; decree reprinted in Claretie, op. cit., 358.

discussion, the Council determined to make the vote of November 3 a plebiscite on the Government's continued existence, while a supplementary vote on November 5 would select mayors and their adjutants for the arrondissements.<sup>2</sup> To forestall all possibility of misunderstanding, the Government announced in the Journal Officiel that the mayoral elections bore no resemblance to a commune, and were, in fact, the negation of it.<sup>3</sup> Use of the plebiscite was a source of embarrassment, for the Government was immediately and inevitably accused of resorting to a Napoleonic device, thus showing its true colors.<sup>4</sup> With the vote placed on this narrow base, the outcome was easily predictable. On the evening of November 3, the Government was able to announce that the people had ratified its powers by a vote of 557,996 to 62,638 (including the military forces).<sup>5</sup> Retained in power by a nine to one proportion of the vote, the Government had a popular support sufficient to enable it to act without equivocation. At the same time the members of the Council might have read with profit Le Temps' reminder that the result obtained was in all probability a vote of necessity rather than one of admiration, and that now was the time to justify the public trust.<sup>6</sup>

Foregoing examination of the municipal elections for the moment, we can turn our attention to the more pressing ques-

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2. Simon, op. cit., 186.

3. Journal Officiel, November 2, 1870.

4. See, Le Rappel, November 3, for one of many instances of this charge.

5. Claretie, op. cit., 359; Denis, op. cit., II: 14; Simon, op. cit., II: 188.

6. Le Temps, November 5, 1870.

tion of the Government's handling of the Jacobins. To demonstrate a newly discovered pertinacity, the Council should have chosen between the alternatives which Rochefort presented. Either they could have repressed the rebels with the utmost severity, or they could have granted a total amnesty, accompanied by a warning for the future.<sup>7</sup> But with the fatal display of irresolution which it had shown before, the Government embarked upon half-hearted measures which were certain to backfire.

The cause this time was the complexity of the problem. Four of the Council members, Trochu, Favre, Picard, and Ferry were bent on stern repressions. All of the others, including Magnin, Dorian, and LeFlô, who were provisorily allowed a vote at one point in the debate, were more or less opposed for reasons of expediency.<sup>8</sup>

Arguments offered by the four advocates of repressive measures ran as follows. Any further generosity would be interpreted as a hopeless weakness of the Government. Since the evacuation convention had not been kept by the investors, the Government was free to act severely, as it must do. (These were the arguments advanced especially by Ferry.<sup>9</sup>) The Government must enforce obedience in Paris if it hoped to be obeyed elsewhere in France. By granting impunity, it would

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7. Trochu, op. cit., I: 395-396.

8. See Dréo, op. cit., 269--Council of November 1.

9. Dréo, op. cit., 277--Council of November 3; Adam, Mes Illusions, 195.

open the door wide to a coup d'état--every government must protect its own existence. Internal order must be maintained once and for all, if Prussia was to be fought effectively.<sup>10</sup>

Arguments on the other side were plentiful. The greatest stumbling block was the problem of the accord of the night before. Dorian had obviously committed himself. Garnier-Pagès evidently felt that he was a party to it. Since two of his colleagues saw the matter in this light, Simon regarded this as determinative.<sup>11</sup> Another consideration was the very questionable efficiency--as the Kératry fiasco had shown--of the Police force in managing any arrests. Related to this was the difficulty of prosecution in the midst of a siege, especially with a changed political system, but an unchanged legal code. Furthermore, it was argued that if the culprits had not been arrested in the denouement of October 31, subsequent prosecution was unjust. Finally, another reason, one which never ceased to embarrass the Government, intervened: since it had come into power by popular acclamation on September 4, by what legal claims did it pretend to prosecute those who sought to assume power in the same fashion?<sup>12</sup> The men of September 4 were cursed with the de facto nature of their power. When it was argued that the elections had now ratified their authority, and prosecutions therefore were justified, Le Rappel did not fail to observe that October 31 was before the

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10. Arguments summarized in Simon, op. cit., II: 178.

11. Dreo, op. cit., 266--Council of November 1.

12. Arguments summarized in Simon, op. cit., II: 178-182; Mason, op. cit., 78.

mandate had been given by the people, and that consequently any subsequent prosecution would constitute ex post facto action.<sup>13</sup>

Before that issue was resolved by means of a slightly delayed decision to arrest and prosecute the culprits, the Council went through several bitter internal conflicts. An hour before the full meeting of the Council of November 1, the advocates of repression held a rump session in which they determined to act according to their own conception of the situation.<sup>14</sup> The decision in full council was, however, by a vote of four to six, against prosecution.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the advocates of sternness were busy drawing up a list of the guilty during the day of November 1,<sup>16</sup> trusting that the decision of the Council would be reversed. Adam, who reluctantly helped to prepare this document, decided that he would not comply with orders to arrest. He offered his resignation to the Councils of November 1 and November 2.<sup>17</sup> The session of November 2 was the scene of heated arguments over the arrests, and over the subject of the separate meeting of the four advocates of repression. If Mme. Adam is to be believed, Ferry and Adam almost came to blows over the insults exchanged,

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13. Le Rappel, November 7.

14. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 377; Trochu, op. cit., I: 394.

15. Dréo, op. cit., 269.

16. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 381.

17. Dréo, op. cit., 266, 273.

and a duel was very narrowly averted.<sup>18</sup> Finally, Adam resigned, in favor of Cresson, who was a friend of Picard's.<sup>19</sup> Cresson presented some rather flimsy evidence<sup>20</sup> to the effect that the rebels of October 31 were busy concocting a new plot. This satisfied the scruples of Simon and Dorian, the latter of whom reversed his intention to resign, and prosecutions were now decided upon by a vote of six to two.<sup>21</sup> Arrests were not to take place until after the elections of November 3, and the reason offered for the arrests was to be the rebels' refusal to cease plotting after October 31. This seems to have been largely a device of Ferry's and his three colleagues to gain the Council's consent to prosecute. It would have been much better had they been able to agree on the October 31 Affair as the grounds for prosecution. Le Temps, seeing through the lame excuse, summarized its opinions as follows. It doubted the seriousness of the supposed plot, for it had not been followed up by action. The Government had decided to put off prosecutions until after the elections, therefore the danger

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18. Adam, Mes Illusions, 195-196. By accident or design, Mme. Adam placed this meeting on November 1, saying that Ferry's letter about October 31 was read. Ferry maintained that he wrote it only on the morning of November 2 (See Favre, op. cit., II: 423). This seems to be the truth for it would have been impossible for him to have published an answer to Delescluze's statement on the very day it appeared. Other internal evidence substantiates this: a careful reading of the minutes of the Council of November 2, at which Adam resigned (Dréo, op. cit., 272-273), and references made by his successor in office in his memoirs (Cresson, op. cit., 19,22).

19. Dréo, op. cit., 275; Cresson, op. cit., 2.

20. Didier's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 871.

21. Dréo, op. cit., 275.

could not have been very serious.<sup>22</sup> In undertaking arrests at all, the Government was attacked immediately by the advanced press for its reactionary policy, and was even reprov- ed by some of the moderate and conservative organs.<sup>23</sup>

Thereafter, the affair was turned into a horrifying fi- asco for the Government. Twenty-three men were marked for arrest, but only fourteen were apprehended.<sup>24</sup> For some time, Flourens, and, notably, Blanqui, were among those at liberty. The civilian authorities, Didier, Leblond, and the trial judge were at their wits end for lack of evidence.<sup>25</sup> Cresson, new at his post, was quick to accuse, but did not supply the nec- essary information for convictions. Because civilian methods proved ineffective under conditions of siege, the accused were remanded to councils of war for trial. After the siege was over, and the affair was a dead issue, the war councils hand- ed down acquittals for the accused, and conviction for those, like Blanqui, who were still at large.<sup>26</sup> When all was said and done, the Government had absolutely nothing to show for its pains, and succeeded only in losing face with everybody.

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22. Le Temps, November 7, 1870.

23. See, for example, Le Combat, November 7; Le Rappel, Novem- ber 8; La Patrie en Danger, November 6. In the moderate press, Le Temps was strongly opposed to the arrests, Le Temps, November 7. Among the anti-republican press, La Liberté lent only its qualified support, La Liberté, November 6.

24. Simon, op. cit., II: 184.

25. Didier's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 871; Leblond's testi- Annales, XXV: 445.

26. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 383; Mason, op. cit., 80.

Considering the outcome of this matter, it may appear that Ferry was altogether wrong in his attitude. However, the inability to prosecute effectively was another crying example of the Government's weakness and that was the very thing which Ferry wished to eliminate. Under the prevailing conditions of siege, harsh measures against a revolt were justified, if ever repression is justified. The strong position taken by Ferry was not an easy way out, because such methods were certain to be branded as reactionary, especially when undertaken by republicans. It does not seem likely that complete amnesty granted to men who were determined to overthrow the government would have turned them into contented citizens. Edward Mason, in his The Paris Commune, remarks that the Government of National Defense, in permitting its democratic principles always to take precedence, fatally weakened itself by failing to act decisively.<sup>27</sup> Granting that the means of carrying out a program of political repression were limited, the Government of National Defense could have been much harsher than it was. After January 22, when another revolt had occurred, the Government managed to act with rapidity and decision. A little less concern with humanitarian and legal rigamaroles after October 31 would have helped a great deal, whatever the press might have said. Ferry evidently believed that decisive repression was practicable, for at one point in the debate he offered to handle the arrests quickly and quietly, if no one

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27. Mason, op. cit., 117.

else would do it.<sup>28</sup>

The mayoral elections of November 5 turned out to be on the whole rather satisfactory to the Government. About half of the mayors selected by Arago were returned to their posts.<sup>29</sup> Ferry was sure that, all things considered, the newly elected mayors were superior to the appointed ones, although the adjutants might not have been sufficiently co-operative.<sup>30</sup> Four arrondissements elected candidates who were persona non grata with the Government. The eleventh arrondissement elected Mottu, whom the Government had removed from office at an earlier date because of his flamboyant anti-clerical activities.<sup>31</sup> The nineteenth arrondissement elected Delescluze, hardly a favorite in recent days. The twentieth selected Ranvier who was on the Government's list of culprits for October 31. The eighteenth presented Clémenceau, who flirted too ardently with the radicals for the Government's tastes. There were eight future Communards among the adjutants elected--Malon, for the seventeenth, Jaclard and Dereure for the Eighteenth, Miot and Oudet for the nineteenth, and Millièrre, Flourens, and Lefrançais for the twentieth arrondissement.<sup>32</sup> Of these, Jaclard, Millièrre, Flourens, and Lefrançais were under the Government's surveillance. The presence of four revolutionaries in the twentieth arrondissement was too much for the Government, which

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28. Dréo, op. cit., 273--Council of November 2.

29. Arago, op. cit., 314.

30. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 357.

31. Simon, op. cit., II: 123.

32. See Claretie, op. cit., 361-362, for a list of the elected mayors and adjutants.

refused to let them assume office and, instead, replaced them by a special commission.<sup>33</sup>

Another change occurred ten days after the mayoral elections, when the Government, always apprehensive of its legal status, decided to replace Etienne Arago. Since he had not been elected to his position, as had the local mayors, the fear existed that the mayors would claim superiority over the Central Mayor.<sup>34</sup> The possibility of letting the mayors select their own representative was discussed in Council, but was rejected because of the fear that this would institute the Commune.<sup>35</sup> Finally, it was decided to suppress the title of Mayor of Paris, and that Ferry was to act as the Government's sole representative to the mayors. Since, as a member of the Government, he had just been confirmed in office, his position would be perfectly legal. The Parisian newspapers, recalling Ferry's part in the recent arrests, did not exactly sing hosannas in praise of Ferry's appointment. Le Combat urged the mayors not to recognize this "illegal usurpation," while Le Figaro observed that Ferry was the new Mayor of Paris, whatever the decree abolishing that office might say.<sup>36</sup> This, if unflattering, was the truth of the matter.

There was one further and very important postscript to the October 31 Affair. This concerned the armistice negotia-

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33. Denis, op. cit., II: 21.

34. Arago, op. cit., 329.

35. Dreo, op. cit., 322--Council of November 15.

36. Le Combat, November 20, 1870; Le Figaro, November 18, 1870.

tions opened by Thiers at the very hour at which the rebellion began. Thiers consulted with Bismarck for four days, learning enough about the chancellor in that time to refer to him as a "savage full of genius."<sup>37</sup> His plea for an armistice was made on the basis of elections and revictualling as agreed upon in the Council of October 30. According to Thiers, Bismarck seemed willing to grant these terms, until he heard of the rebellion of October 31 on November 3. Bismarck maintained that this showed the Parisian populace's determination for war, and that, therefore, he could not grant an armistice which would permit Paris to reorganize its defenses.<sup>38</sup> Actually, it seems very unlikely that Bismarck intended to grant the armistice which Thiers desired in the first place. He used the incident of the rebellion as a convenient excuse to inform Thiers that he was tightening the vice in which he held the French people.<sup>39</sup> The most favorable condition that Bismarck would agree to with respect to an armistice was to grant it either without revictualling or else with the surrender of a fortress.<sup>40</sup>

Discussion of these terms kept the Council and the newspapers busy during the first half of November. The possibility of an armistice came up again, briefly, in early December. To accede to an armistice without revictualling of the capital

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37. Claretie, *op. cit.*, 364.

38. Full text of Thiers' report in Claretie, *op. cit.*, 368-374.

39. Evidence that Prussia intended to demand Alsace-Lorraine as the price of peace as early as November is summarized in Bury, *op. cit.*, 176.

40. Thiers' statement, Claretie, *op. cit.*, 374.

would have been tantamount to conceding defeat. As Trochu said, this was what Bismarck desired, for, without food Paris could not be expected to resume fighting after the armistice expired.<sup>41</sup> It has been pointed out that in the First Balkan War in 1912 the Turks agreed to an armistice without revictualling for Adrianople. Soon after the armistice expired, the inhabitants of that city had to surrender. Such would have been the fate of Paris in 1870.<sup>42</sup> Bismarck's alternative was equally unacceptable. Surrender of a fortress would have placed the Prussians over the threshold of Paris, and made further resistance impossible.

Ferry's reactions to Bismarck's terms were dwelt upon at great length by the Commission of Inquiry. The Commission believed that the Government should have held elections without an armistice. However, this was out of the question, and, in Trochu's words, it would have meant "peace at any price."<sup>43</sup> Ferry agreed whole-heartedly with Trochu. In his opinion the fact that the Prussians refused an armistice with elections showed that they did not desire peace at that time--therefore, war a outrance!"<sup>44</sup>

In the Council, at first all seemed in accord on this point. On November 5 Favre recounted the Thiers-Bismarck conversations, and the members present agreed unanimously that Bismarck's terms were unacceptable.<sup>45</sup> On November 7 Favre

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41. Trochu, op. cit., I: 401.

42. Recalled in Delabrousse, op. cit., I: 383.

43. Dreo, op. cit., 316--Council of November 13.

44. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 361.

45. Dreo, op. cit., 283.

read his note, published in the Journal Officiel, to this effect, and again unanimous approval was recorded.<sup>46</sup>

But by November 8 a considerable section of the Parisian press had editorialized on the desirability of elections without an armistice. On November 10 Le Temps decided that this probably was preferable; the day before it had noted that La Patrie, La Vérité, and several other newspapers felt the same way. Through November 15, Le Temps repeatedly urged the necessity of elections for an assembly.<sup>47</sup> Le Journal des Débats urged an assembly almost daily throughout the month of November.<sup>48</sup> Le Figaro looked at the situation in the same way.<sup>49</sup>

Sensitive, as always, to public opinion, several of the members of the Council now began to think worse of the no-election decision. On November 8 Simon brought up the issue. Ferry urged that it be dropped once and for all, since they must not excite public opinion every other day with this and other questions.<sup>50</sup> On November 12 Picard spoke of the possibility once more. Ferry replied that he would not consider elections in this manner: they were equivalent to surrender. After all the high-sounding phrases which the Government had indulged in, he would not consider elections before a great battle.<sup>51</sup> It is evident that as early as this session of

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46. Dréo, op. cit., 289.

47. See Le Temps, November 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 1870.

48. See Journal des Débats, November 1870.

49. Le Figaro, November 15, 1870.

50. Dréo, op. cit., 293.

51. Ibid., 311.

November 12, Favre and Picard had given up the struggle, and would have accepted elections to prepare a peace with loss of Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>52</sup> The matter was dropped, for the time being, only after the Council of November 15 had recessed.<sup>53</sup>

The question of dealing with the Prussians came up again on December 6, when "Herr General" Trochu received a cryptic message from General von Moltke, informing him that Orléans had just fallen to the Germans for the second time. This looked like a feeler, for von Moltke's letter invited Trochu to send one of his officers to him, if he wished verification.<sup>54</sup> Picard and Favre immediately wished to seize the opening presented. Ferry believed that this was what he considered one of those typical Prussian tricks: probably the Army of the Loire had received the same kind of a message about the state of Paris. Ferry stated that he was unalterably opposed to sending an officer. He added, talking in the manner of Trochu:

"...To prevent the Prussians from entering Paris is a dream. We have a mind to do it. Therefore, it is to this aim that we must direct all of our efforts and the single means of preventing them (from entering) is to fight."<sup>55</sup>

A long discussion ensued. Picard felt that if capitulation was inevitable, then the sooner the better. Trochu, Garnier-Pagès, Arago, Dorian, and Ferry agreed that fighting

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52. Dréo, op. cit., 311-313.

53. Ibid., 326.

54. Ibid., 379; Simon, op. cit., II: 193-194.

55. Dréo, op. cit., 380.

might possibly save France, while capitulation never would. Their will prevailed, and Trochu dispatched a tart rejection of any assistance from "M. le Général Moltke."<sup>56</sup> This ended negotiations until the capitulation in late January.

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## II

Most of the month of November was spent in devising a serious offensive, with which to harry, if not break, the German lines of investment. In this connection, the slow-moving Trochu now had a "Plan," which looked good on paper and was partly the brainchild of Ducrot. It was discussed in the greatest secrecy by the two generals during October. As originally devised, the Plan called for the besieged armies to break through the northwest of Paris at a moment when an army from Normandy should come down the Seine Valley to their rescue.<sup>57</sup>

Then followed the usual fumbling which inevitably ruined all of the Government's good intentions. Trochu had let Gambetta proceed to Tours without informing him of his "Plan," although everybody in Paris knew about it, because it had been made public just after Gambetta's departure. The rest of October was spent in trying to straighten out this confusion, to which end the Ranc mission contributed virtually nothing. Although he became aware of Trochu's intentions, Gambetta had plans of his own for the relief of Paris. These were suspend-

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56. Simon, op. cit., II: 194.

57. Denis, op. cit., II: 57; Bury, op. cit., 151.

ed during the interlude of the Thiers negotiations, but resumed on November 7. On November 9 Gambetta's provincial army amazed Germans and French alike by winning the Battle of Coulmiers. The next day the Germans were forced to evacuate Orléans.<sup>58</sup>

As Ferry said, this victory seemed to justify the Government's decision to fight a war à outrance.<sup>59</sup> But it also forced General Trochu to change his plans. Always slow to act, and unwilling to order Gambetta to proceed in accordance with "le Plan Trochu," its author now found himself forced to plot his course according to the advance of Gambetta's army.<sup>60</sup> Consequently, Trochu got busy reorganizing for a break through southeast of the city into the Marne Valley, there to meet the Army of the Loire, presumably. On November 24 Trochu sent the following dispatch to Gambetta:

"The news from the Army of the Loire has naturally determined me to make a sortie by the south, and go ahead, cost what it may. I shall complete the preparations, which have been hastened on by night and by day, Monday (November 28). On Tuesday the 29th, the outer army commanded by General Ducrot, the most energetic of us, will attack the enemy's fortified positions..."<sup>61</sup>

Through ill-luck, Gambetta received this information only on November 30. The first time the message was sent, the balloon carrying it was blown to Norway, where the citizens of Christiana were mystified to hear that they could expect General Ducrot to come bursting in on them.<sup>62</sup> At Tours, Gambetta

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58. Bury, op. cit., 158.

59. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 364.

60. Bury, op. cit., 184.

61. Ibid., 189.

62. Ibid., 189.

had the Army of the Loire attempt an offensive in order to come to Trochu's aid when he received the General's dispatch. But his general, d'Aurelles de Paladines, incurred defeat which brought the evacuation, already mentioned, of Orléans on December 4.<sup>63</sup>

Back in Paris, there was a period of feverish energy before the battle. General Ducrot, in order to inspire confidence in his men, issued a bombastic pronouncement to the effect that he would re-enter Paris after the battle either victorious or dead.<sup>64</sup> This set the pace for the preparations.

In this connection, Ferry was a participant in an untoward incident which illustrated the intensity of the class antagonism in Paris. It had been decided to send the Belleville battalions of the National Guard into action in the forthcoming battle, since they had been clamoring for the chance for some time. Toward the end of November, Ferry, as Mayor of Paris, presented Delescluze, as Mayor of Belleville, with the flag of honor for the sharpshooters of Belleville. Informed of unrest and discontent among the men, he decided to make a visit to Belleville, as he had done on October 11.<sup>65</sup> Since he was known in the radical quarters of Paris to have been the prime mover in the prosecutions, he incurred no little risk in venturing to Belleville a second time. He was

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63. Bury, *op. cit.*, 189-193.

64. Claretie, *op. cit.*, 410, has a reprint of Ducrot's proclamation.

65. Ferry's testimony, "Enquête sur le 18 mars," *Annales*, IX: 418.

very badly received when he stepped before the assembled battalions. They had found a variety of excuses for not wanting to fight. The most peculiar of these concerned the flag. The men told him that they would never march with it. It was a special flag, they said, to let Bismarck know which was the Belleville battalion, in order to have them massacred. An hour after Ferry left, they tore the flag to bits. With this the affair was closed. Ferry was of the opinion that, however unfriendly his reception, the Belleville sharpshooters would not have marched at all without this visit.<sup>66</sup> The men fought so poorly in the battle that on December 6 it was decided to disarm them and to dissolve the units.<sup>67</sup>

The battles around the Marne ended in another defeat for the French. Dogged by continued ill-fortune, Trochu's advance was delayed for a time by a rising of the Marne. Heavy fighting occurred between November 30 and December 2 before the French forces had to retire once more.<sup>68</sup> General Ducrot returned neither dead nor victorious, thenceforth joining the Government in being continually reminded of unfulfilled promises. Previously full of fight, Ducrot, in the fashion of many a defeated general, now reversed himself, becoming an advocate of peace at any price.<sup>69</sup>

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66. Ferry's testimony, "Enquête sur le 18 mars," Annales, IX: 419.

67. Dréo, op. cit., 386.

68. Denis, op. cit., II: 60-64.

69. Trochu, op. cit., I: 469.

## III

During November and December a debate occurred repeatedly over the conduct of the Tours delegation. Ferry usually defended strongly the delegation's activities, since attacks on it amounted to veiled criticisms of his friend, Gambetta. Distrust of the provincial half of the Government was inspired chiefly by Picard, who suspected the delegation of behind-the-scenes actions which could commit the officials in Paris. The difficulty of communication with Tours-Bordeaux was a serious matter, for it led to all kinds of speculations and rumors, in the absence of authentic information. Gambetta's dispatches came through infrequently, and after much delay Ferry confided to Gambetta his feelings about this:

"We have suffered to an extraordinary degree, and with an impatience which is explained by our cruel isolation, from the rarity of official news, compared to the abundance of private dispatches. So many pigeons employed to say: We are doing well'--'Pay my rent'--'Marie was in childbirth, baby superb'--without a word of your affairs: this was exasperating. You have some enemies in the council. You know them, they are mine likewise...We have not ceased to defend you...; we have made our act of faith, and swore that that there was some mystery. I was very sure of it. It would serve no purpose to have friends, if they wouldn't swear without knowing."<sup>70</sup>

On November 4, in fact, Ferry joined Picard and Trochu in criticizing the Tours delegation for its repeated usurpations of power.<sup>71</sup> Even on this occasion he defended the Dele-

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70. Lettres, 89-90; letter to Gambetta, December 15, 1870.

71. Dréo, op. cit., 279.

gation against any further criticisms. Picard, as might be expected, had the greatest dislike for Gambetta, and repeatedly raised doubts about him. Throughout November he was very much upset over a loan which the Tours delegation had contracted from London banking interests in order to continue the prosecution of the war. Uninformed of the nature of this loan, Picard advised a Government disavowal of it. Ferry, alarmed, said that he was sure the delegation was not as culpable in this matter as it appeared to be.<sup>72</sup>

On November 17 Picard brought up the question of the loan again, asking that a note be entered in the minutes of the Council, explaining his refusal to agree to the delegation's financial policy.<sup>73</sup> Ferry immediately tilted with the Minister of Finance. He maintained that it was disloyal for a member of the Council to enter an objection without making it public. In fact, he objected to the Government as a whole remaining silent on the loan, asking the members to issue a statement, one way or the other, for the public's enlightenment. This was put off, however.<sup>74</sup>

On November 29 Picard said that the silence of Tours was calculated, and recommended that they send special investigators thereto. Ferry, with Simon's assistance, protested any such ill-advised scheme.<sup>75</sup> Ferry must have felt relieved when

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72. Dréo, *op. cit.*, 279-280.

73. *Ibid.*, 329-330.

74. *Ibid.*, 330-331.

75. *Ibid.*, 362.

on December 15 Favre read a dispatch from Gambetta in which the latter said that fifteen messages between Tours and Paris had gone astray.<sup>76</sup> In his letter to Gambetta of that day, Ferry did himself justice in explaining that he had repeatedly defended his friend against Picard's insinuations.

There was another member of the Government with whom Ferry was having difficulties, albeit over an entirely different subject. This was Cresson, the Prefect of Police. Oddly enough, Ferry appeared to have had an aversion for the prefects--he thought little of Kératry, he quarreled bitterly with Adam, and he was contemptuous of the nervous Cresson. Their differences were partly personal, but chiefly over the ticklish issue of political liberty within the gates of the capital. Ferry did not desire suppression of free speech for the duration of the siege, as one might hastily conclude from his attitude on the prosecutions. It will be recalled that in September and October he had agreed with the majority in the Council that the basic liberties should be protected just as long as possible. His outlook in this respect in no way changed after October 31. Cresson, on the other hand, believed that in the perilous state at hand every precaution should be taken.<sup>77</sup> Cresson's attitude was identical with that of Picard. Like most conservatives he took the consistent and comparatively simple position that the state of the siege made suppression of civil liberties necessary. Ferry's attitude

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76. Dréo, op. cit., 409-410.

77. See Cresson's opinions in the conclusion of his book op. cit., 341.

was more intricate and therefore more readily subject to misinterpretation. The siege presupposed no rebellion by force of arms, no violations of military secrecy, and a variety of inconveniences in every day life. Aberrations in these instances should be severely punished. In all other respects life in the capital should proceed unimpaired, barring a closer investment by the Prussians.

Thus, when on November 20 Cresson called attention to the fact that several newspapers were in the habit of issuing news bulletins in a white color--reserved for official documents--Ferry expressed the opinion that an immediate halt to this was in order.<sup>78</sup> Prosecutions might follow, if the offence were repeated.

In other instances, however, the two clashed. On November 11 Cresson spoke lugubriously about the reconstitution of the International, a dangerous vehicle of revolt in Paris. Ferry answered immediately that this had never been a center of action. "As for the pretended agitators, most people recognized that there was little to fear from Flourens' sharpshooters--and the agitation now was deprived of the direction of the dangerous chiefs."<sup>79</sup> Ferry was not altogether correct in regarding the International as of no importance. This organization was the backbone of the Central Committee. He was doubtless thinking of the International of the pre-war period. At any rate, this little speech reveals that Ferry was not an

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78. Dréo, op. cit., 338-339.

79. Ibid., 305.

exponent of reaction for its own sake.

Another instance of this cropped up in a dispute with Cresson on November 15. The Prefect complained that the political clubs were the scenes of violent speeches. The secretary of the Council reported in the minutes:

"M. Ferry protests against this allegation. In this direction, likewise, things have been very much improved.... The liberty of the clubs appears indispensable to him, and he finds that each day they are more noteworthy in defense of the Government."<sup>80</sup>

Cresson replied that since M. Ferry had more information on the clubs than the Prefect of Police, he would resign. He left in a huff, slamming the door behind him<sup>81</sup>--a favorite way of exit for the Government's several Prefects of Police. Cresson soon thought better of his resignation. According to his own account, Favre convinced him to remain in office, consoling him with the statement that he need not let Ferry hurt his feelings, for he was a "violent, brutal man, of whom it was necessary to ignore the nervous temper."<sup>82</sup>

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#### IV

About a week following the Battle of the Marne, very definite signs of discouragement and dissension began to appear in the Council. The most recent defeat had only confirmed Picard and Favre in their conviction that the struggle was hopeless. On December 10, in the absence of Trochu, Favre

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80. Dréo, op. cit., 323.

81. Ibid., 324.

82. Cresson, op. cit., 72.

made a slighting reference to his generalship. Ferry, who had almost a reverential respect for Trochu at the time, jumped to his defense, saying they must wait while Trochu prepared a new offensive. Ferry continued with some advice for Favre:

"Do not persevere in this mood of discouragement which destroys faith, courage, and energy in everyone. It is necessary to have absolute faith in the commander-in-chief, and as for me, I have just that for General Trochu."<sup>83</sup>

In this setting of discouragement, and dissatisfaction with the Tours delegation, he unburdened himself at length in his letter of December 15 to Gambetta. The letter makes it very clear that he was at one with Gambetta in wishing to fight to the bitter end:

"....I must, at present, speak to you of us...It is not necessary to trouble you with the admonitions you receive. They are explained, in another sense, by the intimate abuse that they (i.e., Favre, Picard) made: that they perpetrate on this great, loyal and highest of high spirits (Trochu), whose single weakness is to give way with a feminine facility to the reiterated advice of insincere friends....

...Paris is admirable, poised, purified by the carnival of October 31. The continued ascendancy of good sense is eliminating all semblance of discord. There is only famine which can alter this astonishing attitude, and famine is still far away. It will come, no doubt, sooner or later; the enemy thinks it will be soon--he deceives himself....In any case, if the enemy subdues Paris by famine, he will have verified that Paris is not France; he will not find--I swear it--anyone who will treat for France. Someone will carry our testament to

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83. Dréo, op. cit., 395.

you. We shall bequeath it to you, all of you, for France to defend, behind the Loire, behind the Garonne, in Toulon or in Cherbourg, just as if Paris did not exist.

We are not, I repeat it, at this point, and before it is reached we shall kill many of them....I embrace you with all my soul, as if this were the last salute. Long live the Republic!"<sup>84</sup>

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84. Lettres, 90,92-93.

## CHAPTER VI

## CAPITULATION!

## I

Between mid-December and late January the Government of National Defense moved irresistably toward an ignominious end: capitulation before the Germans. In the superheated state of public feeling in Paris, this was certain to bring about denunciations which would make earlier criticisms seem trifling. But the Government was able to do little about it.

It will be recalled that Ferry had added to his other functions the responsibility of acting as Mayor of Paris. From November 15 until well after the end of the siege, he busied himself with the arduous tasks of presiding over the mayors' meetings and assisting in the administration of subsistence for the stricken capital. In order to study this phase of his work from the beginning, it is examined from all points of view in a subsequent chapter. For the present, we shall follow him in the sessions of the Council to the end of the siege.

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II

A new event arose to disturb the Council members during December and early January. Russia had taken advantage of the distraction caused by the war to denounce Article II of the

Treaty of Paris ending the Crimean War. This clause of the treaty, providing for the neutralization of the Black Sea, had been accepted by Russia because of her defeat. Now she abrogated the offending article. Britain, naturally, was extremely uneasy over this state of affairs. Bismarck took the initiative to propose a conference, which would meet in London, to resolve the difficulty.<sup>1</sup> As far as the Government of National Defense was concerned, the question for debate was whether to send a representative to a conference which, seemingly, would have nothing to do with France's quarrel with Prussia.

The matter was seriously debated in the Council of December 16, where a majority indicated a desire to forswear participation in the conference.<sup>2</sup> Ferry agreed, feeling that it was impossible to participate in a conference in which only the Treaty of Paris was to be discussed. A vote was taken on the issue, and only two, Simon and Picard, wished to have France send a representative.<sup>3</sup>

Gambetta, recalling Cavour's actions before the Crimean War, realized that a conference brings forth a great many conversations not listed on the agenda. He besought Favre to journey to London in person.<sup>4</sup> Favre was very suspicious of any conference called by Bismarck. But, receiving a new message from Bordeaux, the day following the vote, he announced

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1. Bury, op. cit., 211-212.

2. Dreo, op. cit., 413.

3. Ibid., 414.

4. Bury, op. cit., 213.

he had changed his mind: when the conference convened, he would be there.<sup>5</sup>

Formal invitations were sent out on December 29. Favre, however, did not attend. Once again his confinement in the capital was unfortunate; Bismarck, the self-appointed custodian of France's mail service, withheld all diplomatic correspondence for ten days. Favre received the invitations to attend on January 10. By that date the Germans had begun their bombardment of Paris. The conference was to open on January 17, but Favre could not leave the city except through the humiliating expedient of asking a safe-conduct from Bismarck.<sup>6</sup>

After Favre received his invitation, the Council reconsidered the entire subject. By this date, January 11, Ferry, as on several occasions in the past, had realized the wisdom in Gambetta's point of view. He joined Favre and Picard in urging the others to agree to a request for a safe-conduct. Several Council members were opposed because public opinion, as revealed by the press, seemed to be against participation in the conference.<sup>7</sup> Ferry was anxious to gain recognition of the Republic from the sessions of the conference, and, furthermore, to prevent monarchist intriguing. He warned the Council that they would be held collectively responsible for non-participation. Simon, irritated, reminded Ferry in turn that when the subject was discussed in December he had been opposed to par-

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5. Bury, *op. cit.*, 213. Dréo, *op. cit.*, 416-417-Council of December 17.

6. Favre, *op. cit.*, II: 285, 292-293.

7. *Ibid.*, II: 293.

ticipation.<sup>8</sup> Within two weeks, due to the imminence of capitulation, the subject was a dead issue. As late as January 17, however, Ferry regretted that Favre was not outside of Paris,<sup>9</sup> thus giving evidence that he had come to a belated realization of an opportunity lost.

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III

On December 21-22 Trochu attempted another of his infrequent "sorties," aimed toward Bourget. His armies were soundly defeated again.<sup>10</sup> Thenceforth, the subject of his qualifications as a general became a favorite topic for the Council, whenever Trochu was absent.

On Christmas Day Favre remarked that Trochu's temporization would lead them to disaster. Then, as earlier, Ferry revealed himself to be the general's most faithful defender in the Council. He repeated that he had an absolute confidence in him. But, for the first time, he made an analysis of the military situation in a sense critical of the Governor of Paris. He noted that the Battle of Bourget was not conducted with firmness. The mayors, he added, fairly inundated him with criticisms of the Breton. It was better to lose 20,000 men than to face the charge of inaction.<sup>11</sup> The others desired a committee of wardship to direct Trochu in the future. Ferry was opposed to this scheme. In his opinion, none of the gen-

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8. Dréo, op. cit., 512-513.

9. Ibid., 535.

10. Claretie, op. cit., 442-443.

11. Dréo, op. cit., 441.

erals except Trochu and Ducrot could be trusted with a campaign. To set up an advisory council would be the equivalent of military anarchy. Picard presented the suggestion of a war council which could discuss the military questions from all angles. Ferry immediately declared himself opposed to the plan, for the generals would be sure to recommend peace. The best solution, he thought, would be a conference devoted to military problems. This should be in no sense hostile to Trochu, and thus the general could feel free to explain his plans.<sup>12</sup> Then it was decided that conference of all the generals would be called for the date of New Year's Eve.

The day arrived, and the generals conferred. As Ferry predicted, they were pessimistic. Only General Vinoy saw the slightest possibility of breaking through the German lines.<sup>13</sup> However, in a gesture designed to assuage the feelings of the downcast civilians, Trochu ended the conference by announcing that he would never capitulate. According to Cresson, this excited the greatest enthusiasm. "Jules Ferry, in the midst of the members of the Government, cried, while shaking the general's hands: 'Thank you, general, those are beautiful and heartening words.'"<sup>14</sup> Referring to this meeting in a letter to Gambetta, Ferry reiterated his confidence in the Governor:

"I always conclude that...of the generals,  
T. is not only the most intelligent, but the

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12. Dréo, op. cit., 442-443.

13. Ibid., 468-471.

14. Cresson, op. cit., 157-158.

most audacious--the most republican as well, and the most confident in the defense."<sup>15</sup>

Yet his doubts were increasing. Even as he wrote Gambetta, he was pressing for quick action by the military forces. Official rationing of bread was at last contemplated, and Ferry informed Trochu that this would be acceptable to the populace only if a battle were immediately engaged. Trochu exhibited resentment at Ferry's exposition. The latter went on, nevertheless, to urge that he employ the National Guard to a greater extent.<sup>16</sup> Again, on January 14, Ferry pestered Trochu to "hasten, at all costs, hasten." The general replied that the Council would see military action within six days. The secretary of the Council indicated in his minutes that the incident was closed: "M. Ferry recognizes that he has nothing more to say."<sup>17</sup>

It was during the several days before the final Battle of Buzenval that the hard-pressed General Trochu made a gesture which was as revealing as it was pathetic. He drew up a long proclamation in which he recommended to the Parisians that they offer prayers and an invocation to Sainte Geneviève, who had, according to tradition, saved Paris from the Huns. The proclamation was not published, for the other members of the Council did not share the general's religious convictions.<sup>18</sup>

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15. Lettres, 97--Letter of January 10, 1871.

16. Dreó, op. cit., 507.

17. Ibid., 526.

18. Trochu, op. cit., I: 508; Cresson, op. cit., 209.

This incident, followed by the setback at Buzenval, convinced Ferry that his colleagues were correct in demanding Trochu's dismissal. After the disaster was known, Favre and Ferry journeyed to the battlefield in the middle of the night of January 19-20. They received only the discouraging news from Trochu that all was finished, and that they must resign themselves to surrender.<sup>19</sup>

The next day Ferry mentioned, on behalf of a majority of the Council, that it was necessary to find a new general who would not view the future as pessimistically as did Trochu. This proved easier said than done, as consultations with the generals on the dates of January 21 and 22 showed. Also, his removal was an exceptionally painful task. This was because Trochu's private statement of December 31 had been made public: "The Governor of Paris would never surrender."<sup>20</sup> In order to get around this obstacle the Council resorted to the circuitous device of retaining Trochu as President of the Council, while replacing him as commander-in-chief. Thus, as Governor of Paris he did not surrender, for he no longer held the post.<sup>21</sup>

His successor was General Vinoy, formerly a senator under Napoleon III.<sup>22</sup> This fact made the Council members aware that his appointment would not overjoy the populace.<sup>23</sup> It is

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19. Favre, op. cit., II: 331-332.

20. Dreo, op. cit., --Council of January 20.

21. Trochu, op. cit., I: 519-520.

22. Simon, op. cit., II: 320; Favre, op. cit., II: 351.

23. Claretie, op. cit., 518.

interesting to note that before Vinoy was given the position of commander-in-chief (which he did not desire), the Council took a vote on his acceptability. Six civilian Council members were opposed to General Vinoy. Three voted in his favor --LeFlô and Trochu, and one civilian--Ferry.<sup>24</sup> They had to accept Vincy, however, for, said General Trochu, no other general would take the post.<sup>25</sup>

This was an empty gesture, in reality, for the siege was just about finished. Ferry, doubtless, was too confident that Trochu could save them. He admitted as much in a letter to Gambetta, dated February 8:

"...Trochu?--Trochu, undoubtedly, was our greatest error, and, I must confess, I believed in him far too much...for two reasons, about which I have already written: (1) because he was, assuredly, of all the generals, the single one to whom the Republic could be entrusted; (2) because he was the one who had the most faith in the defense."<sup>26</sup>

Despite the above explanation, it should be noted that these considerations were not enough. A successful campaign by an energetic general would have done more for the Government of National Defense than anything else. Ferry's misplaced confidence in Trochu was probably his greatest misjudgment.

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24. Dréo, op. cit., 560--Council of January 21.

25. Trochu, op. cit., I: 540-541.

26. Lettres, 102.

## IV

With the beginning of January, the election question, which had been shelved for six weeks, reappeared as a live issue in Council. This was a favorite subject of Picard and Favre, since elections were the expedient most likely to end the fighting. The lull and the distractions caused by elections would make it difficult for the French people to regain their will to fight. Favre and Picard were convinced that the people were war-weary, and that nothing could possibly be gained by a continuance of the struggle. Therefore, elections would be the best way out. Most of the others did not share their ideas in early January.

On New Year's Day, the question of elections having been raised, a vote showed that only Picard, Favre, and Simon favored same.<sup>27</sup> Two days later the moderates brought up the matter again. This time Ferry made a point of seconding Garnier-Pages, who indicated himself opposed to any elections.<sup>28</sup> The next day he explained how he viewed the question at that time: on October 2 elections would have been possible, but in January they would only disorganize the defense. If they took place, it would only mean abandoning the struggle. "Action or resignation!--This is the alternative facing us in Paris, and which disturbs the calm maintained by the Government."<sup>29</sup>

Ferry confided to Gambetta that the "retrograde elements" in the Council, whom they disliked, were the advocates of

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27. Dreo, *op. cit.*, 486.

28. *Ibid.*, 488-489.

29. *Ibid.*, 492--Council of January 4.

elections:

"The elections have been the flag, here as down there (in the provinces). I honor myself with having always opposed them. It is evident that Paris for three or four months hasn't thought of them for three minutes. Here, the question for the people, as for the Government, is only to fight..."<sup>30</sup>

Two weeks later, when armistice negotiations were being seriously contemplated, Ferry still did not feel that elections might solve the Government's dilemma. Ferry stated that, in his opinion, the Government's vote of November 3 had conferred upon it all responsibility for the capital, and that it must not try to evade its duties by further elections.<sup>31</sup> By January 20 the elections issue had merged into the now-dominating problem of an armistice, and will be most advantageously considered in this context.

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V

With the siege rapidly approaching an unhappy climax, the moot point of the extent of political liberties within the capital could no longer be avoided. This was particularly so, of course, because of the ever-present possibility of another rebellion.

In the course of becoming thoroughly dissatisfied with the Government, the population of Paris was most discontented over the conduct of military operations. The defeat at Buzen-

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30. Lettres, 98--Letter of January 9, 1871.

31. Dréo, op. cit., 550--Council of January 20.

val capped the dissatisfaction, and Trochu's replacement by Vinoy did nothing to assuage the people's ire. Rationing of bread on January 19 was only another source of irritation. The political pot was ready to boil over again.<sup>32</sup>

On January 22, at the very end of the siege, an uprising against the Government over political differences was the single instance of blood flowing for this reason. In the early hours of the day, Flourens, imprisoned since December, escaped from Mazas.<sup>33</sup> He marched in triumph to Belleville, where he distributed all of the provisions of the mayor's office to his friends. Since the political clubs were listening to orators who demanded an immediate rebellion, the Flourens incident warned the Government to expect the worse during the day.<sup>34</sup>

In truth, the Jacobins were again prepared to take advantage of the unrest. Ledru-Rollin, who was more or less of a point of contact between the avancés and the Government, had seen several of the generals. He reported their vacillating attitude to his friends, and they determined on a move led by one of the committees of vigilance, the Alliance Républicaine, for the day of the twenty-second.<sup>35</sup> The adhesion of the Blanquists was obtained. Blanqui, in his sixties, was at last beginning to doubt the efficacy of his life-long technique of

32. For evidence of the widespread unrest, see, Le Temps, Jan. 22; Journal des Débats, Jan. 22; Le Combat, Jan. 21--an editorial which openly advocated rebellion; Le Figaro, Jan. 20, and many others.

33. Dreo, op. cit., 560.

34. Journal des Débats, Jan. 21, 22; Simon, op. cit., II:319-320.

35. Arnould's account in Arnould, op. cit., 60, 66-67.

conspirational revolt. However, egged on by his followers, he agreed to a demonstration for January 22. He would lurk in a neighboring café, while his Blanquists demonstrated before the Hotel de Ville. If they succeeded, he would take command, as he had done on October 31.<sup>36</sup>

By noon of January 22 there were crowds of harmless but dissatisfied people milling about the Hotel de Ville. The Government had had reliable units of the National Guards stationed around and within the building ever since October 31. Their presence helped to disperse this crowd after nothing more injurious than a series of hoots and boos directed at the members of the Government.<sup>37</sup> Only in mid-afternoon, when several National Guard battalions dominated by radical leaders appeared, did the situation become dangerous.

The Government was well-prepared. General Vinoy, unlike Trochu, was not at all averse to using regular troops to crush an incipient revolution. Consequently, there were regulars as well as National Guardsmen on hand at the Hotel de Ville.

On this occasion Ferry was not present, but knew what was coming. He was closeted with M. Pelletier, supervisor of Parisian bakeries, in a conference at the Ministry of the Interior discussing the subject of the deplorable lack of food.<sup>38</sup> He had left the Hotel de Ville in charge of one of his deputies, Gustave Chaudey. About 4:00 P.M. Chaudey received a deputation which informed him that the defense was poorly con-

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36. Nomad, op. cit., 65.

37. Claretie, op. cit., 520.

38. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 367.

ducted and the Government incompetent. The committee was displeased with his response, which consisted simply of saying that he would refer the matter to M. Ferry, who would take it up with the Government. The deputation marched out of the building, and joined the radical battalions which had just lined up before the Hotel de Ville.<sup>39</sup>

Then it happened. The radicals fired, not very accurately, on some of the troops stationed before the Hotel de Ville.<sup>40</sup> Up went the windows in the second floor of the building, and the regulars within replied with a murderous fire, which swept the streets. After fifteen minutes of aimless skirmishing, the National Guard battalions were routed, twenty were captured, another twenty wounded, and five killed.<sup>41</sup> Chaudey was falsely blamed by the revolutionaries for the fusillade. Captured during the Commune, he was executed by Raoul Rigault four months after this affair.<sup>42</sup> With the revolt suppressed so quickly, Ferry telegraphed the mayors that all was well. His message, which referred to the "crime of a few"<sup>43</sup> was not unknown to the radicals, who now could claim that he had perpetrated "le massacre Ferry."

The aftermath was a stormy session of the Council, which culminated in a decision to restrain freedom of speech and the

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39. Mason, op. cit., 97; Claretie, op. cit., 522.

40. There has been a great debate over which side fired first. Many authorities exist for whatever side the interested individual prefers. Claretie, op. cit., 522 is the source used here. He was sympathetic to moderate and advanced republicans, and was a witness of the melee.

41. Claretie, op. cit., 523; Mason, op. cit., 97, estimates the casualties at fifty.

42. Mason, op. cit., 276.

43. Ibid., 97-98.

press. For Ferry, the affair brought further undeserved hatred. Blamed by the radicals for instigating repression, he was to be denounced by the conservatives for excessive leniency.

In the Council, a unanimous decision (with Ferry not at the moment in attendance) was reached to close the clubs, which were regarded as centers of insurrection. Pyat and Delescluze, if words meant anything, had openly advocated rebellion in their newspapers, bringing suspension of Le Combat and Le Réveil. The question as to whether the two editors needed to be arrested was more debatable. Ferry, who had entered in the meantime, voted as part of the majority of six which favored the arrests. Three--Arago, Magnin, and Dorian--were opposed, while Garnier-Pagès did not vote.<sup>44</sup> Ferry's attitude was consistent with the position he had previously taken towards individuals who threatened the internal peace. With the siege so tight at this stage, limitations on freedom of speech could be justified as eminently necessary.

This session of the Council witnessed a clash between Ferry and Vinoy about one of the individuals who was arrested a few hours before. This man was reported to have ordered the firing on the Hotel de Ville. Cresson and Vinoy wanted him court-martialed in order to obtain a summary execution. Ferry, who had arrived at the Hotel de Ville in the last minutes of the skirmishing, had observed the arrest of the man. He had

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<sup>44</sup>. Dréo, op. cit., 563, 565.

presented himself as an intermediary, unarmed, and holding a white handkerchief, asking to have the firing halted.<sup>45</sup> Ferry, then, had him conducted to Vincennes, to await trial before a council of war, much to Vinoy's disgust.

Ferry was made to appear in a very unfavorable light in this incident. The individual in question was Sérizier, soon to be one of the most notorious Communards. He is usually held responsible for one of the worst incidents of execution of hostages during the last hours of the Commune.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, in the January 22 Affair, it is quite possible, as the conservatives have said,<sup>47</sup> that Sérizier divested himself in all haste of his military equipment, then hurried up to the Hotel de Ville in the pose of a parlementaire. Cresson blamed Ferry mightily for his intervention,<sup>48</sup> and his charge is repeated by the Orleanist historian, Denis.<sup>49</sup>

Ferry's defense of his actions went as follows. It was understandable why generals should be so interested in rapid court-martials, but Cresson, a man of law, had favored it. In the midst of the May Days, he said, he had heard MacMahon severely reprove executions without judgment. He was glad that he, and the Government for which he worked, had had juridic scruples.<sup>50</sup>

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45. Dréo, op. cit., 564-565; Ferry's letter to the "Enquête sur le 18 mars" in Annales, X: 259.

46. Mason, op. cit., 277.

47. Denis, op. cit., II: 172.

48. Cresson, op. cit., 231.

49. Denis, op. cit., II: 172.

50. Ferry's letter to the "Enquête sur le 18 mars" in Annales, X: 260.

The affair was a good illustration of how unlucky Ferry was at times, for his motives were completely misconstrued. He received no thanks from the avancés for saving Sérizier, although the conservatives were quick to cite this as further evidence of his complicity with the radicals.

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VI

At last the Government was confronted with the most repugnant issue it had ever faced, namely, the now unavoidable necessity of an armistice. This problem, once it became paramount, had two facets: how to obtain the best terms possible for the capital, and how, in the course of these negotiations, to make some kind of arrangements for Gambetta's government in the provinces.

With the Battle of Buzenval immediately in the offing, the Government on the date of January 17 was engaged in a lengthy discussion of the armistice issue. Some of the Council members, more especially Ferry, were still hopeful that something might yet be saved from the wreckage. On January 8 they had received a Gambetta dispatch, dated December 31, which described in heartening terms the readiness of the provincial armies for further operations. Writing Gambetta the next day, Ferry mentioned the "inexpressible joy" with which they had received this optimistic news. The Parisians, who had been told of it, were unanimously enthusiastic.<sup>51</sup> In actuality, Gambetta's

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51. Lettres, 94.

description of the prospective operations was overly optimistic: the dispatch in question was, if anything, misleading.<sup>52</sup>

Ferry differed with Picard at the very beginning of the January 17 session. The latter felt that the Government could lay the bases of peace for all of France, once armistice negotiations were under way. No, said Ferry, doubtless thinking of Gambetta, they must not negotiate with the Prussians. Bismarck would like to do just this, for in this fashion he could disorganize the defense everywhere. They must treat only for Paris. If possible, theirs should be a flat capitulation, with no stipulations concerning the provinces.<sup>53</sup> As events proved, Ferry's wishes were illusory. Picard came much closer to describing what was to occur.

It was in this meeting that there took place a much-rumored clash between Favre and Ferry. Ferry, in the course of expounding his views, repeated his regret that Favre had not retired from Paris--with the Foreign Minister in the provinces, nobody would care what happened to the rest of them in the capital. Favre replied sharply that he had to remain in order to play the role of Eustache de Saint-Pierre to the Prussians. Ferry rose to his feet and yelled from one end of the Council table to the other that any of them there could play that part as well as he could. He added that he would be the first to offer himself, if they so desired.<sup>54</sup>

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52. Bury, op. cit., 220; Denis, op. cit., II: 152.

53. Dreo, op. cit., 554-555.

54. This, at least, is Rochefort's version--Rochefort, op. cit., I:311-312; Dreo's minutes of the meeting do not describe it so dramatically, merely reporting that in an exchange between Favre and Ferry, the latter had offered to play Eustache-Dréo, op. cit., 535.

After the battle, when all appeared lost, the discussion was resumed in the Council of January 20. The possibility was raised of letting the mayors act as intermediaries for the Government in the armistice negotiations, since they, now, were less unpopular than the Council members. Ferry rejected this advice, saying that it would seem too much like an effort of the Government to disengage itself from the responsibilities it had contracted.<sup>55</sup> He recommended that they find a general capable of attempting a new battle, then go ahead once more, since the pent-up feeling of the National Guard demanded it.<sup>56</sup> They could negotiate while fighting, but they should be careful not to commit provincial France.<sup>57</sup>

This meeting occurred early in the afternoon of the twentieth. That evening another session was held at which the mayors attended. They requested Trochu's resignation. They showed, also, an unwillingness to consider the idea of a complete capitulation.<sup>58</sup> Ferry had expressed in Council this as well as his own views.

In the session which met in the early evening following the rebellion of January 22, Ferry changed his attitude. Previously, he had appeared to consider the necessity of a dé-marche before the Prussians only with the greatest reluctance. Now he believed they must make haste to negotiate. What had changed his mind? Several events had transpired during the

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55. Dréo, op. cit., 547.

56. Ibid., 547.

57. Ibid., 550.

58. Ibid., 553-554.

passage of forty-eight hours, which, added to the other discouraging facts, seemed too much for him.

Only a few hours before there had taken place the attack on the Hotel de Ville. Civil war appeared close at hand. Then, Ferry's hope that a new general might conduct another sortie was futile. Vinoy was not going to do this. A meeting of the junior officers had even been called, and all had regretfully agreed that further resistance was hopeless.<sup>59</sup> Most important of all, Ferry had to admit that Favre was correct in pointing out that food existed only for a matter of days.<sup>60</sup> Rationing at a level so low that people could not long survive had been in existence for four days. Magnin believed that they might possibly hold out until February 4,<sup>61</sup> but this would have made no difference. They had found out other discouraging news. Word had come that Chanzy, in charge of Gambetta's two provincial armies, had been crushingly defeated.<sup>62</sup> It was known that the small forces of General Faidherbe, well to the north of Paris, were incapable of a serious offensive against the Germans.<sup>63</sup> Another army of Gambetta's under Bourbaki was en route to the beleaguered city of Belfort, but nothing was known of it.<sup>64</sup>

Keeping this in mind, Ferry desired that they enter into pourparlers immediately. If they waited, as Magnin wished,

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59. Minutes of this extraordinary meeting in Simon, op. cit., II; 331-335.

60. Dreo, op. cit., 567.

61. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 95.

62. Simon, op. cit., II: 316-317.

63. Favre, op. cit., II: 340.

64. Ibid., 340.

until February 4, they would have nothing with which to bargain with Bismarck. If they negotiated without further delay, they knew they had at least a little food in reserve. Negotiate then, but the negotiator must display great discretion. The meeting closed on this determination, with Favre to act as the agent.<sup>65</sup>

Next day at noon they discussed Favre's powers. Ferry observed that he must not listen to references concerning conditions of peace.<sup>66</sup> Others spoke to the same effect. Trochu summarized Favre's instructions:

He was not to present himself as vanquished, but as a free agent (an illustration of the almost naive hopefulness of the Council members). They in turn would tell the populace of the imminent famine after the démarche.

Favre should ask the enemy for conditions for Paris, with no intention of treating of peace.

He should bring up the possibility of revictualling and an armistice for Paris only.

By all means, he should not compromise Bourbaki's march.

As the limit of concessions, Favre might agree to a armistice.

He should exercise great caution in his choice of words before men such as the Prussians.<sup>67</sup>

On January 24, then, Favre made his forlorn trip to Ver-

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65. Dréo, op. cit., 569.

66. Ibid., 575.

67. Dréo, op. cit., 575-576; the stipulation to negotiate only for Paris is acknowledged by Favre, op. cit., II: 371.

sailles. Probably any other negotiator would have fared no better, conditions being what they were, at Bismarck's hands. Nevertheless, Favre seems to have lost his head, causing him to concede more than was absolutely necessary. He attempted to negotiate according to his instructions, only to find that Bismarck had a bewildering variety of schemes which he had not foreseen.

Early in the course of the negotiations, Bismarck made it clear that Paris would have to surrender her fortresses, the armies would lay down their arms, and a 200 million indemnity would be levied, to be paid within two weeks. Favre told Bismarck his terms were so severe that they would promote a new revolution in Paris. Bismarck was not at all disturbed. If Favre was unwilling to negotiate, he would deal with France's "regular" government as represented by a Napoleonic regency. If Favre would deal with him, but could not handle the French public, he would be happy to be of assistance: France, said Bismarck, was a hopelessly divided nation. Of the prisoners the Germans held, he explained, perhaps a third were republican or Orleanist, another third were indifferent, while the rest would still defend the Empire. He would be glad to lead the Bonapartist third back to France in order to restore order.

Shocked by all of this, Favre agreed to a general armistice in order to elect a national assembly, after he had al-

ready conceded the surrender of Paris.<sup>68</sup> To do this in January, after almost six months of fighting, was tantamount to ending the war. Finally, Bismarck agreed with Favre not to include Bourbaki's forces in the otherwise all-embracing armistice.<sup>69</sup> This was what they had desired, in order to maintain Bourbaki's freedom of action, but Favre should have smelled the proverbial rat when he found that Bismarck seemed to want this also. On the twenty-eighth, when they had concluded their discussions, Favre prepared a telegram to be sent to Gambetta. Bismarck intentionally let him send it without an explanation that the general armistice did not apply to Bourbaki. When Gambetta received it, he ordered Bourbaki's army to halt, while Bismarck had the German armies proceed to trap it hopelessly. Its remnants were neutralized in Switzerland.<sup>70</sup>

In Council on January 24 Favre described his conversations with the Prussian chancellor up to that point--this was several days before the Bourbaki misunderstanding. Ferry's first reaction to Favre's explanation of the proposed armistice was that the capital would not accept such terms. Favre mentioned that he and Bismarck might be able to reach an agreement by which the National Guard in Paris would retain its arms. Even with this concession, Ferry doubted that the

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68. Favre recounted his first meetings with Bismarck at great length in Council of January 24--Dreco, op. cit., 581-584; he prints a full account of all of the meetings in his memoirs, op. cit., II:380-404.

69. Favre, op. cit., II: 402-403.

70. Bury, op. cit., 222-223.

populace would accept the terms passively. Pelletan and Garnier-Pagès offered the opinion that the Government must now accept the Prussian terms. Ferry's solution was to have the Government publish all the information it had without further delay--publicity in order to destroy all illusions was the single means of forestalling a serious rebellion. A vote on the proposal to publish everything in the Journal Officiel resulted in only Trochu joining Ferry in favor of such a technique.<sup>71</sup>

The following afternoon further discussion revealed that the majority would accept the inevitable. Ferry, as would be expected, evinced some concern for Alsace-Lorraine, but offered no specific objections. His personal feelings were shown by one comment: "As for me, were I deputy, the fate of Paris would weigh little on my resolutions, if I saw France capable and prepared for a new resistance."<sup>72</sup>

A few incidental consequences of the armistice drew Ferry's attention. Cresson brought up the possibility that the Prussians might insist upon suppressing the newspapers. Garnier-Pagès said he would not sign armistice if the Prussians intended to be the police of Paris. Ferry evidenced that he shared Garnier-Pagès' reactions.<sup>73</sup> Another day in Council Ferry called attention, "with emotion", to the patriotic woes of the battalion chiefs. It was decided to tell

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71. Dréo, op. cit., 584-591.

72. Ibid., 598.

73. Ibid., 608.

them that "they shared their sorrow," but that the honor of the people had been safeguarded.<sup>74</sup> Finally, on January 31 the Council members became uneasy, as rumors spread about the fate of Bourbaki. Trochu begged Favre to answer his question as to whether Bourbaki's army was protected by the armistice. Ferry observed that if it was not, the disgrace would fall heavily on the Government. Trochu urged Favre to hasten to Prussian headquarters for clarification. The subject was dropped, after Ferry expressed the fear that "the Prussians have profited by an equivocation."<sup>75</sup> It was all too true.

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## VII

While treating with Bismarck, Favre, for all practical purposes, abandoned the position that there were two fighting forces in France, and that he was responsible for the one only. His armistice not only applied to Gambetta, but it deprived the latter's regime of any independent existence. Moreover, although Favre visited Bismarck on January 24, he neglected to notify Gambetta of what was afoot until all arrangements were completed on the twenty-eighth. Gambetta received Favre's message only on the morning of January 29.<sup>76</sup> The Bordeaux delegation's attitude toward a general armistice had not been inquired into. The terms amounted to a fait accompli for Gambetta. Favre mentioned in his dispatch that an

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74. Dréo, op. cit., 613.

75. Ibid., 633.

76. Bury, op. cit., 248.

emissary would follow, in order to offer explanations. When the Paris Government's representative had not appeared by the morning of January 31, Gambetta acted. He issued his famous decree carrying out the armistice agreement calling for general elections, which contained the notice that all Napoleonic official candidates and local officials were ineligible.<sup>77</sup> Simon arrived later in the day of the thirty-first, and he and Gambetta began a debate over the latter's action which lasted for several days.

Suddenly Bismarck, become the ardent suffragist, interjected himself into the drama. Made aware of the Bordeaux Decree, he dispatched a telegram to "Monsieur L. Gambetta" (not Monsieur le Ministre) protesting the decree as seeking to nullify the armistice clause which provided for free elections.<sup>78</sup> This seemed overt evidence of intervention by the hated enemy. Gambetta refused to alter his decree. A solution was found: one of Thiers' messengers in Paris suggested to the Council that if several more members were adjoined to Simon at Bordeaux, Gambetta might give way before a majority. Arago, Pelletan, and Garnier-Pagès left for Bordeaux on February 4. Next day Gambetta met them, then resigned without further ado. His decree was annulled, and it was proclaimed that free elections would prevail. The crisis was ended before civil war was precipitated.<sup>79</sup> Gambetta was not obdurate

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77. Bury, op. cit., 252.

78. Ibid., 253-256.

79. Ibid., 257, 261-262.

to the extent of insisting that his views prevail, a characteristic which distinguished him from the *avancés*.

How did Ferry react to these alarming developments at Bordeaux? He proved to be Gambetta's most faithful friend, although unable to do anything in the Council which could have helped him.

In the Council of January 28, when Favre told his colleagues that the armistice had been signed, Trochu suggested that he journey to Bordeaux, just in case Gambetta should be recalcitrant. Sentiment seemed to be in favor of someone going, although Ferry sought to pooh-pooh the idea, saying that Gambetta would have no choice but to resign.<sup>80</sup>

The day following, the choice of an emissary was debated. Favre wished only Simon to be sent. Garnier-Pagès suggested that he and Favre had better accompany Simon. Possibly recalling that Gambetta had no love for Simon, Ferry seconded this motion, as did Dorian. As usual, a vote was taken. By a five-four majority, it was decided Simon should go alone.<sup>81</sup> Since Gambetta gave way only before a three-man delegation which reinforced Simon, the great unpleasantness might have been averted, had Garnier-Pagès, Arago, Dorian, and Ferry had their way.

On February 2 a discussion arose over a proclamation by Laurier, Gambetta's assistant. This proclamation was to the effect that the French people would deal some mortal blows to

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80. *Dreô*, *op. cit.*, 621.

81. *Ibid.*, 623-625.

The Prussians just as soon as the armistice expired. Picard exhibited great concern over this. Ferry said that Laurier meant not a word of it. This was his way of getting the armistice terms accepted by the people.<sup>82</sup> Not reassured, Picard wished to have Laurier and Gambetta discharged from their posts. Ferry answered that this would be to do Prussia a service, and that he would never be a party to it.<sup>83</sup>

The next day Ferry sought to smooth things over. He re-read Gambetta's dispatch for January 27--now long since dated--in which Gambetta spoke of his devotion to his colleagues.<sup>84</sup> Picard was unimpressed.

Still debating the affair, on February 5 Trochu mentioned that he was more angry at Bismarck for his intervention that he was at Gambetta. Ferry quickly agreed, adding the following accurate impression: Gambetta's was a government of fact much more feared by Bismarck than their own government-in-name-only, with which he naturally preferred to deal.<sup>85</sup> Trochu agreed that they must not assist Bismarck. Picard now wished to arrest Gambetta, which Ferry and Trochu were sure would be perfectly calculated to aid the Prussians and leave the French public with the feeling that they did not desire to save a fellow Frenchman.<sup>86</sup> Picard also talked of suppressing the press. This was rejected without discus-

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82. Dreo, op. cit., 646.

83. Ibid., 649.

84. Ibid., 655.

85. Ibid., 663.

86. Ibid., 670.

sion by Ferry, Trochu, and Dorian.<sup>87</sup> Finally, however, all, including Ferry, agreed that Gambetta must be removed, if he would not resign.<sup>88</sup> As we have seen, this was not necessary.

The months of ineffectiveness before the Battle of Buzenval, the ill-starred armistice negotiations, and the public quarrel with Gambetta, which, despite great efforts, made the Government appear to be a lackey to Bismarck, all combined to insure that the Government would suffer a resounding defeat in the armistice elections. As Arago and Ferry noted, they were so unpopular that the newspapers had gratuitously declared the members of the Council ineligible to enter as Parisian candidates on the list of deputies to be sent to the assembly at Bordeaux.<sup>89</sup> The election results of February 8 bore this out. Paris voted a complete repudiation of the Government of National Defense: Of the forty-three Parisian deputies elected, no less than ten were future Communards, and a number of others were republicans of a radical stamp.<sup>90</sup>

On the day of the elections Ferry wrote Gambetta a long letter. It summarized as well as anything could Ferry's attitude toward his friend and ex-colleague, toward the Government and its unhappy work, and the prospects of France. The important parts are cited below. Ferry referred to Gambetta as "amatissimo mio", evidencing the strong bond which had existed between them up to this time.

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87. Dreo, op. cit., 663-664.

88. Ibid., 670.

89. Ibid., 642.

90. Mason, op. cit., 100-101.

Ferry's explanation of the capitulation:

"People calumniate us, and you accuse us! But you haven't seen, heard, tasted, turned, and turned again, as we have done, as the twenty mayors--persons not too useful--have done after us. As far as the military, the same: From the generals to the colonels of a week, to the majors, the old and the young, the celebrated and the obscure, the sailors and the infantry, and all of them brave! Of one voice--and what a voice--Break with the sobbing patriots...We could still kill the enemy indefinitely, but with no hope...We had not the right to strike down the future. We must guard its blood...

We were supposed to win without soldiers, without strategists, without weapons. And--need I say it?--to hold on without bread. We managed for five months and a half a problem which appeared impossible: We made flour without wheat, fire without coal or wood, war without a commander, and, with all this, we now aren't good enough to be tossed to the dogs...

Ah, well! My conscience does not reproach me for refusing to those Parisians who shriek the most and fight the least a butchery of Parisians who fight without whining..."91

Prospects of continuing the war:

"Are we going to continue the war? I assent with all my spirit, but I don't dare to believe it, and I am convinced that you do not believe it either. Bourbaki's army did exist, alas!-- And the armistice, very much after its ruin, was absolutely for nothing. Loysel's army doesn't exist, for I have exact reports..., likewise, that of Faidherbe..."92

Responsibilities for the tragedy:

"Those responsible before history will not be the government at Paris, whose only fault was not to vanquish when it was impossible to do so. The leaders of the party will be the culprits-- the journalists, jealous of politicians, who are bursting with envy, the ancient politicoes; all those who are powerless but intriguers, who treat politics as a ladder, all the loudmouths

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91. Lettres, 99-100, 102-104.

92. Ibid., 104.

who try to back out of responsibilities, all the false heroes who have refused us their concourse in the hours of danger, and who now applaud their incontestable clairvoyance."<sup>93</sup>

Ferry's own standing:

"The Parisians who have fought, and especially those who were carried away by the prospect of no more fighting, have punished me by not renominating me. I let this misguided passion pass, and I gladly give place to the maniacs who press forward to dispute for this impossible task."<sup>94</sup>

Prospects for the Republic:

"The Republic at this point lies in the elections--elections conducted by a republican government, without noisy and always provocative exclusions. Elections by a united party rather than one in which the members abuse each other, discrediting and dishonoring themselves from right to left and left to right, in anticipation of civil war."<sup>95</sup>

An appeal to Gambetta:

"...In spite of all you've done to cast us out the window, you are a great patriot, a great spirit, a great heart. But you have been for just one hour a great giddy-head. This was the hour in which you did not understand that having led the fight to the last possible extremity, there remained for the republican party only to save the Republic, which alone can prepare a revenge...

In this party..., you, having had the greatest glory in the resistance, were the natural leader. In adopting a measure which could have only one aim, to prevent elections, you have lost the ascendancy you had won over the classes whose concourse is essential to the solidification of the Republic...

You can, if you wish, in the anguish of our discords, rejoice the more over the electoral defeat of the government in Paris. I announce it to you with a perfect equanimity. None of us will be elected, with the possible exception of Jules Favre. We are, in fact, the great scapegoat...

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93. Lettres, 105.

94. Ibid., 104.

95. Ibid., 100.

But you are too much the statesman and man of good sense in order to be so consoled, and to renew that Belleville popularity which has hailed you for a week, after having deserted you for six months..."<sup>96</sup>

Ferry's appeal went unanswered. The differences over the end of the war brought to an end a close friendship of ten years' standing between the two young political aspirants. Each went his own way to fame.

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96. Lettres, 99-101.

## CHAPTER VII

## FERRY AS MAYOR OF PARIS.

## I

A final important phase of this study remains, one in which it is necessary to do violence to the strict chronological pattern which has been followed so far. This is an examination of Ferry's handling of the post of Mayor of Paris during the last two months and a half of the siege, to be followed by an analysis of the newspaper opinion of the man.

It was as Mayor of Paris that Ferry first acquired that singular unpopularity among all classes of the French population which was to beset his entire political life. In the Council, his recommendations necessarily were not for public consumption. Had he done no more than sit in on the Council sessions, he would have been condemned as one of the representatives of a very unpopular government, but with relatively little personal venom attached. But as Mayor of Paris he acquired an unhappy individuality which always transfigured him in the eyes of the French public.

Why? Why does a historian, Samuel Denis, who was fairly typical of French conservative thought, in the course of three volumes on the early years of the Third Republic, find it necessary to make his first precise description of Ferry a very unflattering one?<sup>1</sup> Why does Louise Michel, most fa-

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1. Denis, op. cit., I:178.

mous feminine Communard, go out of the way in her memoirs to say that "among all the members of the government...Paris had an especial horror of Jules Ferry."<sup>2</sup>

Why, as representative of the left wing of parliamentary republican thought, was Mme. Adam compelled to note in 1872 that the republican press was displeased with Ferry's nomination as Minister to Greece? She cited one of the papers which said that he was to become a "compromising agent, after having been an agent compromised."<sup>3</sup>

Why did Etienne Lamy, reflecting conservative republican thinking, having nothing better to say of him than that "Ferry had, in order to govern his brutal activity, only a will without principles."<sup>4</sup> To judge by these observations, Ferry, long before he had acquired enemies by his educational and colonial programs, was without any political friends. And this was very close to the truth. How could he have created so much ill-will as Mayor of Paris that his future in politics was endangered almost before it had begun? In fact, were it not for his own dogged persistence, one could have read a funeral sermon over Ferry's ambitions, after the siege of Paris was over.

Part of the answer lies in Ferry's personality and temperament. With his disposition, he was far short of an ideal choice to succeed Etienne Arago as Mayor of Paris. This was

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2. Louise Michel, La Commune (Paris, 1898), 104.

3. Adam, Mes Angloisses, 288.

4. Lamy, "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale," 740.

not, however, the determining factor. Conditions over which he had no control did the most to destroy any fragment of popularity he may have enjoyed before the siege.

Jules Claretie, one of the historians of the siege, explained a part of the answer:

"M. Jules Ferry...took over at the difficult hour, at the moment when life became most strenuous, alimentation and heat became most trying, and the winter, which was very cold, had set in. The new mayor had to put up with the ire of the suffering..."<sup>5</sup>

A second reason had to do with the widespread impression that Ferry was handling his office incompetently or for personal gain. Karl Marx went so far as to say: "Jules Ferry, a penniless barrister before September 4th, contrived, as Mayor of Paris, to job a fortune out of famine."<sup>6</sup> This statement is obviously false. He was by no means a penniless lawyer in 1870. And there is no evidence to show that he made a fortune out of the siege. As Mason points out, Marx, "in his evaluation of the Government of September 4th, accepts all the wild charges made by revolutionary orators in the radical clubs."<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the falsity of the charge is less significant than the fact that it was widely believed among the Jacobins. Much more often he was accused of incompetence in the conduct of his office. This will have to be examined at greater length.

A third consideration was the unfavorable newspaper

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5. Claretie, op. cit., 404.

6. Karl Marx, The Civil War in France (New York, 1933 edition); 24.

7. Mason, op. cit., 313.

publicity he received. This was partly a reflection of the public reaction to him and partly the individual newspapers; or their writers; distaste for Ferry's person or his politics. This, too, will be examined further.

Finally, there were the day-to-day catastrophes of the siege: happenings in which Ferry's office had to make decisions, regardless, or in total ignorance of, their consequences. Very often the decision arrived at was not particularly suitable to implementation in an especially difficult situation. The inconveniences of the siege were numerous enough without unexpected hardships which were not readily removed. All of these things helped to make the administration at the Hotel de Ville a convenient scapegoat.

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## II

To begin, then, with an analysis of Ferry's conduct of his office. His responsibilities fell into two broad categories. One had to do with the relations between the local mayors and the Hotel de Ville. This amounted to an exercise in public relations. Although this was ordinarily not a difficult task for a person of competency and tact, the political situation which prevailed after the municipal elections transformed this into a very troublesome duty. The other aspect of Ferry's work was purely administrative, but more trying still. This was the management of a variety of municipal functions, now multiplied by the siege, which were identified with the position of Mayor of Paris. As the Prus-

sian pressure grew greater, the related problems of food distribution and consumption became the greatest responsibility in civil administration. The Mayor of Paris, along with the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, made the most important decisions.

It will be remembered that Ferry succeeded Arago as Mayor because the latter was placed in an embarrassing position by the municipal elections. On November 11 the newly elected mayors had petitioned the Government to have the Central Mayor elected by universal suffrage.<sup>8</sup> The Government felt that in assigning Ferry to the position, it was fulfilling this request satisfactorily. They had just been acclaimed en masse by the vote of the city, making any single member of the Government a popularly elected official. Actually, this greatly displeased the radical faction, not only because of Ferry's part in October 31, but because the solution did not answer exactly their demand that the Mayor be elected either by the vote of Paris or by the local mayors themselves.<sup>9</sup> Thus Ferry, from the very beginning of his administration, was sure to face the persistent enmity of the avancés.

After he had been in office a little over a month the nature of this opposition became clear. The Jacobins intended to dominate the mayors' meetings in order to make the Central Mayor no more than a figurehead. The Government had stipulated in the elections that the mayors were to possess

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8. Le Temps, November 13, reprinting La Cloche's account of the mayor's meeting.

9. Le Combat, November 20, 1870.

only administrative, not political, duties. However, as La Liberte noted on November 17, "the attributions of the mayors are fixed neither by law nor by regulations."<sup>10</sup> There was nothing to prevent some of the mayors from ignoring or forgetting the Government's statements of November 1 and November 3.

The pressure from the radical mayors had three phases. First came the interjection of politics into the mayors' meetings, where it did not belong. Second was the argument that the adjutants to the mayors should be admitted on an absolutely equal footing, with a majority vote of mayors and adjutants prevailing. This was important, for the adjutants had been elected only on November 5, the third vote in less than a week. As a result of this, there were many abstentions, and the minority of radical adjutants was surprisingly high.<sup>11</sup> If the moderates should vote against the Government because of disgust with military defeats, a majority in favor of a radical measure might be obtained. The third and climaxing proposal of the radicals was to transform the mayors' meetings into a "little Commune." According to them, this was, after all, what they should be. When one remembers that Delescluze was the spokesman for the Jacobin-minded in the meetings, it can be gathered that this might become a very serious problem. Further defeats or ineffectiveness by the Government

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10. La Liberte, November 17, 1870.

11. Charette, op. cit., 362; Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 357.

could be used as a very strong argument for pushing through the Commune.

Though not ordinarily a model of tact, Ferry did his best to prevent ill-feeling from developing. In his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry he stated that in order to avoid needless conflicts he "appeased the agitators by talking".<sup>12</sup> He could not, however, keep politics out of the meetings, no matter how often he reminded the mayors to confine their questions and advice to administrative routine. In order to emphasize that his conferences with the mayors were informal and consultative only, he deliberately had no minutes of their meetings recorded.<sup>13</sup> The only source, in fact, consists of the newspaper accounts of the sessions.

By late December, with the military future dark, the Delescluze element was causing him some unpleasant moments. On New Year's Day, Le Journal des Débats reported that in the meeting of December 29 Delescluze had proposed a commune.<sup>14</sup> His plan, said the paper, was revealed in his own editorials: Le Réveil had openly admitted that it hoped for a peaceful transition to the Commune by way of the government defaulting.<sup>15</sup> As part of his strategy Delescluze had, in fact, asked for the resignation of Trochu.<sup>16</sup>

Le Journal des Débats was greatly disturbed by the mayors' insistence upon discussing political matters when they

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12. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 373.

13. Ibid., 358.

14. Le Journal des Débats, January 1, 1871.

15. Ibid., January 4, 1871.

16. Claretie, op. cit., 408.

had been elected only for administrative duties. On January 5 (editions of the paper appearing on January 4) it evidenced great anxiety over other newspapers' reports that Ferry had agreed to hold a meeting on Thursday, January 5, in which the mayors would be permitted to discuss politics.<sup>17</sup>

The pressure was indeed great. On January 2 Ferry held a meeting which he stated had been announced as concerned solely with administrative needs. The Government, he said, had recognized the mayors' concern over the conduct of the siege by agreeing to hold special weekly meetings at the Ministry of Interior, where they could discuss political questions. In consequence, the presence of the adjutants in these routine sessions on administrative problems seemed "superfluous." Le Temps, reporting the meeting, observed that the presiding officer's opinion was immediately contested by many mayors and adjutants present. The adjutants did not leave, nor did M. Ferry recognize their presence. A further debate arose as to whether, in the political meetings, the adjutants could vote along with the mayors. No decision was reached.<sup>18</sup>

The meeting to discuss political affairs was moved up one day, taking place on January 4. This session brought the issue to a climax. Once discussion was under way, Delescluze presented a resolution for immediate adoption. It may be summarized as follows:

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17. Le Journal des Débats, January 5, 1871.

18. Le Temps, January 4, 1871.

The resignations of Trochu and Le Flô were asked.  
 Mobilization of the National Guard demanded.  
 Creation of a council of defense dominated by civilian advisors.  
 "Direct and permanent intervention of Paris in questions of its own affairs."  
 Finally, adoption of all measures of public safety necessary to the siege.<sup>19</sup>

Having received no satisfaction in this meeting,<sup>20</sup> Delescluze succeeded in organizing an unauthorized meeting at the offices of the Mayor of the Third Arrondissement. Present were about half of the mayors and three-fourths of the adjutants. Delescluze repeated his proposal, adding to it the suggestion that Ledru-Rollin be attached to the Government.<sup>21</sup> The majority rejected Delescluze's plan, and the matter was dropped.<sup>22</sup>

On January 6 Delescluze and his adjutants sent Ferry and Favre their letters of resignation,<sup>23</sup> which were thankfully accepted. Ferry reported later that, had not Delescluze conveniently resigned, he probably would have been forced to create an unpleasant scene by discharging the Jacobin from his post.<sup>24</sup> Thus Delescluze's clever scheme to bring in the Commune "by the back door,"<sup>25</sup> as Le Journal des Debats put it, was foiled. There was no discussion of this kind thereafter, although the mayors continued to be inter-

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19. Claretie, op. cit., 470.

20. Lissagaray, op. cit., 42.

21. Corbon's (Mayor of the fifteenth Arrondissement) testimony, Annales, XXV: 74.

22. Le Temps, January 7, 1871; Journal des Débats, January 6, 1871.

23. Claretie, op. cit., 472.

24. Ferry's testimony, Annales XXIII: 358.

25. Le Journal des Debats, January 5, 1871.

ested in politics.

The effect of so much time spent in debating political considerations may be readily guessed. Clamageran, Ferry's advisor on matters of administration, offered these comments:

The mayors' meetings were supposed to be for purposes of consultation only, but the sessions were occupied with political and strategic debates, to the exclusion of administrative needs. Then, back in their arrondissements, the mayors would have to execute measures they had not so much as discussed. Naturally the problems of distribution were badly managed, under such conditions.<sup>26</sup>

Others were aware of the result of this. Le Temps complained about the mayors neglecting their more important functions in an editorial on January 7.<sup>27</sup> Le Journal des Débats was equally as disturbed in an article of January 4.<sup>28</sup> Delescluze, so anxious to condemn the Government for its ineffectiveness, was equally ineffective when it came to his real duties as Mayor of Belleville. On January 9, in discussing Delescluze's resignation, Le Journal des Débats commented upon how poorly administered his arrondissement was.<sup>29</sup> La Liberté also noted that, while a person of integrity, Delescluze was too much a man of party to do a good job as

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26. J. J. Clamageran, "Souvenirs du Siège de Paris. Cinq Mois a l'Hotel-de-Ville" in Le Journal des Economistes, Revue de la Science Economique et de la Statistique (Paris, 1871), III -4: 351-352.

27. Le Temps, January 7, 1871.

28. Le Journal des Débats, January 4, 1871.

29. Ibid., January 9, 1871.

mayor.<sup>30</sup> Vacherot, one of the moderate but not conservative mayors, was sure that the adjutants should never have forced their way into the meetings, even temporarily. As he pointed out, it was easy to discuss administrative problems with twenty people, but certainly not with eighty (that is, three adjutants along with each of the twenty mayors). It was then that the discussions became political.<sup>31</sup>

It does not appear that Ferry was to blame for this situation. As long as the Jacobins forced political issues into the mayors' meetings, he could do little more than evince his displeasure. This particular problem, given the intense political feeling of the Parisians, was probably insoluble. It was more easily ameliorated by the use of patience than it could have been in any other way. None of the mayors interviewed by the Commission of Inquiry was especially critical of Ferry's performance as chairman of the meetings. Corbon, comparatively radical in his political feelings, said that relations between a majority of his colleagues and the Central Mayor were cordial whenever they discussed administrative routine.<sup>32</sup> Vacherot was of the impression that he did a fine job. Speaking of Ferry, he said: "I should render him this justice--that he always held to a language as firm as it was conciliating, unceasingly recalling us to the object of our deliberations."<sup>33</sup>

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30. La Liberté, January 9, 1871.

31. Vacherot's (Mayor of the Fifth Arrondissement) testimony, Annales, XXV: 93.

32. Corbon's testimony, Annales, XXV: 64.

33. Vacherot's testimony, Annales, XXV: 94.

## III

Let us now turn our attention to the purely administrative part of Ferry's work. In the first place, what were Ferry's qualifications for his post? He had youth, so far as this was an advantage. In the course of his articles on M. Haussmann's administration, he had made a rather close study of Paris from the point of view of an armchair observer and calculating critic. And, as a result of fifteen years' residence in the capital, he had an intimate knowledge of the many differences which existed between neighboring arrondissements.<sup>34</sup>

On the other side of the ledger were certain limitations which might be important. Ferry had had no training of any kind in administration, and no previous experience in an administrative position. As was frequently pointed out, he was a lawyer, and the Mayor's duties encompassed far more than a few technicalities which might arise in administrative law. His aforementioned inability to appear gracious in the presence of a crowd was a handicap in so public a position as that of the Mayor of Paris. The advisor on economic problems on whom he most relied, M. Clamageran, was not an economist, but a lawyer like Ferry.<sup>35</sup> It was evident that, considering the time at which he was elevated to his post, and the none too useful background which he brought with him to his job, the new Mayor of Paris would have to display un-

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34. Simon, II: 234.

35. Article on Clamageran in La Grande Encyclopedie (Paris, n.d.), XI: 352-353.

usual adaptability.

A sizeable portion of the Municipality's woes during the siege was the result of an appalling lack of co-ordination between the Mayor's office and the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. Other branches of the Government which were located in the capital also conflicted at points with the Municipal administration. No considerable effort to untangle these conflicts in jurisdiction was made by Ferry's predecessor, partly due to lack of time. After mid-November Ferry had much less of this invaluable commodity than Arago had possessed, making it almost impossible to attempt a complete administrative reorganization. The administrative tangle had begun with the Palikao Ministry, and nothing was done to straighten it out until after the Commune. Despite these extenuating circumstances, the members of the Government, particularly Ferry and Magnin, were severely blamed for all of the breakdowns resulting from the confusion.<sup>36</sup>

The major conflicts between the Hotel de Ville and the Ministry of Commerce were as follows. The problem of provisioning of the capital had always been the duty of the Mayor of Paris, assisted by an elected municipal council. The system of electing mayors who would consult with the Central Mayor was not conducive to effective administration in a siege. It was difficult to establish a close liaison among the highest officials, the local functionaries concerning

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36. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 350-351.

the special problems of a particular arrondissement.<sup>37</sup> The system would have worked more satisfactorily over a greater span of time. When these officials turned to the Ministry of Commerce for its coopération they found an intricate situation.

The purchase of provisions was the duty of Commerce, although most of the distribution fell to the Municipality. There were further complications. The Municipality assessed whatever taxes were necessary for bread, while Commerce alone could do this for meat.<sup>38</sup> The Ministry of Commerce kept the cattle for the City's needs, while the Municipality was the depository for flour, potatoes, and most other non-perishable goods. Yet flour, for example, could be freed from the storehouses only by order of the Minister of Commerce. The order once given, distribution to the bakeries for the making of bread was the Municipality's concern.<sup>39</sup>

All of this made for enormous inefficiency and waste in distribution. The exact division of functions between local mayors and Central Mayor, and between local mayors and Commerce was not known, nor was it easily ascertainable by the newly elected officials.<sup>40</sup>

To remedy some of the more glaring evils in administration, recourse was had to a Committee of Subsistence. It would have been better to simplify procedures, rather than to

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37. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 351.

38. Ibid., 351.

39. Ibid., 357.

40. Ibid., 357.

create a supervisory commission overriding the different agencies, but, as in so many other matters, time was lacking. The Committee of Subsistence did not operate very effectively. Sometimes it confused rather than clarified conflicting authorities. And after a time its membership became too large. Though Simon, a member of the Committee spoke well of its work,<sup>41</sup> Clamageran and Magnin agreed that its usefulness was almost nil.<sup>42</sup> The Committee tried, for example, to improve the operation of the canteens, one of the crying evils of the siege. The canteens and dispensaries were essential to the distribution of bread, meat, and most other items, since the ordinary means of obtaining these goods were not sufficiently numerous. However, the Committee of Subsistence was unable to cut through the "red tape" to establish an effective central clearing house through which goods could be routed. The Municipal canteens, Bureaus of Beneficence, and agencies of this type, continued to operate with little semblance of uniformity from one area to another.<sup>43</sup>

There were many other handicaps burdening the administration which can be imagined by anyone who worked for a wartime agency during the recent conflict. There was a perpetual shortage of employees. Too many of the lesser officials seemed to have no conception of the value of time. The lassitude of the Second Empire officials had made inexacti-

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41. Simon, *op. cit.*, II: 211-212.

42. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 359: Delabrousse, *op. cit.*, I: 322.

43. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 359.

tude habitual. Seemingly no one had a sense of responsibility, and the conflicts in jurisdiction did nothing to encourage the growth of such a spirit.<sup>44</sup>

There was another handicap which the Municipality could not overcome--the attitude of the population. Clamageran, who had plenty of opportunity to observe the Parisians in their reactions to the siege, felt that the citizenry loved a liberty which was caprice. He quoted Heine's well-known epigram that liberty to a German was best symbolized by his grandmother, to an Englishman by his legitimate wife, to a Frenchman by his mistress.<sup>45</sup> Clamageran was sure that the great majority resisted every measure which restricted their liberty, being unwilling to make sacrifices in a modd of cooperation. Though he probably exaggerated the point, there is a kernel of truth in what he said. It has been repeatedly noticed that in the last war and its aftermath the French and Americans reacted much more unfavorably to wartime regulations than the English.

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IV

As can be surmised, a great part of the day-to-day needs of a besieged city had to be solved piecemeal. During and after the event many criticisms were levelled at the Government for failing to stock up on provisions in anticipation of a long siege. Ferry's answer to this was that no one ex-

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44. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 359.

45. Ibid., 362.

pected the siege to last more than two months at the most, and the Government could not be expected to be twice as clairvoyant as anyone else.<sup>46</sup> This view is born out by the attitude of responsible people at the time. Nobody believed that the Prussians would be able to seal off Paris from all contact with the outside. The enemy himself--especially von Moltke--did not foresee a winter-long siege.<sup>47</sup>

The Minister of Commerce under Palikao, Duvernois, had done a good job in the short time available to him. He accumulated a three months' supply of food,<sup>48</sup> which the Government of National Defense, with a few additions, managed to extend over a period of four months and a half. The storehouses of the Ministry of Commerce were in fine shape, but, unfortunately for Ferry, those of the Municipality were very bad. Small but valuable amounts of food perished because of this.<sup>49</sup> Gifts of perishable goods from the Ministry of War helped to make up for this misfortune.<sup>50</sup>

It will be recalled that before becoming Mayor of Paris Ferry was responsible for one important decision in municipal administration. This was the lifting of the tolls on September 10. Because of the number of people who poured into Paris as a result of this measure it became impossible, later, to estimate the exact number of people enclosed within the

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46. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 368-369.

47. G. de Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris pendant le Siege" in Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1871), XII:115.

48. Delabrousse, op. cit., I: 291.

49. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 347.

50. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 369.

gates of Paris. But there was another angle to this. According to Ferry, most of the newcomers were farmers. They brought with them a quantity of wheat, oats, barley, and other grains which it was possible to make into 280,000 quintals<sup>51</sup> of flour for the making of bread. This increased the amount of available flour by almost seventy per cent, and, in Ferry's opinion, was "the secret of the long siege".<sup>52</sup> If his estimate is correct, the gain resulting from the tolls suspension far outweighed its disadvantages. However, one cannot estimate the proportionate gain in the food made available. The increase in the supply was limited by the additional population. It is possible that Ferry made an important contribution to the Government by insisting upon the decision to suspend the tolls. At the same time, however, the reference to the extra grain made available is mentioned by Ferry alone. Possibly this was his way of justifying the dubious measure of lifting the tolls, although he was not in the habit of making such rationalizations.

As Molinari, the Belgian economist<sup>53</sup> employed by the Journal des Debats pointed out, the Government, not unwisely, pursued an "economics of expediency."<sup>54</sup> It obviously could not permit the flow of trade and commerce to operate without interference, as if no siege existed. At the same time, the

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51. A metric quintal is 220.46 lbs.--see The World Almanac for 1948 (New York, 1948), 642.

52. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 369.

53. For convenient data on Molinari's career, see Larousse, XI: 406.

54. Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris", 113.

officials of the Government, for reasons to be seen, did not wish to attempt a policy of governmental operation of the goods of commerce. As a compromise, the Government intervened as effectively as it could according to three broad principles: (1) to prevent articles of first necessity from being monopolized, with resultant inflated prices; (2) to manage, when necessary, the timing of the distribution of goods in terms of the possible duration of the siege; (3) to provide means of existence, both in food and in other necessities, to the part of the population which was deprived of its ordinary means of sustenance.<sup>55</sup>

In accordance with these aims, a number of measures had been adopted by the time Ferry became Mayor of Paris. The most important of these were the requisitioning of all available flour and wheat for the manufacture of bread, and the rationing of meat.<sup>56</sup> In the case of the former this meant that the Government controlled the supply, and in that of the latter it controlled the distribution as well as the supply. The sale of bread was maintained at the pre-siege price of 45 centimes.<sup>57</sup> The meat also sold at pre-war prices--2 francs, 10 centimes for high grade meat, 1 franc, 70 centimes for lesser cuts. There was dissatisfaction with the arrangements with regard to meat from the very beginning. The prices, according to Molinari, should have been fixed at a higher fig-

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55. Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris", 113.

56. Delabrousse, *op. cit.*, I: 323-325.

57. Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris," 116.

ure, for, with a shortage of vegetables, people deliberately ate meat, making for more rapid consumption. Butcher shops in considerable number preferred to close rather than sell at a loss. This increased the congestion at other butcher shops.<sup>58</sup> Rather slowly, an adequate system of rationing was worked out. Ration cards limited the quantity of meat purchasable by a single individual, and a fixed clientele was established for each meat market. Unlike the bread problem, there was a meat shortage from the very beginning. The average consumption per capita was 230 grams, but this had to be reduced to 60 grams per person by the date of October 22.<sup>59</sup>

Once in command at the Hotel de Ville, Ferry took the responsibility for any number of debatable decisions affecting the lives of the Parisians. So far as personnel was concerned, a passing word may be said. He preferred to keep most of the lesser officials at their posts in the Hotel de Ville, even if they had been there before September 4. This fact was known in the more ardently republican quarters, and did not add to his popularity. His view was that it was better to leave well enough alone, unless an individual in question were a notorious Bonapartist. The disruption was great enough without adding more.<sup>60</sup>

The first measure advocated by Ferry was ill-fated.

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58. Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris," 116-118.

59. Delabrousse, *op. cit.*, I: 359; a metric gram is .035 ounces--The World Almanac of 1948, 640. Normal per capita consumption, 8 ounces; by this decree, it was only 2 ounces.

60. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 372.

The price of potatoes, as the result of speculation, had risen very high. On November 21 the Council decided to requisition all potatoes.<sup>61</sup> Immediately, potatoes completely disappeared from the market. High at 8 francs a bushel before the decree, the price of potatoes went to 15 francs a bushel after it.<sup>62</sup> Ferry did this because of the pressure of the mayors, who thought that it would solve the problem of high prices.<sup>63</sup> On January 16, too late to make any difference, the decree requisitioning potatoes was rescinded.<sup>64</sup>

This was typical of many of the Government's efforts to control the food problem. Any staple which existed in small quantities would disappear rapidly from the market. Whenever the Government chose the moderate expedient of levying taxes to maintain prices, this usually had no effect. A small tax was useless, and a large one inapplicable due to innumerable techniques of evasion. And when a tax was effective, it brought still another evil, the excessive consumption of the product in question. Price ceilings were avoided, in recollection of the enormous "Black Markets" which had accompanied the "Laws of the Maximums" in the Great Revolution.<sup>65</sup>

To mill flour for bread was a major difficulty, since mills did not exist in the capital before the war. The Government contracted for the construction of mills, which were

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61. Journal Officiel, November 22, 1870.

62. Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris" 357.

63. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois a l'Hotel de Ville," 357.

64. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 62.

65. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 353-354; Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris," 119.

planted in unoccupied locations, during September and November.<sup>66</sup> These mills did not produce flour sufficient to equal the daily consumption of bread in the capital. By December a bread shortage was imminent, although a large amount of grain remained. Ferry helped to resolve the problem. He urged the construction of a large number of tiny mills, which could turn out a sizeable quantity of flour. These small mills would be put into operation in the different railway stations. Previously, construction of the miniature mills had been opposed because the millers said they would produce inferior flour. However, at Ferry's insistence, construction was undertaken, and enough mills were constructed in less than a month's time to enable the Municipality to mill the flour at a pace equal to the daily consumption of bread.<sup>67</sup> Whatever the quality might be, this measure did increase the quantity.

From the middle of December to the end of the siege, Ferry's name was attached to one restrictive decree after another. Most of these were essential, yet the populace evinced irritation, either at the restriction or at the faulty framing of the decrees. Complaints--with some justice--were plentiful concerning the inefficient application of a restrictive measure.

A crisis arose in late December because of the shortage of wood. With all the other sufferings, the capital was

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66. Simon, op. cit., II: 224.

67. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 369; Simon, op. cit., II: 225.

unfortunate enough to suffer from the effects of a very cold winter. In the several nights before Christmas, the temperature dropped down to a low of thirteen degrees below zero.<sup>68</sup> All available fuel was used for war purposes and for the operation of the bakeries.<sup>69</sup> Toward the end of December Ferry requisitioned all wood that could be used as fuel in the districts of Paris.<sup>70</sup> This was variously received. There were complaints about the green wood dispensed by the mayors. In at least one instance a mayor connived with his constituents to use the wood in the arrondissement for local consumption rather than to surrender it to the Municipality.<sup>71</sup> Ferry ordered some of the Vincennes and Boulogne forests cut,<sup>72</sup> a measure which did not please the traditionalists and conservatives. The weather became less severe in January, but the fuel problem remained.

Aside from the complex bread crisis, the most troublesome problem during the last three weeks of the siege arose as a result of the Prussian bombardment. The shortage of domiciles had been widely commented upon, but it became much worse after the shelling began on January 5. Quick action was necessary to deal with the situation. On January 16 Ferry was in a position to report the following information to the mayors.

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68. Denis, *op. cit.*, II: 115.

69. *Ibid.*, II: 106.

70. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 356.

71. *Le Journal des Débats*, December 30, 1870.

72. Dreo, *op. cit.*, 437--Council of December 24.

The Hotel de Ville was able to place at the disposal of the refugees a total of 10,223 beds, with some 6,000 of these unoccupied at that moment. The use of unoccupied barracks, previously resorted to, would be abandoned because of undesirable relations that had developed between the men and women housed therein. Unused churches and theatres were being used when they could be obtained. The use of the Bourse, a large building with many empty floors, had been delayed because of the opposition of the "men of finance." Plans for its use were going ahead regardless of their resentment.<sup>73</sup>

On January 9 the mayors had recommended to Ferry that a decree be issued which would requisition empty lodgings for public use.<sup>74</sup> Following his habit of obeying the mayors' recommendations whenever they seemed reasonable, Ferry published a decree to this effect on January 19.<sup>75</sup> This immediately caused an uproar. Cresson, always Ferry's enemy in Council, went hastening to Favre about it. In his horror-stricken words, Ferry, "without even speaking of it to the Government, had introduced himself into domiciles, the most precious rights of the citizens thus being attained."<sup>76</sup> Ferry threatened to resign over the incident, especially when it was resolved by the expedient of Favre writing a public letter to Ferry asking him to have the mayors carry out the

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73. Le Temps, January 18, 1871.

74. Ibid., January 11, 1871.

75. Journal Officiel, January 19, 1871.

76. Cresson, op. cit., 204.

decree only with the greatest circumspection.<sup>77</sup>

Other measures about this date caused irritation. But everything, really, became subordinated to the mounting bread shortage. Let us turn to this problem, then.

As the siege lengthened, it became obvious that great caution must be exercised with respect to bread consumption. This, much more than meat, was the staple essential to survival. Ferry took the brunt of the public wrath which was directed at the handling of the bread supply. The siege lasted four months and a half before the lack of bread became the most decisive cause of the capitulation. Critics--more especially the radical republicans--have maintained that had a different policy been adopted for preserving the bread, the siege could have lasted for another two months. It was no secret that Ferry had had much to do with the choice of alternatives.

What was the best means by which the bread could be preserved? The Jacobins unanimously demanded rationing as the sole means of assuring a bread supply for an indefinite period. Their argument was that besieged Paris was like a ship becalmed in mid-ocean; the captain must supervise the distribution of the food in order that everyone should have an equal share.<sup>78</sup> This analogy, weak or strong, depending upon the point of view, did not impress the Government of

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77. Cresson, *op. cit.*, 205-206; Le Siecle, January 21, published Favre's letter.

78. Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris", 113.

National Defense. Only as an emergency measure in the last hours of the siege did it resort to rationing.

The Government's decision was reached early in December. By that time the Council knew that it would be impossible to obtain food from the outside. Earlier, the probable success of the Trochu Plan had raised hopes of revictualling by way of the Lower Seine.<sup>79</sup> In Council on December 8, Magnin's report on food, to which Ferry indicated his agreement, showed that, at the present rate of consumption, there was at least thirty-seven days of food on hand.<sup>80</sup> As events proved, this estimate was surpassed. If rationing of bread were to begin, there should be no delay.

Consultations on this and the following several days resulted in a compromise. The first step was a confidential circular dispatched by Ferry to the mayors. This prescribed measures for rationing, should an emergency arise.<sup>81</sup> Next came the airing of this issue in an important meeting of the mayors on December 11. Though personally much opposed to rationing as impracticable, Ferry, nevertheless, presented this as a possible future policy. Opposition by the mayors was immediate and overwhelming. Almost without exception, they announced that they would tender their resignations rather than accept the rationing of bread except as a last desperate necessity.<sup>82</sup> So far as they represented public

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79. Delabrousse, op. cit., I: 418.

80. Dréo, op. cit., 390.

81. Simon, op. cit., II: 254.

82. Ferry's testimony Annales, XXIII: 371; Simon, op. cit., II: 255.

opinion in their arrondissements, the Government could adjudge their views as the feelings of the populace.

News of the secret circular and the meeting of December 11 reached the ears of the public. The result was a panic, and the necessity of releasing more flour to the bakeries than was ordinarily required.<sup>83</sup> It was at this point that the Government made a serious mistake. Trochu, preparing his Bourget sortie, wrote Ferry a letter urging that the uneasiness be put to rest. Consequently, the Journal Officiel, on December 12, announced that there was no shortage of bread, and there would never be an occasion for rationing.<sup>84</sup> To cut short a panic at the time, the Government left itself open to severe criticism when rationing finally was necessary.

At about this date a decision, to which Ferry lent his accord, was reached in the Committee of Subsistence on the subject of bread. It was decided that the wheat for the making of flour should be attenuated by the addition of rice, bran, especially oats, and some other grains, in order to make it last the longer.<sup>85</sup> This combination made a bread which was distasteful from its inception. In the last days of the siege, with the grain rapidly diminishing, the greater admixture of oats made it an indigestible "black bread". This "pain Ferry," its presumed author admitted, was detest-

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83. Simon, op. cit., II: 255.

84. Journal Officiel, December 12, 1870.

85. Simon, op. cit., II: 234-236.

able. Ferry said in reference to it: "I will carry the responsibility...to my tomb--the population of Paris will never forgive me for this bread."<sup>86</sup>

From the middle of December until January 19 bread was distributed to the bakeries in the amount of 6,360 quintels (an average of 318 grams per person) per day.<sup>87</sup> This was a form of indirect rationing, although the public was unaware of it. The average pre-siege consumption of bread was at the rate of 7,000 quintals per day for approximately 1,750,000 people. The population increased perhaps 250,000 (2,000,000 usually is given as the estimate for the population during the siege).<sup>88</sup> Consequently, the 318 grams amounted to a twenty-five per cent decrease in the bread consumption per person, which would not have been too severe a hardship were it not for the poor quality of the bread.

By mid-January the grains had so diminished as to make official rationing imperative. A hint of what was coming came on January 12 when Ferry issued a decree forbidding bakeries to sell bread of a quality any higher than that which was officially sanctioned.<sup>89</sup> This caused another panic, with rumors of approaching rationing.

On January 13 Ferry read a report to the Council announcing that rationing would begin the following week.<sup>90</sup>

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86. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 371.

87. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 370; Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 74.

88. See statistics in Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 74.

89. Journal Officiel, January 12, 1871.

90. Dreo, op. cit., 520.

In the mayors' meeting of January 17 the bad news became semi-public knowledge.<sup>91</sup> Many of the mayors thought that that the measure would cause another revolt. However, the uprising of January 22 cannot be attributed primarily to this cause.<sup>92</sup> On January 18 the Council, with Ferry absent, felt that his decree of rationing at 300 grams per person was too harsh. It would have been modified, had not Ferry, entering, pointed out that no change could be made: the amount of grains remaining, plus the decreased production of the make-shift mills in the bombed-out areas, made any larger figure impossible.<sup>93</sup> As we have seen, the early cessation of the siege soon ended this agony.

In the Council of January 22, when Ferry admitted the futility of further struggling, Magnin differed with him to the extent of wishing to hang on a few days longer. In his testimony a year later Ferry conceded that, as Magnin believed, there was food enough to last until February 4.<sup>94</sup> The difference of opinion between the two men really meant very little. With the military situation as hopeless as it was, to hold out until February 4 would have brought greater hardship, but no rescue.

A charge made after the siege can be quickly dismissed. Some of the more advanced Jacobins claimed that a large

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91. Le Temps, January 18, 1871.

92. Magon, op. cit., 92.

93. Dreo, op. cit., 540-541.

94. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 367.

quantity of food still existed at the time of the capitulation.<sup>95</sup> No document exists to bear out such an accusation, and the Commune government went to the pains of publishing some documents supposedly embarrassing to the Government of National Defense. It was explicitly denied by Magnin's biographer, and Mason denies it by implication.<sup>96</sup>

Little needs to be said about the revictualling after the end of the siege. Since Ferry was very unpopular by this time, his performance of this task was severely criticized. Some of the criticisms were well-founded, but many were no more than public irritation at the inevitable slowness of reconstruction. Suffice it to say that by the middle of February the great hardships had ended, thanks in part to a sizeable donation of food by the city of London.<sup>97</sup> Ferry was able to print in the Journal Officiel on February 8 that rationing would end two days hence.<sup>98</sup>

There remains the moot question of whether rationing should have begun long before January 19. Many who were not Jacobins maintained that the delay in rationing was a great error, and this view is apparently given substantiation by the fact that Clamageran, an official in the Government, was of this opinion.<sup>99</sup> Both Ferry and Magnin expressly repudiated this argument. Because few documents are in existence,

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95. Arnould, op. cit., 71.

96. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 121; Mason, op. cit., 96.

97. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 144.

98. Journal Officiel, February 8, 1871.

99. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville", 359.

the question will remain forever unsettled. But in the absence of more information, the argument that Ferry and Magnin presented in answer to the charge that rationing should have come earlier has some merit.

Ferry explained that there was great opposition to rationing by the populace.<sup>100</sup> The mayors' reaction is evidence of this. Clamageran bore witness to the strong feeling against rationing, as did Molinari.<sup>101</sup> The former was writing within a year after the siege, the latter during it. In the face of such opposition, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to attempt a measure pleasing only a small and vociferous minority.

Furthermore, as many people pointed out, rationing on a basis of complete equality, as the avancés desired, would have worked great hardships on individuals. Obviously everybody did not eat the same quantity of bread. To iron out these discrepancies in individual consumption would have required time and experience. Neither was available during a tight siege. Consequently, as anticipated, when the rationing at 300 grams per person began after January 18 it reduced thousands of unidentified workmen to a starvation level, while supplying others with more bread than they needed.<sup>102</sup>

The indirect rationing, on the other hand, worked out fairly satisfactorily. At seventy-five per cent of normal,

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100. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 371.

101. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 356;  
Molinari, "L'Alimentation de Paris," 113.

102. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 74.

there were complaints aplenty concerning the bread. However, these manifestations of discontent were misdirected in a way which was probably better, in the long run, for the Parisians, although very hard on Ferry. He was bitterly attacked for the shortage of bread in the bakeries. This lack was unanimously attributed to maladministration by the Hotel de Ville, although it was actually due to the Government's desire to hide the existence of an indirect rationing system.<sup>103</sup>

The clinching point in this argument is that rationing of the substandard bread, with all its disadvantages, was at 300 grams per person, a saving of only sixteen per cent over the indirect rationing. It was argued that, since meat had been rationed, the same should apply to bread. But meat rationing had reduced the consumption eighty-seven per cent, which is a startling contrast to sixteen per cent.<sup>104</sup>

If the argument is sound, why, then, was not indirect rationing introduced weeks before December 12-13? The answer is complex. Part of it was the optimism of the early stages of the siege. The Government was overly sanguine about the possible success of the Trochu Plan. After the defeat on the Marne on December 1 the Government took about ten days to determine the type of drastic measures which were necessary. This was too long a time, but, since no great harm was done in the interval, it made little difference. Finally, if, as some desired, the rationing of the last days had

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103. Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 370.

104. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 74.

been introduced in the beginning, the consumption of the black bread would have left nobody to survive an armistice in late January.<sup>105</sup>

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V

Ferry's conduct of his office as Mayor of Paris seems to have been satisfactory with respect to the larger decisions which were made. Though these policies, which were more properly the Government's than his own, were attributed to him, there was much misunderstanding in the popular impressions. It is difficult to find much merit in the criticisms of the decisions which were reached. M. de Raineville, investigator of the handling of provisions and material in the Commission of Inquiry, and his colleagues, all of whom were very critical of the Government of National Defense, could find nothing wrong with the administration.<sup>106</sup> Ferry's colleague, Magnin, had only praise for his performance. Magnin's biographer had this to say:

"Jules Ferry displayed, in his administration as Mayor of Paris, a courage and a spirit of decision which were the presentiment of his brilliant career as a statesman."<sup>107</sup>

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105. Simon, op. cit., II: 235.

106. Statement during the course of Ferry's testimony, Annales, XXIII: 370.

107. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 154.

## CHAPTER VIII

## NEWSPAPER OPINION OF THE MAYOR OF PARIS.

## I

Magnin's opinion of his colleague's ability was decidedly not that of the average person in Paris. The petit bourgeois was painfully aware of the small things in life, and it was the details of administration which were at the root of the greatest difficulties faced by Ferry's office. Few cared how often he might be found on the side of wisdom in long-range administrative decisions. Every citizen knew, however, that the wife had had to wait three hours in line to obtain a loaf of black bread. The newspapers of every political shade, since they, after all, were edited by bourgeois, expressed with amazing persistence the complaints of the man in the street. The legitimate criticisms of Ferry's administration were lost in an avalanche of denunciations, so that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other. By the end of the siege one thing was clear: Ferry's only rival as the most unpopular man in Paris was General Trochu.

Comments on Ferry were infrequent before the end of October. His position in the Government was inconspicuous, and he was overshadowed by the activities of Gambetta and Favre, or the pronouncements of Trochu. The affair of October 31 put him into the limelight. The repercussions of that day had not had time to die down before he was named

Mayor of Paris. In the public mind the two events were related. Thenceforth, increasingly unfavorable publicity greeted his every move.

Astonishingly enough, the newspaper criticism ultimately pervaded the entire Parisian press. It was not possible to examine all of the eighteen papers printed in Paris during the siege. A perusal of eight of these papers representing the various political hues is, however, illuminating. During his first weeks as Mayor of Paris, Ferry was criticized by the Jacobin and Monarchist press, as could be anticipated. The moderate newspapers were, if not enthusiastic, at least not hostile to his appointment. After the cold set in, criticisms began to pour in from all sides. By the end of the siege, Ferry was the object of a concerted public wrath. Le Temps alone could say an indirect word in his defense.

The following editorial by Félix Pyat is rather typical of the attitude of the Jacobin press toward Ferry; the editorial is entitled "The Mayor of Paris:"

"After the Arago dynasty,....we are to have the Ferry dynasty....Who can say where the Ferry dynasty, enthroned at the Hotel de Ville in the midst of 100 battalions, will lead us?

Mayors and adjutants of Paris, your duty is to protest against this illegal nomination, which is illicit and incompatible with your election."<sup>1</sup>

On November 26, apropos rumors of Ferry's resignation,

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1. Le Combat, November 20, 1870.

Le Combat reported that it was true that the mayors and adjutants were to meet in order to choose Ferry's successor, but that "M. Ferry does not despair of unblushingly presenting his candidacy anew."<sup>2</sup> As for the rumor, Le Combat's wish was father to its thought.

The Monarchist, Le Figaro, in discussing Ferry's appointment offered the unkind opinion that the position of Central Mayor had been abolished with Arago's passing, but that one could be sure M. Ferry would not snub those who so addressed him. It added, however, that he must inevitably be superior to the inept Arago.<sup>3</sup> Le Figaro did not give him much of a chance, for it fell upon his administration almost from its inception. La Liberté, of conservative inclinations, was lugubrious about Ferry's future as Mayor of Paris:

"That the citizen Jules Ferry will be less disposed than his predecessor to fraternize with the radical quarters, we do not doubt. But whether he will be strong enough to struggle against a minority who will be hostile to him, may also be doubted, considering the disarray in which we find ourselves."<sup>4</sup>

La Liberté foresaw the darker side of Ferry's difficulties with his mayors. Nevertheless, its future criticism of his work was forever concerned with his administrative procedures, and never with his handling of municipal political maneuverings.

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2. Le Combat, November 26, 1870.

3. Le Figaro, November 18, 1870.

4. La Liberté, November 17, 1870.

Le Temps and Le Journal des Débats, meantime, eschewed useless speculation, confining themselves to constructive criticism of Ferry's performances. Le Journal des Débats on November 27 urged the Government (that is, Ferry's office) to hasten the construction of more dispensaries as the best solution to the food problem. Since Belleville, obviously, was a seat of discontent, more food at lower prices should be supplied that arrondissement.<sup>5</sup> On December 12 it noted that the canteens and dispensaries were still noticeably lacking.<sup>6</sup> Articles such as these, signed by Molinari, carried weight. Though independent of the Government, his opinions as an economist were considered to be quasi-authoritative.

Le Temps offered moderate recommendations on issues such as the use of ceilings on food prices. It cautioned Ferry's office against hasty measures, although, surprisingly, urging more stringent meat rationing immediately.<sup>7</sup> Its only direct reference to Ferry's performance during the first three weeks of his mayoralty came on December 7. This was regarding one of Ferry's proclamations requesting that, with the shortage of hospitals and ambulances, people open their homes for the care of the wounded. Le Temps reminded the Mayor that he should utilize all of the schools and churches before he asked the populace to suffer even greater inconveniences.<sup>8</sup>

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5. Journal des Débats, November 27, 1870.

6. Ibid., December 12, 1870.

7. Le Temps, December 13, 1870.

8. Ibid., November 17, 1870.

The bread panics of December 11-12, followed in short order by unexpectedly frigid weather, were the first unpleasant incidents which really brought down widespread criticism on the heads of Ferry and his adjutants. Le Rappel, which had been critical of the long lines at the bakeries since November 20,<sup>9</sup> had a variety of unfavorable comments to offer about the Hotel de Ville's inability to handle the endless lines of December 11.<sup>10</sup> On December 13 Le Temps urged the Government to take precautionary measures in order to avert repetitions of these panics. It added a rather significant comment:

"We do not have the honor of counting the Ferrys among our stockholders, but for a long time we have had the pleasure of their friendship. Our amity is of a nature to survive political disagreements, but it has never, as far as we know, constrained the liberty of our criticisms."<sup>11</sup>

This statement is somewhat puzzling. It seems quite likely that Nefftzer was trying to make clear all over again, at the stimulus of the other papers' criticisms, that the former relations between Ferry and Nefftzer did not explain Le Temps' tolerance of Ferry's administration.

With respect to the bread panic and all that had preceded it, Le Figaro gave the largest amount of space to Ferry's conduct. Its expert on economics, Richard, authored the first of a series of biting articles on Ferry on Decem-

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9. Le Rappel, November 20, 1870.

10. Ibid., December 12, 1870.

11. Le Temps, December 13, 1870.

ber 13:

"While firm public opinion sustains the Government, the administration of one of its youngest members....causes uneasiness ....He requisitions at a moment when all the requisitions should have been made (beforehand).

His administration has left a million kilograms of food to perish because of his poor surveillance. Today, by a prodigious activity in useless or tardy decrees, he arouses unrest....

The mistake of M. Jules Ferry is one of having known nothing of routine existence. After three months in public office he still knows nothing about it, but believes he knows everything. We have begged him to consult restaurant-owners and merchants ....on the question of provisions. This time we address ourselves to General Trochu, and we beg him, as head of the Council, to use his influence so that the problems of food will not be managed by a lawyer."<sup>12</sup>

Continuing the attack on the following day, Le Figaro was not disposed to greater mercy:

"Why doesn't the Government, animated as it is, by the best intentions in the world, appoint a curator to M. Jules Ferry?

This young man is not badly intentioned, but he is ignorant and maladroit....

It is not necessary to compromise our interests and those of France any longer by keeping this young man at the head of Paris. He is making us regret M. Arago--at least that gentleman did nothing. That is already something!"<sup>13</sup>

The charges made in the above articles are noteworthy, for they embody, albeit in exaggerated form, the best-founded criticisms of Ferry. Le Figaro was obsessed with the limitations of youth, but the barb aimed at his lawyer's

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12. Le Figaro, December 13, 1870.

13. Ibid., December 14, 1870.

training was well-directed. There was truth, too, in the charge that he was prodigious of proclamations and decrees. On December 13 Le Temps reproved him in a much gentler vein for his numerous orders, which did not sufficiently take into account "the nervous and impressionable susceptibilities of the Parisian population."<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, the accusation that Ferry's office had wasted a great quantity of food was one of the myths of the siege.<sup>15</sup> And Clamageran declared specifically that merchants were consulted. Their usefulness was limited by their own desires for profit, although, when available, their advice was invaluable in awakening the Hotel de Ville to the significance of time in any administrative action.<sup>16</sup>

With the onset of the cold, and the decrees requisitioning wood and coal, there were more complaints. On December 30 Le Figaro found this subject excuse enough for another attack on the Mayor of Paris.<sup>17</sup> La Liberté, on the same day, offered the opinion that the panics over the wood shortage could have been averted by a little aforethought on the part of Magnin and Ferry.<sup>18</sup> The day before, Le Temps anxiously urged the Government to supply wood to those in need of it.<sup>19</sup>

Lacking the material means of meeting the wood crisis,

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14. Le Temps, December 13, 1870.

15. Delabrousse, op. cit., II: 121.

16. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 349-350.

17. Le Figaro, December 30, 1870.

18. La Liberté, December 30, 1870.

19. Le Temps, December 29, 1870.

Ferry sought to assuage the widespread vexation by a wordy proclamation announcing that "the cold is our worst enemy..., measures are rapidly being taken..., everybody is working hard,"<sup>20</sup> and so on. This stirred the conservative La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire into a blistering editorial entitled "The Administration and the Cold." Ferry, in his warm office in the Hotel de Ville, talked interminably about proper measures, but why did he wait for the onset of the cold before acting? The people needed warmth now, not next spring when the thaw would set in.<sup>21</sup>

Complaints about the wood continued for weeks. On January 19 Le Combat printed a vehement protest, addressed by the citizens of Montmartre, and signed by a great number, to the Mayor of Paris, on the subject of the sale of green wood.<sup>22</sup>

During the month of December there were a variety of lesser complaints directed at Ferry. Some of the criticisms he could not possibly have answered to the satisfaction of everybody. For instance, about December 10 a sort of vigilante committee in the Fourteenth Arrondissement had taken upon itself certain extra-legal functions which were possibly justifiable in view of the emergency. On December 14 the conservative La Liberté complained that the Mayor was doing nothing about this menace.<sup>23</sup> On the same day Le Combat denounced

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20. Le Journal Officiel, December 29, 1870.

21. La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire, December 30, 1870.

22. Le Combat, January 19, 1871.

23. La Liberté, December 14, 1870.

Ferry for intervening in any way.<sup>24</sup>

Some of these attacks were typical examples of political "sour grapes;" yet they had a sting to them. La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire apropos a rumor that Le Boulevard Haussmann was going to be re-named Le Boulevard Victor Hugo, noted that it came with poor grace to find M. Haussmann's successor attacking his predecessor on so low a level.<sup>25</sup>

As can be imagined, references of this type were frequent in the conservative newspapers. On December 15 Le Figaro featured an article which illustrated the length to which this could go. Under the title of "The Successor to M. Haussmann," it berated Ferry. Since September 4, he had slept in M. Haussmann's bed. He was admired by Blanqui and Flourens and other notorious scoundrels. His apparently decisive action on October 31 had come only after deliberate delay.<sup>26</sup>

From the other side of the political fence, Le Combat, on December 23, published a routine editorial denouncing the Mayor of Paris for arrogating to himself so much power.<sup>27</sup> Four days later it attacked Favre and Ferry because they insisted that remuneration should only be given to the legitimate wives of National Guardsmen.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly enough,

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24. Le Combat, December 14, 1870.

25. La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire, December 10, 1870.

26. Le Figaro, December 15, 1870.

27. Le Combat, December 23, 1870.

28. Ibid., December 23, 1870.

Cresson, in his memoirs, attacked Ferry for the opposite policy, saying that he deliberately sought popularity by permitting remuneration to go to mistresses as well.<sup>29</sup> As with any number of other attacks on Ferry, these two criticisms were mutually exclusive. He could not have been guilty of both matters for which he was accused. Nevertheless, he was blamed accordingly, depending on how his critics felt on any one matter.

Complaints of the type just noted continued throughout January. In the middle of that month a new wave of dissatisfaction arose. This was precipitated by the bread crisis, which was inaugurated by Ferry's decrees forbidding sale of high-quality bread, and forewarning people to buy bread only in their own arrondissements. Le Combat, of course, seized the occasion to blame Ferry for the lack of bread, and for his ambiguous, contradictory placards on the subject.<sup>30</sup> Le Siècle quoted L'Avenir National approvingly in its criticism that the ration cards Ferry had prepared, were not such as to prevent people from going to several bakeries within the same arrondissement.<sup>31</sup> Both Le Siècle and Le Combat were highly critical during this phase. The latter, finding nothing better at hand on January 17, volunteered the contribution of its opinions on Ferry's administrative policies. It said that he wasted funds and that he retained Bonapartist offi-

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29. Cresson, op. cit., 115.

30. Le Combat, January 16, 1871.

31. Le Siècle, January 15, 1871.

cials at their posts. The author of the article continued:

"M. Ferry has arrogated to himself the dictatorship of the Hotel de Ville by bragging about his book, 'Les Comptes Fantastiques d'Hausmann.' One could author a volume no less edifying on his administration, to be called 'Les Contes de Ferry!'"<sup>32</sup>

Next day the paper observed that "Ferry is wondering what new element he is going to inject into the chaos of his administration."<sup>33</sup> On January 20, after the rationing of bread had begun, Le Combat belabored him for delaying it so long, and setting the individual consumption at the low figure of 330 grams.<sup>34</sup> Le Siècle was no more flattering. On January 18 it gave as its considered opinion that the "utter incapacity of the Central Mayor and of most of the local mayors knows no bounds."<sup>35</sup> The same day another article denounced the administration for the completely indigestible bread which was being distributed.<sup>36</sup>

In the conservative camp, Le Figaro was angry at the method chosen by the Mayor to introduce the rationing system. In its opinion, nobody had been forewarned about the new decree, and the bakers had had to apply it beginning with the moment they saw it posted on the walls of Paris.<sup>37</sup>

La Liberté, by this time, had joined the most ardent detractors of Ferry. On January 15 one of its editorial

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32. Le Combat, January 17, 1871.

33. Le Combat, January 18, 1871.

34. Ibid., January 20, 1871.

35. Le Siècle, January 18, 1871.

36. Ibid., January 18, 1871.

37. Le Figaro, January 20, 1871.

writers, in an article entitled "The siege of Paris in the Light of History," waxed satirical in the following vein:

"We hope history will do justice to the common people of the siege for their sufferings and heroism....History should also give an extraordinary place to the supreme mayor, Jules Ferry.

The superb insouciance with which M. Jules Ferry fulfills his functions.....

To give himself the terrible mission of administering, in the face of the enemy, a city like Paris would frighten one with nerves of steel....M. Jules Ferry reflected on the grandeurs and the dangers of his post neither before nor during nor after. Anyone else would have racked his brains and said to himself: 'During the months of December and January there frequently occurs an atmospheric phenomenon which is commonly referred to as the cold weather; the custom is to heat one's self. Therefore, dry wood---that is wood, cut in advance--gives heat. Wood cut by improvident administrators in the last moment, smokes but does not heat.'

M. Jules Ferry is above preoccupations such as these. He represents the man who, in the middle of a fire consuming an entire city, asks his neighbor to put out his cigarette, lest he cause a catastrophe.....

An intelligent administrator would merely have to make certain, by scrupulous and energetic action, that the bakeries receive their bread. Not M. Ferry....He dreams only...of taking useless and delayed measures which will produce for flour the same result as the requisition produced for potatoes... --they disappeared completely."<sup>38</sup>

On January 22 La Liberté's attack was resumed:

"The population will accept rationing with patience. But M. Ferry, the petty tyrant, announces grandiloquently that all the common folk must live by his sufferance.

Paris, yet again, will accept with patience, not only rationing, a measure necessary to public safety, despite the incredible

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38. La Liberté, January 15, 1871.

vexations which M. Ferry insists on adding to this measure. After having lined up for meat, water, wood, our mothers, wives, and sisters will now line up for bread...., while M. Ferry, satisfied with his work, will heat his knees at the Hotel de Ville...

Even though our patriotism may be immense, human reason has its limits of indulgence. The Parisian will reconcile himself to 100 grams of bread..., but he will find that the system (for rationing the bread)...is as useless as the tyrannous lawyer who reigns at the Hotel de Ville."<sup>39</sup>

Almost nothing could exceed the withering satire in these two articles, which, incidentally, embodied certain unpleasant half-truths. It was to some degree correct that the Mayor's office had failed properly to foresee a shortage of wood due to the cold. But in order to obtain any extra wood at all, it was necessary, as we have seen, to cut the forests of Vincennes and Boulogne. It was equally true that, after more than three months, the problem of excessively long queues had still remained unsolved. This can hardly be attributed to anything but faulty administration. However, it seems to have stemmed, not from Ferry's failure to perceive that prompt and remedial measures were necessary, but rather from the lack of local officials and the unwillingness of the mayors to devote more of their time in the meetings to administrative problems.<sup>40</sup>

There also were circumstances which never could be precisely anticipated. As Le Temps pointed out, the problem of the bread lines was immensely complicated by the fact that

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39. La Liberte, January 22, 1871.

40. Clamageran, "Cinq Mois à l'Hotel de Ville," 350-351.

the people evacuated from the bombed-out areas increased the food problems in the areas of refuge.<sup>41</sup> La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire, usually so critical of Ferry, agreed with Le Temps' estimate of the situation, adding that the Mayor was being unjustly criticized.<sup>42</sup> And even La Liberté had to concede an inch by chiding the local mayors to recognize the ration cards issued by the Mayor of Paris, if ever order was to reign.<sup>43</sup> Other instances of such lack of cooperation were repeatedly reported in the newspapers.<sup>44</sup> Before such personal selfishness, Ferry could do very little.

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II

Had not the siege come to an end within a few days after this new wave of attacks on Ferry, it is more than probable that he would have had to resign as Mayor of Paris. When the Jacobin and Monarchist press inveighed against him, it could be written off as the unjust fulminations of political enemies. But when as representative a republican newspaper as Le Siècle, which had been a consistent defender of Ferry in the Corps Législatif of 1869, had become most critical by mid-January of 1871, it was evident that public pressure might soon have forced his withdrawal. Then came the armistice, causing Ferry to remain reluctantly at his post until after the elections scheduled for February 8.

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41. Le Temps, January 15, 1871.

42. La France Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire, January 15, 1871.

43. La Liberté, January 26, 1871.

44. See Le Siècle, January 24, for an article on some of these evasions.

During the period of reconstruction, lasting until the middle of February, Ferry was prey to more attacks than ever. In the first few days of that month, the newspapers turned their attention away from the individual "malefactors" in the Government of National Defense, finding the forthcoming election, and the nature of the mandate of the prospective assembly, more convenient subjects for comment. But very soon the special problems of Paris once more claimed space on the front pages. And, inevitably, the papers bethought themselves of the unhappy Mayor.

The conservative press did not spare any insults. On February 6 La Liberté wondered if there was a remote possibility that the administration at the Hotel de Ville might not mismanage the gift of food from London.<sup>45</sup> On February 13 Le Figaro commented that "M. Ferry's administration will remain bizarre to the bitter end."<sup>46</sup> Several days later it let loose with this barb: "M. Jules Ferry....is about to announce that he has been working for the last six months on his 'Comptes Féeriques de l'Hotel de Ville,' to supplement his 'Comptes Fantastiques d'Hausmann!'"<sup>47</sup> And La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire had this parting shot to fire:

"It is said that M. Jules Ferry has not lost a single occasion for being maladroit since becoming Mayor of Paris. After having prolonged, in an absurd fashion, the

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45. La Liberté, February 6, 1871.

46. Le Figaro, February 13, 1871.

47. Ibid., February 17, 1871.

consumption of this frightening melange of bran, oats, and sawdust, which has occasioned so much illness, M. Jules Ferry declares, February 9, that bread will not be rationed after the tenth, imagining that a decree of this sort can go into operation from one day to the next without any hardship. What an adroit administrator!"<sup>48</sup>

The Jacobin newspapers had been reduced temporarily to Le Rappel, with the suspension of Le Combat and Le Réveil after January 22. Previously fairly lenient with Ferry, Le Rappel now took up the cudgels in turn. On February 11 it reproached the Hotel de Ville for having failed to conduct the elections efficiently, just as it had failed with the distribution of meat, wood, and bread.<sup>49</sup> Two days later its comment was much more nasty. It charged that the long delay in announcing the results of the election was due to M. Ferry's deliberate slowness--had he and his confreres been candidates, the results would have been published promptly. One could be certain of that!<sup>50</sup>

On February 12, Le Siècle interrupted its speculations on election results to ponder the problem of revictualling. The situation was gradually being relieved, it agreed, but the distribution of flour to the bakeries was still very irregular, thanks, as usual, to M. Ferry's incompetence. Furthermore, the food from London was being distributed slowly because the Mayor, wedded to his routine, refused to open new

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48. La France, Politique, Scientifique et Littéraire, February 11, 1871.

49. Le Rappel, February 11, 1871.

50. Ibid., February 13, 1871.

dispensaries to supplement the buther shops.<sup>51</sup>

Weary of the endless criticisms, Ferry sought to justify himself. With respect to elections, he announced in the Journal Officiel that the slowness in tabulating the returns was not the fault of the Central Mayor, who could not personally count the ballots in each arrondissement.<sup>52</sup> Naturally, his critics turned a deaf ear to this explanation. And he engaged in a controversy, by medium of a public letter, with the Journal des Débats--also to no avail.

Le Journal des Débats had refrained from criticisms of his administration throughout the siege, for Molinari agreed with the policy-making decisions of the Government, if not with the means of carrying them out. But during the days of reconstruction he was free with his complaints about the Hotel de Ville. On February 13 Le Journal des Débats disagreed pointedly with Ferry, who had announced in the Journal Officiel that the food from London was being held up until all of it arrived, because it was too difficult to distribute it piecemeal.<sup>53</sup> On February 24 Molinari attacked the Mayor of Paris for ordering the requisition of coal. The administration, he said, should have the good sense to let commerce handle its own affairs, now that the emergency conditions had ended.<sup>54</sup>

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51. Le Siecle, February 12, 1871.

52. Le Journal Officiel, February 12, 1871.

53. Le Journal des Débats, February 13, 1871.

54. Ibid., February 24, 1871.

The following day this newspaper reprinted a letter addressed to it, and to L'Opinion Nationale, by Ferry. He publicly defended his requisition of the coal. Due to the inadequate rail facilities, Ferry maintained, there was still a serious shortage of coal in the capital. In order to prevent excesses of speculation on an inadequate supply, he had had to resort to this measure.<sup>55</sup> Again Ferry's retort had no effect. Molinari agreed that the railways were not able to operate effectively as yet. But this was true three weeks before. If a requisition on coal was necessary, it should have been at the beginning of the month, not at this late date.<sup>56</sup>

Le Temps alone could say a word in defense of the administration. On February 10 it explained that the slowness of revictualling was due to the totally ineffective means of communications. A secondary cause, it added, derived from the lack of time, in the last hectic hours of the siege, to prepare for rapid revictualling.<sup>57</sup>

If Ferry, perchance, derived some slight consolation out of reading these lines, he could taste gall again by picking up Le Figaro for February 8. One of its editors asked the following question on that occasion: "I should like to know if the young and handsome Ferry, the favorite of Le Temps, the advisor to the editors of Le Temps, eats the saw-

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55. Le Journal des Débats, February 25, 1871.

56. Ibid., February 25, 1871.

57. Le Temps, February 10, 1871.

dust bread?"<sup>58</sup>

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III

Ferry's services with the Government of National Defense came to an end amidst this barrage of criticism, at the time when the Government itself went out of existence. In retrospect, the newspaper attacks of which he was the victim, represented less than justice. His management of the routine functions of his office, while not equal to his conception of broad policies, was still not so ill-conceived as to merit all of the denunciations which were aimed at it.

It can be summarized in this fashion. By no means did Ferry display hidden talents as an administrator. If he had had any such ability, it would have enable him to surmount to a greater extent the difficulties which he faced. On the other hand, the peculiar circumstances make it unreasonable to dismiss him as totally incompetent in the position of Mayor of Paris. Never able to charm his public, as could his friend, Gambetta, Ferry was unable to avoid appearing in an unfavorable light. Without a firm government in back of him, Ferry lacked a lever by which he could have controlled the mayors. The best he could every hope to do was to accomplish the negative objective of preventing them from establishing a commune. Without their cooperation in matters of administration, it was impossible to do more than "muddle through". This he did as well

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58. Le Figaro, February 8, 1871.

as any other man could have done. The newspaper complaints, in the broadest sense, expressed the average Parisian's dissatisfaction with a situation governed by remote control. The answer to the question of why Ferry was so extremely unpopular is, then, relatively simple. Ensconced in the Hotel de Ville, the symbol of all the inconveniences of the siege, Ferry made an ideal target for popular scorn. The shafts of public discontent fell upon him from beginning to end. The answer to the puzzle as to why his post-siege critics were so hard on him also becomes plain. All of them were his political enemies, and all concluded that his unfriendly manner, coupled with his wartime unpopularity, made him the ogre that he was reputed to be during the siege. The evidence does not bear out that he was either a knave or a fool.

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#### IV

When one examines Ferry's position during the sessions of the Government of National Defense, much the same conclusions can be drawn. Considering his inexperience, the numerous mistakes in judgment which he made were not unexpected. More often than not, he exceeded his companions in the Government in energy and foresight. On occasions such as October 31 he rose to the stature of an incisive man of action. Whether as Mayor of Paris or as a member of the Council, he displayed the courage and the vision, though not always the tact and experience, of a coming statesman. Of the members

of the Government of National Defense who remained in the capital throughout the siege, he alone, in the teeth of deep-seated unpopularity, was destined for an outstanding political future. The statesmen of the Third Republic who achieved more than fleeting eminence are not very numerous.

Part III. Epilogue: The Commune of Paris.

## EPILOGUE

## I

Jules Ferry's participation in the Government of National Defense ended on the day of February 13, when the Government's de facto existence was merged into the de iure Bordeaux Assembly.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for him, his unhappy wartime service was to be followed by an experience which was more distasteful still.

For the moderate republicans, the epilogue to September 4 and October 31 was, of course, March 18 and the Commune of Paris. To the Jacobins, on the other hand, all that had passed was the prologue, while the drama had yet to unfold. Unlike Gambetta, who, after a brief appearance at the Bordeaux Assembly, departed for an extended vacation in Spain,<sup>2</sup> Ferry saw duty against the Commune. His vacation was not to begin until he had observed the holocaust in Paris during the May Days, and had been the victim of worse indignities, by far, than he had endured during the siege.

Nevertheless, three months of the Commune, except for his own personal and private experiences, meant little in terms of Ferry's political future. He was only a reluctant participant in the interim municipal government following the siege, and his influence and power were slight. Further-

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1. Denis, op. cit., II: 456-457.

2. Bury, op. cit., 264.

more, the tale of this interlude in Ferry's career is fairly well known.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, Ferry's part against the Commune will be summarized here only insofar as it is closely correlated with his activities in the Government of National Defense.

The Assembly which met at Bordeaux after the elections of February 8 was the famous Monarchist assembly of 1871. The republicans of all varieties numbered a mere 200, while the Monarchists, Orleanists and Legitimists, totalled about 400 members.<sup>4</sup> The radical Parisian contingent was due in part to the large number of abstentions from voting. Of 547,858 recorded on the electoral lists, 218,888 did not vote.<sup>5</sup> Only one of the members of the Government of National Defense, Favre, was elected from Paris.<sup>6</sup> Most of the others, including Ferry, were, however, elected elsewhere. Ferry was elected by his native constituency in the Vosges. On February 18 his election was validated by the Assembly.<sup>7</sup> Ferry never took his seat in the first session. Before it moved from Bordeaux to Versailles, his duties in Paris kept him absent.<sup>8</sup> During the Commune, he was closely attached to Thiers and the army.

On February 17 the Assembly named Thiers, "Chief of the Executive Power." Several members of the Government of

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3. Jean Dietz, "Jules Ferry au Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale et pendant la Commune" in Revue de France, XIV<sup>2</sup> (1934), 493-519.

4. Denis, op. cit., III: 12; Brabant, op. cit., 69-71.

5. Denis, op. cit., III: 12.

6. Mason, op. cit., 101.

7. Annales, I: 67.

8. Ibid., 67.

National Defense, Favre, Picard, LeFlô<sup>9</sup>, and Simon, were included in his cabinet.<sup>9</sup> Ferry was retained as Mayor of Paris. He seems to have been kept in his post only because no one else wanted the position with revolution permeating the air of the capital.<sup>10</sup>

As may well be imagined, Ferry had had his fill of governing under adverse circumstances. He had no desire to stay at his post. In the unsettled conditions of the capital, he could exert absolutely no authority as Mayor. Consequently, he repeatedly begged Thiers to relieve him of the duties of his office, but to no avail.<sup>11</sup>

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## II

The causes of the Commune are by now well known. Professor Mason's summary is comparatively recent and objective. The Commune did not take place because of any carefully preconceived plot forged by the revolutionary elements. It came through a multiplicity of causes. The defeat by Prussia was uppermost, and the ready acquiescence by the Bordeaux Assembly to Bismarck's harsh peace terms greatly aroused the ultra-patriotic Parisian radicals.<sup>12</sup>

The immediate causes may be summarized as follows. The Bordeaux Assembly's ill-conceived Law of Maturities provided

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9. Denis, *op. cit.*, III: 119; Mason, *op. cit.*, 102.  
 10. Thiers' address of May 24, 1871, *Annales*, III: 117-118.  
 11. Favre, *op. cit.*, III: 129; *Le Siècle*, March 7, 1871 referred to his imminent resignation.  
 12. Mason, *op. cit.*, 116-117.

that financial obligations, suspended during the siege, were to be payable in an impossibly short lapse of time. This threw the petite bourgeoisie into the revolutionary camp. Furthermore, the fact that the Assembly adjourned to Versailles, and not to Paris, as its future meeting place, irritated radical sentiment.<sup>13</sup>

The Central Committee of the National Guard was the instrument by which a successful revolution was made possible. This committee was in turn the outgrowth of an election committee, which had coalesced with representatives of the International.<sup>14</sup> Under normal conditions it probably would have achieved nothing. Finally, the occupation of parts of Paris by German troops as part of the terms of peace became the precipitating incident. The presence of the enemy was in itself an encouragement to revolution. And this presence was seized upon by revolutionary leaders and National Guard battalions to remove military equipment stored in Paris to a "safe" place on Montmartre. This equipment, plus the retention of arms by the National Guard, as part of the armistice terms, made for a very dangerous situation.<sup>15</sup>

The explosion finally came on March 18. What, in brief, were Ferry's views on the causes of the outbreak, and the imminence of revolution?

To examine the latter first, Ferry explained to the

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13. Mason, *op. cit.*, 103-104.

14. *Ibid.*, 107-111.

15. *Ibid.*, 106, 99.

Commission of Inquiry on the Commune that the situation in late February was critical, but not hopeless. There were armed men marching about aimlessly whom a trifling incident could have galvanized into revolution. There was no way of dealing with the Central Committee of the National Guard, for the Guard lacked a commander-in-chief, and the more efficient battalion commanders had resigned.<sup>16</sup>

On March 4 Ferry telegraphed Simon, who was the Minister of Education at Bordeaux, that the situation was rapidly deteriorating. A general anarchy prevailed, the battalion chiefs lacked authority, and the men were obeying only the secret orders of an "occult committee."<sup>17</sup> The entrance of the Prussians on the first of March, according to Ferry, was the decisive incident. The newly appointed commander of the National Guards, d'Aurelle de Paladines, arrived too late to remedy the situation.<sup>18</sup> After Thiers' arrival in Paris on March 10, Ferry urged arrest of the members of the Central Committee in the council session. However, their identity was not exactly known, and the government did not have the instruments at its disposal with which to locate them.<sup>19</sup> The incident of the military equipment and of the canons completed the causal chain.

As for the causes of the Commune, Ferry listed three. First was the public malaise growing out of the long suffer-

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16. Ferry's testimony, Annales, IX: 407-408.

17. Ibid., 407-408.

18. Ibid., 407-408.

19. Ibid., 408.

ings of the siege. The second cause was the sudden growth of the Central Committee to such power that it was able to sweep all obstacles in its way. Most decisively, the Prussian occupation of Paris brought on the revolution of March 18.<sup>20</sup>

Ferry took particular care to deny that the revolution was the result of a long range plot hatched by the International.<sup>21</sup> Time has proven him correct. In 1871 the holding of so liberal a view of the International's role was regarded as akin to madness.

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### III

The more radical elements in the National Guard, called the fédérés, held the military equipment and were therefore a great source of embarrassment to the Thiers government. Much of this equipment had been carried to a hill on Montmartre, where it was closely guarded. What was the government to do about it?

In the council of March 17 Ferry suggested the solution. Despite the assurances of some of the mayors, especially Clémenceau, Ferry was confident that the fédérés would never give up the military stores voluntarily.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, he urged that regular troops be used to engineer a surprise coup by which the weapons of war could be secured without unnecessary violence. The council accepted this advice, and

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20. Ferry's testimony, Annales, IX: 406,408.

21. Ibid., 405.

22. Ibid., 417.

plans were rapidly drawn up.<sup>23</sup> Thus it appears to have been Ferry's plan which General Vinoy, under Thiers' orders, put into operation on the morning of March 18.

The day of March 18 began as a seemingly easy triumph for the Thiers forces and ended in a victory of the fédérés. With Paris in the hands of the insurgents at the end of the day of March 18, the Commune had begun. For Ferry, installed in the Hotel de Ville in a strategic post of observation, this day, at first hectic enough, ended in what were perhaps the most harrowing experiences of his lifetime.

At 3:00 A.M. on March 18 Vinoy's troops advanced toward the various objectives which had been plotted out. The strategic position was on Montmartre, although the capture of equipment in arrondissements bordering on this district was also important. At his station, Ferry was able to maintain communications by telegraph with every important theatre of action. The telegrams which he sent and received on that day recount the rise and flow of events perfectly. One can read a graphic history of the first day of the Commune in his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry.

The dispatches which Ferry received until 10:00 A.M. reported that everything had gone according to plan.<sup>24</sup> This was so because the government forces had seized their objectives under cover of darkness. Unable to transport the can-

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23. Ferry's testimony, Annales, IX: 408.

24. Ibid., 410.

ons to a safe place before dusk, they were discovered by the populace. The troops were unreliable, fraternized with the crowds, and the coup was lost.<sup>25</sup> This was just a glimpse of things to come: St. Petersburg, 1917.

Nevertheless, the failure of this effort need not have necessitated the withdrawal of the army and of the government to Versailles, as Thiers ordered in the middle of the day. This was precipitate retreat in the face of no more than semi-organized resistance. The reason for the withdrawal was lodged in Thiers' own mind. Forever a historian and a strategist, he recalled that on February 24, 1848 he advised Louis Philippe that if he wished to keep his throne, he should retire in hot haste to Versailles. The way to defeat a revolution was to retreat, recoup, then re-enter in full force. Now in command, he proceeded to adopt his own advice.<sup>26</sup>

The subject is of interest, for Ferry was decidedly of the opinion that the government should hold on in Paris as long as possible. When, at 2:30 P.M., he was indirectly informed that General Derroja, in charge of the military forces stationed in the building, had received an order to evacuate one of the barracks of the Hotel, he protested vigorously.<sup>27</sup> Throughout the afternoon, he strove to maintain their positions in the Hotel de Ville. At 4:20 Ferry had the satisfaction of receiving an order from General Vinoy telling the

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25. Mason, *op. cit.*, 124.

26. *Ibid.*, 126, 138.

27. Ferry's testimony, *Annales*, IX: 412.

forces of the Hotel de Ville to hold fast.<sup>28</sup>

Yet there were alarming signs indicating that their position was unsafe. By 6:00 P.M. the Hotel de Ville was briefly surrounded by crowds, which, however, were dispersed. At about 6:15 Ferry received ominous news by telegraph: General Lecomte, commander of the forces which had tried to seize the Montmartre canons, and General Clément Thomas, ex-commander of the National Guard, had been the victims of a summary execution.<sup>29</sup>

Ferry, however, made plans to hold out in the Hotel de Ville. Anticipating a siege of the building by the fédérés forces, he had wagons dispatched to fetch food and drink. But at 7:00 P.M. came another order to prepare evacuation of the Hotel de Ville. General Derroja wished to follow the order immediately. Ferry held off the general while he telegraphed for more than two hours to Vinoy and Thiers trying to get the order countermanded. It was useless--shortly after 9:00 P.M. the order was confirmed.<sup>30</sup>

Ferry, enraged at this turn of events, intended to remain even without the protection of troops. He was dissuaded by his brother, who told him that further resistance was to no avail. Furthermore he must not risk the lives of his two young assistants, Jules and Paul Cambon.<sup>31</sup>

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28. Ferry's testimony, Annales, IX: 413.

29. Ibid., 414.

30. Ibid., 414-415.

31. Paul Cambon, Correspondence, 1870-1924 (Paris, 1940), 28. In a short essay, entitled "La Commune," 20-32, Paul Cambon gives a gripping account of the night of March 18.

Before leaving, Ferry took some last minute preparations. At 9:55 P.M. he telegraphed Picard, the Minister of the Interior, that, with the troops evacuating, they would abandon the Hotel de Ville, saving what documents they could. A few minutes earlier he dispatched a form telegram to all of the mayors' offices. In this he summarized what had occurred at the Hotel de Ville, ordered them to rescue as many of the public papers as possible out of their offices, and bid them to meet him in a general conclave at the office of the mayor of the First Arrondissement at about 11:00 P.M. At 10:00 P.M. Ferry and his staff left the Hotel de Ville. A quarter of an hour later the insurgents entered.<sup>32</sup> Ferry was the last representative of the government to abandon his post.

The brothers Ferry and Cambon made their way to the First Arrondissement Mayor's office. There they met the mayors and most of the adjutants. Ferry explained in detail the events of the day.<sup>33</sup>

Then occurred the incident which almost cost Ferry his life. Millière, adjutant for Belleville, appeared at the meeting briefly, observed Ferry, then slipped out of the building.<sup>34</sup> A few minutes later there were sounds of a crowd

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32. Ferry's testimony, Annales, IX: 416.

33. Cambon, op. cit., 29.

34. Cambon, Ibid., 29; Cambon makes it very clear that, in his mind at least, the crowd gathered because Millière told who was in the Mayor's office. Millière was the man who revealed a scandal about Favre's private life while an election was in progress--Mason, op. cit., 101--therefore he might have been capable of this. At the very least, it was an astonishing coincidence.

gathering outside. Cambon recounted that the crowd hurled furious imprecations, shouting repeatedly "A Mort Ferry! A Mort Ferry!"<sup>35</sup>

The Church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois was connected with the Mayor's office by a vestibule. The mayors insisted that Ferry and his friends make their escape by this egress, while they distracted attention by exiting through the front door. Accepting this advice, Ferry and the Cambons crawled through a window, dashed across an open space separating the two buildings, and entered the church. Meeting the priest, they were overjoyed to hear that he would have his sexton escort them out through a back entrance into a dark street, which was rarely frequented. The priest overheard the crowd shouting Ferry's name. He asked what that meant. Ferry replied: "Nothing, Father. These are the people who amuse themselves shouting 'Vive la République!'"<sup>36</sup>

The sexton escorted them to the rear door of the church, and they sneaked into the darkness. Running up alleys and unlighted streets, they reached the Cambons' home. Ferry remained with his young friends during that night.<sup>37</sup>

The next morning Paul Cambon attended a rump meeting of the mayors which he had learned about. There he was informed that the fédérés, while in control of the city, had not stationed their guards everywhere, and communications with

35. Cambon, op. cit., 29; Ferry's testimony, Annales, IX: 416.

36. Cambon, op. cit., 29-30.

37. Ibid., 31.

Versailles were not out. He returned to his home to inform Ferry, then went to the Montparnasse station to buy a ticket for him. Seeing National Guards patrolling the building, he hastened home to give Ferry the ticket, and to urge him to leave in all haste.<sup>38</sup> Then, to follow Cambon's account:

"With the indifference to danger for which he was famous, he delayed while he looked for a book to occupy himself during the trip. Then he asked me for my revolver. Finally I led him to the depot. He had entered unperceived, when, at the moment he put his foot on the ramp to ascend to the platform, a shout was heard behind us: "There is Ferry!" Some Fédérés guarding the outer door rushed into the room. Jules Ferry lunged up the stairway four steps at a time, threw himself onto a train which was pulling out of the station, and was en route to Versailles."<sup>39</sup>

By margin of these twin hair-breadth escapes Ferry missed the fate of Lecomte and Clement Thomas. Thereafter, anything that could happen was anti-climactic.

Only a few more words need be said about the events in which Ferry participated, although his thoughts during the period of the Commune merit a little amplification. With Thiers and the army of Versailles, Ferry's duties were largely of a routine nature. Although a participant in the council of the government, Ferry was given no responsibilities. Thiers, in fact, so dominated the council that no minister earned much distinction. Ferry, in a letter to his brother, observed:

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38. Cambon, op. cit., 31-32.

39. Ibid., 32.

"It is very nice to be in the Council, but the siege takes the joy out of it. Anyway, the omnipotence of the executive has made out of the meetings a consultation pro forma for all of us. Every day they become less important."<sup>40</sup>

He was able to accomplish nothing in his last two months as Mayor of Paris. He wrote Charles:

"...I am up to my neck in this problem: without a place to work, without archives, without money, to rebuild an administration which could keep three ministers busy."<sup>41</sup>

As a civilian attached to the military forces,<sup>42</sup> Ferry accompanied the troops as they entered Paris in the last week of May. One of the first non-military members of the Thiers regime to enter the capital, Ferry reached the government buildings before anyone else. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a trifling incident occurred which must have brought to his lips an ironic smile, as he recalled his train flight of March 19. Paschal Groussuet, "Foreign Minister" of the Commune, was not to be found. But on his desk was a time table, opened to "Trains to Brussels."<sup>43</sup>

At Versailles, Ferry had had time enough to mull over recent events, and to observe the political scene from a somewhat detached point of view. A letter written to a cousin less than a month after the eighteenth of March, reveals the extent of his bitterness:

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40. Lettres, 112--Letter of April 15, 1871.

41. Ibid., 120--Letter of June 2, 1871.

42. Ibid., 120.

43. Hanotaux, "Mon Temps," 355.

"Today everything sinks into I know not what bloody insanity. The situation is not only painful, not only obscure, it is monstrous, it is without precedent, without analogy. Paris is, in all the horror of the ancient expression, a prey to the furies.... Six months ago, after a tentative rash act by the same rascals who triumph today, Paris gave us 350,000 votes. Today, Paris wants our blood. For Paris, during six months, I gave what I had of my spirit, my energy, my life. I used my body and my brain, and poured out....all that was in me. And I was obliged to leave Paris after a sinister night, a fugitive and an exile, while the hideous crowd shrieked "la mort" into my ears. Had I fallen into the hands of those who elected me, without formality I should have been cast to the same wall where Clement Thomas lay bleeding. So things go, such is the way they are, such is the way one must learn to take them. If the state of Paris is not explainable as an excess of a great fever, this, alas, does not explain everything--then there is nothing to look forward to, nothing to hope for from our miserable country. Class hate, the division of spirits, the enfeebling and embittering of characters, the absence of all public virtues, egotism and covetousness, the spirit of discord and the passion of envy, with a great deal of cowardice in everybody, will make of us not a people, but an inferno, a Poland more mad and more tragic, and no less justly punished."<sup>44</sup>

He observed political developments with some little trepidation. He was as confident as Thiers that the Communards would be bested.<sup>45</sup> But the Monarchist Assembly disturbed him. He wrote his brother that he did not fear the "reactionary passions of the assembly."<sup>46</sup> But he was relieved when provincial municipal elections turned out well for the republicans.<sup>47</sup> And he was encouraged to find that Thiers'

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44. Lettres, 108-109--Letter of April 15, 1871.

45. Ibid., 109, 113-114.

46. Ibid., 113.

47. Ibid., 110--Letter of May 5, 1871.

sympathies would not be with the Orleanists, but, on the contrary, with the moderate republicans.<sup>48</sup> Despite the Monarchists' continued activity,<sup>49</sup> he was confident that somehow the Republic would survive.<sup>50</sup>

As for his own woes, he had this to say. The Monarchists were strongly opposed to him, but, thanks to M. Thiers, he was not openly maligned. "Admire with me the firmness and faithfulness of the man. It would have been so easy for him to cast me aside. But, instead, he defends me."<sup>51</sup> In any case, he was close to the end of his painful experiences as Mayor of Paris. By early June of 1871, he was ready for a vacation, and anticipating a happier future. We may close this description of the first phase of Ferry's political career by quoting from a letter to his brother.

"Finally!

June 6, 1871 is a beautiful day. It closes this cycle of nine months, begun September 4, 1870. Nine months of power, nine months of anguish, nine months of outrages and calumnies, nine months of responsibilities and tribulations. The (Journal)Officiel contains the nomination of Léon Say to the prefecture of the Seine..

M. Thiers has again spoken to me of (the ambassadorship to) America...You know the pros and cons...You would be deputy from the Vosges in my place, but what a separation...I shall return, M. Thiers says, the wiser, with all of the hatreds appeased.--And forgotten, perhaps!--Still, the great honor and the wonderful voyage!

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48. Lettres, 116-117--Letter of May 15, 1871.

49. Ibid., 123--Letter of June 6, 1871.

50. Ibid., 114--Letter of May 9, 1871.

51. Ibid., 124--Letter of June 6, 1871.

I should say 'no' resolutely, if I saw clearly my role, our role, in the assembly during the next year..."<sup>52</sup>

Ferry's answer to Thiers was, in fact, a rejection of the ambassadorship to the United States. A year later, he began the rebuilding of his political fortunes by accepting the ambassadorship to Greece.

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La France, Politique, Scientifique et Litteraire (Paris), 1870-1871. Conservative.

Le Journal des Debats (Paris), 1869-1871. Conservative, moderate, accurate.

La Liberte (Paris), 1870-1871. Conservative (Orleanist).

Le Patrie en Danger (Paris), 1870. Organ of the Blanquists. Ultra-Jacobin.

Le Rappel (Paris), 1870-1871. Pyat's newspaper, rabidly Jacobin in tone.

Le Siecle (Paris), 1869-1871. Solidly republican.

Le Temps (Paris), 1870-1871. Mildly republican, notably accurate and informative.

All newspapers, aside from their factual information, useful in conveying the atmosphere of Paris during the siege.

#### IV. SECONDARY SOURCES:

Acomb, Evelyn M. The French Laic Laws (1879-1889). New York, 1941. A doctoral dissertation written on France's lay education laws. Best documented study on this period of Ferry's career.

Amigues, Jules. Les Aveux d'un Conspirateur Bonapartiste. Paris, 1874. Interesting as revelatory of a Bonapartist's mind. Author blamed the "moderes" more than the "avances" for the coming of the Commune on the principle that one thing leads to another.

Arnould, Arthur. Histoire Populaire et Parlementaire de la Commune de Paris. Brussels, 1878. A Communard's history of 1870-1871, and not unexpectedly, strongly colored in its interpretation.

Aulard, A. "Souvenirs du Septembre 1870" in Revolution Francaise (Paris, 1920), LXXIII: 263-264. Inconsequential reminiscences of the great historian's youth.

Bainville, Jacques. La Troisieme Republique, 1870-1935. Paris, 1935. The author is well-known as a Neo-Monarchist, but his chapter on the Government of National Defense is fair enough.

Benjamin, H. C. "Official Propaganda and the French Press during the Franco-Prussian War" in Journal of Modern History (New York, 1932), IV: 214-230. Informative article on the state of public opinion before the Franco-Prussian War. Supplements Carroll's article in the American Historical Review.

Bloc, Maurice and Pontich, Henri de. Administration de la Ville de Paris et du Département de la Seine. Paris, 1884. Somewhat dated, but this volume has good historical accounts of the City's political practices, and of such institutions as that of the octroi.

Bourgin, Georges. La Guerre de 1870-1871 et la Commune. Paris, 1939. One of the leading French authorities in this field, Bourgin is usually very critical of the Government of National Defense. Best recent history of 1870-1871.

-----"Sur la Commune de 1871" in Revue Historique (Paris, 1934), CLXIX: 467-73. An interesting bibliographical critique of sources for 1870-71.

Brabant, Frank H. The Beginnings of the Third Republic in France. London, 1940. A study by an Englishman of the first days of the Third Republic. Has some useful odd bits of information, and is accurate enough.

Brogan, Denis W. France under the Republic. New York, 1940. Perhaps the best history of the Third Republic written in English. Unusually full account of the war and the Commune. Accurate in content, urbane in style.

Bury, J.B.T. Gambetta and the National Defence: A Republican Dictatorship in France. London, 1936. This is a very lucid analysis of Gambetta's actions in the provinces, written by an English scholar. A very important secondary work.

Calman, Alvin R. Ledru-Rollin après 1848. Paris, 1921. A doctoral dissertation, this is very informative and accurate. Reveals Ledru-Rollin's subservience to Delescluze, and his contacts with some of the "modérés."

Carroll, E. M. "French Public Opinion on War with Prussia in 1870" in American Historical Review (New York, 1926), XXXI: 679-700. First scholarly article exploding the myth of an irresistible French public opinion directed against Prussia. Shows the trumped-up techniques of Chauvinism which were resorted to by the throne.

- Claretie, Jules, Histoire de Révolution de 1870-71. Paris, 1872. A history, written from the standpoint of a contemporary and ardent republican. The author was half-way between "modérés" and "avancés". His views on certain controversial incidents, therefore, interesting. Certain useful documents.
- Delabrousse, Lucien. Joseph Magnin et Son Temps. Two volumes. Paris, 1915. A lengthy biography of Magnin, this contains some very important information on the administration of the capital, and the problem of subsistence.
- Delord, Taxile. Histoire du Second Empire. Six volumes, Paris, 1869-1875. Still one of the best histories of the Second Empire, Delord's volumes have the advantages of detailed explanations and moderate conclusions. The author was republican, but not greatly biased.
- Denis, Samuel. Histoire Contemporaine. Four volumes. Paris. 1893, ff. The author, an Orleanist, wrote extensively on the Government of National Defense, always in a very critical tone. If used with caution, his volumes are enlightening.
- Dietz, Jean. "Les Débuts de Jules Ferry" in Revue de France (Paris, 1932), V<sup>2</sup>: 501-521; 608-628. The author hopes ultimately to write a new and lengthy biography of Ferry. His magazine articles on the highlights of Ferry's career are useful starting points for further investigations.
- "Jules Ferry au Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale et pendant la Commune" in Revue de France (Paris, 1934), XIV<sup>2</sup>: 492-519. Short article in a popular periodical. It is accurate as far as it goes, but this is not very far.
- Doutenville, J. "Le Général Trochu et la Politique" in Nouvelle Revue (Paris, 1926), LXXXII: 129-145; 148-168. An extremely critical estimate of Trochu's work. Not as informative as one might hope as regards other matters.
- Dubreilh, Louis, La Commune. Paris, 1908. A volume in Jaurès' Histoire Socialiste. This contains relatively little on the Government of National Defense, almost nothing on Ferry.
- Dupront, A. "Jules Ferry Opposant à l'Empire-Quelque Traits de Son Idéologie Républicaine" in Revue Historique(Paris, 1936), CLXXII: 352-374. Excellent analysis of Ferry's intellectual antecedents, and the influences which were to shape him.

- Faure, Fernand. "A la Memoire de Jules Ferry" in Revue Politique et Parlementaire (Paris, 1927), CXXX: 5-15. Short laudatory sketch of Ferry in refutation of the popular impression that he was a cold, unscrupulous man.
- Flourens, Gustave. Paris Livre Paris, 1871. Somewhat fictionalized narrative of a Communard's activity in the fall of 1870, particularly on October 31.
- Geffroy, Gustave. L'Enfermé. Paris, 1897. Still the best biography of Blanqui, the Blanquist author was naturally very favorable to his hero. Contains some useful and usually accurate data.
- Gossez, A. M. "Documents sur la Situation au Lendemain de la Proclamation de la République, Septembre - Novembre, 1870" in Révolution de 1848 (Paris, 1934), XXXI: 170-177. Documents, but none of them bearing on Ferry, or even on the politics of the Government of National Defense.
- Grasilier, L. "Garnier-Pagès, Souvenirs du 31 Octobre 1870" in Nouvelle Revue (Paris, 1920), L: 62-64. Rather insignificant reminiscences on Garnier-Pagès.
- Hanotaux, Gabriel. Contemporary France. Four volumes. Paris, 1903 ff. Translated into English by John Charles Tarver. Volume one has an unusually full account of the siege and the Commune. Very fair in interpretation.
- Jellinek, Frank. The Paris Commune of 1871. New York, 1937. A Marxist history of the Commune. Sometimes misleading, but useful for the critique of the Government of National Defense.
- La Gorce, Pierre de. Histoire du Second Empire. Seven volumes. Paris, 1899-1905. Still one of the best histories of the Second Empire. M. de la Gorce was quite conservative, but seldom blindly partisan. Thus, his references to the republicans in the 60's neatly supplements M. Delord.
- Lamy, Etienne. "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale--L'Avènement" in Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1896), CXXXV: 240-271. A Catholic republican in the days when most Catholics were anti-republican, M. Lamy was very critical of the Government of National Defense and of Ferry.
- "Le Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale--Les Idées et les Hommes" in Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1896), CXXXV: 721-752. Good analyses of the members of the Government written in a critical vein.

- Lefrançais, Gustave. Etude sur le Mouvement Communaliste à Paris, en 1871. Neuchatel, 1871. A Communard's history, should be read with care. The author had two axes to grind: his politics, and the fact of his participation in the events about which he wrote. Decidedly no friend of Ferry.
- Lissagaray. Histoire de la Commune de 1871. Brussels, 1876. Usually regarded as the most accurate of Communard histories. Tends, however, to interpret unclear incidents according to his own predilections. Few distortions.
- March, Thomas A. The History of the Paris Commune in 1871. London, 1896. A little-used history written in an archaic but entertaining style. Based almost exclusively on the Commission of Inquiry's reports, it must be used judiciously. Rather interesting treatment.
- Marx, Karl. The Civil War in France. New York, 1933 edition. This is, of course, the Marxist interpretation, par excellence. Author's opinions on the personalities of the Government of National Defense are largely polemics.
- Mason, Edward S. The Paris Commune, An Episode in the History of the Socialist Movement. New York, 1930. A painstaking and impartial analysis. Especially good on the economic side of the Commune, and on the myths of historical interpretation which have grown up. Some useful material anent the siege.
- Mazade, Charles de. "L'Examen de Conscience après la Défaite --L'Enquête sur le 4 Septembre" in Revue des Deux Mondes (Paris, 1875), VIII: 589-616. This is a good, short analysis of the Commission of Inquiry's techniques of investigation. Important to read before attempting the seven volumes of the Annales.
- Michel, Louse. La Commune Paris, 1898. A feminine Communard's emotional account of the siege, the Government of National Defense, and the Commune.
- Nomad, Max (Pavolosky). Apostles of Revolution. Boston, 1939. A series of sketches of some of the great nineteenth century revolutionaries. Very penetrating analyses and unusually good documentation for a "popular" work.
- Pickeragill, W. "French Plebescite of 1870 and the Catholics" in English Historical Review (London, 1937), LII: 254-266. Interesting analysis of Catholic opinion on the eve of the last Bonapartist plebescite.

Pottecher, Maurice. Jules Ferry. Paris, 1930. A short biography of Ferry, this is very informative on the personal side, but contains little of importance on the politician's public career.

-----"Jules Ferry, ou la Tragédie de l'Impopularité" in Revue Politique et Parlementaire (Paris, 1931), CXLVI: 366-380. This is a brief article for popular consumption which tries to dispel the myth, which lingered long after Ferry's death, that he was a completely unlovable person.

Power, Thomas V. Jules Ferry and the Renaissance of French Imperialism. New York, 1944. A doctoral dissertation, unusually painstaking in method, on Ferry's efforts on behalf of the French colonial empire.

"Le Quatre Septembre 1870, Récit d'un Témoin" in Grande Revue (Paris, 1920), CIII: 177-188. A good account, supplementing better-known reports, by an anonymous witness, of the day the Third Republic was born.

Raiga, E. and Felix M. La Régime Administratif et Financier du Département de la Seine. Paris, 1935. Good on the fiscal problems, and on the resources, of Paris.

Rambaud, Alfred. Jules Ferry. Paris, 1903. Although dated, this remains the best biography extant of Ferry. Very favorable to him; most parts of it need amplification, and some sections, modification.

Tchernoff, J. (I) L'Extrême-Gauche en 1870-1871. Paris, 1900. A short treatment of the "avancés" and their aims. Nothing startling in the way of new data.

Weill, Georges. Histoire du Parti Republicain en France de 1814 a 1870. Paris, 1900. Very fair and very informative. Second only to M. Tchernoff's volume as the best history of the republicans out of power. Much useful information.

Winnacker, R. A. "The Third French Republic" in Journal of Modern History (New York, 1938), X: 372-409. Important bibliographical article for anyone beginning research in this period.

Zévaès, Alexandre. Histoire de la Troisième République. Paris, 1926. The chapter on the Government of National Defense has more information than is found in most texts. Generally, one of the better histories of the Third Republic.

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